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**BJP, 1 OCTOBER 1926**

*A double hoax?*

The "Daily Express" states that a professional photographer (name not published) walked into the office last Friday with the claim that he was the author of one of the greatest hoaxes ever perpetrated on scientists and astronomers in this country. He claimed that he alone was responsible for the "meteoric" displays confidently thought to have been seen all over England on September 6, displays that resulted in highly technical wrangles between famous scientists.

"The lights which were seen flashing across the sky that night and were thought to be meteors," he said, "were caused by the ignition of bags of ordinary photographic flashlight powder which I sent into the air attached to gas-filled balloons.

"The balloons that I sent up, six tied together, had reached a height of some five thousand feet when the powder burst into flame. There was a deafening explosion as the balloons burst and flames shot from the powder, and then the damp<sup>d</sup> ball shot through the air with a sizzling sound before it burned out."

Further press reports mention that the photographer made the experiment for amusement, and also with the object of finding whether any advertising "stunt" could be incorporated with it. Astronomers declared that the phenomena observed could not have been caused in this way.

THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
3 OCT 1986

[J + C BORD]

bol 0065

#### MAJOR BALL LIGHTNING CASE

JR had an article published in the AIR UK inflight magazine. One important case it generated was from David B, now aged 55 and an airline operative with Air UK. He served in the RAF from 1947 to 1974 and a detailed account of his UAP adventures was secured:-

In 1953/54 he was based with his wife at RAF Changi, Singapore. They had a small bungalow in Katong. One Saturday or Sunday afternoon there was a violent tropical storm (the flood aftermath of which is shown in a picture of the house taken immediately after the sighting) (on file). In the house were also another service couple with whom they shared. After thunder, lightning and torrential rain there was a sudden calm. On telephone/electricity wires at the rear of the house a cricket ball sized object appeared. It was coloured orange and made a loud hissing. The fozy object then rolled along the wires and curved away from them towards the house - passing through the open louvred shutter windows. Now a blue/white and yellowy ball it travelled about four feet off the ground and moved the length of the kitchen in front of them, all at a slow walking pace. The house lights were switched off, but glowed a dull orange whilst the object was inside the building and then went out again when it left. Even the flourescent tube light in the kitchen behaved this way. The fridge made shuddering sounds and its motor accelerated and decelerated as the ball went straight past. After about 20 seconds the ball arced back out of the kitchen through the same window and disappeared over the power lines.

After recovering from the shock they inspected the house. No electrical equipment was damaged, the lights and fridge worked perfectly and the metal bars around the window through which the ball entered and exited were not marked. There was no smell at all during the objects 'inspection' of the house.

This is a major first hand observation of ball lightning and the fact that it was seen to form, plus its strange effects by inducing a magnetic field into electrical equipment, could have significant ramifications for UFO (or UAP) study.

Between 1965 and 1974 he was stationed at RAF Coltishall in Norfolk. During that time he observed one of the 'green fireballs' which plague the area (see SKY CRASH). He says that many similar reports were collated over a long period and all remained classified. The "general track... was from the east heading in the direction of Sutton Coldfield". If you know anybody who lives there, perhaps you had best warn them. David B says this 'green fireball' matter is covered by the Official Secrets Act! [Green fireball = fast moving, naked / flare like balls of light seen repeatedly in one place]

Northern UFO News Mar / Apr 1987

[J. Randles]

# Horror for retired couple as thunderbolt blasts roof

DAILY  
POST  
12 JUNE  
1987

by Gerald Williams

A RETIRED couple narrowly escaped death yesterday when a thunderbolt struck the roof of their North Wales cottage demolishing a chimney stack.

The garden of their neat, white-washed hillside home at Cwmyglo, Gwynedd, was showered with rubble.

And it caused a power blackout as a massive surge of electricity blew a kitchen fusebox from the wall.

Shaken by the incident, former Glasgow traffic police sergeant Alec McLellan (57), and his 56-year-old Scottish wife, Audrey, counted themselves lucky to be alive.

Villagers described seeing a vivid red ball flashing through the sky just before the cottage was struck.

Mr and Mrs McLellan spoke of hearing "an almighty bang" at about 1.15 pm as they were sitting down after lunch at their home-with-a-view at Bryn Awelon, 'Rallt Goch.

"I thought an aeroplane had hit the top of the roof," said Mr McLellan.

"There was a colossal noise inside the house as if a bomb had fallen, but it was all over in seconds."

Their tortoise-shell cat, Kitty Puss, ran out in fright, and her young kitten escaped under a pile of clothes, while their two German Shepherd dogs looked

scared.

Some of the bricks from the chimney crashed through the roof into the loft, and a cloud of dust and debris fell into the living room fireplace.

Mrs McLellan said: "I rushed through to the kitchen extension and saw rubble coming down from the roof. My husband rushed outside."

## Rubble

Mrs McLellan said there was smoke coming from the electricity boxes, one of which had been blown off the wall as had their wall telephone.

Firemen cleared the loose rubble off the roof and Mrs McLellan added: "The fire-

men said we were very lucky to be alive. We did feel a tremendous surge of electricity - we felt it and the dogs barked. We were rather shaken."

Surprisingly, said her husband, none of the windows, which are double-glazed, were broken.

But his two-year-old Mazda car was dented by falling rubble, and a plum tree "also ruined for this year."

Said Mr McLellan: "I was brought up in Glasgow during the wartime blitz, but I've never experienced a thunderbolt before.

"In the four years we've lived here we've experienced an earthquake in 1984, and now this. That cannot have happened to many people."

[J. BORD]

601 0066

bol 0067

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Dans le pays de Galles, les signes de mort prennent une autre forme. Ce sont des lumières, appelées dans la langue du pays *canluillan cyrth*, c'est-à-dire des petits corps, que l'on observe surtout dans les comtés de Cardigan, de Carmarthen et de Pembrock. Ces lumières ressemblent à celle d'une lampe, avec cette différence qu'elles brillent et s'éteignent alternativement, surtout lorsque quelqu'un vient vers elles; après quoi, elles se remettent à briller de nouveau derrière lui. Elles sont si fréquentes en ces contrées qu'il existe à peine un homme âgé qui ne les ait vues au moins une fois pendant sa vie. De tout cela on peut conclure que ce sont des feux follets qui forment la base de cette sorte de vision. Mais il paraît que la clairvoyance des habitants du pays s'est emparée de ce phénomène naturel, l'a transporté pour ainsi dire du domaine physique dans le domaine psychique, et s'en est fait une sorte de séméiotique donnant des résultats assez sûrs. Car il ne s'agit pas seulement, comme on peut le conclure du grand nombre de lumières visibles dans ces contrées, il ne s'agit pas seulement ici de visions grossières, accessibles aux sens dans l'état ordinaire; mais il s'agit encore d'apparitions subtiles et délicates qui ne sont visibles que pour des yeux très-développés.

Les lumières dans le pays de Galles.

GORRES : La mystique divine &c.

un des habitants du lieu, s'étant mis au lit avec toute sa famille, se réveilla après minuit, et vit entrer dans sa chambre une de ces lumières, puis une seconde, puis une troisième, jusqu'au nombre de douze, avec la forme d'hommes, excepté deux ou trois qui ressemblaient à des femmes portant de petits enfants dans leurs bras. Bientôt après il lui sembla que la chambre devenait plus claire et plus grande, et que les lumières se mettaient à danser. Puis elles s'assirent autour d'un tapis, comme pour manger, et, le regardant en souriant, l'invitèrent à manger avec elles, quoique cependant il n'entendit aucune voix. Il invoqua la protection divine, jusqu'à ce qu'enfin une voix lui dit, dans la langue du pays, d'être tranquille. Après avoir regardé ainsi pendant quatre heures, il chercha à éveiller sa femme; mais il n'y put réussir. Après que la danse eut duré quelque temps encore dans une autre chambre, les lumières disparurent, et lui se leva; mais, quoique la chambre fût petite, il ne put trouver la porte, jusqu'à ce que ses cris eussent éveillé les gens de la maison. Le juge de paix du lieu rend à cet homme le témoignage que c'est un père de famille pauvre, mais honorable et jouissant de la meilleure réputation. Comme il ne demeurait qu'à deux milles de chez lui, il le fit venir et lui fit croire qu'il lui déférerait le serment relativement à ce fait; mais il se montra très-disposé à faire ce qu'on lui demandait. (Barter, *la Certitude des esprits*, p. 152.)

La femme de charge du baronnet Budds, à Llangathen, entra dans la chambre où dorment les servantes, et y aperçoit cinq lumières. Quelque temps après on peint de nouveau la chambre, et, pour la faire sécher plus promptement, on y place un grand bassin avec du charbon. Cinq des servantes se mettent au lit dans cette chambre le soir, selon leur coutume; mais il était trop tôt, et on les trouva étouffées le lendemain matin. (*Ibid.*, p. 143.) — Quelquefois ces lumières sont un présage pour le voyant lui-

même. Cath. Wyat, dans la ville de Tenby, se trouvant un soir dans sa chambre à coucher, aperçoit droit au-dessous d'elle deux lumières. Elle veut les écarter avec la main, mais n'y peut réussir, et elles disparaissent ensuite d'elles-mêmes après quelques instants; mais Catherine accouche bientôt après de deux enfants morts. — Davis, après avoir prêché un sermon solennel devant le jury, revenait chez lui. Vers le crépuscule du soir, lorsque le ciel était encore très-clair, il lui sembla par deux ou trois fois voir voler derrière lui, entre l'épaule et la main, quelque chose de blanc de la grosseur d'une noix; et la même sensation revenait toujours de nouveau après qu'il avait fait soixante-dix ou quatre-vingts pas. Il n'y fit pas d'abord grande attention, et crut que c'était le collet de son habit qui produisait cet effet. Mais l'objet devenait toujours plus rouge. C'était, dit-il, un feu d'une lumière et d'une couleur pure et claire. Il détourna son cheval deux ou trois fois pour voir d'où cela venait et ce que c'était; mais il ne put rien apercevoir. Dès qu'il se retournait pour continuer son chemin, le même phénomène recommençait. On pourrait croire qu'il ne s'agissait ici que d'un phénomène électrique; mais ce qui suit contredit cette supposition. En effet, comme Davis traversait le bourg de Llaurislid sans s'y arrêter, la lumière qui l'avait accompagné jusque-là le quitta comme pour entrer dans une auberge située à l'entrée du village, au moment où il passait devant la porte. Il ne la vit plus, mais il fut inquiet, et s'arrêta dans une autre auberge à l'autre bout du village. Là il raconta à l'hôte ce qui lui était arrivé. Celui-ci le redit le lendemain à quelques-uns des membres du jury, et ceux-ci à d'autres, de sorte que bientôt il ne fut plus question que de cette histoire. Or, il arriva pendant cette même session qu'un gentilhomme, Guillaume Lloyd, tomba malade, et fut attaqué en retournant chez lui d'un accès si violent qu'il fut obligé d'entrer dans la maison devant laquelle la lumière avait quitté

Davis, et il y mourut au bout de quatre jours. (*Ibid.*, p. 142.)

Morris Griffith, prédicateur très-pieux, se trouvant à Tre-Daveth, vit une grande lumière descendre de la colline dans le vallon : elle était très-rouge, et se tenait à un quart de lieue environ sur le chemin qui mène à l'église de Lanferchllawddoy. Morris passa promptement de l'autre côté de la colline pour mieux voir. Il aperçut la lumière se diriger vers le cimetière, s'y arrêter quelques instants et entrer dans l'église. Il attendit un peu, la vit ressortir de l'église et s'arrêter encore quelque temps à un certain endroit du cimetière, après quoi elle disparut. Peu de temps après mourut le fils d'un habitant du lieu, nommé Higgon. La bière s'arrêta un quart d'heure au lieu où s'était arrêtée la lumière, à cause d'une rivière qu'il fallait passer, et le corps fut enterré ensuite au lieu même où la lumière avait disparu auparavant.

