

DEAD OF NIGHT MAGAZINE



Issue 9 July/August 1996 Price £2

Vampirism- All The Rage Once More



Merseyside's Only Publication Dealing With All
Paranormal Phenomena!!!

Dead Of Night Issue 9. July' August 1996

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL.....Page 3

CHASING THE UNKNOWN (Latest Stange News Clippings From Around The World Including Armageddon Warnings, Weird Deaths, Cosmic Jokes, Allah In An aubergine, The Washington Bigfoot, Real-life Dinosaurs, The New Ferry Terror, Strange Days In The Animal Kingdom, Revenge Of The Mummy, Miracle Cures, The Curse Of Superman, Weird Crime, Premonitions and Esp, Divorced From Reality, Ghostly Tales, Vampire Cults, Chupacabras and Lost Worlds).....Page 5

A DICTIONARY OF POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS (Part One of a regular look at ancient and modern-day superstitions from Aconite to Asthma Cures).....Page 35

WITCHCRAFT, ORACLES AND MAGIC (Roy Kerridge takes a personal look at occult pretices among the Azande and modern-day disciples living in Britain).....Page 40

UFO UPDATE (The very latest from the increasingly bizzare world of Unidentified Flying Objects, including: Government Cover-ups and the Ros-Reynolds-Parhham Abduction).....Page 42

AIDS: THE NEW WORLD ORDER'S FINAL SOLUTION (Dr. William Douglass's Conspiracy Theory to End All Conspiracy theories).....Page 49

EXCHANGE MAGAZINE REVIEWS.....Page 53

DEAD OF NIGHT MAGAZINE DOES NOT SUBSCRIBE TO ANY ONE BELIEF SYSTEM. VIEWS OF CONIBUTORS ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE EDITOR

Editor: Lee Walker

Cover Art: Lee Walker.

Artwork: Lee Walker

Grant Walker

Contibutors: Roy Kerridge

Johnathon Dillon

Paul Williams

Subscription Details: £2 Per Sample Issue.

£10 For Six Issues If You Subscribe!!!

(A Saving Of £2 - Jeezly Crow, what an offer)

AVAILABLE FROM:

156, Bolton Rd East, New Ferry, Merseyside, L62 4RY.

**Next Issue: TALES FROM THE LOCHSIDE III
THE COMING OF THE MOONLIGHTS
LIFE ON MARS
HALLOWEEN HORRORS plus lots more!!!**



Editorial

*'There is freedom within. There is freedom without,
Try to catch the deluge in a paper cup.
There's a battle ahead. Many battles are lost,
But you'll never see the end of the road while you're travelling with me.
Hey now...Hey now;
Don't dream it's over!!!
(Crowded House).*

Late one Christmas morning, when I was a young child, I'd been sat with my head in my hands, crying my eyes out at the foot of a mountain of carelessly torn wrapping paper and a host of abandoned, half-opened packages.

I remained in that sorry state for what seemed like an eternity, refusing to be consoled by either family or friends, until eventually, there'd been no more tears left to cry and my body was instead wracked with dry, heaving sobs like an old man afflicted with a particularly nasty throat infection.

Instead of experiencing the wondrous joy of the Season, it had felt as though my entire world had caved in...And the reason for this was as simple as it was predictable; Although I'd received virtually every item I'd included in my personal letter to Santa Claus, I hadn't gotten the *one* thing I'd truly set my heart on; A cine film projector and screen.

And before you set about thinking that I was weeping the tears of the selfish, unsympathetic tears of the eternally spoiled, please allow me to just explain that it was not so much for myself that I grieved. Ever since I can remember, I'd always been a big film fan, (I had, in fact I still have, a particular fondness for sci-fi/horror movies, especially the old Hammer and Universal classics), and I had spent the whole of that Autumn announcing to anyone that would listen, that I was intending to hold a film show (although perhaps it should be pointed out that as these were long before the days of video recorders, so by necessity, the films would amount to little more than silent, black and white clips of cheap and nasty B-movies) in our newly erected extension. And by the time the last day of term had come rolling round, virtually the entire class had been invited to attend the 'premiere', scheduled for Boxing Day afternoon.

And so, there I was, hounded by the twin spectres of intense personal disappointment and the sense of having let other people down, and I would have to face them all at school after the holidays...Little wonder then that I was disconsolate.

In the end, it was my granddad who'd led me gently but firmly, by the arm away from where I was sat huddled on the living room floor and out into the kitchen.

Once there, with the air thick with the mouth-watering aromas of roast turkey, Yorkshire Pudding and boiled potatoes, he'd lifted me onto his bony old knee, and told me something, the import of which has stayed with me ever since;

'Son, it's Christmas...One of life's Magic Times. Even at your age, you must have noticed such moments only come around once in a while. Most often, these times are about as rare as swallows in mid-winter...And you know what, they fly by every bit as fast. Almost before you know it, they've flown over the horizon, out of sight and out of mind, and all you're left with is a great wad of regret that you didn't live each and every second to the full...Listen to your old granddad, now (and here he'd fixed me with a piercing, but not exactly unkind stare). 'Please. Don't ever allow the fact that we don't always get what we want to spoil the Magic of the occasion itself. These moments are simply too precious to waste dwelling upon the what-might-have-beens.'

Twenty-odd years have rung down the ringing grooves of change since that long-ago Christmas, but I have strove always to abide by the wisdom of my grandfather's words.

And late on the evening of Wednesday, 25th June, 1996, I had especial reason to pause and remember...

For that was, as if you needed any reminding, the night England faced Germany in the semi-finals of Euro '96....

Isn't it funny how time seems to fly at roughly the speed of Ben Johnson running the 400 metres when you're having the best of times, and how it seems to drag interminably when you're really looking forwards to something?

Even though I'd managed to get off work a half hour early, you would have sworn that Wednesday afternoon had lasted for an eternity. The hands of the clock on the wall of the secretary's office appeared to have crawled around with agonising slowness and more than once I felt like asking if it had wound down, or if the batteries had run out. The incredible build-up of tension hadn't helped any, of course.

Every newspaper, (some of which had sunk to the turgid depths of hack journalism in a bid to whip up jingoistic fervour—a factor which, ironically enough, helped inspire the very opposition the hacks sought to denigrate), radio programmes, and TV stations had featured overkill coverage, and the countdown to kick-off time had been all but unbearable.

Four thirty did eventually come along, and it was a real relief to be granted freedom from the claustrophobic atmosphere of the office. I raced home as fast as I could, my head spinning like Regan McNeil's in *'THE EXORCIST'*, with a vivid selection of those (all too few) memories of England glory that had occurred within my lifetime. It seems totally crazy to me now, but I remember I even caught myself commentating aloud in a passable imitation of Barry Davies, to some imaginary audience, as I charged headlong towards my home. Each goal - each precious highlight inspired a kaleidoscope of memories...Memories, not just of the moment itself, but of where I'd been and what I'd been doing before, during and after those matches had been played. It was a lot like the way a certain song or piece of music can conjure up powerful images of the times and circumstances in which you first heard it.

When I finally arrived at my front door, I dived straight into the bath (barely taking the trouble it took to strip out of my suit) and got myself changed in (for me, at least) pretty near record time.

We, that is my two brothers and I, had already decided to watch the match in our local pub. The thought of watching it in the house with our parents and having to keep a curb on the inevitable bouts of swearing, just hadn't proved to be an option worth considering. Besides, all our mates were going down the 'The King's', and the fact that we'd be in a place filled with people every bit as nervous as ourselves, was somehow a source of great comfort.

I spent five frustrating minutes trying to locate my faded old Union Jack bedspread and eventually found it buried deep in the vast, unexplored depths of my wardrobe where it had lain, all but forgotten since the ignominy of Sweden '92.

I couldn't eat my tea. My stomach had felt as though it were being squeezed by some rough and powerful hand - the kind of feeling you get when you're setting off on a first date with a girl you've been dying to meet for ages: A potent mixture of high, barely contained excitement coupled with sick apprehension. Draping the bedspread/flag over my arm, I stood at the head of the stairs for a long moment in silent contemplation - Took a deep breath - then stepped out into summer evening sunlight...And a nation's date with destiny.

