



# DEAD OF HEATH



## Spring heeled Jack

a real life bogeyman

issue 1  
sept. 94



Strange  
Times

a step back in time  
The opener of the ways

A Carnival Of Monsters

*Mike Wicks  
1994*

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Issue 1 Sept 94

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SPECIAL.** The customs  
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All Hallows Eve.

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## EDITORIAL

"Sure is good to seek a challenge,  
Sure is fine to set your sights,  
Sure is foolish to be blinded .  
There are legions out there churchin'  
Searching for the Holy Grail,  
Isn't one of them can find it...  
All this time. "

Prefab.Sprout. 'Looking For Atlantis.'



Welcome to the first issue of 'Dead Of Night', the fanzine that seeks to explore ALL realms of what we might term, for want of a better description, 'Strange Phenomena'.

Ever since Steve, the assistant editor, and I were kids, we've had a consuming interest in the kind of things most scientists and 'right thinking men and women' prefer to dismiss as arrant nonsense. If you've ever been to W.H. Smith, and cast a cursory glance at magazines like 'The Fortean Times' or 'The Unexplained', then you'll know the sort of stuff I'm talking about here.

If not, please allow me to run a few examples right by you...

**GHOSTS AND APPARITIONS:** Easy to deary as the product of a 'wee dram' too many, when you're swapping tales on a day blessed with warm, Summer sunshine. It's not quite as easy playing the role of scoffer when you're walking past a quiet, moonlit graveyard on the wrong side of midnight however... Try it and see...

**WEATHER ANOMALIES:** Nope. I'm not merely referring to the fact that it always seems to chuck it down each and every Bank Holiday - Although I've got to admit, that is more than a little strange in itself.

**CORN CIRCLES:** Still an unsolved mystery... Unless we are to honestly believe that a phenomenon that has been puzzling meteorologists, geologists, and biologists - not to mention the countless farmers - since the Middle Ages, the whole World over, is all down to a couple of ol' fellas named Doug 'n' Dave, who've taken up 'Hoaxing' as a hobby.

**OCCULT CRIMES:** In my profession, I've come across one or two cases that quite frankly, almost defy belief. The three schoolkids who took it upon themselves to douse their caretaker, 'cos they thought he was a child molestor, a' la Freddy Kruger. The grossly perverted father who sexually abused his daughter since she was nine, and locked up his son in a cupboard under the stairs, with no light on, no heating, and nothing to eat save a bowl of stale Cornflakes. The middle-aged man who savagely beat seven kinds of crap out of an 86 year oldblind man - 'cos he was fed up waiting for the number 64 bus!!! To name but three.

As yet, I haven't come across anything that could be described as OCCULT related... But something tells me it's like waiting for the hole in the Ozone Layer to make sun-bathing obsolete... It's only a matter of time).

**VANISHING PEOPLE:** Human beings who disappear right before your very eyes... A bit like your best mate when it's their turn to get the ale in.

**FALLS OF ANIMATE AND INANIMATE OBJECTS:** You've doubtless heard the old

saying "Raining cats and dogs." Well, it may as come as some surprise to learn that there are literally hundreds of reports on record of it raining Fish and Frogs. And not just in some far-flung corner of Hicksville, USA, either. Reliable people in THIS country have apparently been witness to the same. Also on file, exist accounts of falls of newts, yellow mice, and pieces of still warm flesh - talk about 'Manna from Heaven'. If anyone was brave enough to actually eat it, that is. Meanwhile, on the INanimate front; we have showers of red sand, dried oak leaves, huge chunks of ice, eggs, hazlenuts, and...Get out those 'Vomit Bags' ladies 'n' gents...Warm flowing BLOOD. Yep. When analysed, it almost always turns out to be the REAL thing to. SPONTANEOUS HUMAN COMBUSTION: Nosiree. I'm not even gonna THINK about dwelling on THIS aspect of weirdness. Just writing the initials; S.H.C. is enough to have me rubbing my stomach up and down like one of those kids in those old 'Ready Brek' adverts (only the warm glow I feel spreading inside, is anything but comforting). COSMIC JOKES: What most of us term 'mere coincidence.' But what EXACTLY do we mean by 'coincidence?' The Jungian Theory Of Synchronicity? The Chinese concept of Yin and Yang? Or is there at work here some 'Force' - an Intelligence that has co-existed alongside Mankind, in various guises - which for purposes that we may never come to fully understand, delights in playing tricks upon our race? CURSES AND JINKES: Everyone knows of someone who claims they've been soooooo unlucky, they're convinced either God, or the Devil, that little old lady who lives down the lane with nothing for company but that damned black cat, and who once predicted the Summer of '76 would be the hottest on record by reading the tea-leaves at the bottom of her 'Magic Roundabout' 'Zeberdee say's; It's time for bed' mug, and so she simply MUST be a Witch etc...etc, has placed life-sucking curse upon them...

Methinks by now, you've got a fairly good idea of the type of things that scream for my attention, like kids at a Spoiled Prat's Convention.

I've only just scratched the surface of course. There's a lot more anomalous phenomena that I haven't listed here. Delving into this stuff is kind of like tapping an artesian well. You dig deep enough, you're eventually gonna hit the source. But you gotta be careful. Caution is the key, else you're liable to wind up getting swept away in a veritable torrent of information.

As John Candy say's in 'Planes, Trains And Automobiles,' to be able to take it all in you've gotta learn to 'Cooooocoo With The Floooooowwwww.'

And with these pearls of wisdom ringing in your ears, I'll very briefly touch upon some of the conspicuous by its absense Weird Stuff, just to round things off;

UFO'S. MYSTERIOUS SWARMS AND MIGRATIONS. VAMPIRES AND WEREWOLVES. MODERN DAY FOLK TALES AND URBAN MYTHOLOGY. VANISHING HITCH-HIKERS. SCREAMING SKULLS. OUT-OF-PLACE-ANIMALS. MYSTERIOUS MUTILATORS. THE YETI AND OTHER B.H.M.'S. ARMAGEDDON WARNINGS. WEIRD SIMULACRA. DEMONOLOGIE. ANGEL LORE. FAERIES. BALL LIGHTNING. LEY LINES. STRANGE CONSPIRACIES. UNEXPLAINED DEATHS. THE BERMUDA TRIANGLE. ATLANTIS. ANCIENT ASTRONAUTS. ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANOMALIIES. MEN IN BLACK. INVISIBLE ASSAILANTS. HAIR BANDITS. FRIUT THROWERS. WEIRD MEDICAL PHENOMENA. STIGMATICS. IMAGES THAT WEEP AND BLEED. TALKING ANIMALS. ALCHEMY. REINCARNATION. LEVITATION. BIZZARE ATTACKS BY ANIMALS. ANIMAL KINDNESS. STRANGE BANGS AND NOISES IN THE AIR. PEOPLE FROM NOWHERE. SEA MONSTERS. WEIRD HUMAN BEHAVIOUR. DISCOVERY OF NEW SPECIES OF ANIMALS. STRANGE PLAGUES. MASS

PANICS. HORSE RIPPERS. TWINS. BOGUS CHILD WELFARE OFFICERS. ALIEN ENTITIES. LAKE MONSTERS. OUT OF THE BODY EXPERIENCES. HOLLOW EARTH THEORY. ELECTROMAGNETIC PEOPLE. UNUSUAL AERIAL PHENOMENA. UNUSUAL DARKNESS. THE HUM. REAL LIFE MIRACLES. ORIGINS OF LIFE. KILLER CLOWNS. CLONING. LORD OF 22. DRAGONS. PREHISTORIC ANIMALS STILL ALIVE TODAY. FABLED LANDS. OTHER DIMENSIONS. THE OCCULT. ZOMBIES. OWLMAN. MOTHMAN. THE LOCH NESS MONSTER....

The list is endless.

Okay. I hope now I've succeeded in outlining our sphere-of interest, and we can finally get on with the Fans...Hang on a second. What are you doing reaching out for the phone? Who are you planning on calling at this hour?

Wait. I recognise that number you're dialling.

Please hear me out...

I'm NOT mad.

Just give me a chance to explain myself. To elaborate on the root causes of my er...Fascination for the more esoteric side of life. If I can't convince you I'm clinically sane in the next few pages you're about to read, you can then get on the 'Dog and Bone' and page 'Dial-A-Strait-Jacket.'

I promise I'll go quietly.

I wouldn't want to embarrass you in front of the neighbours.

Oh, and I'll even tell you where I've hidden the Christmas present my auntie Joyce bought me when I was ten years old. At least then you won't have to fork out for a packet of 'Crayola's.'

Just indulge me a little while longer...

That's all I ask.

I mean, it couldn't hurt to listen...

COULD IT???

Lee Walker. September 22nd. 1994.



1900:

THE EILEAN MOR LIGHTHOUSE MYSTERY.

I was in my final year at Church Drive Junior School, seated behind the graffiti splattered desk top in Mrs William's math class the first time I read of 'The Inexplicable Disappearance Of The Lighthouse Keepers Of Eilean Mor'. I remember it had been one of those depressingly grey, winter afternoons when time drags on interminably and the ringing of the 'Home-time' bell seems a billion light years distant. I recall too, we pupils were SUPPOSED to be studying the myriad joys'n'wonders of long division and the 12x table, but much of the excitement(?) seemed lost on my fellow class-mates, most of whom were either staring vacantly into space, their thoughts wandering adrift on that far-off imaginary plane, the majority of adults can never hope to perceive, or were busy passing 'Secret Messages' to one another concerning the hottest topical issue (the size of Jackie Goodchild's rapidly expanding 'gazangas' were making the major headlines, if I'm not mistaken, back then), or like me, were sneakily engrossed in reading something a damn sight more interesting than a blackboard full of numbers and mathematical equations.

I'd been eagerly devouring a crumpled copy of one of the 'Look and Learn' magazines Mrs Williams kept stacked in a dusty pile on a desk in the far corner of the class-room. I'd concealed it beneath my even MORE dog-eared exercise book, and every time our teacher turned her back to write on the board some more, I hastily speed read as much as I could take in without arousing her suspicion.

'Look and Learn', now sadly defunct, was one of those rare publications that somehow managed to both educate AND entertain. Its pages were jam-packed with fascinating, little-known facts and it was lavishly illustrated with wonderful pictures, covering as it did an almost impossibly wide spectrum of subjects. Everything from ancient history to space age interstellar travel. From the flora and fauna of the Amazon jungle to the latest theories of how life itself evolved. From detailed biographies of the rich and famous to the intricate workings of the human body. All this and a whole pile more assaulted my young, inquiring mind like a succession of video tape images with the cassette stuck in the 'Fast Forward' mode.

My favourite articles however, were those that dealt with 'Great Unsolved Mysteries', features that were invariably graced with a lurid drawing and some suitably evocative heading such as; 'The Ghost Of The Flying Dutchman Crossed Our Bows' or 'Did A Fireball From Space Kill Off The Dinosaurs???'



I simply couldn't get enough of these fabulous pieces, I really couldn't, and I guess I'll take this opportunity to confess before God, The Saints and (assuming she's still alive and kicking), dear old Mrs Williams, that it was indeed I who secretly whizzed all of those countless missing pages during that winter/spring term of 1975. I kept them all in the battered old box file my father had given me after I'd helped him clean out the attic one drizzly Sunday morning.

I treasured those clippings the way other kids my age treasured their 'Panini' Football stickers album, or their set of 'Airfix' model kits, and the odds are better than even that I'd STILL be dipping into 'em on the occasions I grow disenchanted with the world, or time is in dire need of a-killing, if they hadn't fallen victim to one of my mum's revolutionary spring clear-outs a few years back. Much to my eternal dismay, she went and handed over the box file and its contents (along with half my collection of 'Incredible Hulk' comics, a pile of grubby clothing I'd long grown out of, and my signed colour poster of 'Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark'), to 'The Rag'n'Bone Man' who used to traipse up and down our road, dragging a cart fully laden with a stack of 'no-good-to-anyone's'.

I don't see him so much these days. 'The Rag'n'Bone Man' I mean. He was all but consigned to the dust-bin of childhood memory till I'd written of him just now. No such problems with my recalling the story of the lighthouse keepers of Eilean Mor, however. Even though I haven't set eyes on that 'Lock and Learn' article that dealt with the mystery in years that feel more like the passing of CENTURIES.

Sometimes, the most seemingly trivial of things stick firmly in your mind, like tiny insects caught on fly paper...

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The Flannan Isles are a group of rocky outcrops dotted around the West coast of Scotland. Owing to their position in one of the world's most unpredictable seas, it's perhaps not surprising they've acquired a somewhat sinister reputation, and are deemed a serious hazard to shipping - especially in the days before radar, sonar, and all the other technical caboodle that is supposed to prevent ocean disasters.

What also isn't particularly surprising is the fact that the erection of a lighthouse in the immediate area was considered a number one priority, and as soon as it was physically possible, one was duly built. The lonely, deserted island of Eilean Mor was chosen to be the site, and for countless years it was manned without incident. Then, one evening in late December, 1900, and for no immediately obvious reason, the guiding light suddenly went out, and the area around the island was swallowed up by the ebon darkness of night.