Ces apparitions se reproduisant dans ces contrées d'une manière aussi fréquente et sous des formes si diverses, on se mit à comparer ces signes avec les événements qui en étaient l'accomplissement, et l'on se fit ainsi, comme dans le Nord, certaines règles dont on se servit pour interpréter ces visions. Lorsque la lumière est petite, pâle ou bleuâtre, elle signifie un accouchement prématuré ou le cadavre d'un enfant. Si elle est grande et forte, c'est un adulte. **S'il y en a deux ou trois grandes, ou plus encore, mêlées avec de petites, elles signifient un nombre égal de morts, pris les uns parmi les enfants, les autres parmi les adultes. Si deux lumières viennent de lieux différents, la même chose arrive pour les cadavres. Si l'une se détourne un peu du chemin qui conduit à l'église, elle annonce un obstacle qui arrêtera la marche du convoi funèbre. Au reste, ces lumières se retrouvent non-seulement dans le pays de Galles, mais encore dans l'île de Man. Le commandant de Belfast, Leathes, en 1690, ayant perdu sur mer treize hommes dans une tempête, un vieux prêtre le lui dit au moment où il débarquait. Le commandant lui demanda comment il le savait. Il répondit que c'était par treize lumières qu'il avait vues se diriger vers le cimetière. Une mort prochaine est annoncée quelquefois aussi par les ténèbres. Martin rapporte que de son temps, à Bommel en Hollande, il y avait une femme qui voyait une fumée obscure autour de la tête de ceux que menaçait une mort prochaine. Et comme l'événement justifiait souvent ces prévisions, cette faculté lui attira en même temps et beaucoup de visiteurs et de grandes persécutions.**

*Mr. Davis's Letter, concerning the  
Corps-Candles in Wales.*

Venerable Sir,

FOR your Worth, hath purchased you that  
Stile. With all due Respects, you shall  
hereby understand that I am one, who sin-  
cerely blesseth himself, to have been much  
Edified by you, as being Confirm'd in some  
points, and informed in others, by a piece  
of your Learned and Judicious Works,  
Termed by your self a Supplement, which  
proved to me a Complement, and which  
was Communicated to be by my Worthy  
Friend, and special Encourager, *John Lewis*  
Esq; , at whose Request, I am to give you  
the best Satisfaction I can, touching those  
fiery Apparitions, which do as it were, mark  
out the way for Corpses to their *καταφραία*,  
and that sometimes before the parties them-  
selves fall sick, and sometimes in their  
sickness of these, I could never hear in  
*England*, they are common in these three  
Counties, *Cardigan, Caermarthen* and *Pem-  
brock*, and as I hear, in some other part of  
*Wales*.

These *καταφραία* in our Language, we call  
*Canbyllau* *Cyrth* (i) Corps-Candles; and  
Candles we call them, not that we do see  
any thing else besides the Light: But be-  
cause

cause that Light doth as much Resemble Material Candle-light, as Eggs do Eggs, saving, that in their Journey, these Candles be *modo apparentes, modo disparentes*, especially, when one comes near them; and if one come on the way against them, unto him they vanish; but presently appear behind him, and hold on their Course. If it be a little Candle, pale or blewish, then follows the Corps either of an Abortive, or some Infant, if a big one, then the Corps of some one come to Age, if there be seen two or three, or more, some big, some small together, then so many, and such Corpses together. If two Candles come from Diverse places, and be seen to meet, the Corpses will be the like, if any of the Candles be seen to turn sometimes a little out of the way; or Path, that leadeth unto the Church, the following Corps will be found to turn in that very place, for the avoiding of some dirty Lane, or Plash, &c.

Now let us fall to Evidencē; Being about the Age of fifteen, dwelling at *Lanŷlar*, late at Night, some Neighbours saw one of these Candles hovering up and down along the River bank, until they were weary in beholding, at last they left it so, and went to Bed. A few Weeks after came a proper Dame from *Montgomery Shire*, to see her Friends who dwelleth on the other side of that River *St. Mary*, and thought to Ford the River

that very place, where the Light was seen ; but being dissuaded by some lookers on, (some it's most like of those that saw the Light ) to adventure on the Water, which was high, by reason of a Flood : She walked up and down along the River Bank, even where, and even as the foresaid Candle did, waiting for the falling of the Water, which at last she took ; but too soon for her, for she was drown'd therein.

Of late, my Sextons Wife, an Aged Understanding Woman, saw from her Bed, a little blewish Candle upon her Tables end : Within two or three days after, comes a fellow in, enquiring for her Husband, and taking something from under his Cloak, claps it down directly upon the Tables end, where she had seen the Candle, and what was it, but a Dead-born Child ? Another time, the same Woman, saw such another Candle upon the other end of the self same Table, within few days after, a weak Child by my self, newly Christned, was brought into the Sextons House, where presently he died : And when the Sextons Wife, who was then abroad, came home, she found the Woman shrouding of the Child, on that other end of the Table, where she had seen the Candle. On a time my self, and a Kinsman coming from our School in *England*, and being three or four hours benighted, ere we could reach home,

home, were first of all Saluted by such a Light, or Candle, which coming from a House, which we well knew, held his Course (but not directly) the High-way to Church; shortly after, the Eldest Son in that House Deceased, and Steered the same Course. My self, and my Wife in an Evening, saw such a Light, or Candle coming to the Church, from her Mid-Wifes House, and within a Month, she her self did follow: At which time my Wife did tell me a Story of her own Mother, Mrs. *Charine Wyat*, an Eminent Woman in the Town of *Tenby*, that in an Evening, being in her Bed-Chamber, she saw two little Lights just upon her Belly, which she assayed to strike off with her Hand, but could not; within a while they vanished of themselves. Not long after, she was Delivered of two Dead-born Children: Long sithence there happened, the like in mine own House; but to a Neighbours Wife whom my Wife did sometimes call for, to do some work or other and (as I credibly heard within these three days) to some good Gentlewoman also in this very Parish; where also not long since, a Neighbours Wife of mine, being great with Child, and coming in at her own Door, met two Candles, a little, and a bigg one, and within a little after, falling in Labour, she and her Child both dyed.

Some

Somethirty four, or thirty five years by-gone, one *Jane Wyat* my Wifes Sister, being Nurse to Baronet *Rudds* three Eldest Children, and (the Lady *Mistris* being Deceased) the Lady Controuler of that House, going late into a Chamber where the Maid-Servants lay, saw there no less then five of these Lights together. It happened a while after, the Chamber being newly Plastered, and a great grate of Coal-fire therein, kindled to hasten the drying up of the Plastering: That five of the Maid-Servants went there to Bed, as they were wont; but (as it fell out) too soon, for in the Morning, they were all dead, being Suffocated (I conceive) in their Sleep with the Steem of the New-tempered Lime and Coal. This was at *Llangathen* in *Carmarthenshire*.

Some thirty three, or thirty four years ago, upon a *Tuesday* coming towards home from *Cardigan*, where I had been enjoyn'd to Preach the Session Sermon: *Incipiente adhuc crepusculo*, and as Light as Noon, and having as yet, nine long Miles to Ride, there seemd twice or thrice from behind me, on my Right side, and between my Shoulder and my Hat, to fly a little whitish thing, about the bigness of a Walnut, and that *per intervalla*, once in seventy or eighty Paces: At first I took no notice of it, thinking it had been but the glimpsing of my little

little Ruff; for such then I wore, by Degrees it waxed reddish, and as the Night drew on, redder and redder, at last not *ignis fatuus*, (for that I partly knew) but *putus ignis*, both for Light and Colour. At length I turned my Horse twice or thrice, to see from whence it came, and whether it would flash into my Face, then nothing I could see; but when I turned homewards, it flashed as before, until I came to a Village called *Llawrifiid*, where as yet I did not intend to Lodge, though there were four Lodgings, and one of them (save one) the next House in my way, which, when I passed by close, being just against the Door, my Fire did flash again upon, or very near the Threshold, and there I think it lodged; for I saw it no more. Home still I would go, but by thinking my self, that so I might tempt God, and meet a worse Companion than my former: I turned to the furthest Lodging in the Town, and there after a little Rest, in a brown Study (because mine Host was an understanding Man, and Literate, and such as could, and had but lately read his Neck-Verse in pure Roman Language) I could not contain, but needs must tell him of the Vision, he the next day to some going to the Sessions; they to others there at last it came to the Judges Ears; in so much, that the greatest News, and wo-

der at the then Assises was the Preachers  
 Vision. To come at length unto the Pitch,  
 or Kernel, (for I have been too long about  
 the Husk and Shell) at that very Sessions,  
 one *John William Lloyd*, a Gentleman, who  
 dwelt, and whose Son yet dwells within a  
 Mile of *Glasferig*, fell Sick, and in his com-  
 ing homewards, was taken with such a vio-  
 lent Paroxism, that he could Ride no fur-  
 ther than the House, where I left my Fire  
 to entertain him, and there he lighted and  
 Lodged, died about four Days after. *Ex*  
*abundanti*, you shall understand that some  
 Candles have been seen to come to my  
 Church, within these three weeks, and the  
 Corpse not long after. *Hactenus de Cande-*  
*lis nostris.*

Another kind of Apparition we have,  
 which commonly we call *Tan-me*, or *Tan-*  
*zed*, because it seemeth Firy. This ap-  
 peareth to our seeming in the lower Re-  
 gion of the Air, straight and long, not much  
 unlike a Glaive, Mours or Shoots direct-  
 ly, and level (as who would say I'll hit) but  
 far more showly, than *Stelle cadentes*, or Star  
 shot lightneth all the Air, and Ground  
 where it passeth, lasteth three or four Miles,  
 and more for ought is known; because no  
 Man seeth the Rising or Beginning of it;  
 when it falls to Ground, it sparkleth, and  
 lightneth all about. These before their De-  
 cease, do fall upon Free-Holders Lands,  
 and

and you shall scarce bury any such with us; be he but a Lord of a House and Garden, but you shall find some one at his Burial, at least Wise in his Neighbour-hood, that hath seen this Fire to fall on some part of his Lands. Two of these at several times I have seen my self, since I Studied Meteors, and since I was a Minister, and narrowly observed, even till they were in the *air*, and began to fall; but the Interposition of Grounds, marred the Conclusion; for where, and how they fell, I saw not; but where I did guess, they fell, there died in the one place an aged Gentleman, in the other, a Free-Holder too though of a Meaner Rank. To come nearer home,

My Mothers first Husband (for my Father Married her a Widdow) walking about his Ground, saw one of these Darts, or Piles aloft; which fell down hard by him, shone far, and sparkled round about his Body, he took it for a Warning-Piece, made his Will, and having lived in good Health, some four or five Months after, dyed.

A little before the Decease of mine own Father, Aged Ninety six, a Son in Law of his, who dwelled two Miles off. (but upon higher Ground) saw such another fall in a Close behind the old Mans House, which gave such a Light, that by it, he did clearly

clearly see the House, the Hedges, and the Oaks in the Wood adjoining.

Sir, So many of these Evidences, as I saw not my self, I received from Understanding and Credible Persons, and such as would not lye, no, not for a Benefice; and your self may receive the same from me, as from one that was never too Credulous, nothing Superstitious, and as little Ceremonious. These Secrets, I dare not Father upon Satan, I will not Honour him so much, so much as to Ascribe to him the Knowledge of Contingent Futures. I presume that of himself, he cannot certainly know whether, or when a Healthy Man shall Sicken, nor whether, or when he shall dye of his Sicknes, nor whether he shall dye by Sicknes. or by Fire or Water, &c. or (in an open Country especially) which way of two, three, or more, the Corps shall be brought to Church, whether it shall meet another Corps in the way, whether it shall pass a River by the Ford, or Bridg; how many stops, turnings, and windings it shall make, Satan can have no certain fore-knowledge of all such Circumstances; nor more, but this Candlemaker and Director of them too foresees, and foreknows them all; and therefore must needs be the Creator, who, as according to the good pleasure of his Will, he hath Determined; and allotted to several Nations, their sever-

ral

ral Habitations; Dispositions and Conditions, even so ( as I suppose ) hath he vouchsafed to each of them some peculiar signs and tokens, if none to some, which I cannot believe, and if to some more, and more wonderful than to other some, for my part, I can give no other Reason for it, but his Will. This with my hearty Prayers for your self, your Pious and Learned Brethren of the Association.

I Rest,

*Your Friend in all kind Offices*

*that lye in my Power.*

Generglyn the 19.

March 1656.

**John Day**

DAVIS

bol 0069

## The "Tregaron Triangle"!

A few years ago, I was told of "something funny" which was reported to have happened on the Cors Caron (Tregaron Bog). The area attracts hundreds of wildlife enthusiasts each year. My interest, though, was in something less tangible than birds, animals or plants. The information was that unusual noises and peculiar lights had been seen at night.

I confess to a healthy scepticism about such things. The noises could be, I reasoned, those of natural phenomena. After dark, such sounds can be scary. The night cry of a vixen is eerie. But, my informant claimed, the sound from Cors Caron was like an old steam engine. And what of the lights? Animals don't have candles on their birthday cakes!

Bear in mind, too, that the Aberystwyth - Carmarthen line was closed many years ago. The rails have long since been removed. It was June, near Midsummer Day. On that day, my wife and I have a tradition of going out at some dreadful, still-dark hour of morning and waiting to see the sun rise. There's nothing mystical about this habit - in my case it's an act of true heroism. Thank goodness for the vacuum flask, say I! With my interest in the odd tales of Wales, here was an opportunity to investigate one at first hand. Wouldn't it be splendid to report sightings of a ghostly loco boldly chugging along in defiance of the Beeching axe?

So I persuaded my wife that, instead of getting up in the small hours, we should keep awake all night, witnessing not only the Midsummer sunrise but also seeing it set on the previous evening. Certainly a two flask job, with piles of sandwiches. The plan was to park in the "bird watchers lay-by" on the B4343, past which the course of the old line runs. During the hours of darkness, we would wander along the track occasionally looking and listening. We had a portable tape recorder and a camera to capture anything which might happen.