My brother's wife, Alison, offered to give Grant and I a lift to 'The King's', which was just as well really, seeing as how Grant had been weighed down with a decidedly heavy-looking drum he was taking to help inspire the atmosphere (It was the same instrument he'd been taking on The Kop at Anfield these last few years and it was bedecked with our national colours and various flags - mementoes of Liverpool's glory days as 'King's Of Europe').

As we were about to get in the car, my dad had emerged from the house with his camera and he asked us to stand together while he snapped a few photo's. We stood and posed, the flags flying proudly in the gentle breeze, almost as if we were soldiers on the eve of some great battle, bearing standards and wishing we felt as brave as we looked.

But the camera refused to work despite much fiddling around, and our impatience to be off grew by the second. In the end, my dad was forced to give up and in that moment, it seemed to me that a shadow had drifted over the sun, although when I glanced up, I saw the sky was a deep, peerless shade of blue. As someone who is openly superstitious, especially where footy is concerned, I was struck with the entirely illogical feeling that this was indeed the first bad omen of that evening. It wouldn't prove to be the last.

We arrived at 'The King's' about 5pm, and hurried through the pubic bar and into the lounge where there was a giant, movie-house-sized screen. Although there had been three hours or so to kick-off time, I'd half-expected the pub to be jam-packed with supporters eager to secure their very own 'spec'. As it was, we had the premises virtually to ourselves. My other brother, Dale was already there with his wife Jenny, and for a few moments we tried to focus our attention on the *other* semi-final between France and the Czech Republic, but for all the interest we could muster, they may as well have been screening the World Bowls Championship or endless repeats of '*Jim Davidson's Big Break*'.

I draped the Union Jack over the wooden partition that splits the lounge in two and Grant began passing around a vast assortment of percussion instruments; maracas, castanets, cowbells and those funny little hollow objects that when you scrape with a stick makes a sound like a swarm of crickets in an August field. Gradually, our friends arrived in dribs and drabs and the pub in general began to fill up.

We talked awhile. It was too early to start playing anything yet.

For me, these were the best moments of what I knew, instinctively would prove to be one of those all-too rare Magic Times. I remembered what my granddad had said all those years ago, and I tried to take time to commit everything to memory. The comparative lull that belied the undercurrent of high excitement. The way the sunlight came through the windows in different-sized bars and sparkled on the surface of the glass-plated ads for '*Budweiser*' and '*Labatt's*'. The Cars softly crooning '*Drive*' on the jukebox. The expressions of the bar-maids, as even they began to cast nervous glances at the giant screen. The whispered hub of conversation drifting across from the front of the pub where people who had not the slightest interest in football were gathered, sipping martini's or tucking into '*Beefeater*' specials. The increasingly fervid chatter amongst our party as the drinks began to flow and the France-Czech game goes to a penalty shoot-out, which the unfancied Czechs duly win....And then...

And then, despite my best efforts, everything begins to revolve slowly but surely at a pace that almost defies recollection. It's more a series of rapid images, like a video on fast forward:

Grant testing out his drum. A girl's voice raised in complaint. The first (rather weak) rendition of '*Three Lion's*'. The police arriving (not, as first thought, to answer the spoilsport girl's complaints about the drum, but to arrest someone who's hassling his ex-wife). The police leave. Des Lynam appears on the screen. An anticipatory cheer goes up. All our party are now present and include faces I haven't seen in months beyond counting. The juke-box is turned off, rendered obsolete. Another Union Jack is hung from a rusted nail above the public bar entrance. Grant kicks in with the drum once more. He gets nothing more than a half-hearted response. The pub continues to fill up. The drink's are not just flowing, they're cascading down our throats like Niagara Falls after a particularly heavy rainstorm. The instruments are handed out at the same time the teams emerge from the dressing room. Grant tries again on the drum. This time the response is as immediate as it is deafening. No one holds back and the girl who was earlier complaining is singing along with the best of them. Everyone sings the National Anthem with an ironic sense of pride to a perversely Latin beat. I feel like crying. I feel like laughing. I feel like...Oh, I don't know. There are some things you can't put into words. Some things weren't meant to be committed to paper. They remain firmly within the realm of *experience*. And the only way for you to make someone else understand it is for them to experience it too.

The game finally kicks off to a crescendo of noise.

And impossibly, within three minutes, Shearer scores. The place erupts. Nah. Strike that. It goes stark raving mad. People who very likely would cringe with embarrassment at any display of emotion, public or otherwise, now embrace, hug and *kiss* the person nearest to them, no matter what their gender. Massive big dockers with mutli-scarred faces and bodies that seem hewn from pure granite weep tears of unabashed joy. Girls, who in ordinary circumstances wouldn't be caught dead watching footy, are screaming like runaway fire engines. The normally placid pub manager jigs the Watusi behind the bar like somebody emptied a bucketful of ice down his y-fronts. Hell..Maybe someone *did*. An old man who'd been sat quietly smoking his pipe over in the far corner (and who I was fairly sure was a vicar or at the very least, a regular church-going man), suddenly jumps to his feet and, sticks one raised finger in the air, and loudly invites the German Football Team to; "Kiss me arse, yer bunch of Kraut bastards!!!"

It was the pinnacle of ecstasy.

It was one of those rare as a swallow-in-mid-winter Magic Times.

And of course, from that moment on, things could only ever go downhill.

I won't dwell on the aftermath of the German equaliser or the inevitable outcome of the penalty shoot-out.

That I didn't get that which I'd set my heart on in the end, doesn't matter. The magic of the occasion still remains. As pure and untainted as newly fallen snow. The memory of that night will live with me forever.

And no one (not even Andy Moeller) can take that away from me.

Lee Walker. New Ferry, Merseyside. August 15th, 1996.

Chasing The Unknown

The Latest Weird And Wonderful News-Clippings From
Around The World

Walking The Miracle Mile



Are We Living On The Brink Of The 'End Times?'

In an increasingly nervous World as we fast approach the Millennium, the number of stories garnished with an apocalyptic flavour are appearing almost daily in both the tabloid and the broadsheet press.

Arthur C Clarke (ahem, 'author' of 'The Mysterious World' books and narrator of the somewhat patronising TV series) has chosen this opportune time to pitch in with his very own pet scenario regarding Armageddon...

In an article printed in the 'DAILY MAIL', he stated his prediction, based on first-hand experience, that there would come a time, not too far in the future when the energy crisis would be solved. Not only that, but there would be; *'limitless energy for everyone, no more fretting about heating bills or coal-fired pollution. No more National Grid either, everyone will have a power station in their own back gardens. It's absolutely incredible. What I've seen makes me 95 per cent sure that the greatest technological revolution in centuries is almost upon us. The implications are just stunning.*

Sounds wonderful. Can you give me HALLELUJAH???

His views are based upon claims by some scientists and engineers to have made machines that create energy out of nothing. According to Clarke, a factory already exists in the former Soviet republic of Moldova making machines that generate huge quantities of heat simply by churning up water in a rotating pump. Known as 'Yusmar Devices', they appear to defy a

fundamental tenet of physics: Namely, that energy cannot be created from nothing. Yet Clarke says that reputable scientists he has contacted have seen the devices in action - and they appear to work.'

Most scientists, of course, dismiss all this as arrant nonsense: According to them, 'Yusmar Devices' make not a jot more sense than the theory of Perpetual Motion.

Clarke however is not so sure. He thinks there is at least a possibility that *'the violent churning of the water is triggering sono-chemical energy, a way of creating high temperatures from collapsing water bubbles.'*

There is also another, more terrifying possibility. The machines maybe tapping so-called 'quantum vacuum energy', the awesome power source that gave birth to our universe.

The existence of 'quantum vacuum energy' is already accepted by many scientists. According to quantum theory, the whole universe is filled with a seething sea of particles, continually popping in and out of existence. Although lasting for only a tiny fraction of a second, these particles live long enough to generate energy - quantum vacuum energy - whose lurking presence has been measured in the laboratory.

Many scientists believe that it was this energy in a far more powerful form, that propelled the Big Bang in which the universe was born 15 billion years ago.

But few believe that it is possible to harness that energy today. Clarke however, warns that if he is right, humanity may be playing with a power source far more potent than nuclear weapons. *'They only threatened the Planet'*, he says. *'This could threaten the whole Solar System.'*

He even suggests that Supernovas may not be exploding stars at all, but may be the result of other civilisations tinkering with quantum vacuum energy and paying the price: *'Supernovas may be industrial accidents,'* he says.