Later that same evening, two experienced sailors on the brigantine 'FAIRWIND' were witness to the eerie sight of a longboat, filled with a group of dishevelled men, that was apparently heading toward the strangley darkened lighthouse.

The sailors, concerned for the well-being of the 'crew', called out to the men but they received no answer. They were just able to make out their pale, death-

like faces by the light of the moon as it peered through gaps in the ragged cloud cover..

'Our first thought was that they were floating dead from some shipwreck. But then we heard the oarlocks and saw the movement of their arms', one of the sailors was moved to say when reporting the incident.

Whatever the truth of the matter, the would-be rescuers were unable to assist the 'vessel' and I've failed to locate any further record of what became of its 'crew'. If I subsequently come across any additional information, you can bet your 'Reeboks' I'll refer to it in a future issue.

Because of the remoteness of the island, it wasn't until the 26th of December, (the light had been extinguished on the evening of the 15th), that any investigations could be undertaken to establish what had happened on Eilean Mòr. The supply ship 'HESPERUS' arrived at the silent lighthouse in the mid-afternoon. And when there was n response to their repeated signals, the crewmen set out in a small boat to the landing dock. The eerie quiet filled the air like a living, palpable presence as the men tied up at the dockside. No sea-birds sang. There was no wind. Even the ocean itself seemed to have lost its eternally roaring voice. But it wasn't the peaceful silence born of tranquility. This was more the type of pervasive calm you get in a million horror movies...Just before it's irreparably shattered by the sound of terrified screaming...

The lighthouse was meant to be staffed by three men, but no-one rushed out to greet the crew of the 'HESPERUS'. Upon entering the building it was immediately apparent that there were no signs of any degree of violence, and that the keepers supply of food and were well stocked. The living quarters were spick'n'span. Beds were made up. All the crockery and cutlery were sparkling. The place looked a lot like my mum had been let loose on one of her infamous stints with a brush'n'pan.

But of the three lighthouse keepers, there was np trace!!!

Only two things struck the investigation team as being in any way peculiar.

Firstly, on the stairway and in a cubby-hole office where the log was usually kept, they found numerous shreds of a seaweed that couldn't be identified by them.

And secondly, there were no oilskins or sea-boots in the building, the inference being that the keepers had left the lighthouse together. What made the latter all the more unusual was the fact that prior to this occasion, no lighthouse keeper had ever been known to desert his post - Not even in the midst of the worst storm imaginable.

During the subsequent inquiry into the disappearance of the three men, the log book kept by keeper Thomas Marshall, was produced, and when its contents were read aloud to the inquiry board, an atmosphere of hushed, almost reverant silence descended upon its members.

'December 12th: Gale north by northwest. Sea lashed to fury. Never seen such a storm. Waves very high. Tearing at lighthouse. Everything shipshape. James Ducat irritable'. And later that day, 'Storm still raging. Wind steady. Stormbound. Cannot go out. Ship passing sounding foghorn. Could see lights of cabins. Ducat quiet. Donald MacArthur crying'.

'December 13th: Storm continued through night. Wind shifted west by north. Ducat quiet. MacArthur praying'. And later, 'Ncon, grey daylight. Me, Ducat and MacArthur prayed'.

There was no entry whatsoever for the 14th, and the final words in the log read;

'December 15th: 1pm. Storm ended, sea calm. God is over all'.

The only explanation that was forthcoming was that the men had somehow been sharing visions of a particularly vivid nature - The reason behind this line of thinking being the fact that although the log entries had reported gales lashing the Flannan Isles, there had been NONE at all 20 miles away on the island of Lewis.

As to the whereabouts of the three keepers, no official verdict was arrived at other than that they may've been panicked into trying to escape from what they believed to be mortal danger, and had perhaps tried to swim to the mainland, drowning in the process.

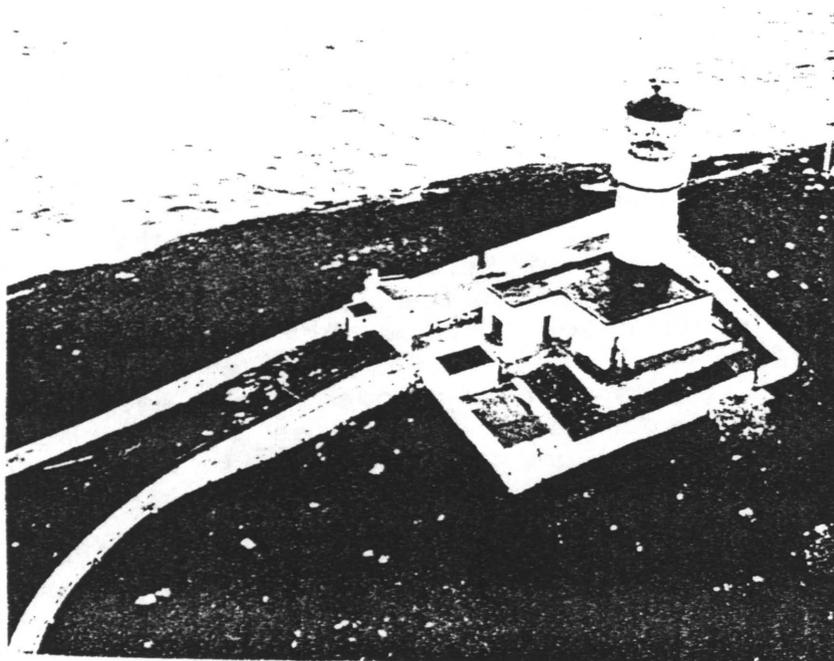
The locals, of course had their OWN opinion.

They believed the islands to be haunted. Some said they were accursed and that only the ridiculously brave and downright foolhardy would dare set foot on their godforsaken shores...

For all the supposition and theorizing in the world, one thing at least is for certain;

Like the ill-fated crew of the much more famous mystery of the 'MARIE CELESTE', the lighthouse keepers of Eilean Mor vanished without trace from human perception, only to RE-APPEAR in the twilight realm of folklore, myth and superstition...

And the crumpled pages of a child's 'Look and Learn' magazine...



The Eilean Mor lighthouse, one of the Flannan Isles, off the West coast of Scotland. Three men went missing from this building in December, 1000, and were never to be seen again...

## REFLECTIONS IN A GOLDEN EYE:

### UNEXPLAINED PENOMENA IN THE 20TH CENTURY:

#### INTRODUCTION:

The following series of articles are an admittedly flawed attempt to chronicles as many strange events as possible on a year-by-year basis beginning naturally enough with 1900 and working on through to (assuming we're still here) the end of millenium.

I say it's gonna be 'flawed' with good reason. It must be pretty obvious to anyone with even a passing interest in 'weird stuff' that the potential volume of "accounts is enormous and that it would be well-nigh impossible to catalogue completely, every single snippet. Every press cutting. Every extract from 'Ripley's believe it or not', or every submission to respected and well-read journals, especially when your access to such material is limited to a couple of hundred books, magazines and first-hand eye witness testimonies.

I'm well aware that there are things that we'll dismiss, overlook, or ignore entirely. I can only apologise before-hand and state that should anyone associated with this 'bag of waffle' ....oops, I mean 'serious-minded fan-zine', come across any ommisions, they will duly include them in future issues.

There's a second reason (actually there are probably a billion reasons if you want the honest truth, but hey, let's just stick to the painfully obvious ones if you don't mind), why these pieces are less than comprehensive and that's the pure 'n' simple fact even those reports that don't slip through the net, (and in my minds eye I recall a couple of eager young boys, perhaps ten years of age, one wearing a 'SPIDERMAN t-shirt, the other a 'PLANET OF THE APES' iron on transfer rip off from Birkenhead market, sitting together on the banks of the River Mersey, in the lazy heat of mid-August, hoping to catch Sea Serpents with twenty pence plastic fishing nets the size of a childs hand), are at best likely to be tainted with their authors own bias and interpretation, and at worst could well be outright fallacy, or the product of an over-heated imagination.

Still, I guess there's nothing to lose in at least trying to bring to our readers attention, (all three of 'em), some idea of the welath of unexplained mysteries there are out there. Each one a challenge to science and the recognised order of what is termed 'reality'.

As Charlie Fort, (the late, great granddaddy of investigation into 'The Unknown', and who along with Johnny Barnes, Ian Curtis, and Peter Cushing, is one of my all-time number one heroes), once said of the type of tales you're about to read:

'These are examples of the magic that surrounds everyday life'.

The Best Of The Rest Of 1900:

DATE: Sometime in early February:

PHENOMENA: Ghosts and Apparitions.

LOCATION: Sunningdale, Berkshire, England.

This is a report that sadly, we don't have a whole pile of details on. In fact all we DO know is that 'A GHOST in the form of a police officer' was sighted by two ladies of indeterminate age, near the above location. The 'figure' reportedly vanished right before their astonished eyes. There is no indication as to whether the witnesses would have thought there was anything at ALL unusual about the policeman...If it hadn't have been for the disconcerting fact that he disappeared without trace...a commonly reported fact in similar encounters, so unhappily, we are left with no option but to surmise.

(Credit: 'Modern Mysteries Of Britain.' (Page 246) Janet and Colin Bord. Guild Publishing. 1989.)

DATE: Unknown.

PHENOMENA: Weird Winged Creatures.

LOCATION: Leeds, Yorkshire, England.

One of the strangest aberrations of nature that I have ever come across in delving through my not inconsiderable library dealing with all matters of 'Strange, Unexplainable Phenomena' (Pheeeewww!!! That was a birrova of a long-winded opening sentence), is the bizzare tail (Ooooh, don't blame ME for the terrible joke(?). That one was strictly down to Conrad Poch' And His Happy Crappy Pun Club...Honest), of a 'Winged Cat' named 'Thomas Bessie', who was born sometime in this year in a Leeds workhouse. Not surprisingly you may think, such a wondrous creature soon acheived a certain amount of fame, and it wasn't long before some unscrupulous showman saw fit to whisk the cat away for use in a travelling sideshow. William Markham, an official of the workhouse from which the unfortunate 'Flying Feline' had been 'Kitty-napped' (Yep. That's Conrad again!!!), eventually tracked the animal down to a fairground peepshow. He retrieved it, and after an indeterminate amount of years, it the cat died of poisoning and was duly stuffed.

When Markham himself passed on, the now totally inert 'Thomas Bessie' was handed down to his granddaughter, Mrs Amy Clague, who afterwards dispalyed the curiosity in the various pubs she and her husband have run over the years in and around their home town of Selby, Yorkshire.

The cat's wings are said to be 'Malformations of its rib structure'...

There are no indications that the creature was ever able to actually FLY. Though it is perhaps worth recording here that that well-known researcher John Keel,

('Operation Trojan Horse' 'Strange Creatures Of Space And Time' etc) makes mention of a case from Ontario, Canada, in which a Ms. Jane Revers states she saw a 'Winged Cat' 'Sailing' after a neighbour's moggie...To use her words, 'It screamed like hell. And it tried to get away by making gliding jumps of fifty or sixty feet - wings extended - after a good running start. It could stay a foot or so above the ground...

A 'claw-'tionary note though, lest you accept this report at face value. The Rever's cat was later shot and buried, and when exhumed by 'an expert', was found to be 'Just an ordinary cat with growths of thick, matted hair... So you use your noggin and make up your OWN mind as to its veracity.

(Credit: 'Fortean Times.' # Vol 1. No:6. (Page 3)).

DATE: April 1st.

LOCATION: Wallingford, Oxfordshire, England.

PHENOMENA: Falls Of Organic Matter.

How's this for an April Fool's ('Cosmic') joke, folks?

At the above location on the aforementioned date, there was a fall of dried Beech leaves from a clear blue sky, and from a great height. That was strange enough. What was even more incredible was the fact that there are NO Beech trees for at least two miles from the area in which these MANY leaves fell to Earth. I don't know what YOU think, but it's SOME wind that can hold aloft and carry whole bunches of leaves for a couple of miles, before dropping 'em wholesale like a pile of unwanted irty washing smack into the middle of Wallingford.

And, whilst we're at it, has anyone thought to inquire why it was that ONLY dried Beech leaves had fallen? What about the other types of trees?

Selective winds???

Aah, c'mon. Do me a favour...

(Credit: 'Modern Mysteries Of The World.' Janet and Colin Bord. (Page 246). Guild. 1989).

DATE: June.

LOCATION: Augusta Mills, USA.

PHENOMENA: Unexplained Disappearance.

On an unspecified date, sometime during the crazy, lazy, days of mid-Summer, Sherman Church, (Yep. That's his REAL name, I promise), ran (for what reason isn't clear) into a cotton mill at Augusta Mills.

He never came back out.

Like the Lighthouse Keeper's of Eilean Mor, he had vanished without trace and was never heard of again...

(No further details).

DATE: July 20th.

LOCATION: North Morton, Oxfordshire, England.