Even in summer, it can be cold at one o'clock in the morning. Just before midnight, a breeze had arrived from the east. The night was now blotched with clouds. We had made a few forays along the old railway. Night noises were there, of course, mainly the scufflings of small animals. The wind rustled scrubby trees. Late motorists were few, most people being properly abed by now. Another hour passed. It was now a matter of munching

sandwiches and waiting for the first glimmer of dawn. It might be more interesting to sit in the car and listen to the radio.

But my wife is made of sterner stuff. I had brought her here to seek ghosts and ghosts she would make us seek. We would have another drink and take another stroll. It was only an hour or so to daylight, anyway. We left the car for the umpteenth time and walked up the stone steps back onto the line.

For fifteen minutes we strolled along, tired now but still alert. There were still only the real noises and sights. We returned towards the car.

I made to go through the small gate and down the steps. Unexpectedly, my wife shook my arm. I turned round. Saying nothing, she pointed across the Cors. I looked to where she indicated.

There was a long, low light moving across the face of the bog. It was difficult to assess its height, size or distance from us, though it was certainly between us and the hills opposite. It glowed a dull red. The light was north-west of us, travelling southwards. A swishing noise came from its direction.

It's at moments like this when a camera and tape recorder are invaluable. Ours had been left in the car! I dived down the steps and grabbed them. When I rejoined my wife, things had changed. She quickly told me. The long light had stopped moving. It had "broken up" into several smaller lights. These seemed to drift again but at differing paces. Then they just faded away. The swishing noise had gone, too. I had taken no more than fifteen seconds to fetch my equipment.

Explanations are many and varied. Will o' the Wisps, perhaps, or distant car lights reflected on thin mist. It certainly was not a spooky steam engine. We shall dub it, then, an unidentified flying object.

And I shall modestly dub myself "Discoverer of the Tregaron Triangle", for as soon as I made the story of the lights we'd seen public, more people came forward with their stories.

In 1982, two ramblers were walking along the Abergwesyn road just outside Tregaron town. They were interested mainly in local flowers and fauna. The road winds and climbs through a very lovely valley flanked by steep mountains. Looking up at the peaks, they saw what was obviously the triangular shape of a cairn. Cairns abound among the Cambrian Mountains, and these

piles of rocks can be either ancient or modern. Why they were erected anciently will never be fully known. Some of them, though, are known to be marker points on ley-lines. But back to our pair of rambles.

Having seen the cairn atop a mountain, their interest was taken with birds and flowers near at hand. The bright summer evening was drawing to its close, so they decided to retrace their steps. As they wandered back towards Tregaron, they looked up to the place where they had seen the cairn. It was no longer there.

Reason dictated that a great heap of stones cannot simply uproot itself and wander away. They thought it would be that they were simply on the wrong spot in the road. Perhaps something was obstructing their view. For at least half an hour, they wandered up and down that stretch of road trying for another sight of the cairn. But it had totally disappeared.

More recently, UFO sightings on the Tregaron Bog are becoming fairly common. A lady from Pontrhydfendigaid told me

of her experience whilst driving from Tregaron to her home via the B4343 road. As she drove near the house of the nature reserve warden, she saw a light of great brightness moving along the Bog. It was not much above ground level and had a bluish tinge. She actually slowed her car, not through bravado, but because she expected the light to come onto the road in front of her. However, she did lock all the car doors! She drove home leaving the light behind her but like most of us in such a situation, she can think of no explanation.

A tradition of the Tregaron Bog was once told to me by my friend Tom Evans, Dolcoion. He assured me in all seriousness that the River Teifi flows uphill whilst crossing Cors Caron. And even stranger was the yarn spun by an old fellow who used to live in Bronant. As a lad, he swore he had seen a galleon under a full sail navigating her way along the river. Surely a case of too much 'cwrw' at the Llew Coch!

LLOWARCH, WEIRD WONDERS OF WALES [BORD]

bol 0070

# THE NATURALIST.

## LUMINOSITY OF THE WHITE OWL.

**T**HE OCCASIONAL LUMINOSITY of the white owl (*Strix flammea*) is a subject that is engaging the attention of many residents in North Norfolk, where unaloubted testimony exists that this phenomenon is not so rare as is generally supposed. An account by an eye witness who has observed it on several occasions may therefore be acceptable to some of your readers.

On the evening of Feb. 3, 1907, returning from a long walk with my son, we crossed one of the shallow valleys that abound in this district. Reaching the higher ground we noticed a moving light, apparently about a quarter of a mile to the north. On watching it, it moved up and down vertically with great rapidity upwards to a height of some 50ft. or 60ft. It did this a number of times. When at the highest point of its ascension it sometimes jumped up and down a little, then when near the ground it three or four times moved horizontally very quickly for about 100 yards, and then back. We watched it for about twenty minutes, during which time it made several ascents. It resembled a carriage lamp, for which we at first mistook it, and was slightly reddish in the centre. The time when we first observed it was 7.10 p.m. It was a perfectly calm night, and rather mild.

The cause of this light remained a mystery to us until the first of the present month, when, crossing the same valley, I saw what I supposed was the lamp of a motor bicycle rushing at a rapid rate along a road that ran parallel to the one I was walking on, about a quarter of a mile to the south. The light suddenly stopped, rose into the air above the trees, and retraced its course. This it continued to do, frequently rising some 20ft. to 40ft., and as rapidly descending. My groom's cottage being near, I called him and his wife out to see it. I then hastened to my house, about half a mile off. From the attic windows my son and myself and three servants watched the light for some minutes. My son and I then went out to the road near which the light was moving. Having reached a favourable position for observation, we watched the erratic course of the light. I called a very intelligent man from a cottage near by, and we all watched it; once we distinctly saw two moving lights. We then went across the field in its direction, but it moved away from us. We then got through a thick fence with a ditch of water on the other side, and, it being pitch dark, made some noise in doing so, when the light disappeared. About 10.30 the same evening I again took up a position as before, and after waiting about ten minutes the light emerged from a covert about 200 yards distant, and kept moving to and fro over the ground, sometimes approaching within 50 yards of where I was standing. It then alighted on the ploughed field, rose after a few seconds, and again alighted in the same field about 100 yards off. Twice it passed across the field of my telescope, but the time was so short I could only discern what looked like a larger lamp. A slight mist hung over the ground.

The next time I observed it was on the 22nd, about 7 p.m. I was near the house of the squire to whom the adjoining land belonged. I called at his house, and his wife and daughter came out with me and watched it. We had an excellent view of it moving along the valley, when something appeared to alarm it, and it rose rapidly to a height of 100ft. or more, and was lost to sight about half a mile to the west.

On the 25th, 26th, and 28th it was seen by myself and several other persons whose veracity is undoubted, but it was on the 29th, when the doctor and his son joined me in a tour of inspection, that we were rewarded with the best display. The evening was dark, and as the bird issued from the covert its luminosity seemed to have considerably increased, lighting up the branches of the trees as it flew backwards and forwards, occasionally mounting over their tops. After watching it for more than half an hour it was joined by a companion hardly so bright, which flew about 100 yards behind it. As they appeared one on each side of a copse it was one of the most curious and pretty sights we ever beheld. They finally disappeared in the trees surrounding a church near which, I believe, is their diurnal abode.

For obvious reasons I refrain from giving the names of persons or places. I am inclined to think the luminosity of the white owl is not so rare a phenomenon as we suppose, and that it is the basis of many stories in which the lantern-men, corpse-candles, and will-o'-the-wisps play an important part. If further investigation be judiciously pursued it may remove some of the errors and superstition still existing amongst our rural population, and help to preserve a most useful and interesting group of birds now threatened with extinction. On making inquiries of country folk I have elicited the following remarkable stories of moving lights. A groom when in his former employ often saw two lights moving over a pond and going up and down. An old soldier, and a Mutiny veteran, while in some meadows one evening saw a bright light moving along a line. It then came towards him, and when a few yards off went high up into the air and away. His wife when a young woman saw a "lantern-man" moving down a meadow; it stopped in a tree overhanging a pond and quite lit up the tree, and she could see it moving from branch to branch, but it so scared her that she gathered up her skirts and ran home. A servant at the rectory states that luminous owls are sometimes seen in the woods about her home not far from Cromer. The old people call them "lampmen," and are afraid of them. A lane there is called Lampmen Lahe, from the frequent currence there. Not long ago her brother was walking out at night with a friend and saw a bright light on the road, which he took to be a bicycle lamp. On approaching it it went into a covert close by.

Since writing the above I had another opportunity of watching the birds on Jan. 7 at 8.30 p.m. with my wife, the squire, his wife, son and daughter, and two friends. The display was quite as bright as on former occasions, the two birds hawking along the valley for twenty minutes, when they separated, one flying to the south, the other to the north, passing overhead some 60ft. from the ground. I am very anxious to ascertain the cause of this display, and I hope some of your readers will be able to elucidate it.

R. J. W. P.

'THE FIELD'  
The County Gentleman's  
Newspaper;  
Vol III (No. 2872);  
January 11, 1908;  
pg. 70

[D. CLARKE]

## WELSH MYSTERY.

### PIOUS VILLAGERS WATCH THE SKY.

#### INVESTIGATING THE STRANGE LIGHTS.

The mysterious lights of Wales have not been generally seen in the little Merioneth village of Egryn since Saturday night. They appear irregularly, and the last two days have been blank to the watchers.

I went four miles to Arthog last night, where Mrs. Mary Jones was to pray and preach, telegraphs our special correspondent. In the pulpit of the chapel I saw Mrs. Jones, a thin, middle-aged woman in a black dress, who, with her hands clasped behind her back, her eyes on space, stood slowly swaying to and fro as an old man prayed.

Outside the chapel in the road stood a little group of watchers with eyes on the towering tree-clad sides of Cwiler Idris, which rose almost sheer from the little chapel. They kept their eyes upwards on the lowering mountain slopes, expecting the mysterious lights, which they regarded as Divine, to appear above the chapel in which Mrs. Jones was praying. I watched too, but saw them not.

I accompanied Mrs. Jones to the chapel, riding by train from Barmouth and walking from Arthog station, a distance of half a mile. I saw no light. The night was dirty, the tops of the mountain, swept by mists, were concealed, but the lower slopes were black only with the darkness of night, and a light could easily have been seen. I saw none.

#### WAITING FOR THE LIGHTS.

I walked back by the mountain side to Barmouth. None of the mysterious lights were to be seen. On reaching Barmouth, just before eleven o'clock, I found hundreds of people on the beach singing Welsh hymns and waiting for the arrival of Mrs. Jones with her attendant lights. They were fated to disappointment, for Mrs. Jones had told me earlier in the evening that she was staying in Arthog for the night.

On Sunday night I tramped the meadows and the roadway from half-past seven till nearly eleven searching the countryside for some sign of the brilliant lights of the night before. I saw nothing. An old lady I met on the road professed to explain their absence, pointing out that there was no service that night at the little Egryn chapel in the neighbourhood of which they frequently appear. She further remarked that Mrs. Mary Jones had not gone out on her mission work that night, contenting herself with being merely one of the congregation at Dyffryn Chapel.

Later I saw Mrs. Jones herself, and asked her if the lights always appeared on bright moonlight nights, such as Saturday, or whether they came as well on the dark, overcast nights like the present. "They come all kinds of nights," she said, "dark and light. I saw one to-night on my way to Dyffryn. Perhaps you haven't been that way."

I acknowledged that I had not, having kept in the neighbourhood of Egryn.

"I was accompanied home by them on Saturday night," she said, "and had one right in the carriage."

page 5,  
col 3

#### ST. ELMO'S FIRE.

To the Editor of the "Daily Mail."

Sir,—I have read with great interest your article upon the mysterious lights which have made their appearance in Egryn, Wales. May I venture to suggest that they are a new phase of what at sea, especially in the tropics, is known as St. Elmo's Fire?

This is apparently a spontaneous outburst of static electricity, and is often to be seen at the mastsheads and bowsprits of vessels sailing in tropical countries. The description you give of the fire seen in Egryn tallies almost exactly with that given by sailors who have been witnesses of this St. Elmo's Fire. I hope this explanation of the phenomenon according to natural science may prove of interest to your readers.

RUDOLPH M. MAYER,  
Collington, Boxhill-on-Sea, Sussex.

[D. CLARKE]

(LONDON)

DAILY MAIL, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1905.

page 5, col. 6

THE WELSH LIGHTS

POSSIBLY DUE TO MARSH GAS.

The appearance of a scientific investigator at the Welsh village of Egryn coincides with the disappearance of the mysterious lights and balls of fire which the superstitious have associated with the religious ministrations of a woman revivalist.

Another night's watch by Mr. Redwood, the scientist who was engaged by the "Daily Mail" to investigate the matter, has been productive of no result. He reports as follows:—

"I am convinced that no reliance can be placed upon the statements of natives. I have grave doubts whether they have seen anything beyond ordinary farm lanterns, distorted by mist arising from the marsh which encircles Mrs. Mary Jones's house.

"It is an ideal locality for the production of phosphuretted hydrogen or marsh gas, although I have not detected its presence during my stay. This gas is frequently self-ignited, and the flames, although vague and elusive in character when seen through a slight haze of mist, might give rise to many stories of the so-called heavenly manifestations.