Even if humanity succeeds in safely harnessing the energy, Clarke warns that there could still be dangers. *'All that energy has to go somewhere. If everyone has their own 1,000 kilowatt power source, the Earth could end up like Venus.'*

Clarke is no doom-mongering fantasist, either. He merely believes that to be fore-warned is to be fore-armed. He has himself played a role in protecting mankind from a threat once dismissed as being far-fetched, but now taken very seriously by scientists: Giant meteor impacts.

Time will tell if he is proved right on *this* one, as well...

24th February, 1996. General. 'DAILY MAIL'.

DOES THE WORLD FACE A NEW AGE OF PLAGUE?

Laurie Garrett, an immunologist and science writer, argues in a work that has become a best-seller in America; *'THE COMING PLAGUE'*, that at its more elemental levels, nature seems (not surprisingly, you may think) to be rising up against constant human interference.

She tells of how genetic engineering aimed, for example, at improving crops has produced viruses that can swap genes with other viruses, producing active, pathogenic, and new viral species, potentially hazardous to man.

She also argues, pretty damn convincingly, that Western medicine's obsession with anti-biotics has resulted in strains of microbes that are stronger and more deadly than ever and almost impossible to kill. She warns of how modern communications help spread local infestations by air and sea, so that a disease that erupts in Central Africa can be in London or Los Angeles just days later, and with the right conditions, it could spread like the proverbial wildfire.

Pandemics of cholera and TB swept Europe as recently as the turn of the century. South Korea, an advance, highly organised society, is under attack from a deadly strain of cholera that has already claimed hundreds of victims.

According to Garrett, plagues could blight our cities and lay waste communities, bringing to the forthcoming millennium a mediaeval dimension some would consider entirely appropriate.

Garrett's book, centres upon the premise that the world could soon well be struck by a new form of plague analogous to AIDS. Her message; that social breakdown in the developing world has combined with global travel and an over-reliance on antibiotics to encourage the emergence of supermicrobes, is being taken seriously in Washington.

Al Gore, the vice-president, wanted to know whether Garrett was exaggerating, and at the tail end of last year, called in a group of experts from Harvard and Yale. Their combined findings were enough to scare the pants off of the White House. They realised pretty quickly that America was a long way short of drumming up suitable contingency plans should an epidemic suddenly break out in some isolated hick town.

Those stalwarts of national crisis, the good ol' CIA were informed of the prognosis and they drew up an even grimmer picture...Diseases were developing on a scale so

vast and complex that, as with AIDS, no outbreak could be confined with any degree of confidence to its point of origin. Rather like the plot of Stephen King's apocalyptic novel *'THE STAND'*, it would more likely spread right across the nation in roughly the same time it takes to shout *'Bring out your dead!!!'*

Government organisations were briefed and told in no uncertain terms that there was an urgent need for international surveillance. That sounds all well and good. But in actuality, not a lot seems to have been done other than to voice concerns in a world that appears to wrapped up in its own selfish, material needs.

In other words, no one listens 'cos no one really cares, and so nothing practical gets done.

And in the meantime, our old friend Ms Garrett has been growing increasingly worried about the lack of action and has been constantly raising *her* voice in complaint that a world-wide restriction on health spending means the situation is gradually getting worse. The World Health Organisation has forecast that an effective international surveillance programme, based around 15 strategically placed tropical laboratories would cost £100 million a year to operate. And, wouldn't you just know it, no one nation is prepared to pay up its share of *that* kind of cash.

And so, Garrett's fears continue to grow and fester...Her worst nightmare is that an incurable disease, such as Ebola, which cut like a deadly scythe through the populace of Zaire in the winter of 1995, could well be exported to other countries across the globe...Confinement of the virus may well become impossible, like trying to keep an ant farm in a hamster cage...And once it begins to spread, it may covet the four corners of the Earth faster than we can come up with a potent vaccine.

And there are other paths too that remain disconcertingly open to killer diseases. Inadequate health practices can often help to spread plagues. The multiple re-use of syringes turns the apparent instrument of cure into a deadly amplifier.

Casual, multi-partner sex habits, still prevalent in parts of Africa, are another potentially lethal practice.

Garrett's message then is that the nightmarish spectre of plague is not an exclusively mediaeval phenomenon, but remains a constant threat to human survival...

She believes that we ignore her increasingly strident warnings at our peril.

10th September, 1996. General. 'THE SUNDAY TIMES'.

The Temptation To Play God

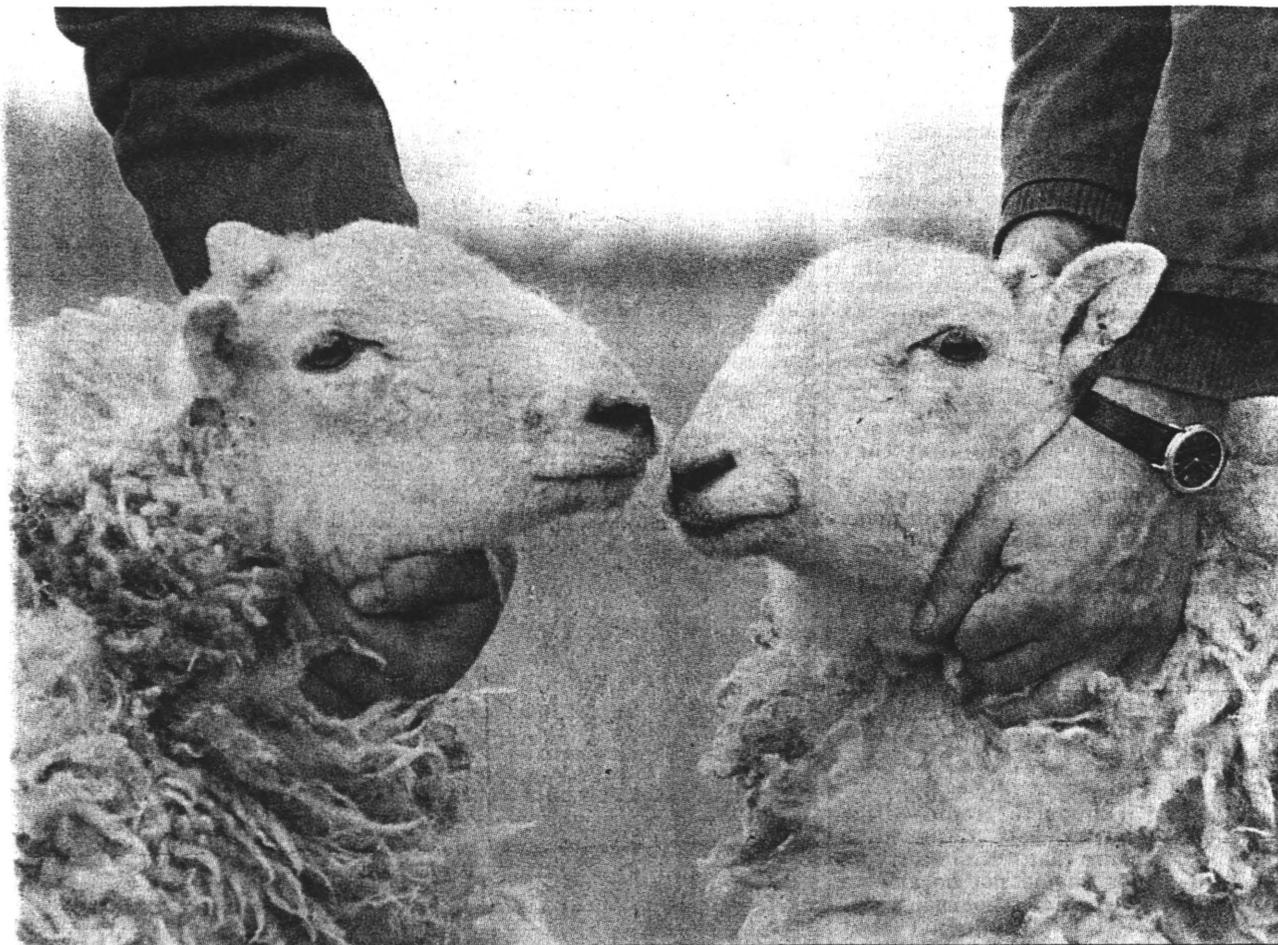
In early April this year, the media were up in arms about the sort of scientific breakthrough Doctor Frankenstein himself would have doubtless dreamt about...