PHENOMENA: Toad-In-The-Hole.

At a local church, a perfectly preserved toad was found (whether dead or alive and hopping, isn't recorded) inside a skull buried beneath the church. I've heard of SCREAMING SKULLS...But CROAKING ones...They're a new one on me...

(Credit: 'Modern Mysteries Of Britain.' Janet and Colin Bord. (Page 246). Guild. 1989.

DATE UNKNOWN.

LOCATION: Sandwood, Sutherland, Scottish Highlands.

PHENOMENA: Mermaid sighting.

A fella by the name of Alexander Gun, reported seeing a Mermaid somewhere in the area of Sandwood. Details are sketchy, but what we DO know is that his dog howled mournfully upon setting eyes on the entity...A often reported reaction when an animal is confronted with a denizen of the 'Supernatural.'

(Credit: 'Modern Mysteries Of Britain.' Janet and Colin Bord. (Page 247). Guild. 1989.

DATE UNKNOWN.

LOCATION: Lough Auna, Ireland.

PHENOMENA: Lake Monster.

A woman whose name isn't recorded (perhaps she requested anonymity) saw what she described as a 'Horse-eel' come out of Lough Auna, and climb onto the turf bank, very close to where she was working. Not surprisingly, she didn't wait around long enough to see what would happen next...

(Credit: 'The Unexplained.' #39. (Page 767). 'Irish Lake Monsters.'

DATE UNKNOWN:

LOCATION: Isle Of Man.

PHENOMENA: Premonition.

A classic case of premonition, precognition, call it what you will, concerns the grandmother of a Mrs. J. George, who had a daughter who used to live on the beautiful (even if it still does have 'the Birch' as a punishment meted out for committing petty crimes) Isle Of Man. She was married and had one child, Dorothy, who was 14 at the time this tale takes place. The three of 'em had just moved house, and Mrs. George's grannie hadn't yet set eyes on the humble abode, but one night she dreamed that she was actually there and that it was the day following the 'big move-in'. In her dream, young Dorothy had gone out in a small boat with some friends and had fell into the water and drowned.

When she awoke, the grandmother was filled with such a portentous feeling of dread that she hurried off a telegram to her daughter in a desperate bid to warn her not to allow Dorothy anywhere near the water that day.

As it happened, Dorothy HAD in fact arranged to go out on a boat trip with a couple of friends that very morning. Fortunately, she was kept at home on the strength of the warning...You probably guess the rest.

Her friends, doubtless shaking their heads at Dorothy's batty nannie, took out the boat...A sudden squall hit the craft causing it to capsize...And two of the occupants were drowned...

Hold on a sec. There's a postscript. To further enhance the idea that this was NOT merely some incredible million-to-one coincidence, came news that a few days after the tragedy, the grandmother wrote a second letter to her daughter supplying a detailed description of the house and its surroundings...Even though she had still at that stage, never once set foot on the island...Let alone seen the building!!!

Credit: 'The Unexplained.' #58. (Page 1161). Orbis. 1981.

DATE: 8th June.

LOCATION: Sart, Belgium.

PHENOMENA: Fall Of Strange Liquids.

Fairly scant details on this one I'm afraid. Apparently, a substance smelling quite a bit like glue came raining down on the city of Sart in Belgium...No explanation forthcoming.

DATE UNKNOWN.

LOCATION: Campbell River, British Columbia, Canada.

PHENOMENA: B.H.M. Sighting.

A timber cruiser by the name of Mike King, may have the dubious distinction of reporting the first 'BIGFOOT' sighting this century in the state. Ol' Mikey, doubtless minding his own business and getting on with whatever it is 'Timber Cruisers' do (I'm sure I don't know...Perhaps a smart arse reader can write in and enlighten me, if they know), when his jaw dropped wide open like an out of control elevator as he spotted a Big Hairy Monster washing roots in the water and placing them in neat 'n' tidy piles.

For Mikey's benefit (assuming he's still 'cruisin' around), I can assure him he wasn't losing his marbles...There have been a fair amount of similar reports trickling in from the same area of British Columbia...Including Albert Oatman's famous encounter in 1924...See a future issue for the full details of THAT humdinger of a story...

DATE UNKNOWN.

LOCATION: Boshof, South Africa.

PHENOMENA: POLTERGEIST.

A family of Boers were woken at midnight (That's 'The Witching Hour' dontcha know) by a cacophony of noise emanating from the kitchen. It sounded like just about every pot and pan in the house was being hurled around with gay abandon...Not to mention their collection of crockery. After a couple of minutes...With no-one in the family feeling especially curious to volunteer and see what the cause of the disturbance was, the tumult suddenly ceased.

As is sometimes the way in POLTERGEIST cases, when morning came to town and the family emerged from underneath their bedclothes, before creeping downstairs, there was found to be none of the expected damage and wanton destruction. Just the opposite in fact. Everything was neatly in its place. The kitchen was spotless.

For three consecutive nights, the mischievous spirit played its noisy pranks on the unfortunate family, and each time the sounds of destruction grew more and more severe. Nothing was ever harmed however. They should be thankful for that. POLTERGEISTS are not ALWAYS so harmless...As we shall soon discover...

These next few reports amount to little more than brief notes...I include them here purley in the interests of completeness...

DATE UNKNOWN.

LOCATION: Warwick, Queensland, Australia.

PHENOMENA: Fish Fall.

Apparently there was a fall of a species of fish called Gudgeon upon the town of Warwick.

DATE: 16th November/7th December.

LOCATION: Turin, Italy.

PHENOMENA: Poltergeist Disturbance.

There was a fairly serious outbreak of 'Noisy Spirit' mania centered in the midst of a dim and dusty inn cellar, that lasted for three weeks in 1900. Details are sketchy, but it appears that this particular 'Refugee from a Tobe Hooper Film', had a penchant for chucking around beer and wine bottles, much to the chagrin of the landlord and his wife.

It's not recorded in my files as to how the 'Poltergeist' was finally laid to rest...

Maybe 'IT' never truly was...

DATE: 21st August.

LOCATION: Telemark, Co. Fermanagh, Northern Ireland.

PHENOMENA: Ball Lightning.

An unnamed man was apparently knocked outta his socks by a spate of the mysterious ol' Ball Lightning...A 'natural' phenomenon, the reality of which is still the subject of much debate amongst meteorologists...

As often happens when these floating, spherical lights explode, they release a great deal of energy...Not totally unlike an honest-to-God THUNDERBOLT!!!

DATE: 15th May.

LOCATION: Providence, Rhode Island, USA.

PHENOMENA: Fish Fall.

During a severe thunderstorm, a variety of fish, including Perch, reportedly fell onto the backyards and city streets in their hundreds.

Credit: 'Modern Mysteries Of The World.' Janet and Colin Bord. (Page 384).

DATE UNKNOWN.

LOCATION: Buffalo, New York, USA.

PHENOMENA: Fish Fall.

A group of boys found small fishes in abundance, floppin' about in rain puddles after a particularly heavy shower. They, not too surprisingly, came to the conclusion that they must've fallen from the sky along with the deluge.

Credit: 'Modern Mysteries Of The World.' Janet and Colin Bord. (Page 377).

DATE UNKNOWN.

LOCATION: Killdeer Mountains, North Dakota, USA.

PHENOMENA: Big Hairy Monster Sighting...(Hereafter referred to by the abbreviation, 'B.H.M.').

A group of people out bob-sleighting were minding their own business, having some fun, when they suddenly saw a 'Gorilla-like animal' running towards them. Just as the reluctant witnesses were about set to give it toes, the 'beast' decided to turn around and race off in the opposite direction. It left huge, 'man-like tracks although there is no record of any photographs being taken of this invaluable evidence. My guess is, the folks were simply far too relieved at having emerged unscathed from the encounter...

Credit: 'Modern Mysteries Of The World.' Janet and Colin Bord. (Page 380).

DATE UNKNOWN.

LOCATION: May's Landing, New Jersey, USA.

PHENOMENA: Out-Of-Place-Animal.

A Kangaroo was seen by the owners of a farm, and was heard uttering a bout of terrifying screaming in the middle of the night (at least they ASSUMED it was the miles-from-home 'Roo...They didn't quite have the bottle to nip outside their farmhouse and take a peek...). The farmers did later come across a strange set of animal tracks leading down to the nearby swamp...So maybe there was something else abroad in the area of May's Landing...

DATE: July 20th.

LOCATION: Monza, Italy.

PHENOMENA: Cosmic Joker/Coincidence.

King Umberto I of Italy, was dining in a restaurant when he gasped with astonishment as he saw that the proprietor looked exactly like him. When he engaged the man in conversation he found that there were even more uncanny similarities.

The restaurateur was also named Umberto, like the King, he'd been born in Turin, and on the same day; and he had married a girl called Margherita on the day the King had wed his Queen Margherita. And it doesn't finish there. The restaurant had been opened on the day that Umberto had been crowned King of Italy.

The King was understandably amazed, and duly invited his 'double' to attend an athletics meeting which had been the purpose of Umberto's visit to Monza. Unfortunately, at the stadium the following day, the King was informed that the proprietor had been killed 'in a mysterious shooting accident.'

And how about THIS for coincidence...

Even as the King was expressing his regrets, he himself was shot dead by an anarchist in the crowd...

DATE: September.

LOCATION: Galveston Island, Texas, USA.

PHENOMENA: Cosmic Joker/Coincidence.

The Canadian actor Charles Francis Coghlan was taken ill in Galveston and later died. It was considered too far for his body to be sent back for burial in his home town on Prince Edward Island, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, (it WAS after all over 3,500 miles away by the sea route) so he was laid to rest in a lead coffin inside a granite vault in Galveston.

Less than a year later, a powerful hurricane hit the island and Coghlan's coffin was released from its bounds as the cemetery was totally flooded, and the vault shattered. It floated out into the Gulf of Mexico, and drifted along the Florida coastline before entering the Atlantic, where the notorious Gulf Stream sent it hurtling northwards.

Eight years later, in October 1908, some fishermen on Prince Edward Island spotted a the coffin, now in a terrible, weather-worn state, floating near the shore. Coghlan's body had come home.

He was re-buried in the local church. The very same one he'd been christened in as a baby.

Credit for the last two reports: 'The Unexplained.' #30 (Page 594), and #32 (Page 640).

Charles Coghlan,  
whose dead body made an  
immense sea journey before  
being cast up on the shore  
of his home town



1901:

### A STEP BACK IN TIME?

One of the most celebrated 'Timeslip' cases of this or any other year, (and therefore obligatory material for just about EVERY book/magazine I've ever read dealing with strange phenomena) is the story told by two English school teachers, Miss Anne Moberley (and Anne Moberley, coincidentally or not, is the name Peter Straub gave to his vengeful apparition in the excellent novel, 'Ghost Story - Just thought I'd throw that in, fact fans) the daughter of a bishop, and a Miss Eleanor Jourdain, both of whom decided to spend a holiday in Paris together. Whilst they were there, being particularly interested in all things historical, they decided to take in a few of the local sights and a visit to the Petit Trianon, in Versailles, was almost compulsory. Neither woman was inclined to be gullible or over-emotional as regards their surroundings, but after touring the palace, and affording themselves a brief rest, they went in search of the chateau built by Louis XV, and given by his successor, Louis XVI, to Queen Marie Antoinette.

They passed a long lake sheltered by a woodland glade, made their way around another stretch of water beside which stood the Grand Trianon, a chateau erected for Louis XIV. They eventually arrived at a verdant, green drive, with the aforementioned building away to their left.

They suddenly became aware that they were hopelessly lost, and not even sure of the direction in which they were headed. As they traipsed rather dispiritely down a side lane, Miss Moberley spied a woman shaking a white cloth out of the window of a building at the corner of the lane, and was a little surprised Eleanor didn't take the opportunity to ask her the way. She didn't discern anything at all strange about this sight however.

Eleanor later explained that she hadn't asked directions for a very good reason; She hadn't seen either the building or the woman. Although she most certainly DID become overtaken with a feeling of gloom and isolation.

They continued walking, and passed some other buildings, glimpsing the end of a carved staircase through an open doorway. They didn't pause, but elected to take the centre path of three that were offered them, mostly because two men appeared to be at work on it with a kind of wheelbarrow and a pointed spade. The women thought the 'gardeners' dress a little on the old-fashioned side; they were wearing long, green coats and small, three cornered hats. The two 'men' directed them straight ahead, and the two ladies continued as before, lost in everything and nothing conversation.

It was round about now that they became aware of the sensation that there was a strange flatness about their surroundings, and they both had the impression that the landscape had somehow turned into a two-dimensional reality.

These feelings grew to be overpowering as they approached 'a light garden kiosk, circular, and like a small bandstand, by which a man was sitting.'

They heard running footsteps behind them but instead of feeling relief at having found some more civilised company, when they turned to see who was in such a hurry they perceived the path to be empty.