"On the whole, I am inclined to regard the reports of the natives as grossly exaggerated, and to suspect a few will-o'-the-wisps, leavened by a little practical joking with lanterns."

D. CLARKE

bol 0072

## THE WOMAN IN WHITE

### Worrall Ghost Layers and the "Elusive Lady."

Unusual interest has been aroused by the Worrall ghost story, which under the heading of "The Woman in White," appeared in the "Independent" on Thursday last. Several more residents in Wadsley and Worrall districts declare that they have seen the "strange visitor," who, according to the stories current, haunts the Worrall to Loxley road at the end of Wadsley Common.

Hundreds of people have since journeyed to the spot at night to gratify curiosity or to take part in ghost hunting. Not a few of them were to talk. Much amusement has been aroused, and among the villagers of these lonely parts, not a little unswerving.

Several theories are advanced for the origin of the ghost—or the story! One, which is very popular, is that somebody has been masquerading as a ghost; and not a few persons are inclined to believe a story current that men who have been using a hut (or outbuilding) for gambling purposes are guilty of conjuring up a ghost in the district to keep away intruders. Not least amusing of all is the assertion that a farmer has shot a white owl, which is supposed to be responsible for creating fear and apparitions in the minds of timid folk. But the white owl theory is very ancient, and has accounted for too many ghosts.

Meanwhile a "live" interest in ghosts and spirits is being maintained in these parts, and the number of men who are anxious to lay "the woman in white" with asphaltic is increasing daily.

[D. CLARKE]

## WOMAN IN WHITE.

### Stories of a Ghost on Wadsley Common.

#### VILLAGERS A-TALKING.

Another ghost has walked. As a sequel, many country folk in Worrall and the adjacent districts of Wadsley and Loxley are more or less excited. The mystic visitor, so the story goes, is a woman in white who glides about silently and now and again raises her arms in lament or imprecations. Some people say she occasionally moans as if in trouble.

According to the villagers the ghost appears to have its home on Wadsley Common—a wild, hilly, crag-strewn waste, overgrown with bracken and heather, and clothed with trees in parts—and haunts the vicinity of the Worrall to Loxley road near the old pit workings. Folk who claim to have encountered the ghost state that it was first seen on Sunday week last, and that it walks abroad between the hours of 9 and 11 o'clock.

#### On the Track of the Ghost.

An "Independent" representative who made investigations yesterday into the "manifestations" (1) was told the story by a man named Clarence Swain, who is employed on a farm in that part of the country. He was accompanied by his sister, who was a nurse in Rotherham prior to the war, and had been paying him a visit, as she was just demobbed after serving on the Rhine.

"We were making our way for Hillboro' when we saw it," he said. "When we got against the lane end that comes from the field road to Bradfield she clutched at my arm, and, upset-like, screamed: 'Oh, look, Clar!' And when I looked there was something white coming across, like a woman, maybe, holding her arms up. Then it vanished across by the old pit. It scared me right, and my sister couldn't talk for a bit, as she was very 'feared.'"

To the suggestion that they were nervous in the darkness and loneliness, he replied: "No nervous! I was never 'feared' before of man or spirits, but if that wasn't a spirit I'm beat." "Or a white cow," I added, but he was not out for joking, and replied: "Cows don't glide over walls."

A gannister miner named John Grayson, who lives in a cottage on the hillside, also claims to have seen the ghost walk a few days ago near the same spot waving its arms as if in despair. Villagers interviewed gave varied versions of the story, without being able to explain why the ghost was supposed to be a woman; and one learnt that these "strange happenings" had been much discussed at the Shoulder of Mutton and the Blue Ball.

#### Fearn's Gibbet and the Goblins.

A farmer who discussed the subject with me said that he had a good talk with two men who worked at Fox's, Stocksbridge, who were in the Ball, and, said he, they knew some of the folk who had seen the ghost. "I hear that several who live down Loxley and Wadsley has seen it," he commented, "and so I expect we'll get famed like now; but Worrall's a old place for ghosts and goblins, an' they never bother me much."

Other people to whom I talked suggested that country folk read so much about "spirit rappings" these days that some are nearly afraid to go out at night, and are ready victims of imagination. But others talked seriously about the ghost, and believe there is "something in it."

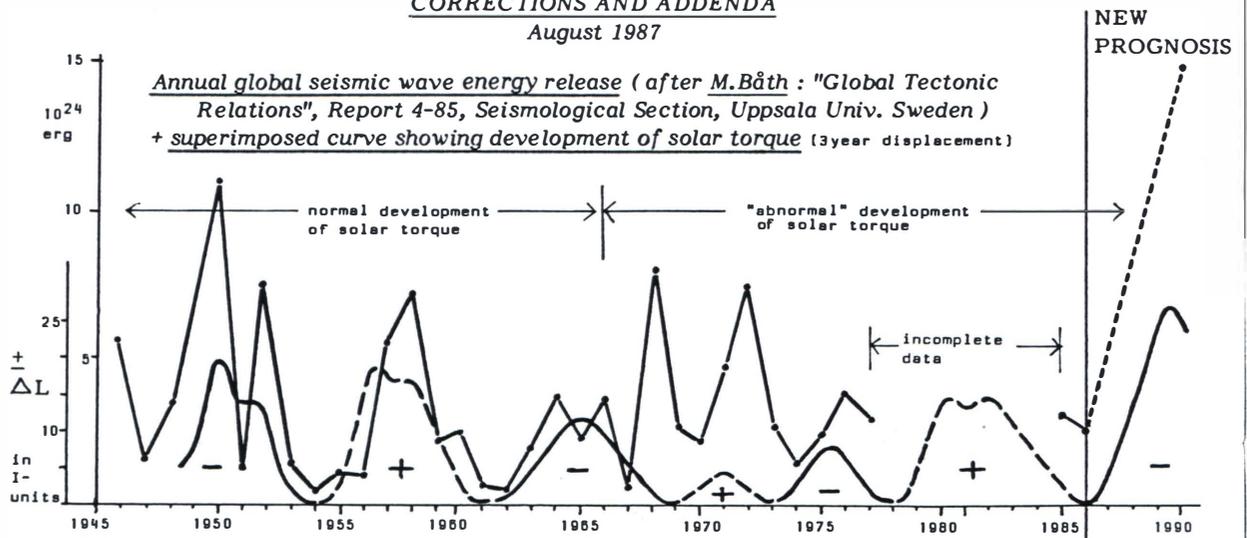
One learnt, by the way, that near this particular corner of Wadsley Common the gibbet of Frank Fearn used to hang and creak in the wind; and that at one time this fact was responsible for weird stories about his unhappy soul haunting those parts. There is another old story, too, of a mysterious murder on the Common; but nobody seems exactly to know the yarn. Meanwhile the superstitious are alarmed, and brawny colliers have sworn a bad time for any "ghost" they may chance to meet.

bol 0073

CENTRE FOR CONSCIENTIFIC STUDY OF CHANGE  
Fack. 170 11 Drottningholm, Sweden

"TIDAL & SEISMIC MECHANISMS  
AND A FORECAST OF SEISMIC ACTIVITY 1988-1991"  
by Göran Windelius

CORRECTIONS AND ADDENDA  
August 1987



In comparing the above plot of global seismic energy release with that on p. 54 of "Tidal & Seismic Mechanisms", considerable discrepancy will be found between the two during the period 1965-1980. Båth's curve (based on sythetic analysis of international earthquake catalogues) shows much higher levels of energy release, particularly in the years 1968 and 1972.

The lack of seismic activity shown in the Windelius curve is due to over-reliance on earthquake lists obtained from the Seismological Section of Uppsala University, Sweden (these showing all quakes registered in Uppsala between 1945 and 1980). Uppsala appears to have missed a number of quakes during the late 60's and early 70's, these probably occurring within the "blind spot" that all seismological stations have to contend with in their measurements.

Since Båth's curve must be considered a more complete reflection of actual earthquake occurrence and intensity than the Windelius curve, the basis for the prognosis made in "Tidal & Seismic Mechanisms" for the years 1988-1991 cannot be said to be adequate. In particular, the law proposed on page 55 — that the seismic factor should change in squared proportion to the torque factor — though possibly valid, cannot be upheld on the basis of the above, rather scanty, and as will be shown, anomalous material. In other words, the latter does not warrant more than the assumption of a proportional relationship. The relationship itself, however, cannot be called into question; this has been clearly shown to exist by others (eg. I. Jakubcová & M. Pick: "Correlation between solar motion, earthquakes, and other geophysical phenomena", Annales Geophysicae 1987, 5B, [2] 135-142).

Despite this unfortunate lack of stringency in the selection of base material — for which the author presents his apologies — the above revision cannot in any way affect the theoretical conclusions presented in the rest of the text. These are still valid as an explanation of tidal and seismic mechanisms.

Furthermore, recalculation of a new prognosis, based on proportional relationships and Båth's more reliable data, still indicates very high levels of seismic energy release between 1988 and 1991 (approx. 40% over those of 1949-1950, in themselves the most intensive years since 1945) ....

Further corrections :

Introduction : "Umberto Eco's ..." Page 17, §6 : "no less than 300% from ..."  
Page 22 ( see also p. 38 ) : " $E_t = \sqrt{F_m} \cdot \cos^2 u_m + \sqrt{F_s} \cdot \cos^2 u_s \cdot \cos 2v$ "

Appendix 1:  $m_p$  changes to  $\sum m_p$  throughout

[MATTSSON]

Moreover, study of the new curve and its relation to the development of solar torque reveal the intensive years 1968 and 1972 to be significant anomalies. The low level of solar torque during this period does not lead one to expect so marked a seismic reaction ( one of the main reasons why the author did not question the Uppsala statistics ).

An explanation of this phenomenon can be found in the pattern of solar torque, which normally follows a cyclic rhythm of alternate positive and negative phases changing at approx. 10 year intervals ( not to be confused with the sunspot cycle and other electromagnetic solar phenomena, which should be regarded as but symptoms of the former, more fundamental cycle ). As can be seen from the diagram and table below, this rhythm of torque change has been seriously out of phase since 1966, suggesting this as a possible cause of the anomalous increase in terrestrial seismic activity during the same period.

Extract from the as yet unpublished work : "The 1990 Solar Event" ....

Pattern of solar torque phases 1951-1990, showing abnormal development between 1966 and 1990 ( calculated on the basis of NASA plot of solar movement )

	Period	Approx. duration of positive phase in years.	Approx. duration of negative phase in years.
Full cycle = 14 years	1951-'58 1958-'66	6.5 ( + )	7.5 ( - )
Full cycle = 24.75 years	1966-'70 1970-'75 1975-'83	4 ( + ) 8.25 ( + )	5 ( - ) } disintegrated positive phase
	1983-june'89 1989-april'90 1990-nov. 1990	0.75 ( + )	6 ( - ) 0.75 ( - ) } disintegrated negative phase

"Here can be seen a reasonably normal full cycle between 1951 and 1966, with respect to the relative lengths of positive and negative phases ( 6.5 + as against 7.5 - ), although the total length of the cycle is considerably shortened ( 14 as against the average 19.86 years ).

The next full cycle between 1966 and 1990, however, is completely abnormal. Not only is the full cycle prolonged by 5 years, but positive and negative phases have disintegrated into sub-phases, thus creating a disturbing, "off-beat", rhythmic sequence, somewhat reminiscent of the back-firing of a car engine. There are also good reasons for suspecting that exceptional sun-spot activity in august 1972, and accompanying anomalies in the solar constant during the same period, owe their origin to this unusual development of solar torque. "

It is therefore not remarkable that the Båth curve shows unexpectedly high levels of energy release during this same period. Furthermore, the entire period since 1966 has been the subject of considerable debate among astronomers, no convincing reason being yet found for significant anomalies in solar behaviour registered during the last two decades. The solution to this puzzle may well lie in the out-of-phase rhythm of solar torque, a phenomenon that, in its turn, can be interpreted as being part and parcel of the process leading up to the unique solar event of 1990. If this interpretation is correct, there should be every reason to expect even higher levels of seismic activity during the late 80's and early 90's than were predicted on p. 54 of "Tidal & Seismic Mechanisms".

Appendix 1 : In drawing attention to a baffling, numerical commensurability, which appears to provide a bridge between micro and macrophysics, the author has resorted to rather unconventional terminology ( eg. the term "rotational energy" is usually reserved for other concepts in physics than those discussed in the text ). It is hoped that this does not obscure the thread of argument for the reader, who should also consider the following, alternative formulation of the proposed law :

$$M_T \cdot c^2 = \sum m_p \cdot r_p \cdot v_p^2 / 2 = m_s \cdot \sum m_p \cdot C / 2 \quad ( M_T = \text{total mass of the system} ).$$

bol 0074

HOLROYD, S.

116 *Prelude to the Landing on Planet Earth*

nourishment, what your role is in the universe, how you relate to the Nine, what your interest is in the Earth, etcetera, etcetera. It would help us all immensely if you could give us some idea of who you are in a descriptive sense.'