The cloning of living creatures...In this case, Sheep.

The Photograph featured below features the first two such specimens: Morag and Megan. Though they were born to different mothers, they are genetically identical, cloned from the one embryo. The British scientists responsible have labelled it a world-beating triumph for the potential eradication of disease and famine.

Not so, say the doom-merchants. They have predicted instead that, in the wrong hands, such knowledge could be a major step towards creating a human master race. Leading geneticist Professor Steve Jones admitted that *'Yes, it does take us closer to the day when some madman could try that. Inevitably, this is what people will worry about.'*

The cloned sheep were bred by a four-man team at the government-funded Roslin Institute Research Centre, near Edinburgh. The lambs were born last July (1995), but the researchers delayed making their findings public while they prepared a patent application.



Under the new technique, details of which were published in *'NATURE'* magazine, involves taking the cells from an embryo which are then multiplied into thousands in a laboratory environment. Each embryo cell is then 'fused' into an egg which has been wiped clean of its genetic coding forming a new embryo which carries all the characteristics of the original.

The crucial part of the Roslin's success lay in getting the embryo cells to multiply successfully. In the past, genetics researchers have been able to create only as many sheep embryos as there were cells in the original. Now, in theory, scientists can modify cells in the laboratory and breed thousands of identical animals from them. They could make sheep which produced a particular type of milk for example, or ones which were especially disease-resistant.

Not surprisingly, the doctors responsible have been quick to downplay the possibility that the cloning process could ever be applied to human beings. Dr Ian Wilmut was quoted as saying; *'It is inconceivable that the process should ever be used on humans - it would be an appalling prospect.'*

Famous last words???

7th April, 1996. Edinburgh, Scotland. *'DAILY MAIL'*.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO GLOBAL WARMING???

The new chill in East-West relations caused by the tit-for-tat spy expulsions between Russia and Great Britain seems to have been mirrored by the current (at the time of writing) weather situation.

While Moscow baked in the hottest May on record, Britain was forced to shiver in the coldest May for nearly half a century. The first half of the month was the chilliest since 1941 - at almost seven degrees Fahrenheit below average and the weekend of the 18th and 19th of the month was amongst the coldest days in the second half of May since 1948, at about 14 degrees below what might have been expected.

The cause of this unseasonably cold blast that has set crops back a month is due, according to meteorologists, to a huge mass of high pressure near Iceland, which blocked the way for this Spring's usual warm breezes, instead bringing dull, dry and cold weather.

Another reason for the unusual weather was the fact that it was part of a cycle of climatic change which has been caused largely by the lack of westerly and south-westerly winds, which would normally be the most frequent in Britain.

However, on the wake of the wettest Spring on record, ushering in the hottest Summer, succeeded by one of the coldest Winters has given cause for apocalyptic warnings to be given yet another airing.

And even the most hard-nosed of sceptics would be forced to admit that freak conditions have been rather prevalent recently...In Antarctica, an iceberg the size of Jersey broke off from the main continent and flowers have bloomed on the ice shelves. The seas off California have warmed up so much that plankton populations - a vital part of the marine food chain - were devastated. Blizzards brought New York to a standstill. And the European mainland was deluged with appalling Spring floods.

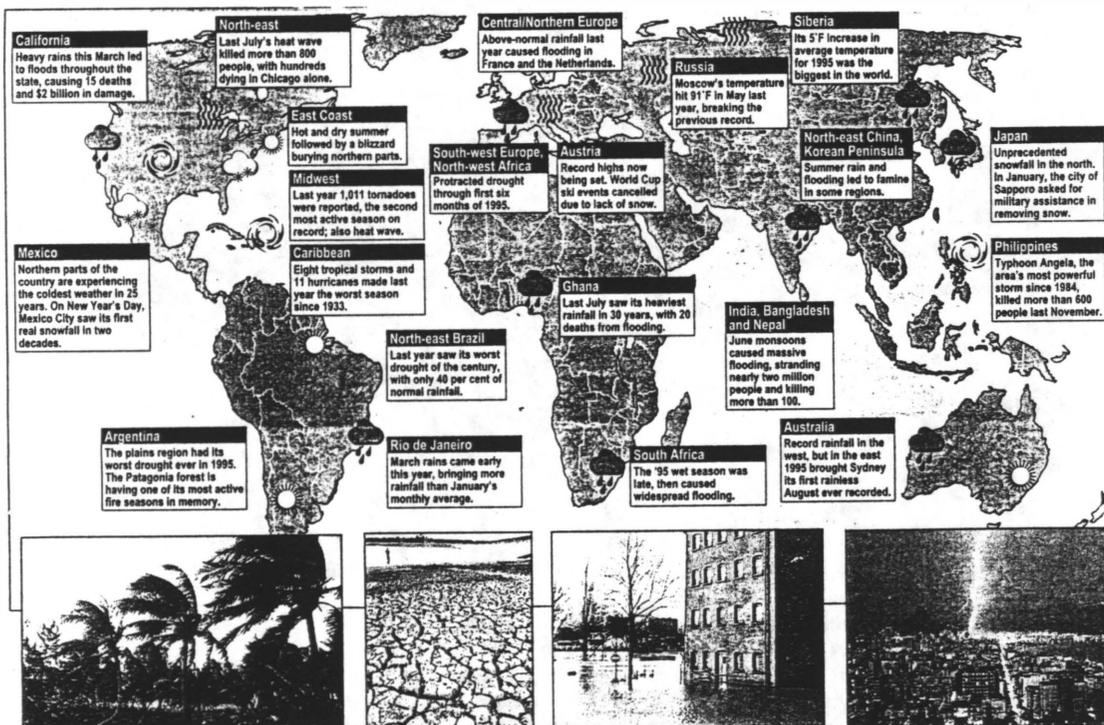
Scientists on the Intergovernmental Panel On Climate Change (IPCC), which was convened by the United Nations in December, 1995, all agreed that global warming is now an undeniable fact. They forecast a rise of 3.2 to 11 degrees Fahrenheit in World average temperatures by the year 2100. Since the IPCC can usually hardly agree on what to order for lunch, that unanimous prediction was something of a milestone.

The optimists have predicted milder Winters (not if last year was anything to go by, bubba), and bumper crops. They say the differences between the poles and the equator will even out, resulting in fewer severe storms.

But pessimists warn that many of the World's bread baskets could empty as an ever-warming Earth causes a serious mismatch between climate, soil and rainfall.

They fear that small Caribbean islands could be wiped out as sea levels rise by 6in to over 3ft. Eastern and North Africa could expect widespread droughts, and a balmy North Pole could alter ocean currents such as the Gulf Stream, which at present warms Western Europe.

As for Merry ol' England, it could become more rainswept, battered by stormy seas and freezing cold, (so, no change there then). It is too soon to tell which side is right, but one alarming prediction appears to be coming true already: In a warmer world, extremes of wet and dry will intensify. As the Earth's surface warms, more moisture evaporates. In the arid regions, where there is little to evaporate, droughts could worsen and rain become rare in the interiors of continents. In moist areas, such as mountains and the coasts, rainfall would dramatically increase...



A world of contrasts: Hurricanes, drought, flooding and storms — all side-effects of a warming climate which scientists say is changing the face of our planet

30th May, 1996. General. 'DAILY MAIL'

SIGNS IN THE SKIES

Almost all religions hold that the appearance of Comets traversing the skies above the Earth are harbingers of great and terrible events, and with that in mind, the last few months have been more than a mite disconcerting. For there seems to have been a sudden increase in the number of these portentous heavenly bodies...

On the 3rd April this year, the superstitious amongst us would have looked to the skies with a fair degree of trepidation and dread. There was a total eclipse of the Moon (another sure-fire portent of doom) occurring at

approximately 11:20pm whilst at the same time the Comet Hyakutake was still visible in the north-west sky. The eclipse continued until about 2am on the 4th April and turned the Moon a coppery shade of red. This effect is caused by the Sun's rays being bent by the Earth's atmosphere, but since ancient times, the sight of the Moon 'turning to blood' has been regarded as a sure sign of disaster and/or war.