Annie then noticed another person standing nearby who it seemed had appeared from nowhere. He smiled an enigmatic, wistful smile as the two ladies once more asked for directions, and having told them the way to their intended destination promptly disappeared before they could even think to thank him for his kindness. Annie recalls that he was 'distinctly a gentleman...Tall, with large dark eyes and crisp, curly hair.'

As they traipsed across a bridge that spanned a mini ravine, they once again heard the running footsteps emanating from somewhere behind them. And once again, there was no-one discernible. They eventually reached a 'square, solidly built, small country house with a terrace on the north and west sides.' Miss Moberley then spotted a lady seated on the lawn who appeared to be engrossed in a spell of sketching. The feeling of being plunged into some bizzare dream persisted as the woman glanced in their direction and stared frankly at the pair. No words were exchanged, but Annie was later moved to remark that the lady, clothed in a lacy, white Summer dress and matching hat, that looked to belong to the style and fashion of an earlier century, was no spring chicken, although she was rather pretty. She admitted to feeling a great wave of relief that her friend hadn't thought to ask the woman's permission to enter the premises. It was only later that she discovered that Eleanor hadn't even seen the lady.

They next bumped into a man 'with the air of a footman', who emerged from a second house and offered to act as a guide. Not long after this encounter they were joined by a rather large wedding party, and things began to return to something approaching 'normality'.



During the following week, neither of the two women saw fit to discuss the events at the Petit Trianon, and in fact it wasn't until Annie was writing an account of the visit that she again experienced that by now familiar feeling of oppression, and inquired of Miss Jourdain if she thought the place could possibly be haunted. Perhaps you won't be too surprised to hear that Eleanor certainly DID believe that to be the case, and it was only then that they actually took the time to compare notes concerning their experiences.

Full accounts were written separately, a full three months after the events, a fact that helped give rise to the usual doubts as to the authenticity of their stories on the part of the hordes of would-be skeptics.

Local legend and tradition however, would tend to support their veracity.

Certain people from the nearby village of Versailles had avowed that they'd seen the GHOST of Marie Antoinette during the 'dog days' of mid-August, seated in the verdant gardens of the Petit Trianon, dressed in a pink dress and a floppy hat. And, just to add some historical credence to the proceedings, the friend went on record as claiming how the people encountered and the period dress described by Miss Moberley and Eleanor, appeared to be an exact representation of Trianon on the fateful date of August 10th, the day of the sacking of the Tuileries, the French Royal family's skeedaddle to Paris, and the Queen's imprisonment.

The two teachers were led to speculate that maybe they'd somehow entered a projected memory of the long dead Queen, or that the place itself was acting as the catalyst. A recorded transmission that was only waiting for the right people sensitive enough to receive its broadcasts.

There was obviously only one way to check the thing out.

Eleanor duly returned to Versailles the following January.

Almost immediately, she sensed the ethereal quality of the area, and certain aspects seemed totally different from how she remembered them from the previous Summer. The kiosk, for example, appeared not to be the same building, and initially at least, there was no sense of the anticipated eeriness. That soon changed though when she crossed the bridge to reach the Hameau, the place where Queen Marie Antoinette and her chums delighted in playing at being pointless peasants...It was then that she consciously felt that a very REAL line, barrier, gap in the fabric of time (\* 'Shamelessly Self-Indulgent Nostalgia Corner #2. I'm reminded of a children's TV programme that used to grace our screens in the early '70's, called 'TIMESLIP'...The plot centered round a group of kids who stumble upon a hole in wire mesh fence that once you step through, you find yourself transported either backwards or forwards in time...My friends and I used to spend many fruitless hours searching in vain for a similar rent in the miles of chainlink fence that borders the dockland area where I live. Isn't life grand when you're blessed with the capacity for such simple beliefs???) , call it what you will. Anyway, she espied a cart in the process of being filled with sticks by a couple of labourers dressed in tunics and hooded capes. She turned her head for a second to glance back at the Hameau, and when she faced front once more she saw that the two men and their heavily laden cart had vanished without trace.

Both Eleanor and Annie decided to immerse themselves in research in an attempt to understand just what it was they were dealing with. They pored over plans of the Versailles gardens and found that things were very different from when they had walked within its borders. Those flat looking, frighteningly surreal woods had disappeared entirely. Paths had been removed. Buildings altered. The creepy kiosk was no more. The little bridge had vamoosed...

One thing was clear from the off.

Either the two ladies had been the victims of a shared hallucination.

Or, they had genuinely undergone a subjective experience that belies explanation within the current scientific concept of what we term 'reality.' ;

In 1911, Annie and Eleanor decided to publish a book (always a good ammunition provider for those who proclaim loudly that people who allege they've

encountered the Supernatural, only do so so's they can make themselves a pretty buck) about their experiences entitled 'AN ADVENTURE' (noms-de-plume). It was conjectured within its pages that the two supposed gardeners were actually Swiss guards, and that the woman sketching away merrily could well have been Marie Antoinette herself. Supposition maybe. But it's "an undisputed fact that the research revealed the Queen did wear exactly the same clothes that Miss McBerley and Miss Jourdain had stated they saw her attired in that beautiful yet strangely atmospheric August day in 1901. What is also a fact, is that various historians who had a good degree of knowledge about the palace and its grounds, claimed that there are at least 20 features described by the two women that were there in 1770...But which are most definitely NOT there today!!!

Of all the available records of the palace, there were never any mention whatsoever of any small wooden bridge crossing any gulley/ravine. Well, at least not until 20 years after the publication of 'AN ADVENTURE', when the Royal architects' original plans were discovered in a bricked up chimney of an old house in a nearby village.

These plans clearly showed the bridge in all its glory.

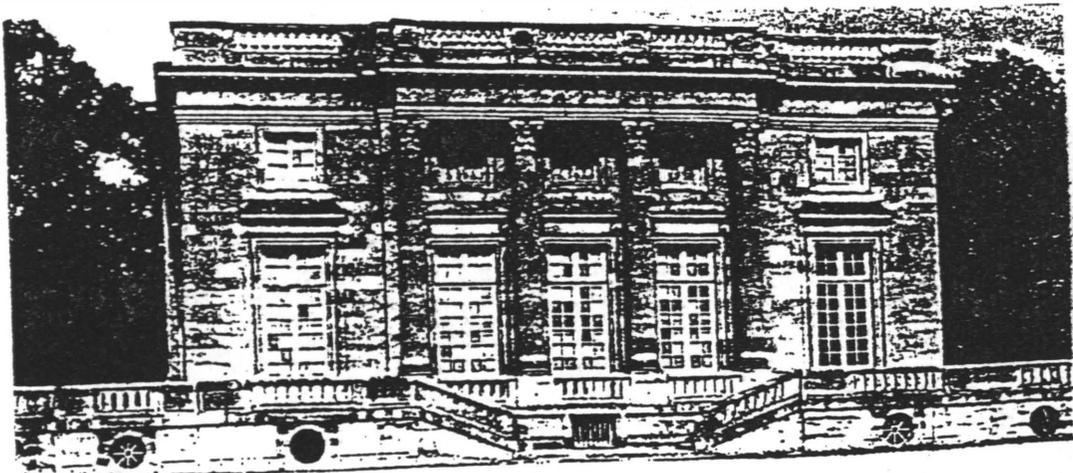
Obviously, whatever other doubts or reservations we may entertain regarding Annie and Eleanor's tale, we cannot seriously suggest it was in any way possible for them to have known about the existence of these plans...Which begs the question, How DID they know a bridge once stood in the palace grounds if they hadn't truly crossed it themselves???

And so, what are we left with?

It does seem entirely feasible that these two (fairly) elderly spinsters may have dreamt up the whole thing, either consciously or otherwise. Perhaps they succumbed to what is, on anyone's account, an oppressive, heavy atmosphere, fraught with the residue of historical tragedy...Maybe they were the victims of some bizarre practical joke...Or maybe they made the whole thing up for a purpose best known to themselves...

Or maybe they really did find the rent in the chainlink fence and were transported backwards through time, like the kids in a children's TV programme...

(Below: The Petit Trianon. The ornate mansion and former home of Queen Marie Antoinette...And the site of a possible 'Timeslip...')



## SPRING HEELED JACK'S LAST STAND?

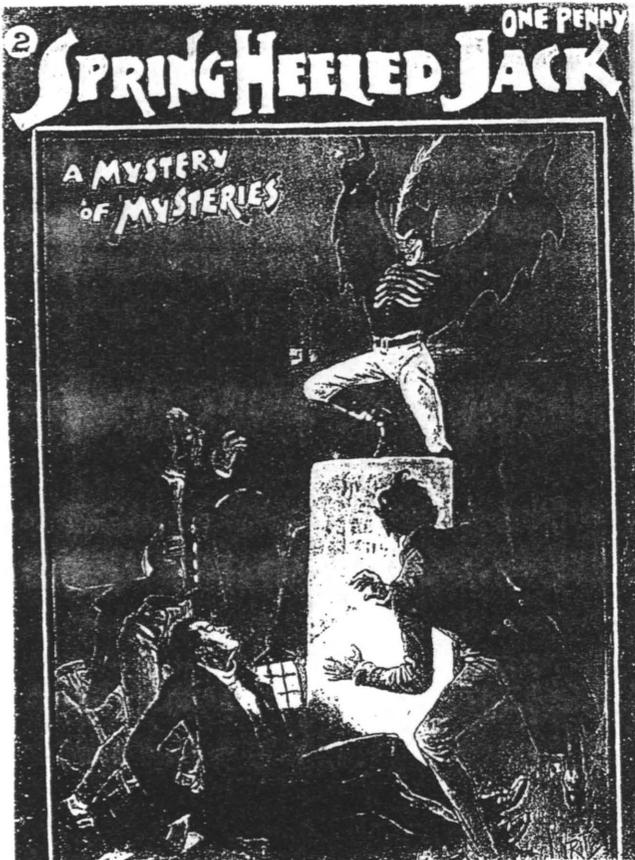
1

## A Victorian Bogey-Man

"Spring-Heeled Jack will get you if you don't watch out"! Such was the topical admonishment aimed at misbehaved children across Victorian England, right up to the dawn of the twentieth century and maybe even beyond. This mysterious entity was formerly on a par with 'Peg Powler' and 'Jenny Greenteeth' at the top of the charts of childhood bogey-men (and women). Judging from contemporary illustrations and descriptions, the invoking of his name most probably had the desired effect (along with countless nightmares) more often than not.

I guess it's no real exaggeration to say 'Jack' was the then literary equivalent of today's horror fiction characters like Freddie Krueger and Michael Myers - with one all important distinction; Whereas the latter are the imaginary creations of film makers, 'Jack's' origins have their basis purely in fact.

Sure, 'He' was often the subject of lurid 'Penny Dreadfuls' (Victorian versions of 'Tales from the Crypt' E.C Horror comics) and melodramas performed in cheap theatres, where (sometimes he was cast as the hero, more often than not as the villain) and it's easy to see why modern day 'realists' have dismissed all references to 'Jack' as being anything other than a 'real' flesh 'n' blood person. With their customary disdain toward 'Supernatural' hypothesis they threw in their lot with those who blamed the whole phenomenon on Henry De La Poer Beresford, The Marquis of Waterford who was admittedly a notorious prankster in his day. But none of this detracts from the fact that although no-one seems to know his true identity or even when he made his debut appearance the mystery of Spring-Heeled Jack is a time enduring example that sometimes science and logic don't have all the answers.



(above) Contemporary illustrations of 'Jack' as hero (left) and as demonic entity impervious to bullets. (right)



Two typical illustrations of 'Jack' at his most capricious. Springing out of a man-hole to terrify an unwary passer-by, (left), and leaping over a couple of would-be captors with one almighty bound. The trailing cloak and devilish beard are recurrent themes throughout folklore and are symptomatic with the vampiric like entities of yesteryear, and today's comic strip superheroes.

'Jack's' incredible to leap high into the air, by the way, was ascribed to a powerful set of springs that were attached in some way to his boots.

One of the first TRULY publicised encounters with 'Jack' occurred during the February of that 'debut' year. Polly Adams, an attractive farmers daughter from Kent, was working in a South London pub when she decided to announce that she'd been seriously assaulted several months earlier while taking a stroll across a place called Blackheath. She was a touch skimpy on the details, but what she made a point of getting across was the fact that her assailant didn't simply race off into the night as you might expect, but instead leapt great distances into the air!!!

A young servant girl by the name of Mary Stevens was also terrorised around about the same time, by a figure that came bounding out of the inky darkness, with eyes glowing like scarlet balls of fire, (another common feature reported in ALL types of encounters with 'Creatures of the Outer Edge' - See future articles on 'Alien Visitors', Out-of-Place Animals, and 'Black Dog' accounts for comparasion), and his mouth spitting orange tongues of flame in the middle of Barnes Common, also in London.