This bold and challenging formulation initiated one of the most informative communications they had held to date. Tom \* began his explanation with a clear answer to the main point of Andrija's question:

'We don't have a physical body, although we may put on a mantle of a physical body when it is necessary. It would be difficult to explain to you what we appear like. We appear in many forms. We may appear as a human. We may appear as an energy bar. We may appear as a very bright light. We have evolved beyond the point of needing a physical-type body.'

\* Andrija recalled that a week or two ago two members of the household had entered the house at 8.30 p.m. and had both seen what they believed was a lightning ball in the living-room. 'Is that one of your appearances?' he asked.

'We were here,' Tom said. 'At times we use your electrical impulses and your lightning in order to come into your atmosphere and to generate.'

'I see,' Andrija said. 'So you could manifest now assuming that you had certain physical energies to draw upon, for instance, as you suggested, the plasma from lightning, or perhaps water vapour, or even the energy we could give? You could mould this energy into something that would manifest in our world. Is that the idea?'

'It would be similar to that,' Tom said, 'but our technology you would not understand. For instance, in the manifestation that took place in this Being's office: we have a unit that was placed over the office, and through this we were able to manifest a being that appeared in a physical body to her.'

\* ANDRIJA =  
PUHARICH

\* TOM - AN ALLEGED  
ET COMMUNICATOR

Most of the time, she said, she had been in the presence of just eight members of the Council, and then Tom had come along. Asked by Andrija to describe what they had looked like, she said that at first they had looked like venerable old men, but when she said, 'None of you are really like this, I want to see what you're really like,' they had turned into 'balls of light that were, like, pure energy, but with a soul'.

'Perhaps that's what a soul looks like,' Andrija said. 'Perhaps that's what they are, all soul and no body.'

'Right,' Phyllis said. 'Anyway, they were very nice to me.'

[KOTTMEYER]

bo / 0075

## Ball of fire?

SIR — On Tuesday, 3 August, shortly after 4.00 p.m., the Cavendish Laboratory and the surroundings were struck by lightning several times during an exceptionally intense storm. No structural damage ensued, but immediately after one of the discharges a ball of light was seen by a number of observers. Their descriptions are not entirely consistent but certain features are agreed upon well enough to enable a broad description to be given. The discharge apparently responsible struck near the centre of the Bragg Building, which runs east-west. An observer on the ground floor of the Mott Building, whose back was to the window, saw his room momentarily lit as if by a very bright object moving past rapidly towards the west, between the Bragg and Mott buildings. Another observer on the first floor saw the space between the buildings filled with a luminous haze at least to the first floor level, and on looking to the west noticed a blue-white light that he thought at first was a warning light on a distant tower. He

apparently noticed no motion, but his companion in the same room must have seen it an instant earlier for she had the impression that it was moving past and away, and possibly expanding as it went, being about the size of a grapefruit when first seen. Three people who saw it after that, as it moved over the ground to the west, agreed it looked about the size of the moon, was blue-white in colour, very bright, and was visible for some 4-5 seconds before suddenly vanishing.

To this reasonably well attested observation must be added that while an assistant in the duplicating room, on the ground floor, was closing a small window she was startled by a noise that made her think the window had been knocked in; a bright sparkling object, resembling the lights thrown out by expensive rockets, entered by her head, rebounded from a machine and left as it came. The window was in fact undamaged, and when examined next morning entirely unmarked. Both assistants who were there at the time are convinced something came into the room.

BRIAN PIPPARD

Department of Physics,  
University of Cambridge, UK

Nature Vol. 299 23 September 1982

## Ball of fire

SIR — I was interested to read Professor Pippard's letter on his experience with lightning (*Nature* 19 August, p.702). Thunderstorms are frequent in the Entebbe Peninsula, Lake Victoria (Uganda). During one of these storms, which usually come at night time, there was a simultaneous flash of lightning and its associated clattering crash of thunder. A second or less later, several balls of brilliant blue light, about 4-6 cm diameter, entered the room through a window on the south side and "floated" across the room to leave by a window on the east side. My wife and I were already awake (it would have been difficult not to be) and independently exclaimed aloud on what we had just seen.

The incident occurred during the pre-independence period of Uganda and so there was no air conditioning. We therefore left all the windows open at night, protected only by the anti-mosquito metal screening. During many hundreds of storms we had never seen

this phenomenon before, even when the house was struck, as it was on several occasions. We therefore continued with our practice of leaving all the windows open. But during the same rainy season the same thing happened again with the same startling effect. After that we always kept the windows on one side of the room closed and we never experienced the phenomenon again.

J.D. GILLET

London School of Hygiene and Tropical  
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[from T. Pivodic]

bol 0076

## LA BOULE DE L'ERDRE

*Une enquête de Joël MESNARD*

Samedi 13 juillet, vers 13 h., « France-Inter » diffusait une nouvelle selon laquelle « un ouvrier agricole de 20 ans, Eugène Beaugé, des Touches, près de Nantes, avait déclaré à la gendarmerie que, circulant à bicyclette, il avait été suivi sur cinq kilomètres par une boule lumineuse rouge et jaune. Cette boule, d'une quarantaine de centimètres de diamètre, évoluant à environ 40 mètres d'altitude, avait été également observée par un voisin tiré de son sommeil par Eugène Beaugé ».

Le même jour, deux quotidiens régionaux, « Presse-Océan » et « L'Eclair », publiaient un article commun, plus détaillé et comportant beaucoup moins d'inexactitudes.

Le lendemain matin, dimanche 14 juillet, Eugène Beaugé se prêtait avec la plus grande gentillesse à une enquête qui dura de 9 h. à 13 h., poussant la courtoisie jusqu'à m'emmener sur les lieux de l'observation pour la reconstituer.

Il faut d'abord préciser la personnalité du témoin : Eugène Beaugé, qui demeure chez ses parents exploitants de la ferme « La Noë Rouge », au lieu-dit « Carcouet », commune des Touches, est employé par les frères Pentecôteau, qui exploitent

des champs vers le lieu-dit « La Hous-sais » (commune des Touches). Il jouit manifestement dans le pays de l'estime générale. Tous ceux qui le connaissent bien l'apprécient pour son sérieux, sa gentillesse et sa sobriété. Ce jeune homme de 20 ans, qui paraît en avoir 25, apparemment un peu timide, semble d'une grande honnêteté, et l'hypothèse d'une falsification de sa part, outre le fait qu'il n'est pas le seul témoin, peut, à priori, être exclue, étant contraire à toute vraisemblance psychologique.

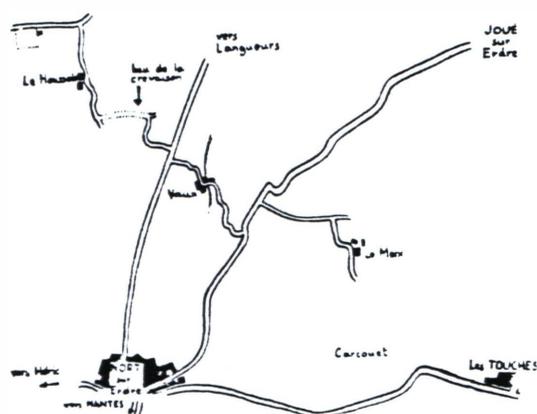
Jeudi soir 11 juillet, Eugène Beaugé décida de travailler tard dans la nuit pour achever de passer le rotavateur, sorte de rouleau laboureur, dans un champ destiné à recevoir aussitôt après des plants de betteraves fourragères. A 23 h. 30, Eugène Beaugé remontait la pièce, c'est-à-dire conduisait son tracteur vers la sortie du champ. C'est alors qu'il vit, vers sa droite, une boule immobile, non pas rouge et jaune, mais « rouge-jaune » nous dirons rose-orange, assez terne d'aspect, en tout cas beaucoup moins lumineuse qu'un feu de signalisation. Le témoin la compare, quant à sa couleur et, à peu près, quant à sa taille apparente, au soleil levant ou cou-

"Phénomènes Spatiaux", n°18, 4<sup>e</sup> Trimestre 1968, pp.29  
(Revue du G.E.P.A.)

[JEAN SIDER

chant, lorsqu'il est voilé par la brume et que le regard le supporte sans aucune peine. Eugène Beaugé conteste maintenant ses premières estimations, d'ailleurs incertaines (40 cm. de diamètre, 40 m. de distance, 10 m. d'altitude, puis respectivement 100 m. et 30 m.), car il voyait l'objet sous un diamètre apparent supérieur à celui de la Lune (32 minutes d'arc ou un demi-degré) et comparable à celui d'une pièce de 1 franc tenue à bout de bras.

Les parages sont déserts à cette heure. La vue de cette boule inquiète Eugène, qui décide de terminer son rang et de rentrer aussitôt.



Carte des lieux par J. M.

Le voilà donc conduisant le plus vite qu'il peut sur la petite route sinueuse, bordée de haies et de petits arbres, son gros tracteur en direction de la ferme du Houssais où il doit le garer. Il sait que là-bas une Renault 4L est à sa disposition, pour qu'il puisse rentrer dormir au hameau « Le Meix ».

Hélas ! à peine a-t-il parcouru quelques mètres que la boule se met en mouvement et à droite de la route, suit le tracteur (dont les phares sont allumés).

Au bout de 200 ou 300 mètres, Eugène Beaugé oblique à droite et, dans la manœuvre de la boule, une particularité se produit qui se répétera encore plusieurs fois : celle-ci, qui précédait légèrement le témoin sur la droite, franchit la route qu'Eugène va prendre, à droite, avant même que ce dernier ait bifurqué, et se retrouve, par conséquent à gauche du tracteur. Chaque fois, ou presque, qu'Eugène tournera du côté où se trouve la boule, celle-ci, ayant dépassé le virage, changera de côté.

Après quelques centaines de mètres sur la petite route, dans le paysage vallonné et très verdoyant, Eugène arrive au

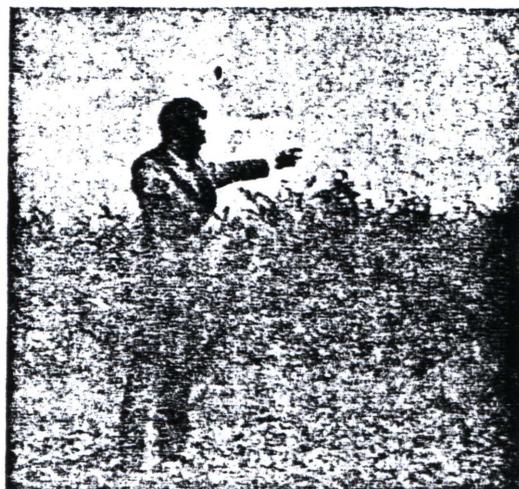
Houssais : 2 fermes et quelques bâtiments annexes, principalement sur le côté droit de la route. La mystérieuse et inquiétante boule s'immobilise de l'autre côté de la route, au-dessus de fils électriques. Eugène va garer son tracteur derrière un hangar, espérant échapper à l'indésirable chose.

Mais dès qu'il revient près de la route pour emprunter la Renault 4L, déception : la boule est toujours là, elle semble l'attendre. Eugène, qui a un instant songé à réveiller les personnes qui dorment au Houssais, y renonce et se dirige seul vers Le Meix, la boule l'escortant toujours. La petite route goudronnée fait bientôt place, après un virage à gauche, à un chemin de terre assez caillouteux. La boule se trouve maintenant à droite.

Comble d'infortune, Eugène sent alors qu'un pneu de la voiture est crevé, le pneu avant droit. Il ne peut continuer à rouler ainsi sur les cailloux. Il gare la voiture à gauche, perpendiculairement au chemin, à l'entrée d'un champ. Sortant avec précipitation, tout en éteignant les phares, il voit la boule, immobilisée derrière la voiture au-dessus de la haie qui borde la route à droite, s'éteindre en quelques secondes, comme occultée par un écran surgissant de la gauche.

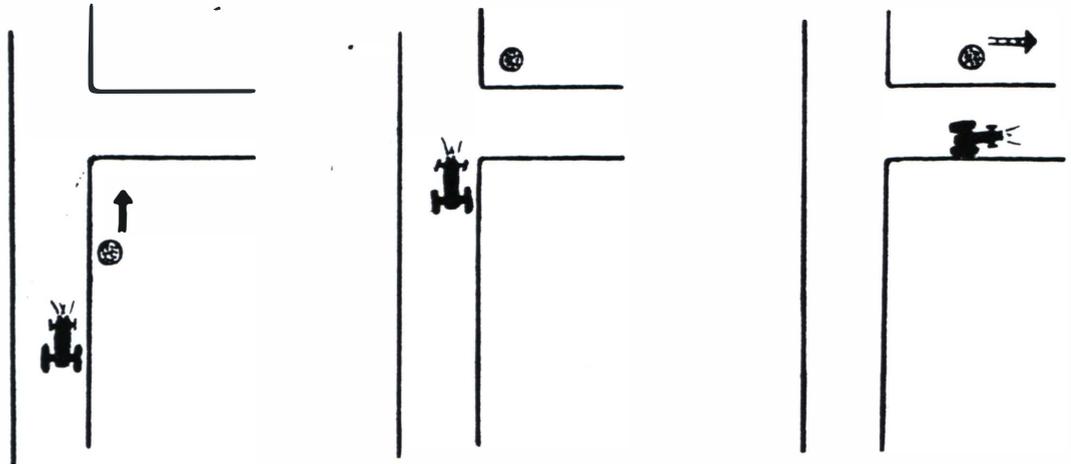
Eugène a peur, très peur. Il regagne en courant, vite, faut-il le dire ? le Houssais. Il a parcouru environ 500 mètres quand, après un petit bois, la boule reparaît à droite.