And, hot on the heels of the departure of Comet Hyakutake (in the wake of which we had the coincidental(?) upsurge of violence in the Middle East culminating in Israel's indiscriminate shelling and bombing of Lebanon), Dr. Mark Bailey, Director of The Armagh Astronomy Institute, was

busy informing the UK National Astronomy meeting that Comet Hall-Bopp is heading towards the Earth. This latest Comet could be up to 40 kilometres in diameter - four times the size of Halley's Comet.

It was predicted that it would pass the Earth 120 million miles away on March 23rd, 1997, and would be at its brightest on April 1st.

11th April, 1996. General. 'LIVERPOOL DAILY POST'.

Meanwhile, other astronomers are predicting that the fate of the human race may have already been sealed by four Brown Dwarfs, 100 Light Years from the Earth.

Brown Dwarfs - the astronomical Missing Link between stars and planets were once nothing more than the wild imaginings of science-fiction writers. But now, as so often happens, art has imitated life and Dr. Mike Hawkins, of the Royal Observatory in Edinburgh, has discovered four Brown Dwarfs after 10 years ceaseless searching. Their existence has been shrouded in mystery, they have formed part of what the 'experts' term 'Dark Matter', the unknown mass which fills the cosmos and on which its future relies.

Now, Dr. Hawkins, in true Professor Quatermass-style, has lifted the veil of disbelief and ignorance and the discovery may well help scientists to quantify the amount of time we have left.

10th April, 1996. General. 'LIVERPOOL ECHO'.

And just a week or so later, 'NATURE MAGAZINE' was confidently predicting that an asteroid christened Eros, 22 miles in diameter (roughly the size of Loch Ness, obscure fact fans), and composed largely of iron, is expected to crash into the Earth at a 100,000 mph, killing every human being sometime in the next 100,000 years. Presumably, the time scale involved should give our descendants plenty of opportunity to dream up a plan to deal with the threat.

Eros does not at the present time circle the Earth's orbit, it currently circles the Sun between the Earth and Mars, but its orbit is constantly changing by minute amounts because it is gravitationally influenced by all the planets with the exception of Pluto.

A team led by Professor Paolo Farinella of the Observatory of Pisa in Italy, has done a computer simulation of Eros's changing orbit over the next two million years, and

concludes that an eventual collision with the Earth is 'likely with significant hazard to the future of human civilisation.'

According to another 'expert' on asteroid impacts, Professor James Scotti of the University of Arizona, 'there is not the slightest chance that any human living on Earth at that time could survive the catastrophe. A collision with Eros, because of its metal content, would be four times more violent than the collision with an asteroid or comet 65 million years ago that killed most of the Dinosaurs. It would have the same effect as several full-scale nuclear wars taking place simultaneously. If our descendants have about 100 years' warning of the impact, they will probably be able to prevent it.'

26th April, 1996. General. 'DAILY TELEGRAPH.'

END OF THE WORLD IS SHELVED...YET AGAIN.

Jehovah's Witnesses however, have decided to go against the grain of current apocalyptic belief...

They have recently announced that their sect has given up forecasting Armageddon (when only its followers will be saved, incidentally), after a grand total of *three* false alarms.

The first came when founder Charles Russell predicted the end in 1914. Subsequent Last Days came and went in 1925 and 1975.

A spokesman was quoted as saying; 'We do not need to know the exact timing of events.'

Just as well, really.

13th November, 1996. General. 'DAILY MANC'.

Earlier this year, more than 500 members of the notorious Solar Temple Sect were put behind bars to prevent them from killing themselves. Police swooped across France after a tip that the fanatics were plotting mass suicides. The arrests follow the ritual death of 16 followers in the Alps near Grenoble before Christmas, 1995.

Ringleaders gave drugs to their companions, including three children, before setting them alight and taking their own lives. Members captured will be held until the police think it's safe to set them free.

24th March, 1996. France. 'DAILY MAIL'.

RELIGIOUS VISIONS AND PORTENTS



BLESSED VIRGIN MARY SIGHTING'S IN OHIO AND KENTUCKY

On the final day of August last year, approximately 12,000 people converged upon the town of Norwood, Ohio, intent upon obtaining a sighting of the Virgin Mary Herself. Since 1991, a woman from Batavia, Ohio, has been honoured with the presence of Mary, and every year since then the faithful have gathered in the hope of receiving special blessings.

The crowds previously met at St. Joseph's Church in Cold Springs, Kentucky, but 1995's observance was moved north because of roadwork on the grounds of Our Lady Of The Holy Spirit Center.

Many believers spoke of rosaries turning into gold, images appearing in the clouds, scents of invisible roses and shooting beams of lights. A show of lights around midnight was variously explained by those in attendance as flurries of camera flashes, strategically placed strobe lights or light that might be construed as a sign from above.

3rd September, 1996. Norwood, Ohio. USA. 'COLOMBUS DISPATCH' Via COUD-I

Meanwhile, in Falmouth, Kentucky, on the eighth day of each and every month, up to 3,000 followers happily congregate at Our Lady's Farm to pray with 49-year-old visionary 'Sandy', and to witness what is said to be an encounter with the Blessed Virgin. Crowds have gathered monthly at the farm since 1994.

Some people claim to have beheld miracles. For example, a silver crucifix belonging to 12-year-old Liz Moody, began to turn a golden colour and her step-brother, Brian Loney, said his plastic statue of St. Michael changed colours too.

Spreading Mary's word, Sandy was reported as saying is a mission she received from the Blessed Virgin more than two years ago. Initially, she acknowledged, she was sceptical but then she began hearing voices urging her to say the Rosary, to go to a farm and, to build a shrine, to draw people to the site, and to pray for peace and the conversion of sinners.

'How the Blessed Mother tapped me is anyone's guess, says the bewildered mother-of-three and grandmother-of-four. 'I am not anyone special. I am not perfect.'

10th August, 1996. Falmouth, Kentucky, USA. COLOMBUS DISPATCH' Via COUD-I.

THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR HAVE THE HOLY GRAIL

Members of the mysterious religious order, The Knights Templar, are the latest group to claim they are in possession of the Biblical Holy Grail - the cup Christ is said to have used at the Last Supper.

The Knights Templar who claim descent from an order founded in 1120 at Jerusalem by French crusaders, presented what it said was the Holy Grail during a news conference on August 17th, 1995, at its headquarters on an apartment in a rundown suburb of Rome.

'We have decided it is time that the world knew about the Grail's true whereabouts.' said Rocco Zingaro di San Ferdinando, Grand Master of The Templars in Italy, reverently holding up a minute green, mottled glass flask.

Zingaro was the second person in less than a week to claim possession of the Grail. A few days earlier, the British amateur historian Graham Phillips, said a jaded goblet that he had found in the attic of a house in Central England was the relic. (see 'DON' #7 for more on this story).

At least three churches in Europe also claim to have the Grail, and numerous historical detectives through the ages have claimed to have discovered it.

Zingaro said; 'We have unveiled the true Holy Grail partly in response to last week's false claim that the Grail had been found in Britain and partly because as mankind approaches the year 2000, it is in need of the Grail for salvation.'

He said that the Grail was given to the Templars 20 years ago by the late Italian academic Antonio Ambrosini, who belonged to the Order. The relic has since been housed in the Order's simple headquarters. Zingaro said; 'Ambrosini travelled the world visiting both Africa and South America. He recovered the Grail from a Coptic monastery in Egypt. He gave it to me as a wedding gift saying it would eventually bring peace to the world.'

Zingaro believes he is descended from Frederick Barbarossa, or Redbeard, the 12th century Holy Roman Emperor and Crusader, and said that the Grail had not been subjected to scientific tests to ascertain its age or origin, but that a simple examination of the vase's

dimensions revealed that it had special qualities. He explained; 'It's nine centimetres high. The circumference of the base is seven centimetres. Seven times nine is 63. Six plus three equals nine. Numerically, it is perfect.'

18th August, 1995. Rome, Italy. 'ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH' Via COUD-I.

THE TOMB OF JESUS DISCOVERED?

'At least ten ancient stone caskets bearing the remains of a person named Jesus have been discovered around Jerusalem in recent decades,' said an Israeli archaeologist.