On Wednesday the 18th of February, Lucy Scales, aged 18, and her sister Margaret, were on their way home from visiting their brother, a butcher who lived in one of the more respectable parts of the London district of Limehouse. Lucy had wandered slightly ahead of her sister and was passing the entrance to (and here comes a hearty slice of humour courtesy of the perennial 'COSMIC JOKER' playing his 'Coincidental Name Game', ladies 'n' gentlemen) Green DRAGON Alley, when a dark figure leapt from the cover of the shadows, and after physically assaulting her, breathed FIRE into her face - Just like a real honest to God Dragon!!! The assailant then bounded away as Lucy, temporarily blinded, fell to the ground, seized with a violent fit...

## A FEW TANTALISING GLIMPSES: 1817-1838.

As early as 1817, there came reports of 'a peculiar leaping man' from in and around the outskirts of London. There was however, no REAL verification for what amounted to little more than half-heard rumours - Certainly, I've never been able to locate any written documentation that would add weight to 'Jack's' existence prior to his 'Big Opening Night' in 1838.

A writer named Paul Begg, (a former correspondent for 'THE UNEXPLAINED' magazine, and a self-avowed skeptic of the first order - In 1981, he almost single-handedly destroyed 'The Bermuda Triangle' legend), has categorically stated that it wasn't until the winter of 1838, that 'Jack' actually 'sprang' (if you'll pardon the pun), to prominence, and hey, who am I to disagree or take issue???

On the 9th of January of that year, the then Lord Mayor of London, Alderman Sir John Cowan, elected to hold a public session at The Mansion House, during which he produced a letter that he'd received several days earlier. Its contents had previously been withheld, not for any degree of censorship or security, but rather to allow efforts to be undertaken to see if any further information about its subject matter could be obtained.

The correspondent had signed the letter: 'A Resident Of Peckham', this anonymity adding to the sense of mystery and intrigue.

Basically, what it said was this;

'As the result of a wager, a person of the highest rank, had adopted several frightening guises and set out to scare thirty people to death.'

This whoever-it-was, had apparently already succeeded in 'depriving seven ladies of their senses, two of whom weren't likely to recover, but become burdens to their families'. The letter went on to say, 'The affair has now been going on for some time, and strange to say, the papers are still silent on the subject. The writer has reason to believe that they've the whole history at their fingertips, but through interested motives are induced to remain silent'.

Quite why the Mayor chose to make the specifics of this letter public knowledge is a mystery in itself, and the hints at a press cover-up, (an allegation with which today's UFO conspiracy buffs will be entirely familiar), are intriguing to say the least.

One thing is for sure though, the huge quantity of letters that subsequently poured through to the Mayor's office were testament to 'Spring-Heeled Jack's' 'reality', at least in the poorly-lit suburbs of the capital.

As with a predominant number of similar 'otherworldly entities' (i.e. The Loch Ness Monster, UFO occupants and sightings of ghosts and apparitions), 'Jack' was variously described in number of different forms. For example, he is said to have appeared as a milk-white bull, a similarly coloured bear, and a gigantic baboon. When in humanoid form, he was seen wearing a suit of shining brass armour and on another occasion, in a suit of burnished steel. In Hackney, London, he appeared as a 'Lamp-lighter' who, unlike similar employees, had the bizzare habit of walking upon his hands and carrying his ladder between his feet!!!

## JACK TURNS IMPRESSIONIST.

Just two days after the attack on the unfortunate Ms. Scales, Jane Alsop, also aged 18, became 'Jack's' next victim. Jane shared a house in Beerhind Lane, in the East End of London, with her two sisters and their father. One night, Jane, responding to a terrible banging at the front door was confronted by an extremely agitated man who asserted he was a police officer. He was swathed in a long, black cloak and seemed to be consciously avoiding the light that shone from the house by standing in the shadows.

'For God's sake, bring me a light', he cried. 'We have caught Spring Heeled Jack here in the lane'.

Jane was wildly excited. She had of course heard the stories of this legendary bogeyman before, but had always dismissed them as faerie tales or the product of over-active imaginations. Without uttering a word, she raced back into the house to grab herself a candle before quickly handing it over to the 'police officer'. Suddenly, the man shrugged off his concealing cloak, and to her horror Jane saw that he was wearing what appeared to be a horned, close-fitting helmet and a skin-tight suit of what looked like white oilskin. In the jittery light cast by the candle, his hideously bulging eyes burned like fiery coals (there's that reference to 'glowing eyes' again, folks). Without warning, he grabbed hold of the poor girl by her neck and pinned her head under his arm. Somehow she managed to tear herself away just as he began ripping at her dress with talon-like fingernails. She let out a piercing scream but before help could arrive, her assailant vomitted blue and white flames into Jane's face. When her two sisters, Mary and Sarah came running to her assistance they between them contrived to drag Jane away from the maniac and into the sanctuary of the house, slamming the door firmly on 'Jack's' fearful countenance.

When further help finally arrived, 'Jack's' would-be captors could only stare in astonished disbelief as he bounded his way back into the ebon darkness from which he'd emerged.

A week or so later, 'Jack' apparently tried a similar attempt at deception, but for some undisclosed reason, the intended victim grew suspicious at the outset, and he was forced to flee unappeased. A witness to this abortive attack claimed that 'Jack' had been wearing an ornate crest embroidered with the golden letter 'W' underneath his dark cloak. Could this information provide a clue as to his true identity?

## 'THE DEVIL HIMSELF'.

In the wake of these and subsequent incidents, the police stepped up their investigations, posses were organised, and large rewards were offered for information leading to the arrest of 'Spring-Heeled Jack'.

The Duke of Wellington, a national hero if ever there was one, elected to dig out his gun and go and hunt down 'the fiend', on horseback. Like all others before him however, he failed.

Perhaps not surprisingly, as 'Jack's' infamy grew, so his actual exploits, (in London at least), became less and less frequent, although accounts now began to filter in from all over the rest of southern England. There were still one or two sightings deep in the secluded backstreets of the capital, but the vast majority came from tiny, remote villages in the midst of the Home Counties.

In 1843, 'Jack' appeared in Northamptonshire, Hampshire, and East Anglia, where most witnesses described him as being 'the very image of the Devil himself', with his horns and eyes of flame, and who took particular delight in frightening the drivers of mail coaches.

As with most outbreaks of strange occurrences and unusual phenomena, the all-too-human hoaxer had to get in on the act at some stage, (see this issue's Loch Ness Monster 'Surgeons Photograph Hoax' for some topical confirmation of THAT fact). And so it proved in this case. In 1845, a butcher from Bradford admitted to being responsible for a spate of reports issuing from Ealing and Hanwell in West London, of a shrieking black figure that leapt over hedges in the dead hours before dawn.

Later that same year however, there was NO obvious perpetrator forthcoming for the only recorded fatality directly attributed to 'Spring-Heeled Jack'...

5

JACK THE LADY-KILLER.

In 1845, at a cheesy, down-trodden slum called Jacob's Island, in Bermondsey, a 13 year old prostitute, Maria Davies, was allegedly killed by 'Jack'. The area was formerly made up of crumbling houses linked by wooden galleries that stretched across ditches brimming with all kinds of stinking, disease-ridden filth.

It was in the midst of these appalling surroundings, that 'Jack' reputedly trapped Maria on a bridge over a place called 'Folly Ditch'. Without warning, and as on so many previous occasions, he breathed fire into his victims face - This time however, there was to be no dismissing the attack as an essentially harmless, if over-the-top prank. This time 'Jack' turned murderer.

He threw the hapless young girl off the bridge into the clinging sewage below, where she eventually drowned. The ditch was dragged by the police and her body was recovered. The verdict at the inquest that followed was one of death by misadventure.

The inhabitants of Jacob's Island disagreed.

Perhaps they knew better.

'Spring-Heeled Jack' was also forwarded as a possible candidate for the famous 'Devil's Footprints', the marks that appeared overnight in the freshly fallen snow right across the West Country in February, 1855, (see future issue for full story). The good folk of South Devon towns awoke to find what looked like footprints that ran in sequence along the tops of walls, over roof-tops, and across enclosed courtyards. No satisfactory explanation has ever been offered as to their origin.

Was 'Jack' once more enjoying another of his seemingly never-ending supply of practical jokes on an unwitting population???

## 'A HAND AS COLD AND CLAMMY AS A CORPSE'

It wasn't until the November of 1872, that 'Jack' made the front-page headlines in 'The News Of The World', once more.

To use their own words, 'London is in a state of commotion owing to what is known as "The Peckham Ghost"... A mysterious figure, quite as alarming in appearance as 'Spring-Heeled Jack', who terrorised a past generation.

At Aldershot Barracks, in early March, 1877, a sentry on guard at North Camp, witnessed a 'peculiar figure' that leaped and bounded across a nearby common in his direction. Alarmed, the sentry shouted (in time honoured fashion), 'Who goes there?' The challenge went unheeded, and the figure vanished from sight for several seconds before suddenly re-appearing right next to the soldier and slapped him in the face with 'a hand as cold and clammy as a corpse'.

In the days that followed, there were reports of further attacks on different soldiers at the barracks. A rumour was prevalent amongst the guards that 'Jack' was impervious to bullets after the first sentry to encounter him had shot at the retreating figure. In fact, it transpired that the soldier had only fired blanks.

Once again, the identity and motive for these increasingly bizzare antics remain a potentially unsolvable enigma.

Ten years later, 'Jack' made what was to be his (so far as we know), penultimate appearance at Oxton in Cheshire, when he terrified a number of young ladies, one of whom was playing the piano in the Drawing Room of her father's house. A black clad shape rushed into the room and swept all the ornaments off the mantelpiece, before vanishing suddenly.

The indomitable Paul Begg, reminds us with that rather cynical attitude of his that 'The Liverpool Citizen', (a contemporary newspaper), referred to a story doing the rounds that 'a number of young swells...Sons of well-known men and bearing historic names, had wagered £1,000 pounds that one of their group could successfully impersonate 'Jack'. The bet was accepted...'

Does the preceding case then provide proof that the wager was indeed won???

## 'SPRING-HEELED JACK'S LAST STAND'?

'Jack's' final goodbye performance (if indeed that's what it was - This writer has severe doubts about that now, but we'll deal with this later in the article), occurred even closer to home.

In Everton, deep in the heart of Merseyside to be exact.

Once again, that paragon of honesty and virtue 'The News of the World', was quick to report that on September the 25th, 1904, crowds of people gathered to watch 'Jack' scrambling up and down William Henry Street, where he executed tremendous leaps, some of which are said to have exceeded 25ft (which is obviously a height far greater than any ordinary mortal could ever hope to achieve. Finally, he bounded over the houses and vanished...Apparently, never to

be seen again.

Once more, the ever redoubtable Mr Begg, deemed it wise to bring to light the fact that only four days prior to the aforementioned report, 'The Liverpool Echo' had contained in its pages an article about a house in William Henry Street that was said to be haunted by a poltergeist. The story reached sensational dimensions as it was passed on from mouth to mouth.

At the same time, there was further excitement being caused by a man afflicted by religious mania (of the type personified by Carrie Whites' mother in Stephen King's novel), who enjoyed nothing better than to climb onto his roof and scream to any interested parties (and one presumes to any UNINTERESTED parties), that his wife was a devil or a witch. Police and firemen often tried to persuade the nutter to come on down, but he somehow managed to give 'em the slip by jumping from one roof to the next.

Our dear old friend Beggsy, has suggested that a combination of these two factors may have become juxtaposed with a goodly sized dollop of exaggeration and outright fabrication...And thus we have ended u with a wholly fictitious account of a 'Spring-Heeled Jack' sighting...

#### OF FAERIES, DEMONS AND COSMIC JOKERS.

Various theories have been propounded as to the 'real' identity of 'S.H.J.'. Living as I do in the fair county of Merseyside, I've found you only have to mention 'Jack's' name to anyone with fond memories of their parents or grandparents to tap into a rich vein of possibilities and potential explanations, spanning the whole spectrum from the entirely plausible, to the downright fanciful.

Some believe he was an insane practical joker (or more likely a whole GROUP of pranksters), who went to totally ridiculous lengths to get his/their kicks. Someone else suggested the culprit was an acrobat or energetic circus clown. And I've even heard it proposed that a demented animal owner had trained a dressed up kangaroo to scare the pants off the general public.

On the other hand, there are also those who believe 'Jack's' origins are based firmly in the realms of the supernatural. Certainly, if we are to lend credence to even a few of the feats attributed to this maddeningly elusive character, it's easy to see why this should be so.

And despite the skeptical attitude employed by many modern researchers, there at least remains the possibility that 'Jack' was/is not of this Earth...

Stories of creatures similar to 'S.H.J.' abound throughout the folklore and superstitions of many widely divergent nations.

Obviously, different kinds of people have different kinds of experiences, but when it comes to recounting their tales of encounters with unknown entities, the vast majority seem to see a more-or-less HUMANOID type of figure, which there are often fairly good reasons for believing is not as 'real' (in the accepted view of what WE term 'reality'), as it seems to be. But if that proves to be the case, is it perhaps 'real' in another sense.

There are of course many definitions used to describe these entities. For example; 'BEDROOM INVADERS' (the products of the darkest childhood nightmares

made flesh?).

GHOSTS: (Apparitions, omens of impending death, wandering helpless souls lost in limbo, projections from the future, recordings from the past, or the spirits of the dead?).