Eugène arrive en trombe au Houssais, en compagnie — si l'on peut dire — de la jolie boule, toujours couleur de soleil



(Cliché J. M.)

Le témoin indique la position de la boule, quand il l'aperçut, et sa propre position



Manœuvre de la boule  
lors d'un virage à droite du tracteur

(Dessin de J. M.)

voilé, qui s'immobilise à nouveau. Eugène, renonçant pour la seconde fois à réveiller les gens du Houssais, met en route le tracteur, seul moyen pour lui de rentrer au Meix autrement qu'à pied. Il roule d'abord une vingtaine de mètres avec les phares éteints, puis les allume.

La route est longue jusqu'au Meix, la campagne déserte, et la boule ne veut décidément pas disparaître. Elle sera toujours désormais devant le tracteur et plutôt à droite en général.

Dans un virage, les feuillages bas des arbres masquent un instant l'objet qui réparait aussitôt après.

Après avoir emprunté, sur une cinquantaine de mètres, la route qui relie Langueurs à Nort-sur-Erdre, notre ami, toujours accompagné du curieux globe, traverse le hameau de Vault (ou Vaux), désert à cette heure: il est environ minuit. Comme il franchit un pont, il croise une DS qui ne ralentit pas. Peut-être son conducteur n'a-t-il rien remarqué?

A un autre moment, le témoin note un éphémère changement dans l'aspect de la boule: pendant une, deux ou trois secondes, celle-ci présente, à mi-hauteur, une bande horizontale sombre qui disparaît aussitôt, aussi subitement qu'elle est apparue.

Débouchant sur la route de Nort à Joué, Eugène tourne à gauche, en direction de Joué.

La route de Nort à Joué est plus importante que la précédente: peut-être un autre automobiliste viendra-t-il partager l'angoisse de notre ami? Non. Lorsqu'il prend, à droite, la petite route qui mène au Meix, il est toujours seul avec la boule qui, cette fois, n'a pas dépassé le virage, et est donc encore à droite.

Quand le malheureux témoin arrive enfin au Meix, il s'empresse de réveiller Albert Pentecouteau, chauffeur de camion et cousin des patrons d'Eugène. Il est minuit vingt. Albert, en chemise, accepte de sortir et tous deux, pendant une dizaine de minutes, observent le globe, complètement immobile, au-dessus d'un hangar, puis, sans attendre plus longtemps, rentrent se coucher dans la grande pièce où sont installés plusieurs lits.

Une nouvelle fois, Eugène sort, seul: la boule est toujours là, toujours silencieuse, toujours incompréhensible. Il rentre se coucher. Il est minuit et demie. Il s'endort vite et, de même qu'Albert, passe une bonne nuit, contrairement à ce qui a été écrit. On ignore donc à quelle heure et comment la boule a disparu.

Ce sont les patrons d'Eugène qui, mis au courant par lui, alertèrent dès le vendredi, non pas, comme on l'a dit, la gendarmerie, mais le secrétaire de mairie des Touches.

Le dimanche matin, à sept heures et demie, on apprend par la radio qu'un autre récit est venu corroborer l'observation des Touches: deux restaurateurs de La Chapelle-sur-Erdre ont vu, eux aussi, la boule rose-orange.

On a appris depuis que plusieurs observations auraient été faites vers la même date et près des mêmes lieux. L'une d'elles, due à un chauffeur de poids lourd, qui avait téléphoné à l'O.R.T.F., mais dont le nom n'a pas été malheureusement retenu, concernait un objet de grande taille pourvu de hublots.

Dans le compte rendu qu'on vient de lire, Joël Mesnard, auquel nous disons toute notre gratitude, a fidèlement rapporté, non seulement les observations, mais aussi les sentiments du témoin, dont il n'avait aucune raison de mettre en doute la sincérité, et il a refait avec plus de détails, au cours de la réunion publique du G.E.P.A., le 13 décembre 1968, l'exposé de son enquête en Loire-Atlantique.

Après son exposé, un auditeur, M. Jean Le Flour, professeur de mathématiques au lycée Voltaire, a fait justement remarquer qu'il y avait pleine lune la veille même de l'observation et qu'il y avait eu risque de méprise, si étonnante que puisse être cette méprise de la part d'un cultivateur de 20 ans.

Revenu chez lui, M. Le Flour a examiné de près les données astronomiques du problème et, en faisant les calculs nécessaires, il a pu établir qu'au cours de la nuit de l'observation (nuit du 11 au 12 juillet), la Lune a dû, à Nort-sur-Erdre, se lever au sud-est vers 22 h 45, passer au méridien sud vers 3 h 05 et à une hauteur d'environ 18° pour, finalement, se coucher vers 7 h 40 du matin, le 12. Les heures étant données ici en temps légal, on voit que la Lune devait être encore au sud-est et basse sur l'horizon au début de l'observation. Qu'elle ait pu alors paraître énorme au témoin, c'est là une illusion classique qui ne saurait surprendre, et la couleur décrite est de celles que peut prendre un astre à son lever.

Dans la lettre qu'il nous a écrite, M. Le Flour poursuit :

« L'observateur se déplaçait dans la direction générale sud-est. Il ne semble pas cependant qu'il ait vu la lune !

« Aurait-il pu ne pas identifier la lune ? Par temps brumeux, la lune peut très bien présenter un aspect blafard qui rend sa teinte uniforme. Il se trouve que la pleine lune de juillet est très au sud et très basse sur l'horizon, c'est la seule époque de l'année où on la voit dans cette direction, qui paraît toujours anormale aux esprits non prévenus.

« La confusion n'est donc pas impossible.

« Le témoin estime la boule distante d'une quarantaine de mètres, cette distance lui semble constante, le diamètre apparent de l'objet ne varie jamais. Cela est assez curieux pour deux mobiles, qui devraient être indépendants, dont l'un s'arrête, repart, tourne à droite, tourne à gauche, fait demi-tour. Si l'objet est extrêmement éloigné, l'observation devient normale. De même, si la direction de cet objet est fixe (ou varie lentement),

le phénomène observé concernant les traversées de route trouve une explication des plus naturelles...

« La manière dont la boule s'éteint, comme cachée par un écran qui se déploie devant, devient logique s'il s'agit de la lune devant laquelle passe un nuage. Il en est de même pour la barre horizontale qui traverse la boule : ce serait simplement un nuage lenticulaire passant devant la lune.

« Le second témoignage ne peut guère être pris en considération, car il provient de quelqu'un à demi endormi... »

Notre conclusion sera celle même de notre correspondant, que nous remercions très vivement de sa précieuse collaboration :

« Il n'y a pas à conclure. Chacun peut penser ce qu'il veut et interpréter les faits comme il l'entend. Mais, en matière d'O.V.N.I., l'examen critique des observations se doit d'être d'une rigueur extrême, si nous voulons espérer être un jour pris au sérieux par les scientifiques qualifiés ».

A leur lever ou à leur coucher, le soleil et la lune peuvent, dans certaines circonstances, présenter de bien singuliers aspects, et les témoins peuvent commettre sur les distances des erreurs stupéfiantes.

S'il ne s'agissait pas cette nuit-là de quelque Fatima lunaire — non prophétisé, ce qui change tout ! — nous serions pour notre part enclin à croire à une compréhensible méprise d'Eugène Beaugé. La même nuit, en effet, vers 23 h, M. Cervin, restaurateur à la Chapelle-sur-Erdre, et sa femme, faisant une promenade dans cette localité, virent, au sud-est et à faible altitude, un disque rouge-orange, démesuré et flamboyant, qui « colorait de pourpre les nuages se déplaçant devant lui » (« Presse-Océan » du 15.7.68). M. Cervin, qui n'exclut pas l'hypothèse lunaire, devait déclarer : « En tout cas, jamais, ni ma femme ni moi n'avions contemplé de spectacle aussi fascinant en soixante ans d'existence ».

Or, là aussi, les indications d'azimut, de distance et d'altitude apparente de l'objet s'accordent avec celles prévisibles pour la lune au moment de l'observation.

#### Références de presse :

« Presse-Océan » et « L'Éclair » du 13.7.68 ;  
« L'Éclair » du 14.7.68 ; « Presse-Océan » du 15.7.68 ;  
« La République du Centre » du 17.7.68.

#### Nos remerciements à :

MM. Jacky Algret, J.-L. Becquereau, Jean Cerles, J. Le Derff, et à l'O.R.T.F.

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# SOLVING THE SPOOK LIGHT MYSTERY

By Peter Jordan and Rita Allen

**A pioneering group of scientists has used the technology of the 20th Century to solve one of Earth's age-old enigmas and possibly offer a solution to the UFO phenomenon.**

**F**antastic stories of ghostly lights which frequently appear near railroad tracks and, according to popular imagination, are carried by the spirits of long-deceased conductors have become a permanent and tantalizing feature of American folklore. Commonly referred to as "spook lights," the phenomenon has captured the imagination of Fortean investigators around the world.

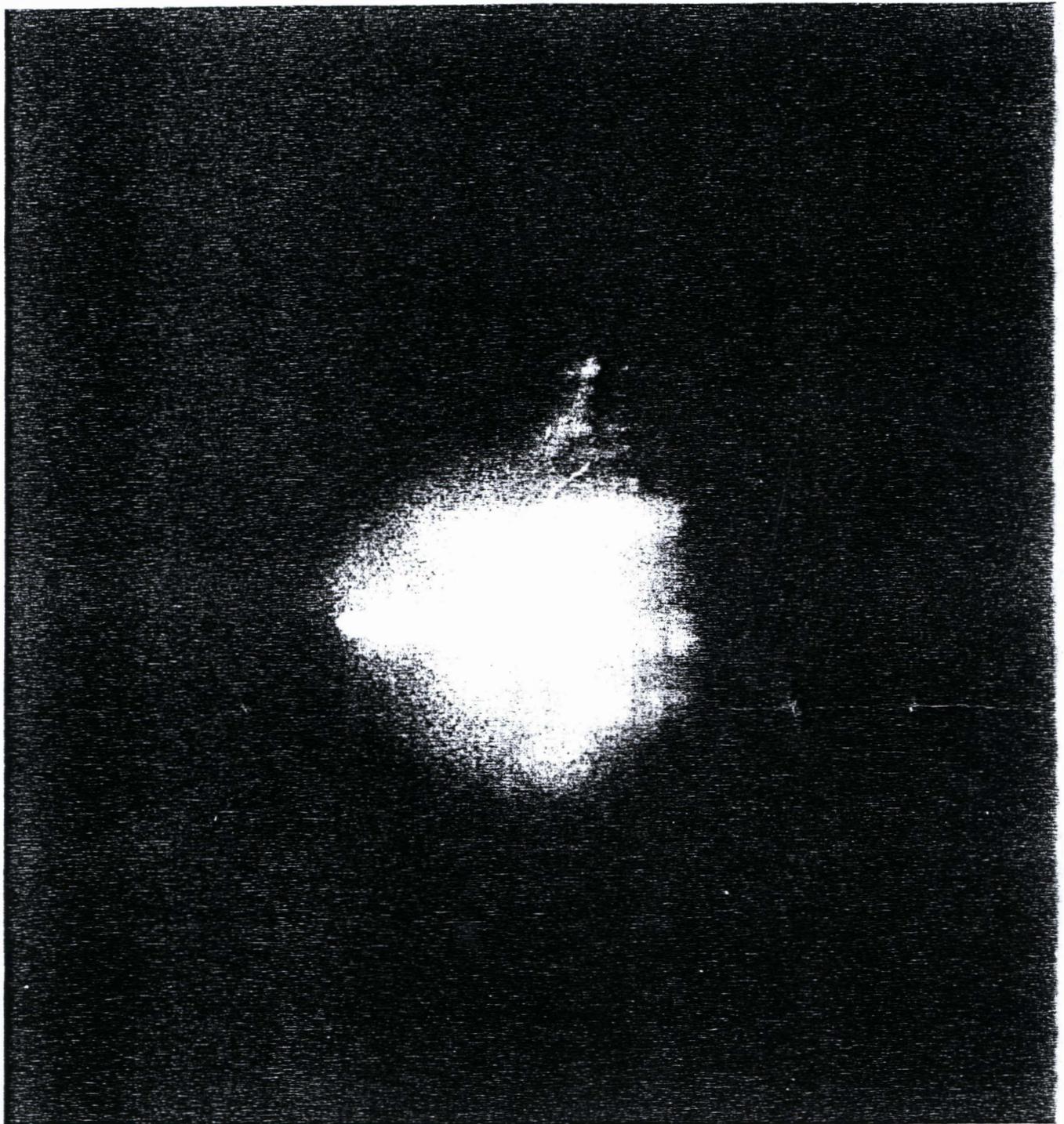
According to recent estimates, there exist more than 60 separate locations throughout the United States alone where this strange phenomenon occurs. The "Maco lights," of North Carolina, have, by far, received the greatest attention of all, and are said to have been first sighted during the 18th Century. Others, though less familiar, are equally well-documented, with many of the contemporary sightings having their roots in local Indian legends, such as the Hornet Spook Light, found in the southern midwest region of the country. Here, as in countless other cases, the belief persists that the lights are concrete proof of psychic survival after death, and that the discarnate personalities of dead railroad conductors and ancient tribal leaders are with us today.