He was answering claims by the BBC's 'HEART OF THE MATTER' TV programme that the tomb of Christ and His family may have been located and excavated.

The tomb contained inscriptions bearing the names Jesus Joseph and Mary, but Ly Rahmani, ex-curator of Israel's Department of Antiquities, said the implications of the claim were 'absurd'. He added; 'All these names were common and the fact that you have this combination in the same tomb is merely a matter of statistics. What we have is a tomb containing the remains of three generations of a nice Jerusalem family.'

2nd April, 1996. Jerusalem, Israel. 'DAILY MAIL'.

THE LORE OF CHEAP ILLUSIONS

In the type of 'exclusive' normally reserved for the likes of 'THE WEEKLY WORLD NEWS' or 'THE NATIONAL ENQUIRER', our very own 'DAILY SLUR' carried the following story/illustration under the banner headline; 'CAN YOU SEE THE FACE OF CHRIST?'

According to the paper, nine out of ten people who tried the (ahem) 'visual experiment' (this amounted to staring at the four dots in the centre of the image reprinted below for 30 seconds, then quickly focus your eyes on a white ceiling or wall), managed to 'see the face of Christ'.

Thousands, they reported, had rediscovered religion because of 'the sensational vision'.



The paper was quick to point out however, that scientists like Dr. David Thomson from London's City University, were highly sceptical...

'The eyes can play tricks on the brain - and this is a classic example of optical trickery. Nerve-endings in the retina at the back of the eyes absorb varying degrees of light intensity, a bit like film in a camera. These are converted into nervous impulses which are sent to the brain. A negative after-image is produced which can be turned into a positive by then looking at a white background. Staring at the four dots simply keeps the head still and helps the retina take in the image. Once the image is produced, it can last for up to 10 seconds. To keep it longer, try rapid blinking. This is a well-known phenomena. I have a similar ink-blot image of the Mona Lisa which can suddenly spring to life when stared at for 20-30 seconds.'

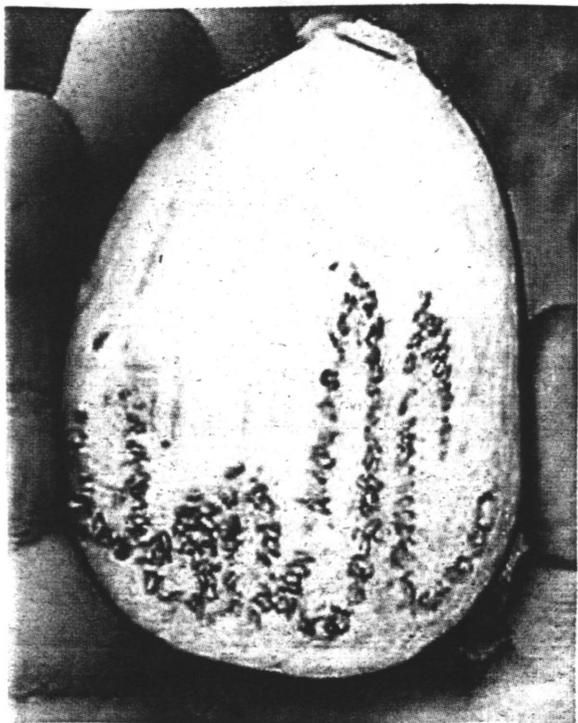
Eager to maintain the sense of mystery however, the article adds the proviso; *'But the astonishing picture is currently fascinating millions around the world. The picture was first discovered by a missionary Roman Catholic Bishop who gave copies of it to a strict order of nuns based at the St. Mary Of Providence convent in Lake Zurich, Illinois, USA.*

It was meant to be a closely-guarded secret, but a young nun sent a copy to her mother, who managed a Catholic publishing company. The Roman Catholic authorities examined the picture and spokesman Kieron Conry said; 'It is quite extraordinary, but we believe it's more to do with the miracle of modern science than divine intervention. The popular image of Jesus does appear to those who stare at this for long enough. It worked for us here, in the office. But it's hardly in the same league as Bernadette at Lourdes receiving a vision from the Virgin Mary. Still, it's harmless, inoffensive and extremely interesting.'

20th March, 1996. Lake Zurich, Illinois, USA. 'DAILY SLUR'.

ALLAH IN AN AUBERGINE

Abdullah Patel, a Muslim Priest, placed an Aubergine on display at his mosque in Bolton after a couple found a 'miracle' in its seeds.



The seeds are said to spell out the name of Allah and hundreds of the faithful were expected to view it after it had been placed inside a protective case. Moslems in fact, besieged the Aubergine after its 'message' was discovered by a devout couple; Salim and Ruskana Patel, as they were

preparing a meal. The priest said the seeds spelled the outline of the Arabic word for Allah. He added: *'This clearly shows our God exists. It is a message to non-believers. This is the first time I have seen anything like this. It is a miracle.'*

Machinist Salim, 29, said: *'My wife saw it first and showed it to me. The name of our God Allah was spelt out. I feel very proud and happy that this has happened in our house. It is a great honour.'*



(Above: The Moslem symbol that Bolton's faithful say the Aubergine seeds resemble)
13th March, 1996. Bolton, England. 'LIVERPOOL ECHO.'

MONKS IN NEPAL HAIL BOY, 4, AS LAMA

He may only be four years old, but his devout followers have waited nine years for his return. The Bhuddist monk is believed to have been reincarnated in the body of an American boy named Trulku-la.

The boy, (his real name is Sonam Wangdu), was born in Seattle, USA, and was recognised by Tibetan Bhuddists as Deshung Rinpoche IV - the reincarnation of a high lama who died in Seattle in 1987. Trulku-la is the Tibetan term for reincarnation.

Deshung Rinpoche III moved to Seattle in 1960 after China's military took over Tibet, and he taught at the University Of Washington. He was said to be reincarnation of the original Deshung Rinpoche, who lived in Tibet in the 19th century. Before he died, Rinpoche III told his students that he would be reborn in the Seattle area.

While pregnant with Trulku, Carolyn Lama had dreams and received other signs that she and her Bhuddist teacher saw as evidence that the child was the reincarnation. The boy's father, who died in a traffic accident in 1993, also had such dreams.

Of the hundreds of lamas - or teachers - said to be reincarnations in the Tibetan Bhuddist faith, only a handful have come from the West.

Carolyn Lama and the boy underwent several interviews in Seattle before Trulku-la was brought to Nepal and, at the age of 2, formally enthroned in a ceremony attended by 4,000 people.

Now Carolyn is preparing to leave her son, who will study subjects ranging from medicine to metaphysics while under the care of the monastery's thirty eight monks.

29th January, 1996. Katmandu, Nepal. 'ST. LOUIS POST & DISPATCH' Via COUD-I.

SIGHTINGS OF RARE AND ALIEN ANIMALS

CHUPACABRAS 'THE GOATSUCKER' STRIKES AGAIN

The giant bat-like creature terrorising the town of San Juan, Puerto Rico, that we reported on in our last issue has been hitting the headlines again right across the globe, and not just within the pages of Fortean journals.

Even the normally conventional 'LIVERPOOL ECHO' has seen fit to publish a serious account of this mysterious, nightmarish entity, although according to them, Chupacabras, has been sighted in other areas of Central America including Costa Rica, El Salvador, and has even been reported as far north as the Mexican state of Sinaloa. Farmers from Claderon village claim that it has attacked one human, and goats are being found dead on a daily basis with their blood sucked dry. Night vigilante groups have been set up to track down the 'Goat Sucker', so far without much success.



In a line that sounds suspiciously like it belongs in a cheap, (but nonetheless loveable) 1950's science-fiction movie, a villager was quoted as saying on the national television network Televisa; 'We are telling people to keep the women and children locked up inside at night. Nobody really knows what it is.'

Farmers have produced what amounts to a 'Wanted' sketch of 'the bat', which is said to be more than a foot long, and has two horn-like prongs protruding from a hairy head. And still the accounts continue to spread...

In the neighbouring Mexican state of Sonora, farmers have reported cows dying of rabies after being bitten by 'Vampire Bats'.

Meanwhile, back at the point of origin of all these subsequent reports, the horror continues unabated. Goats, hens, rabbits and geese have fallen prey to the nocturnal killer and no one can offer any sane explanation as to why. Angela Lajes found her dog and her sister's two cats dead in the southern city Puerto Rican city of Ponce in early November, 1995.