RELIGIOUS AND MYSTICAL VISIONS: (Purported sightings of saints, Christ-like figures and the Blessed Virgin Mary).

HALLUCINATIONS: (Self explanatory).

DOPPELGANGERS: (Every human beings twin/double).

GUARDIAN ANGELS: (Every human beings protecting spirit).

FAERIES AND DEMONS: (Not necessarily the inhabitants of childrens morality fables or the evil tempters of godly men in biblical theology).

...And lest we forget...EXTRATERRESTIAL UFO OCCUPANTS: (Surely self-explanatory).

Such entities have been reported throughout history, frequently enough to qualify as a scientific anomaly.

I guess what I'm attempting to postulate here in my own waffling, never-getting-to-the-point manner, is quite simply this; Was 'Spring-Heeled Jack' just another incarnation - a contemporary Victorian one - of essentially the same phenomenon?

As I believe I've already stated, DIFFERENT entities appear to DIFFERENT people...One persons 'Man In Black' sighting is another persons 'Demonic Manifestation'. Another persons 'UFO Occupant' is another persons 'Spring-Heeled Jack'.

That this may indeed be so is perhaps illustrated by something one of my best friends, (and co-editor of this Fanzine coincidentally enough), Stevie Gee, saw when he was 12 years old or thereabouts. He was playing with a group of friends outside his house on Bromborough Road, Bebington, when his attention was drawn to a figure etched in silhouette standing atop the roof of the house opposite. All the kids present witnessed the same thing. A 'man' not much taller than themselves, dressed in what they could only describe as a 'Batman' outfit, with the cape and hood, complete with a pair of ear-like points. With the charming innocence of the very young they didn't think to question WHY 'Batman' would be crusading in THEIR locality, and they later related this incident with no more excitement than if it'd been one of their father's up on the roof.

It was only in later years, when logic came a-calling with all the subtlety of a particularly unsubtle sledgehammer, that Steve realised that there was maybe something a little strange about a small guy in a 'Super-Hero' costume clambering across a dangerous stretch of roof-top, without any apparent means of actually getting up there...Or indeed of getting back down again.

With the benefit of hindsight, but looking back with the slightly more blinkered eyes of an adult, it is of course entirely possible to assume that some loon

from God knows where decided to pull a stunt that would have precisely the effect it ultimately did have on the witnesses.

I guess it's also feasible that the kids, their minds more receptive to the myriad wonders of an unchained imagination, shared a kind of mass hallucination...such jointly viewed illusions aren't as uncommon as you may think...

And yep, it's also perfectly reasonable to suggest they were all simply mistaken in what they actually saw, and now time has exaggerated all memory to the point where no-one can say, with any degree of certainty, WHAT they saw...

ALL the above is possible...

Likely even...

Perfectly and indubitably so...

But then so too, in my humble opinion, is the possibility that 'Spring-Heeled Jack' (or a very close relative), is alive and well and living on in a thousand untold guises...

And maybe...Just maybe...It might well be wise to heed the warning drifting across a century and more...

'SPRING-HEELLED JACK WILL GET YOU IF YOU DON'T WATCH OUT!!!'

9

#### A FINAL FOOT (or should that read HEEL) NOTE:

I couldn't wind up this admittedly rather lengthy article, without first making a brief mention of a spate of (to my mind at least) slightly unsettling coincidences that surrounded the penning of the said piece.

None of the following has any direct reference to the contents of the article, so I'll kindly excuse you if choose to skip the next page or so.

For those faithful readers who have elected to stick with me, at any rate long enough to see if I need measuring out for a nice, comfy, white strait-jacket, let me just outline what happened the first week I began researching the background on 'Jack'.

The only illustrations I had of 'S.H.J' were tucked away in issue 39 of 'The Unexplained' magazine (Orbis Publishing, 1980). And so, together with the aforementioned Stevie Gee, I traipsed up to the Civic Centre Public Library to see if they had any further material I could use. No sooner had I set foot in the cool, air-conditioned building, than I came across a book ( a brand new acquisition by all accounts - Certainly it was in the 'New Books' section, and a quick glance at the inside jacket revealed that no-one had yet taken this volume out. There was no blue-inked, rubber-stamped date on the frontspiece), called 'The Unexplained' by an author named Jenny Randles. I browsed briefly through the contents, the faintly fabulous smell of the pages filling my nostrils, and saw that it was a chronological history of strange events of the 20th century. And three guesses with no prizes for taking a pop at WHO was pictured on the opening page...Yep, that's correct...It was a head and shoulders portrait of Jenny Randles...

But on the THIRD page in, the first illustration of anything remotely weird

(okay, okay. I know there's a cheap joke to be had here, but I'll pass if you don't mind), was indeed of 'Jack' being shot at by two police officers.

Nothing particularly strange so far then.

Except maybe inspiring a slightly raised eyebrow or two when you consider the odds against there being a brand new addition to the treatises concerning paranormal phenomena featuring 'S.H.J.' and including a drawing I'd never seen before, on the first time I'd set foot in the library for three or four years. After leafing through every other volume dealing with a similar subject, I never found even a single MENTION of 'Jack'.

The following morning, a Sunday, I discovered a free magazine with 'The People', called amazingly enough, 'The Unexplained'. And mid-way through the pictorial anecdotes on such subjects as Fish Falls, Pterodactyls sighted over Texas, and the obligatory Alligators being found in the sewers of England, there he was!!! 'Spring-Heeled Jack' in all his glory - and again it was a sketch I'd never set eyes on before.

Doubtless I would have dismissed the above incidents with little more attention than you'd be likely to lavish upon a particularly boring documentary like, 'How to Play Snooker the Terry Griffiths Way'.

However, just one week later, things took a decidedly nasty turn.

Two more of my friends were winding each other up one night about what they would do if either of 'em were to sight 'Jack' leaping from a bridge on Magazine Road, Bromborough.

Forty eight hours later, I was returning home from a wonderfully riveting evening out in the 'Wirral's Number One Nite-Spot!!!' (assuming your taste in music is limited to 'bloop-bloop, bleep-bleep, squrg-squrg monotonous drivel, and your conversation level raises no higher than that expected at a 'People With Full-Frontal Lobotomy's Wine And Anthrax Party').

It was a 50p a pint night, and needless to say, I was non4e to steady on me tootsies. Not too far from the bridge were my mates had joked about 'Jack' bounding across the A41 motorway to frighten passing motorists, my left foot had a bit of an altercation with somebody's front garden wall. The result was as painful as it was inevitable; My left foot (which sounds to me like a helluva good name for a movie), finished up on the losing side, with all the consequences that entails...

And, once again, you've guessed correctly, you win the 'Blankety Blank Cheque Book and Pen' for predicting that it was my HHEEL that bore the brunt of my subsequent injuries.

Early the next evening, after having spent most of the day in Arrowe Park's Accident and Emergency Dept in a state of agony, my Dad's friend Carl, called round on the way to 'The Village Inn' for a pint. He took one look at my bandaged foot and without a word of a lie, and with no prompting from yours truly, said; 'Hello, it's Sore-Heeled Jack'

YOU may not find any of the above even REMOTELY creepy.

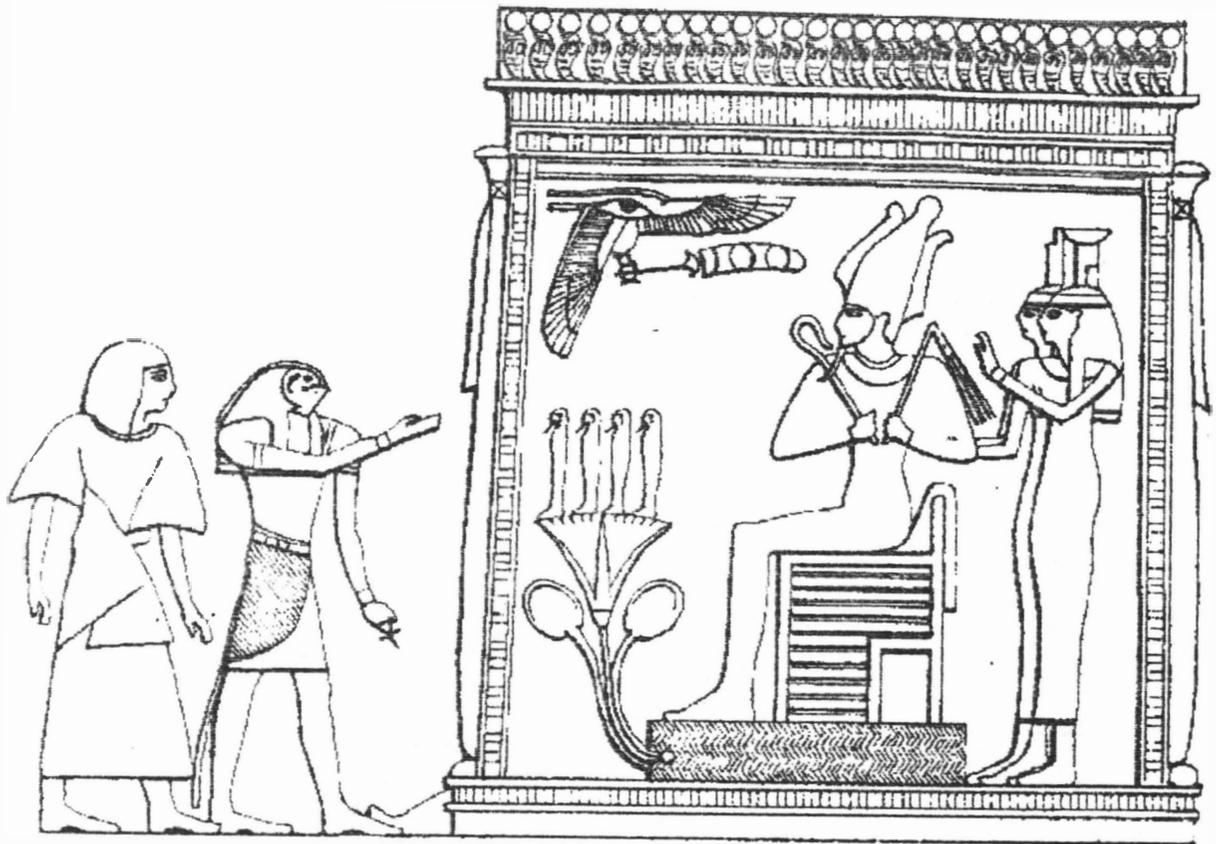
You'll pardon me I'm sure, but I guess I DO.

I recall the words of a famous investigator of strange phenomena, John Keel, who warns; 'Delving into the supernatural can bring about a whole bunch of weird coincidences. And sometimes, in EXTREME cases, you can pretty soon find yourself in dire mortal danger as a consequence of your investigations into the

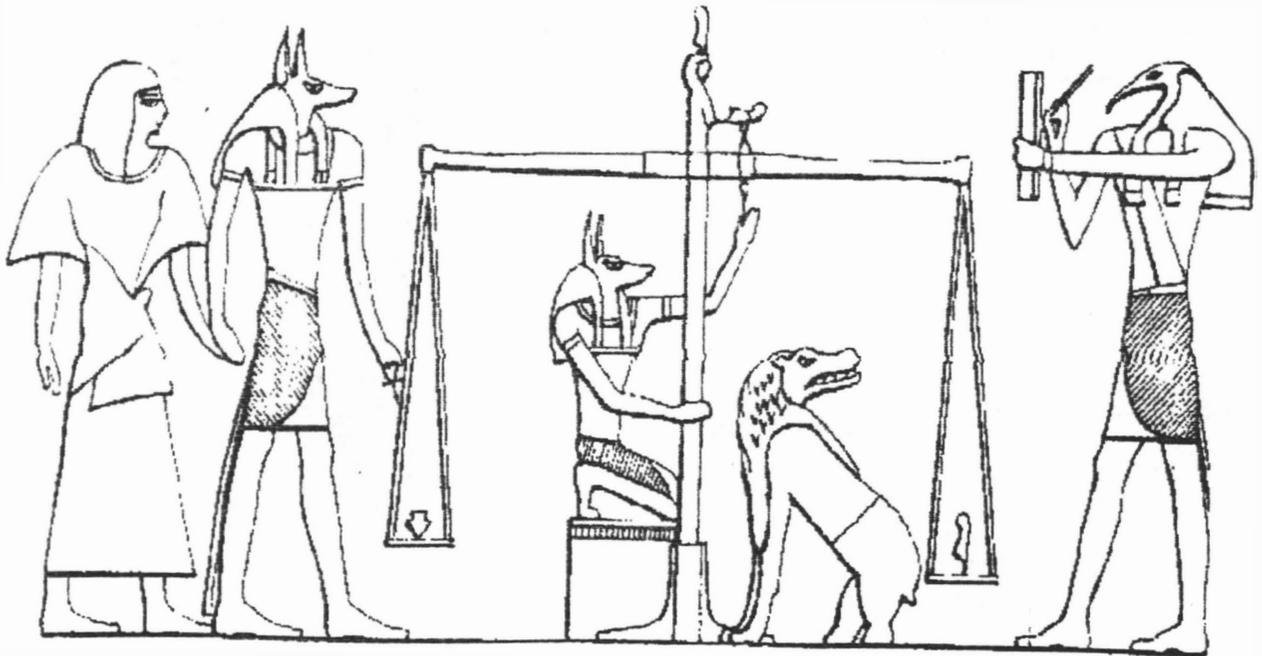
UNKNOWN.