Over the last five years, however, many researchers have sought to strip away the thick layers of myth and superstition which surround the spook

light mystery, and have begun to employ sophisticated scientific equipment and methods in their research efforts. One such research group, Vestigia, has been concentrating its attention on strange lights observed in northwestern New Jersey, in an area known as Long Valley. Their investigation and findings, along with material gathered from other researchers in the field, have yielded some provocative answers to the spook light phenomenon.

The spook lights of Long Valley have been actively reported since the turn of the century. One particular section of the High Bridge Railroad is the focus of the activity, a stretch of railroad which is now owned by ConRail. The spur was originally built in the mid-19th Century, and was, for a time, a bustling link between the iron-rich Long Valley area, and the main line of the New Jersey Central Railroad at Chester, N.J. The High Bridge Railroad was built by mine owners for the transfer of ore; the line later carried both passengers and freight until the 1930s. Today the line is an infrequently used freight spur.

The legend of this local spook light is, indeed, colorful, and conforms faithfully to the mythic storyline found in many similar cases. A brakeman of the High Bridge Railroad is supposed to have lost his hand in an accident caused by a mechanical malfunction. Mentally unbal-



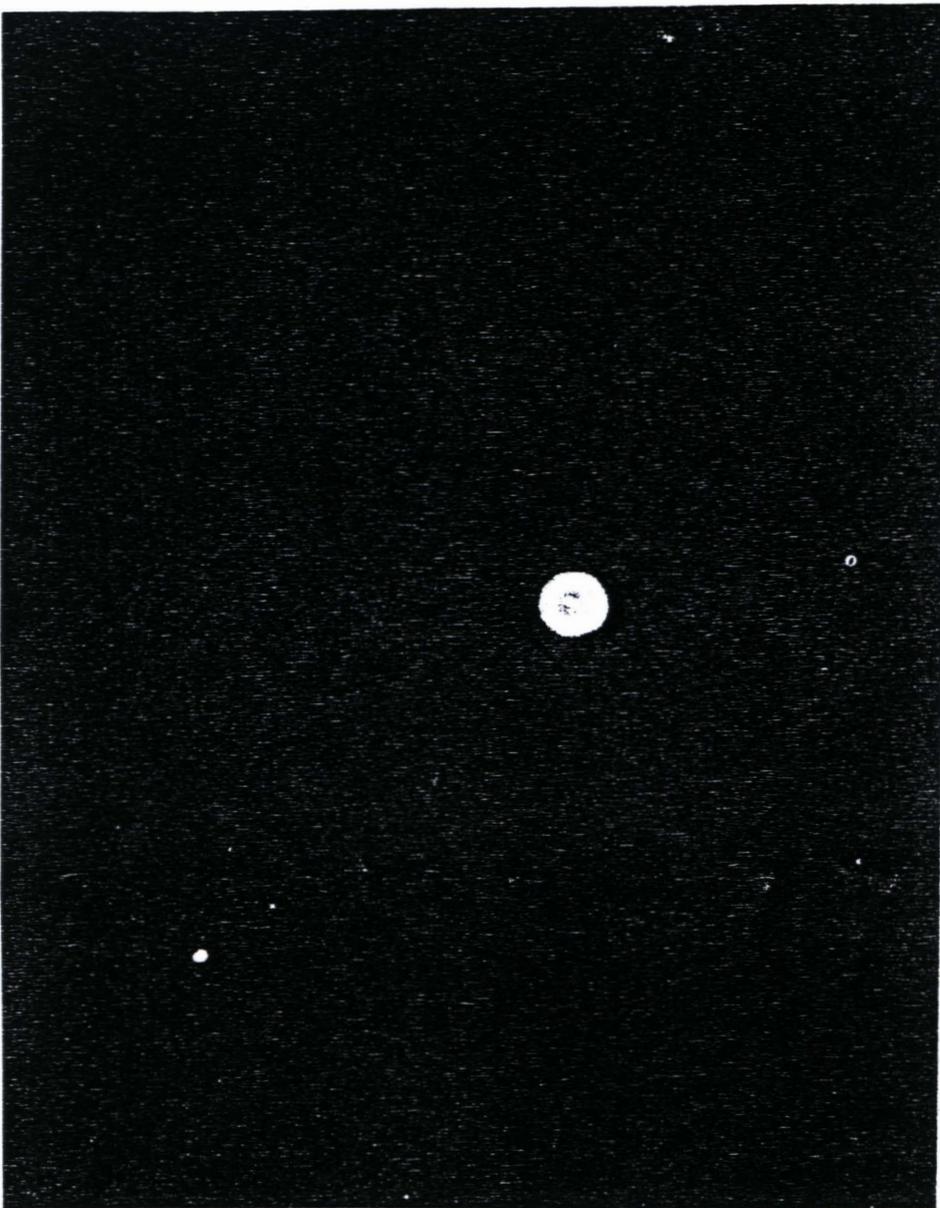
anced by the trauma of the accident, he walked the tracks near the site of the mishap with a lantern swinging from a hook which replaced his lost hand. One night, legend has it, that hapless figure, while searching for his lost limb on the tracks, was struck by an oncoming train, and instantly killed.

It was believed that the lights appearing over the High Bridge Railroad were

a psychic re-creation of that tragic night. The "Hookerman's" lantern sways over the tracks, then, suddenly, the light vanishes as he is once more felled by the approaching locomotive.

**T**he High Bridge legend is almost identical to others across the country, both in reported phenomena and folklore. In

almost all cases, the lights appear suddenly and at random, but seldom during heavy rain. The light itself, often a dull yellow, flickers much like a lantern, swinging from side to side like a pendulum. Generally, it appears several inches to a few feet above the ground, and seems to move toward the observer in uncanny silence. In one isolated incident, a young high school



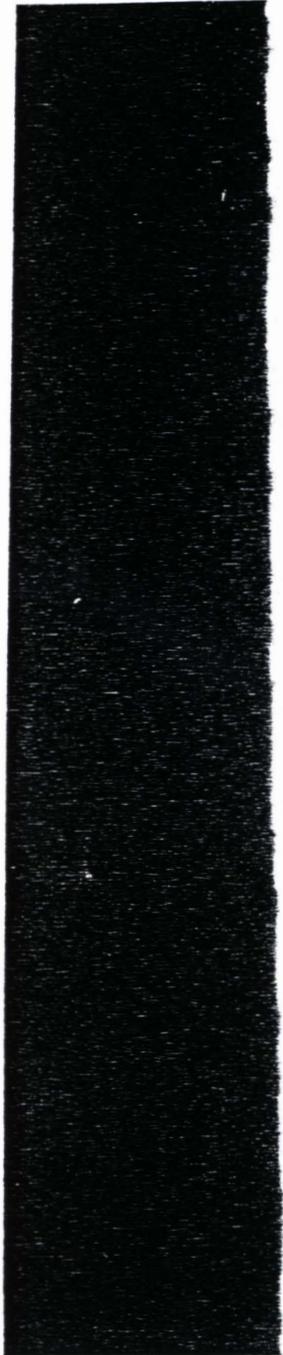
student was said to have been severely burned by this bizarre light, though this report has yet to be confirmed. What is confirmable, however, is that the phenomenon is genuine, and has been reported by hundreds of people since the turn of the century.

At Long Valley, the researchers of Vestigia undertook a preliminary study of the spook lights in 1976, studying the history of the area, the High Bridge Railroad, and any accidents that could be linked to the Hookerman legend. It was learned that Long Valley was rural farmland until 1850, when iron ore began to be mined in the area. The High Bridge Railroad was, at first, a short spur that was used to transport ore from the mines to the foundry, and was actively used until 1885, when the mines began to cut back on operations. Eventually the railroad added several spurs, to the original Chester branch that ran to Long

Valley. It was this spur that became the center of Vestigia's study. By 1899, the railroad was renamed the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western Railroad, and ran passenger operations until 1934. The line was still in use for freight until 1960. Today there is little activity on the spur, which is now part of the Jersey Central Railroad owned by ConRail.

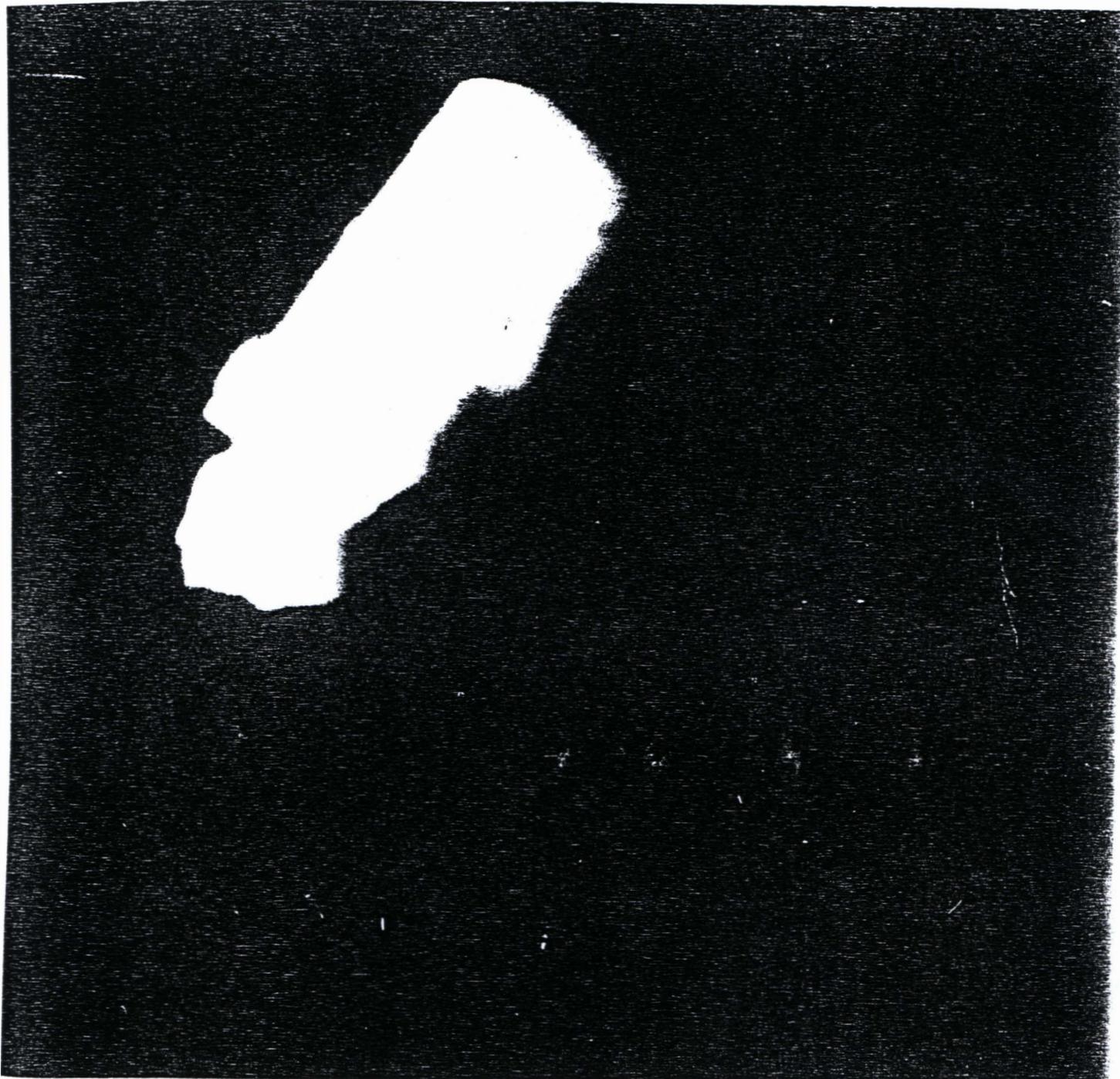
The area is incredibly rich in folklore, including several tragedies associated with both mining and railroad operations. Many of these casualties are on record, but nothing in the records parallels the legend of the Hookerman, or gives any hint as to his identity, if he did, in fact, exist.

**R**epresentatives from Vestigia collected background information from local residents about the legend, includ-



ing several accounts that suggested the Hookerman was hospitalized at a local institution for the insane after his accident. Local hospital records and old railroad documents were carefully examined. The researchers even visited the local mental hospitals in search of the true identity of the Hookerman; but nothing could be found to link the legend of Long Valley to reality.