'It sucked out the animals' blood and took out their guts and aethem,' she said.

The nation's daily tabloid; 'EL VOCERO' reported that 'Chupacabras' had a field night on (predictably enough) Halloween last year, with a total of five goats and 20 parakeets 'sucked dead'. It depicted the killer as a pointy-tailed Devil.

But of course, not everyone is taking the reports seriously.

The 'SAN JUAN STAR' newspaper dedicated a humour column to the mystery headlined; 'HUNTING THE GOATSUCKER'. The searchers, it said, found a political party was killing the animals to divert attention while it registered voters for the following year's San Juan mayoral election.

To date, the only case examined by the government's veterinary services office indicated that the killers were stray dogs, office director Hector Garcia said. His veterinarians studied a pack of sheep in the central town of Orocovis, including about 10 that had died and two that had marks on their necks but had survived.

'It could be a human being who belongs to a religious sect, even another animal,' said Angel Luis Santana of the private Garden-ville Veterinary Clinic in San Juan. 'It could be someone who wants to make fun of the Puerto Rican people.'

Whatever the truth of the matter, one thing is certain: There have been similar reports of animals dying inexplicably in Puerto Rico appearing periodically since the 1970's. No culprit has ever been found...And so the mystery goes on.

19th November, 1995. San Juan, Puerto Rico. 'THE PLAIN DEALER'.

3rd May, 1996. Sinaloa, Mexico. 'LIVERPOOL ECHO'.

Tales Of The Washington Bigfoot

The Old Mill Creek Road in Walla Walla, Washington State, (a road that stretches from the farmland of south-east Washington to the feet of the hushed and empty ranges of the Blue Mountains) has always attracted a welter of stories that have long since passed into the realm of local folklore.

It is perhaps not surprising that tales of otherworldly beings and strange entities abound also. In particular, rumours of and half-whispered stories of that infamous denizen of modern American legend...Bigfoot.

The large, human-like footprints found along the creek. The sounds heard late at night outside the lonely cabins on the upper end of the road. The man who was riding his motorcycle and saw something lurking in the brush, 10 or 12 feet tall, that made a weird, high-pitched scream.

As far back as the 1920's, there were reports of a family of huge 'man-like creatures' skulking up near homesteads along the nearby Coppei River. Six dairy cows were said to have been herded away by the beasts. One by one, the homesteaders left and moved back to town. But the stories persisted. As long as anyone can remember, it has always been an item of belief for many that Bigfoot walks the Blue Mountains.

'Up north here, we grew up with this thing. People would say, "Look out for the Wild Man". Man, how can you doubt it when you still got diapers on and they got a picture of you pointing at a Bigfoot track?' said Wes Sumerlin, a Walla Walla Mountain man whose alleged sighting of two apelike creatures about seven miles off Creek Road during the Summer of 1995, has led to hopes of providing the first scientific evidence of the legend.

Sumerlin and two colleagues came back with clumps of hair that Ohio State University researchers are currently testing for DNA comparisons (See last issue of 'DON' for full details).

From Northern California to the dense forests of British Columbia, the legends of Sasquatch have been handed down over hundreds of years, a Northwest version of the fearsome fireside fable - from the Grendel of Beowulf to the Abominable Snowman of the Himalayas - that is as old as the forest itself.

Now years after much of the wild forest has given way to the civilised suburbs, the Sasquatch is in resurgence all over the Northwest, a cultural phenomenon that is at least as remarkable as any scientific evidence uncovered in the DNA labs.

Mainstream scientists have long scoffed at reports of a Man-Ape lurking in the forests of the Northwest, something akin to the great apes that dwelt in East Asia approximately half a million years ago. Not only is it unlikely that a live specimen wouldn't have been seen and clearly photographed by now, but it would be difficult for so large an animal to find adequate food in the wild lands that remain, they say.

On the other side are a handful of anthropologists, zoologists and others who say that it is possible that the great apes could have crossed the Bering Sea along the ancient ice passage into North America - and survived by a combination of cunning, brawn and shyness in the huge tracts of forests in the Northwest. You only have to consider the case of The Mountain Gorilla...For centuries its existence was the subject of wild tales among native Africans, and it wasn't officially discovered by European scientists until the 1840's.

'We have an enormous amount of circumstantial evidence. We have footprints by the tens of thousands...I have a giant footprint that is 22 inches long. And they go bigger than that. The second thing we have is sightings. They're from people in all walks of life, from game wardens to loggers, plain old grandma's, police officers with 20,000-candlepower searchlights,' said Oregon primate zoologist H. Henner Fahrenbach, who teaches a course on Bigfoot science at Portland Community College.

Gordon Krantz, anthropology professor at Washington State University, estimates that there have been approximately a quarter of a million Bigfoot 'events' over the past 40 years.

He said he has tracked nearly identical reports from the Northwest into China and former Soviet Central Asia, supporting his theory that the ancient Gigantopithecus - the greatest ape that ever lived, some 8-9ft tall, did not become extinct 400,000 years ago but crossed over into North America, and survived in small numbers.

The following Bigfoot story goes back to August, 1995, in Walla Walla, and began when some youths reported they had heard screaming sounds emanating from the surrounding mountians.

A local rancher confirmed that his entire herd of cattle had come down off Biscuit Ridge, where the good feed was, and gone over to Black Snake Ridge, where there wasn't any feed to speak of.

The rancher talked to Sumerlin. *'I said, "What about the deer, the elk?" He said, "I haven't seen anything for about a week. Hell, they're aren't even any birds up there. There ain't nothing sticks around when those critters are there".'*

Sumerlin talked to Paul Freeman, who has spent much of the last several years looking for Bigfoot, and Bill Laughery, and ex-game warden. The three of them decided to drive up and have a look at what the situation was the next morning. They hiked in off the main road and started climbing into the highlands. Then, Sumerlin said, he got a *'whiff of something. Smelled like somebody skinning muskrats. And then I thought, hell, there ain't nobody skinning muskrats up here.'*

Freeman had gone on ahead, but Sumerlin called Laughery back.

'I stood there just a second or two, and all of a sudden I smelled it: a real pungent, heavy odour like an animal that's in rut. Like you can smell a bull elk or a buck deer,' Laughery said. The two men were interviewed separately but gave identical accounts.



Plaster of Paris cast shows the tremendous size of a Bigfoot's footprints when compared to the human hand. Photo taken sometime in the 1960's

Sumerlin and Laughery said they moved together into a clearing, where they found a number of small trees twisted and broken, so fresh, they were still dripping sap. There were large clumps of long hair, some black, some dark brown, caught on the trees where they were broken.

Laughery started to walk on when Sumerlin said he saw something moving in the trees. *'It's like you can't see it, but you can see the daylight breaking behind it,'* he said. *'Bill was there - he packs these sneaky little spy-glasses around - and he said; "Well, I see something, but I can't put a head on it"... I got down by him and he was walking about it while I was walking toward it, and then he said: "Hell, it's gone".'*

I was looking at the back of the critter, I was just seeing part of it. But he was looking on the other side, and he was getting a good look at it. But basically, we saw the same thing. It was a big, hairy critter, about 7ft tall, I'd say, covered with hair.'

Laughery and Sumerlin said they believe that there were actually two creatures, one that moved off down the canyon, another that headed down a small trail. They both saw the

big one jump the trail, 15ft in one leap, and they got a better look at it. They followed it down 60-70 yards through ferns and low bushes.

From far down the canyon, they said, there was a whistle. And then a grunt, and a crash of bushes, and whatever it was was gone.

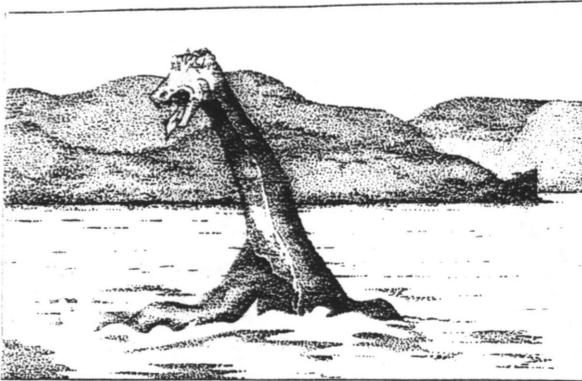
Their story has been discounted by some Bigfoot investigators because it involves Freeman, who is believed to have faked some Bigfoot evidence in the past.