AND SOMETIMES... ECHOING ALONG THE PASSAGE OF TIME... A MOTHER'S WARNING CAN BE HEARD AS SHE ADMONISHES HER FRIGHTENED CHILDREN...

' SPRING-HEELLED JACK WILL GET YOU IF YOU DON'T WATCH OUT !!!'



*Illustrations showing the presentation of a worthy soul at the court of Osiris (top) and the weighing of the heart ceremony.*



## TIME'S DARK LAUGHTER.

A Selection Of Recent Weird And Wonderful Press Cuttings.

If you ever wanted proof that FACT is always stranger than fiction, you only have to take yourself a peek at the following snippets from the annals of the great British newspapers..

They are usually tucked away right at the bottom of the page,(unless of course it's the height of the "Silly Season", or you're an avid reader of such pathetic drivel as 'The Sport') so that, unless you're blessed with perfectly good, 20/20 vision, you're apt to pass 'em by without ever knowing they were there...

We here at 'Dead Of Night', however, are only too happy to reprint every cutting that we come across...Be it a major Loch Ness exclusive or, (more likely) a three line UFO report with suitably lurid headline...saving you the trouble of straining your eyesight in the search for a slice of REAL news...(although if you SHOULD come across ANYTHING remotely 'strange' in your daily rag, we'd be most appreciative if you could let us have it for use in a future issue.

So, Constant Reader, grab yourself a hot mug of coffee, take the phone off the hook, leave the tv screen blank, and sink into your comfy-est armchair, and before long you'll discover that "In the Fortean World, the most implausible, illogical things show themselves to be factual. No matter how much they seem to be mimicking the contents of folk-fiction..."

1991

### WEIRD HUMAN BEHAVIOUR.

Quite honestly, this is a very difficult case to try and categorize. The suggestion that the woman involved in these quite bizzare attacks may have had some sort of "mental problem" connected with babies, is at best supposition, and at worst a wild guess based upon a desperate need to find a rational explanation. Similar acts of graveyard desecration are often blamed on 'Satanists' or 'Black Magicians'...And it seems a trifle strange that there was no mention of that possiblity contained in the account.

## Vandal's grudge

● A WOMAN who smashes the heads off statues of the infant Jesus was being hunted yesterday by police.

● They fear she may have a grudge and could attack a real child.

● The attacker has struck three times at Catholic churches in Ruath, Cardiff. In each case the child's head was smashed while the Madonna was untouched. A woman was seen fleeing after one of the attacks.

*Ruath, Cardiff. Daily Manc.  
31st January.*

## GHOSTS AND APPARITIONS.

An archetypal tabloid account of ghostly phenomena deep in the heart of the editor's home county of Merseyside, West Derby, to be exact.

It's interesting to note the firemen's embarrassment at having had to report sighting something that lies outside the accepted sense of what passes for reality. Their apparent reluctance adds a slice of credence to this tale of a haunted fire station.

The resultant advice seeking from a local medium also adds some weight to the fireman's veracity... After all, most people regard 'Spirit-Sensitives' as being predominantly cranks or charlatans out to make a few bob at the expense of the gullible... It follows that men working in positions of responsibility are not likely to resort to calling upon such colourful individuals unless they truly believed there was no other option... The catalyst for the haunting seems to have been the building of an extension to the station which unearthed an old well... Disturbances of the ground and the uncovering of ancient sites often gives rise to similar phenomena. Just ask Professor Bernard Quatermass fresh from a run-in with the DEMONS of Hobb's lane!!!

## CURSES.

Any fan of all those classic late-night horror double bills, will be more than familiar with Castle Dracula. The castle is reputed to be the focus of inherent evil. And sometimes, this evil is embodied in a succession of bad luck and curses.

# SPOOKED!

Liverpool Echo, Thursday, January 3, 1991

by Val Woon

**FIREMEN** have put out their own 999 call ... for ghostbusters.

Alarm bells are ringing at Liverpool's West Derby Road fire station because of some ghostly goings-on.

The lads on the night shift are convinced they have got an out-of-this-world visitor — or two.

Fireman Keith Taylor said: "I'm very sceptical about these things and in our job you see some disturbing sights — but I tell you, this has really got to me."

### Spiritualists

Various watches claim to have seen apparitions in their rest room every night shift.

The man figure appears to be a Dickensian looking man — who local spiritualists claim is Edward Wilson, who used to live on the site of the fire station.

There has also been another

something. Up until recently we have all been too embarrassed to admit to such a thing."

Fireman Tony Jordan reckons there has been something weird about the station for six years.

The firemen have called in the local Spiritualist Church to help.

Church treasurer Coral Matthews, who put them in touch with a medium, said: "Without doubt there is some kind of spirit activity down there."

### Fear

"It often happens that people like firemen, or ambulancemen or policemen who, as we say, work for the good of mankind, have a compassion and sensitivity which makes them susceptible to sensing spirits.

"From what we know about this case they have nothing to fear. The spirit is simply very interested in the work the firemen do and the technology that is there. He says he is also learning a whole new language ..."

very tall man, and sometimes a group of children.

The firemen have seen the figures walking up and down the room, standing over their bunks and even feeling as if their sleeping bags are being pulled away.

And they say it has got worse since work began on building an extension to the station which has unearthed an old water well.

Keith said: "It sounds far fetched and if it had not happened to me I would never have believed it. But the other night I woke up and there was this bloke, staring at me.

"It's only now that we have all started talking about it that we realise we have all experienced



Ghostly ... a sketch of the fire station spirit

## Ghost gives fire crews the jitters

West Derby, Liverpool.  
Liverpool Echo, 3rd January.

# DRACULA HORROR TRIP SPOOKS SARAH

TV star Sarah Kennedy told yesterday how she was spooked by a nightmare trip to the land of Dracula.

The trip to Romania to film travel agents taking part in the show *Buaman's Holiday* turned into a real-life horror story.

Director Jenny Dodd was bitten by a dog and had to be flown home with a badly-gashed leg.

Then cameraman Andy MacDonald was almost killed when a huge boulder falling from Dracula's Castle in Transylvania missed him by inches.

Sarah said: "It was very odd. Strange things kept happening."

"Jenny was gushing fountains of blood but they couldn't treat her in Bucharest. And we feared Andy might have been killed."

Transylvania, Romania. Daily  
Mail 12th July.

#### ALLEN BIG CAT.

A typical tabloid reaction to a sighting of a 'PUMA' in the wilds of Britain. They're more concerned with the creature's proximity to one of the Royals than with the fact that there shouldn't be such animals roaming free in England...

### PUMA HUNT NEAR FERGIE

WORRIED police were yesterday hunting a puma-type beast on the loose near the Duke and Duchess of York's almost-completed new home.

A woman walking her dog spotted the snarling big cat lurking in the bushes near Ascot, Berks.

Ascot, Berkshire. *The Scum*.  
11th June.

#### STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE.

A mystery of the sea that had it occurred anywhere near the dreaded Bermuda Triangle, would doubtless have had Charlie Berlitz wetting his trousers...

### BOAT MYSTERY

Businessman Clive Carr, 47, is missing after his yacht was found drifting Marie Celeste style, with the sails set off Salcombe, Devon.

Devon, England. *The Scum*.  
12th March.

#### SUPERSTITION.

THE street number of a rectory has been changed from 666 to 668 because church parishioners in Central Falls, Rhode Island, feared the old number was a sign of the devil.

Rhode Island, USA. *News Of The World*. Summer.

#### ANIMAL ATTACKS.

Looks like our feathered friends have been watching too many Alfred Hitchcock movies...

## HELP, BIRDS ARE BITING!

RESIDENTS in a quiet street are facing the real-life terror of Alfred Hitchcock's film *The Birds*.

A family of crows swoop down to attack every time people open their doors in Grange Gardens, Hampstead, north London.

By an amazing coincidence

Daphne Du Maurier, author of *The Birds*, used to live nearby...

"It's terrifying," says Patricia Abomnes, who was pecked as she got out of her car.

North Hampstead, England.  
*Sunday People*. April 15th.

#### HALLOWE'EN HORRORS.

Every time the 31st October comes around, you'll hear the warning voices of concerned christianity offering their kill-joy advice to youngsters who have the temerity to engage in a spot of frivolity on this date.

It's a bit rich, especially when you consider the christians nicked just about every pagan festival going to suit their own religion.

## Kids 'lured by the devil'

HALLOWE'EN fun and games are luring Britain's children into devil worship, a top churchman warned yesterday.

Bishop of Chester, the Right Rev Michael Baughen, wants the spooky festival banned.

And Anglesey vicar Phil Hughes said: "It is wrong to view Hallowe'en as harmless fun."

General. *Daily Manc*. 31st October.

## UFO'S

Something of a rarity here. I don't have a whole pile of reports emanating from this particular country. The Balkans and their immediate neighbours are notoriously secretive about such things... Even today

## Peeping UFO

HUNGARY — A saucer-shaped UFO escorted a truck driver to his home in northeast Hungary and "peeped" through the curtains, the Hungarian MTI news agency reported today.

The driver, Mr Zoltan Bartus, and a companion said they noticed the luminous object as big as a full moon following their truck near the village of Szecsnyfelfalu. They climbed into Mr Bartus's house through the back window, hoping to shake the UFO, which shone a green beam into the room. —

*Szecsnyfelfalu, Hungary.  
Irish Times 1st October*

An account a little closer to home this time. 'pear-shaped' UFO'S are not as uncommon as you might think, in fact the traditional saucer shape isn't quite as ubiquitous as is popularly believed

## Mystery light spotted in sky

EARLY riser Ian Morrish wondered if he was seeing things on Tuesday when an unusual light in the sky changed from round to pear shape and sprouted wings.

"My wife thinks I'm mad," says Ian, of Oxmans Cottages, Westleigh.

"But I am 100 per cent sure it wasn't a star, the moon or a plane."

Ian spotted the bright light at 5.30am while he was looking from Westleigh towards Eastleigh. It was at an angle of about 30 degrees.

"It was about the size of a five pence piece — three or four times bigger than a star — with two wings and it was a long, long way up," he says.

"I watched it for about an hour and a half until it became daylight and clouds obscured it. It wasn't moving.

"I thought it might be the Russian space station, but that wouldn't have changed shape like this did."

He took some pictures of the object, but next morning was too cloudy for it to be seen again.

*Westleigh, North Devon.  
Flying Saucer Review. 10th  
October.*

## KILLER ANIMALS.

Stories of Mother Nature's creatures engaged in open revolt against humanity are not the exclusive property of horror fiction writers. Even the tiniest of insects can sometimes wreak havoc upon mankind.

## ANTS KILLED MY HUSBAND

WIDOW Hazel Murphey claims her husband was bitten to death by hundreds of fire ants as they slept at a motel.

Charles awoke with nausea and died from an allergic reaction after staying at the motel in Houston, Texas. Hazel is suing the owners.

*Houston, Texas. 14th  
October. Daily Manc.*

## UFO'S

A sighting that adds weight to the 'Wednesday Phenomenon' a term coined by the famous UFO researcher John Keel (See future issue for in-depth feature on this peculiarity of Ufology) mostly due to the fact that it occurred on... Surprise, surprise... A Wednesday.

A MAN says he saw a UFO over Tunbridge Wells on Wednesday night.

It had large red rectangular rotating lights; and hovered over parts of the town, he claimed.

Patrick Syder, 28, a geologist, told the Courier the he and his friend Damian Payne are convinced they saw a UFO from a flat in Nevill Park, moving slowly over Hungershall Park shortly before midnight.

"We saw a single light, then it dimmed and moved off very slowly. The light changed to three rectangular panelled lights which were rotating. We could not believe it, it certainly wasn't any normal type of aircraft."

Mr Syder, who added that he and his friend had not been drinking, watched the rotating craft for about 30 seconds before it disappeared behind the trees.

But Tunbridge Wells police, although used to strange happenings in the night, said no-one had reported a UFO.

*Tunbridge Wells, Kent and  
Sussex Courier. 27th  
September..*

## WEIRD HUMAN BEHAVIOUR

Who says life doesn't imitate art?

Here's an updated version of the Romulus And Remus legend.

### **No taming a wolf boy**

DOCTORS have abandoned hope of changing a boy brought up by a pack of wolves into a normal human.

The savage, christened Djuma - Wolf Boy - still walks on all fours and eats raw meat, 29 years after he was found by oil explorers in the wastes of the Soviet Union.