Even if the Hookerman was the product of overactive local imaginations, the spook lights of Long Valley certainly were not. Researchers visited the area several times and each time they were able to see the Hookerman's infamous "lantern." Although the size, shape,



speed of movement, and color varied from sighting to sighting, one thing was certain—the phenomenon was authentic *and* repeatedly observable. The directors of Vestigia then began the arduous task of amassing the technical materials, test equipment, and personnel necessary to study the phenomenon properly.

The first studies of the lights were scheduled for the fall of 1976 and the list of necessary equipment was extensive. Included were cameras, Geiger counters, methane gas sniffer devices, oscilloscopes, a Vascar radar unit, re-

coding apparatus, thermometers, walkie-talkies, and assorted auxiliary equipment.

The team, led by Bill Wagner, was working on the theory that, if the lights could be seen, they should be recordable, photogenic, and measurable. To that end, the team, 16 in all, amassed their equipment, much of it at their own expense. Next, the researchers selected the location for the study—a one-mile stretch of railroad track, a virtual straightaway, intersected at its midpoint by a dirt road and bordered by two major roads.

While team members worked on collecting their gear, other Vestigia investigators secured the necessary releases, and received the cooperation of all authorities involved. ConRail was contacted, and permission was granted to use its right of way for the tests. A local resident whose house was in close proximity to the railroad tracks was contacted, and agreed to make power available from his home to the central post during the experiments.

**O**n the night of Nov. 20, 1976, the first  
*Please turn to page 50*

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## SPOOK LIGHTS

(Continued from page 47)

of the field experiments was initiated, with three outposts set up. For the first time in Long Valley, the Hookerman's light was going to be photographed, measured, and permanently recorded. The team assembled on the night of the initial test was composed of individuals from all disciplines and backgrounds. Within the group were experts in electronics, meteorology, physics, optics, photography, chemistry, and mathematics. What distinguished Vestigia's study from any other was the quality and amount of technical expertise and equipment amassed for its study. A total of 10,000 man-hours were spent in the search, and the value of the equipment totalled considerably over \$30,000.

What follows is a brief description of the first night of study into the Long Valley spook lights. The investigation continues in the area, and Vestigia is presently collaborating with other research groups and universities in its probe.

On the night of the investigation,, 4,000 feet of ground antenna made of silver-plated fine copper wire was laid between the rails, and attached to an amplifier and oscilloscope which would detect variations in electrical frequency and amplitude. Other cables were attached directly to the rails to act as a capacitance test; anything metallic between or over the rails would register on a readout device in the equipment van. The Geiger counter was positioned at the presumed "hot spot," and it, too, was wired into a readout in the command post. Other devices included a methane gas detector, and a parabolic listening device.

At Post Two (level with the command

post), a group of observers on the track manned the Vascar radar unit as well as cameras which were loaded with infrared-sensitive film, and a motion picture camera containing ultra-fast film. Post One and Post Three observers, located a half-mile to the right and left, respectively, were armed with cameras, binoculars, and radio communicators.

**A**t approximately 10 p.m., researchers at the control van reported drastic fluctuations on their instruments. Researchers at Post Three simultaneously observed a small, distinct light that startled them with its sudden and unanticipated appearance. They described it as yellowish, of low magnitude, and from five to six inches in diameter. It hovered over the tracks, about a foot above the ground, and was positioned between Post One and the control vans. Cameras clicked, and recording devices were quickly activated. One puzzling thing occurred, however. Although Post Three was in visual contact with the object, and Post Two was clearly recording it electronically and had activated its cameras to photograph the phenomenon, observers at Post One had no visual contact with the light.

The oscilloscope, and other electronic measuring devices, recorded changes in the electromagnetic field of the area in which the light appeared, as well as discharges of electrical energy.

During the appearance of the light, the oscilloscope recorded a dramatic reaction for a period of one minute and 50 seconds. Amplitude varied from .5 volts to 2.5 volts, while a *normal* background signal is only .4 volts at 60 cycles. During this time, the normal 60 cycles range swelled to well over 40,000 cycles. These readings obvi-

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ously indicated that whatever the observers were seeing, whatever the cameras were recording, was capable of producing a dramatic change in the electrical activity of the area.

Other equipment did not immediately respond to the sighting; no radiation was evident at the time of the incident. Although there were no noticeable reactions in the rail capacitance tests, both the test and the radiation indicators became active after the sighting. One thing was certain: for approximately one minute and 50 seconds, the legend of the Hookerman became objective reality, and staged a performance for the most sophisticated audience in its history.

**A**s quickly as the phenomenon occurred, it disappeared, and the team began to run through the tests to find any possible explanation for the incident. The observers at Post One never obtained visual contact with the object between them and the command post, but all tests, with the exception of the rail capacitance test, verified that the phenomenon had, indeed, physically occurred.

Team leaders checked the apparatus responsible for the rail capacitance test and discovered why it had not responded at the time of the sighting. It seems that one of the connections to the track had been knocked loose, perhaps by some of the onlookers earlier in the evening.

At approximately 10:45 p.m., a full 10 minutes after the visual sightings of the light had ceased, test equipment used to record radiation began to show active readings from the track area. The Geiger counter recorded these readings for about five seconds before returning to its normal level. This occurred again nearly four minutes later, and persisted for seven seconds. There was a third and final recurrence 15 minutes following the visual sighting, this time lasting for over 10 seconds.

The team worked on past midnight, hoping for a possible replay of the phenomenon, but all was quiet. Finally, by one a.m., the team leaders called it a night, yet the most dramatic proof of the evening would not be apparent until the photographs of the light were developed.

**T**wo independent cameras at Post Two, near the control van, photographed an image, using two different types of film. A total of six frames of regular black and white, and seven frames of infrared were taken. Each frame reveals a definite image—a glowing ball of light. The black and white film shows a pinpoint of light, while the in-

frared shows a more detailed image. The black and white film (Tri-X) which was shot at 1/250th of a second, shows only a light source, similar to that discerned by the observers' naked eyes. The infrared film was exposed at 10 seconds per frame, and provides far more detail. This furnished us with important insight into the light range of the object, the film images showing density not discernable in normal black and white photographs.

What, however, does all of this prove? In what way do Vestigia's findings contribute to an overall understanding of the spook light mystery. Just how have they succeeded in deflating the widespread claims of bodily survival?

To answer these questions, it is necessary to enter the realm of geophysical science.

It is fairly common knowledge that when certain types of quartz-bearing rock are subjected to stress from within the Earth, an electrical potential results. This principle, referred to as the piezoelectric effect, is applied to telephone receivers as well as microphone transmitters, in which pressure from sound waves produce electrical responses in crystals. Physicists David Finkelstein and J.R. Powell, of New York, vigorously explored this phenomenon in 1970, and concluded that stress accumulated in rocks in a fault zone over a period of years may change in intensity very slowly just prior to major earthquake activity. They further hypothesized that such stress may be capable of establishing an electrical field whereby discharges of electricity would ionize the air in the area into visible light.

**I**ntrigued by this curious theory, Vestigia investigators carefully examined geodesic maps of New Jersey, and discovered that a major fault, the Ramapo Border Fault, runs through Peapack in northern New Jersey and passes within a mile of Indian Point, N.Y. It was also learned that since 1962 no fewer than 33 earthquakes have occurred along that fault, with a *sizeable* portion in close proximity to the Long Valley area. After exhaustive study and field investigation, Bill Wagner and his associates within Vestigia became convinced that a definite correlation existed between the appearance of the light and local seismic activity. Through careful observation and documentation, they have succeeded in establishing, beyond any reasonable doubt, that the Long Valley lights *persistently* and *predictably* precede reports of local earthquake activity, and are entirely dependent upon natural, physical principles. Many, if not all, of the mysteries associated with the

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## SPOOK LIGHTS

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Hookerman have been unraveled. For instance, the railroad bed at Long Valley is composed of granite, an extremely good conductor of electricity. Wagner has noted that the phenomenon is most prevalent in Long Valley either before or after changes in weather, and he cites barometric pressure as a logical correlative factor. As for the tendency of the light to recede as a human agent approaches, Vestigia believes that it is foolish to automatically ascribe intelligent behavior to the light when a more sound and reasonable explanation exists. It is likely, they claim, that either the delicate field within the area is disrupted by the body's own electrical charge, or merely that the static charge of the light itself seeks the natural ground of the approaching human and harmlessly discharges to the earth. But what about the radioactivity? Wagner and his co-workers suspect that the abnormal radiation recorded during their investigations of the light is associated with the presence of *radon*, an inert, natural gas, which is apparently bled off during earthquake activity.

The movement of the light across the tracks, though a bit more difficult to explain, has been linked by scientists to subsurface stress forces within a dynamic state of displacement. The spook light, according to informed speculation, is simply following the local fault lines, rift zones, and other rock

strata that locally dissipate the stress. Dr. Michael A. Persinger, in his work, *Space-Time Transients and Unusual Events*, argues that "since the locus of the subsurface sources exists in a three-dimensional space, any movement of this source would be reflected, like a 'transformation of axes,' on the surface by the luminosity." Persinger maintains that the lights' apparent movement, whether pendulum-like or vertical, is dependent upon the source's subsurface position.

**W**agner and his team members are in full agreement with the findings of Persinger, and are currently refining their research techniques at Long Valley. They are confident that with additional research and investigation, earthquake prediction, based upon the observation and scrutiny of these spook lights, may evolve into a more precise and accurate science.

Due to Vestigia's pioneering research on the spook light mystery, major universities and governmental agencies have begun to collaborate with the group in its probe of this highly elusive, but natural phenomenon. As for the legend of the "Hookerman," local residents appear to be accepting the conventional explanations advanced by Vestigia. It would seem as though the colorful story centered around this mythic figure has begun to lose much of its original luster, and that superstition, at least for the community of Long Valley, has been firmly replaced by truth. ★

## STRANGE PIPE AND GHOST LIGHTS IN WEST VIRGINIA

One of our readers has sent us the following details of a rather unusual experience which took place in the late 1930s in West Virginia. We are pleased to share it.

"My husband and a friend were walking in a remote area of West Virginia, looking for work. It was a bitterly cold winter's night and, as they were looking for a place to camp, they saw a black pipe sticking out of the ground for a height of about five feet. The top of the pipe was bent over at right angles and a flame issued from the end. They camped in the warmth from this pipe and survived the night. There were no mines or other works for miles around. What was this pipe?

"In the same area are the caves known as Devil's Cavern. The local people will not go near the area and say that several people have vanished in the caverns over the years. My husband visited the cavern during a lunch break. Large rocks that he threw into the cavern disappeared without a sound, as if they had gone straight down into a bottomless hole.

"The area where this took place is near the Coal and Coke Railroad tracks in the Buckhannon Valley, between Newland and Helvetia, West Virginia."

### Ghost Lights.

Following our publication of the fine article by Michael Frizzell on the Brown Mountain Lights (INFO Journal No. 43), we received the following letter from the same member regarding an unusual ghost light experience in West Virginia.

"Many years ago (possibly the late 1920s - Ed.) my husband was working on the Mace Lumber Company Railroad near Hacker Valley, West Virginia. His foreman was Pete Genenetti from Italy. On this particular day they had picked up their paychecks and decided to walk to Summersville, about three days walk from Hacker Valley. They started up Wolf Hill and eventually came to Brown's Mountain. (Note: Not the Brown Mountain in North Carolina.) They were walking along an

old dirt road as darkness fell.

"They walked in the darkness for awhile and suddenly noticed a flash of light in the sky. Pete said that a storm was coming. When they reached another turn in the road, they saw three or four lights hovering just above the ground to one side of the road. One of the lights looked like an oil lantern, smoky yellow. Another was bright, like a gas flame. Another was blueish. They passed by two of these lights. Pete looked at the next one ahead and stopped in his tracks. He crossed himself and exclaimed "Mama Mia!", swore that the Devil was around, turned tail, and ran back down the mountain the way they had come.

"My husband went on past the other two lights. Just as he passed them he heard voices jabbering, but could not understand what they were saying. He heard these voices all the way to the top of the mountain, a walk of about an hour. There were lights floating in the air all this time. When he reached the top, about fifty feet from where he stood one light fell to the ground and exploded. Just before it exploded, it made a clear humming sound as it passed through the air. When this light exploded, the others disappeared. It couldn't have been swamp gas, as there are no swamps on that mountain!"

**Comments:** Both the Devils Cavern and Browns Mountain sound like excellent places for some Fortean investigation. Neither have been recorded previously to our knowledge. It is easy to suggest that the strange pipe was a vent pipe for an abandoned coal mine, or that it was burning gas leaking from a control valve on a high pressure gas line. But it could be something really unusual.

And this is the first time that we have heard of jabbering voices and humming sounds being associated with ghost lights.

Mrs. Howard, who sent us the above notes, has published a small book dealing with these and other strange experiences. For a copy, send \$5 to Mrs. Howard at Box 134, Station S, Toronto, Canada M5M 3Y0.