The wolf boy, who was about seven when he was found, will stay in hospital at Ashkhabad. A doctor said: "Djuma will howl at the moon for the rest of his life."

Ashkhabad, CIS. Daily Manc. April.

## UFO'S

The really strange thing about this report contained in the popular press, is that there was never any further information concerning this unidentified object forthcoming. Was it duly discovered to be a harmless chunk of space debris, or a small meteorite?

Or is there a more sinister reason behind withholding the facts???

## Mystery object heads for Earth

SCIENTISTS are baffled by a mystery object due to pass close to Earth next month.

The object, which measures one yard across, could be the smallest asteroid ever seen or a 20-year-old Apollo moon rocket.

Astronomer Brian Marsden said: "Unless the military knows, no one has a clue."

High above the Earth. Today.  
29th November.

## DEMONOLOGY.

A quite blatant example of how public hysteria can be whipped up by the sensation-seeking Sunday tabloids.

Whilst there is little doubt that there exist certain sicko individuals who proclaim themselves to be 'Satanists', the recent spate of Ritual Child Abuse cases that were laughed out of court, prove that sometimes the media can influence public opinion to the extent that they're ready to accept the most ridiculous notions at face-value.

## War on Satanic orgies

A SATAN Squad has been set up by Scotland Yard to track down devil-worshippers who prey on children.

The crack detective team - the first of its kind in Britain - will have nationwide powers to probe Black Magic rites.

Senior Metropolitan officers set up the group after the Epping Forest Satan case, which collapsed at the Old Bailey last month.

During the trial it was claimed little girls were forced to eat babies and humans were sacrificed.

The case, in which two girls were claimed to have been sexually abused by their parents, godparents and a family friend, collapsed after the prosecution said the legal system was not equipped to deal with it.

Britain. News Of The World.  
14th July.

## DEMONOLOGY

Proof indeed that even in the midst of the so-called 'enlightened' scientific age, the fear and irrational belief in the inhabitants of some dark, imaginary plane, is still as prevalent as it was in the middle ages.

## Exorcism by water kills mum

A MOTHER killed herself by swallowing 15 PINTS of mineral water in a bid to wash away the Devil.

Her husband, sister and two daughters are in hospital after the bizarre exorcism ceremony.

Christiane Confre, 41, from Halingen, Northern France, was convinced she was possessed by the Devil.

When the church failed to "cure" her and her family, she went to a local shop and bought all the mineral water in stock.

Then the family sat down and began to drink the water non-stop to "cleanse" their bodies.

They guzzled 100 pints. Christiane flooded her lungs and died. The others were taken gasping for breath to hospital.

Halingen, France. Daily Manc. Summer.

## LAKE MONSTER.

'Nessie' isn't the only Monster rearing its head from the dark depths of isolated lakes to confound zoologists. Here's evidence from the former USSR

● A RUSSIAN version of the Loch Ness monster has surfaced in a remote Siberian lake, says Tass news agency.

● Residents describe it as "a giant green snake, over 20ft long, with a sheep's head."

Siberia, Russia. Daily Manc. 2nd November.

**Nesski on  
the prowl**

## WEIRD HUMAN BEHAVIOUR

People do the strangest things. Talk about total over-reactions..

## Shamed to death

A CHINESE couple committed suicide in embarrassment on their nephew's wedding day after relatives scoffed at the value of their gift.

They had followed custom by writing in a gift book that they were giving £2 — less than half what other relatives gave.

Unable to bear the scorn according to a Shanghai report, the husband hanged himself after his wife drowned herself in a vat.

Shanghai, China. Daily Slur. 7th July.

## ANIMAL KINDNESS.

A touching example of the possibility that 'dumb' creatures may have real feelings and emotions...Not that dissimilar to we humans. This is just ONE of several accounts we have on file that seem to indicate that animals are indeed capable of experiencing the feelings of joy and sorrow.

## Mongrel 'suicide'

FAITHFUL pet Trudi the mongrel leapt off a cliff to her death after seeing her master die.

She was seen howling and barking shortly before jumping.

Her owner's body had been found minutes before on rocks below the cliffs in New South Wales, Australia.

New South Wales, Australia. Daily Slur. 17th October.

### CANNIBALISM.

Real-life video nastie...I honestly can't stomach writing too much about this subject...

#### **Wife gets the chop**

A LITHUANIAN farmer who killed and cooked his first wife 10 years ago has now murdered his second after she stole from him. This time the 51-year-old father of four cut the "best meat" off her body and put it in a bucket of salt, according to police.

Lithuania. The Sun. 3th October.

### WITCHCRAFT.

Even today, some people place more faith in the occult than they do in your average surgeon...

#### **A grisly cure...**

A NIGERIAN caught with a bag of human fingers cut from an exhumed corpse told police he needed them to cure his brother's epilepsy. Police made the discovery when a tax was stopped at a checkpoint in Benin City, capital of mid-western Bendel State.

Nigeria. Liverpool Echo. Summer.

### WEATHER ANOMALY.

#### **Ice 'bombs' crash down**

HAILSTONES as big as walnuts crashed down on a town yesterday.

"They sounded like bombs dropping on the roof," said a woman in Bedford.

A sizzling day in the south and east of England, with temperatures nudging 90F, ended with torrential rain in places, bringing chaos to roads.

Bedford, England. Daily Slur. 11th July.

### COSMIC JOKE.

I know we've already collated two whole pages of synchronicity/coincidence snippets, but I honestly couldn't resist including this classic...

#### **Truly striking tale**

HORROR story fan Jennifer Roberts saw fiction turn into fact on a camping holiday.

She was struck by lightning while reading a book featuring bolts of lightning on the cover. It burned through 291 pages of Stephen King's spine chiller The Dead Zone and left her paralysed for over an hour. Jennifer, 23, was saved by the rubber mattress she was lying on during her holiday in Queensland, Australia.

Queensland, Australia. Daily Slur. 1st November.

### RELIGIOUS PHENOMENA.

We may live in essentially faithless times, but it seems that mankind is a sucker for a bout of the old purveyor of miraculous cures...

#### **Crowds flock to healer**

THOUSANDS of Nigerian lepers, cripples and other disabled people are flocking to the home of a reputed miracle worker.

Hajiya Zulai, 35, the wife of a Nigerian security guard in, claims to have cured 1,200 people in a week, without charge.

Nigeria. Liverpool Echo. Winter.

...And here's what happens if you're taken in by them...

#### **Tonic kills 72**

SEVENTY-TWO people died of alcohol poisoning in India after drinking a traditional Hindu stomach medicine.

India. Daily Manc. 13th November.

## UFO'S

One of the more plausible explanations proffered by the skeptical fraternity is the frequent claim that some mysterious aerial objects are in fact terrestrial airships...I guess it's one of those situations where you have to make up your own mind...

# Airship theory on UFO claims

A BIRDWATCHER claims a "UFO" seen by dozens of people in Nottingham last month was an airship.

Mr David Palmer, of Birchfield Road, Arnold, said he spotted the airship through nightglasses he uses for watching owls.

He said he saw the craft flying at about 500ft from a friend's house in Arnold, on May 22.

Mr Palmer, 39, said: "I managed to get a good look at it through my glasses and you could make out the airship form quite clearly."

A spokesman for the East Midlands UFO Research Organisation said they had contacted airship owners and none of them had a craft flying at that time.

East Midlands Airport say they checked at the time of the sightings and there was no airship recorded, but said they do not record everything which goes through

Nottingham. Nottingham Evening Post. 14th June.

## OUT-OF-PLACE ANIMALS.

The old Greenhouse Effect has taken the brunt of the blame for reports of creatures being spotted far from the country of their origin. The fact that throughout recorded history animals have been seen where they shouldn't seem to have escaped the 'experts'. As Elizabeth Mastrantonio says in the sci-fi film THE ABYSS, "You have to look with better eyes than that!!!"

# OCTOPUSES ARE COMING!

AN INVASION is expected on Britain's beaches this summer - by octopuses up to five feet long.

Mild winters have led to an explosion in the numbers of Lesser Octopuses in the English Channel.

Marine biologist Amanda Burrows, of the Dorset Sealife Centre in Weymouth, said: "People should not touch them. They are not usually aggressive, but their beaks and suckers can inflict nasty injuries."

Britain's beaches. Daily Manc. July.

## CURSES.

More from the by now infamous Castle Dracula Curse..

# VAMPIRES GET CROSS

DRACULA'S curse has fallen on a spooky musical with a series of bizarre accidents.

One cast member cut his wrist as he did the washing-up - and one slit his throat falling on broken glass.

Several others broke legs in falls. But Dracula Spectacular goes on at Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

Transylvania. Daily Slur. 10th July.

THE ROAD OF DREAMS AS MIRRORS.

(A Couple of Pages Full Of Crackin' Good Cosmic Jokes).

**GREASE MY PALM!**

A 29-year-old German tourist scooped nearly £700,000 in a lottery in Koblenz after a Hong Kong palm reader correctly predicted his lucky numbers would be 17 and 19.

Koblenz, Germany. 29th January.  
Sunday People.

**LABOUR MP Rhodri Morgan tempted fate when he told Cardiff radio listeners Britain had the world's best electricity supply ... he was silenced by a 30-second POWER CUT.**

Cardiff, Wales. 11th July.  
Daily Mirror.

**DEAD ANNOYED**

A family in Lima chased their 'dead' relative with crosses when they came home from his funeral after burying the wrong man.

Lima, Peru. Sth America. 10th July.  
The Scum.

**Jam today**

A CENSUS designed to cure traffic congestion caused seven-mile jams at Swindon yesterday.

Swindon, England. 10th  
The Scum.

**ESCAPED** prisoner Alan Williams hurled himself 40 feet from flats to flee police—but landed on a cop car in Plymouth, Devon.

Plymouth, Devon. 7th July.  
News Of The World.

**THE** German city of Hameln needs a new Pied Piper to deal with a sudden plague of rats. Mild winters have brought a population explosion despite the use of four tons of poison a year.

Hameln, Germany. June.  
The Scum.

**Deadly error**

**A POLICEMAN** sent to shoot an alsatian with rabies missed—and killed its woman owner. He is on trial for manslaughter in Arlon, Belgium.

Arlon, Belgium.  
12th October. Daily Manc.

**BURNING PASSION**

WENDY Robinson was reading The Burning Woman in bed → when her electric blanket caught fire! Wendy escaped the blaze in Moreton, Wirral—and firemen even saved her charred novel.

Moreton, Merseyside.  
4th October. Daily Manc.

A MAN who went to a clairvoyant ended in hospital when her crystal ball fell from a first floor window onto his head.  
Fortune teller Maria Fortunata left the ball on a ledge after washing it. She said yesterday: "I had warned him to be careful."  
Client Salvatore Lugaresi, 40, of Syracuse, Sicily, had stitches. He said: "She doesn't know it yet, but I'm suing for damages."

Syracuse, Sicily. Summer.  
The Soup.

### oh deer!

BIKER Alan Collard is nursing broken ribs — after hitting a deer for the THIRD time.  
Alan, 47, from Yeovil, Somerset, came off his Suzuki after swerving to avoid an animal near Langton Herring. He came round covered in blood ... injured by his lunchbox and haversack.

Langton Herring, Somerset.  
October. Daily Slur.

### SPOKES WOMAN

NORTH West Thames Health Authority has appointed a new finance controller to run the region's wheelchair services' department. Her name? — Miss Helen IRONSIDE.

London. 4th November.  
Daily Slur.

### SHARK ATTACK

A DUTCH docker was taken to hospital with a fractured foot yesterday after a dead shark fell on him. The 5ft frozen shark fell from a container the docker was unloading in Amsterdam port.

Amsterdam, Holland.  
10th October. Liverpool Echo.

## Shocker for sisters

A WOMAN killed herself while showing neighbours how her sister died. Yooket Pean, 57, was killed when she slipped in mud at her farm in Thailand, grabbing a live wire as she fell.  
 Showing how it happened, Pean's sister Yooket Pan, 52, also slipped, touched the wire and electrocuted herself in front of horrified onlookers.

Thailand. May.  
Daily Manco.

ROMANTIC Nigel Dowsett prepared a surprise candlelit dinner for his wife Coral — and burnt his house down.

Nigel, 32, left two candles burning while he collected Coral from their garage business in Portland, Dorset.

They fell over setting fire to their £200,000 detached home.

Portland, Dorset. April 8th  
Daily Manco.

### Stone me Father!

A PRIEST ended up in hospital with bruises after being flattened ... by a statue of Christ. Vandals had loosened the statue at the Sunderland church and it fell six feet on to Father Beresford Skelton.

Sunderland. 4th November.  
Daily Manco.

### 9 DIE WATCHING A 'SUICIDE' BID

NINE people were killed and 13 injured yesterday when a bridge collapsed under the weight of a crowd who had gathered to watch a girl commit SUICIDE. The girl, who had jumped into a river at Ho Minh City, Vietnam, was later RESCUED.

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.  
July. Daily Manco.



*REIGN OF TERROR: Spring-heeled Jack leaped out at his unsuspecting victims*