But Sumerlin and Laughery said they know all the stories about Freeman and he could not have faked what they saw. Sumerlin has a good reputation in the Blue Mountains, even among skeptics.

Hair samples the trio collected may well shed some light on the veracity of their encounter.

4th February, 1996. Walla Walla, Washington State, USA. 'THE PLAIN DEALER'.

ANOTHER TALE FROM THE LOCHSIDE



Whilst we were up at the Loch this year (June, 1996), Steve Feltham, the only current full-time Monster Hunter (an interview with whom will be appearing in our next issue), very kindly passed on this account of a possible Nessie sighting that occurred sometime in early March, this year.

Two bus-loads of Abriachan children and their driver spotted something strange on the surface of the Loch as they travelled to school on the morning of March 7th.

Bus driver Jimmy Burnett, of Drumnadrochit based Loch Ness Tours, claims he saw something in the water, not once, but twice.

'I am always looking out at the Loch and I was coming down the hill from Abriachan onto the main road when I definitely saw something in the water.' says Jimmy.

'I take the Charleston Academy pupils first and then 20 minutes later I take the Dochgarroch Primary pupils.'

'Whatever it was, it was still in the water when I took the second run about 8:40am. I stopped the bus and the children all had a look. Although it was a good distance away there was a ripple in the water and a hump was visible.'

Jimmy has been driving along the lochside for the last 30 years, but this was his first ever sighting of anything unusual in the Loch.

'I'm a Nessie believer now', he declared. *'It's taken me a long time, but all the years I've spent scanning the Loch have paid off. A lot of people will think it's just a ploy to attract tourists, but it's not. There's definitely something there.'*

Eleven-year-old Eilidh Barr, a passenger on the minibus, was among the children who saw something lurking in the loch.

'The driver stopped the bus and pointed across the water towards Dores,' she said. *'We saw a single hump in the middle of some ripples. We did not see a head, but as we were*

high up on the hill we had a good view of the Loch. I'm very excited and I will be looking out for Nessie in the future.'

Although not a witness to the sighting herself, Dochgarroch Primary School head teacher Patricia Green is sure that her pupils saw some type of creature.

'I think there is something there. I think she must be a friendly soul and if the children say they saw something, then I believe them,' said Mrs Green.

8th March, 1996. Abriachan, Loch Ness. 'INVERNESS COURIER' Via Steve Feltham.

DINOSAUR HUNT IN TURKEY

Authorities are reportedly sending investigators to Turkey's largest lake to look for what witnesses describe as a monster resembling a Dinosaur.

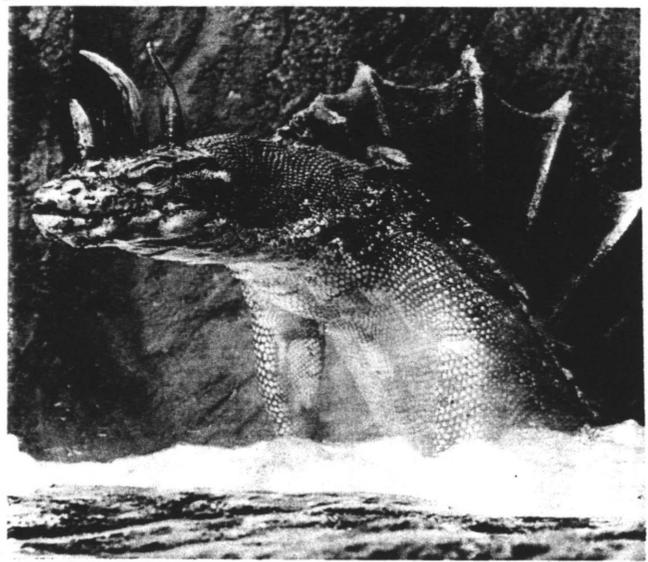
After the provincial deputy governor recently claimed to have seen the creature, a parliamentary commission agreed to conduct a formal search. The monster is said to dwell in Lake Van, in Eastern Turkey.

Some 'experts', predictably discount the reports.

'It is not possible for a creature of the size claimed by witnesses to dwell in Lake Van,' said Orhan Erman, a biology professor at Ataturk University.

Witnesses however, are equally insistent.

'The monster was just like in cartoons. It was black and had triangular spikes on its back. It looked like a Dinosaur,' said the provincial official, Bestami Alkan.



'Some witnesses describe the head as being hairy and horned,' said Nadir Kartal, head of the commission.

More news on this fascinating and seldom-reported entity as and when we get it...

2nd November, 1995. Lake Van, Eastern Turkey. 'THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH' Via COUD-I.

'THE SKINK PANTHER'

There have been numerous sightings of a 'panther' spotted crossing farm land around Stonesfield in Oxfordshire. No trace of a big cat has been found (so what else is new?), but Janet Norman-Phillips, who lives in the area, has proffered the explanation that the sightings are due to misperceptions of her missing domestic cat, 'Skink'.

Well, in the weird world of Fortean phenomena, anything's possible, we suppose...

13th March, 1996. Stonesfield, Oxfordshire, England. 'Daily Mail'.

STRANGE DAYS IN THE ANIMAL KINGDOM

GENERAL ANIMAL WEIRDNESS

LIFE, BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT

Scientists have discovered an animal so strange that it cannot be compared to anything else currently alive on the planet. An expert at Cambridge University has described the find as the 'zoological highlight of the decade.'

The tiny beetle-shaped creature was named the Symbion Pandora by Danish scientists who found it living on the lip of the Norway Lobster.

It is so odd that they believe it represents an entirely new category of creature, or Phylum. There are only 35 Phyla known to man - and the categories are so large that humans and fish belong to the same one. The creature is less than a millimetre long with a sack-like body which attaches to the host lobster. It reproduces both sexually and asexually, when the internal organs collapse into a 'soup' and are reconstituted into a larva, then an adult.

'We are not talking about an alien from outer space, but it is a very odd animal with a most intriguing and peculiar life-cycle,' Cambridge professor Simon Conway Morris was quoted as saying.

16th December, 1995. *General.* 'DAILY MAIL'.

Return Of The Burbot

In 1590 it was so common that people fed it to their pigs. But the 20th century, for some unknown reason put paid to the Burbot Fish in Britain. Now the eel-like fish may be about to make a reappearance in UK rivers thanks to scientists at Nottingham University.

For the past two years they have been nurturing 150 male and female Burbot imported from Moravia in the Czech Republic. The adults could soon be spawning fertilised eggs. Before the fish are reintroduced, the scientists want to find the reason for their puzzling disappearance in the first place. The last one on record was in the Cam near Cambridge in 1970, although the species is still protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act.

Dr. Jim Reader, a lecturer at the university's department of life science, is studying various theories - overfishing, disease, changes in its habitat and a rise in water temperature through industrial pollution.

Dr Reader admitted: *'There will be those who will say that its reintroduction is a mad idea but there's a chance it may be a success. People will always say why reintroduce this fish to the River Trent, or for that matter the Osprey to Loch Garten or the White-Tailed Eagle to Northern Britain?'*

My response to that is, Britain is a more enjoyable place to live in if we know we are sharing it with a greater diversity of flora and fauna'.

Quite right, too.

8th March, 1996. *Britain.* 'DAILY MAIL'.

And Wild Boars Are Making A Come-Back, Too

Wild Boar, hunted to extinction in England in 1525, were first reintroduced in 1850. But now, for the first time in more than 80 years they are back in the New Forest, Hampshire, where they once roamed for centuries.

The fearsomely aggressive animals, weighing up to 25-stone, were killed off because of tourism. Keeper Charlie Bessant was forced to shoot the last one dead in 1905 so trippers could enjoy the forest in safety. His great grandson was a driving force behind the boars' return. Peter Bessant, 44, who lives and works in the forest, was on site to oversee the

arrival of 13 of the beasts at the New Forest Nature Quest reserve.

Three pigs, four sows and six cubs from Perthshire moved into their eight-acre, electrically-fenced quarters.

'I think Charlie would be delighted to see them back,' said Mr Bessant. But not everybody is happy about the animals' return. A Forestry Commission spokesman said; *'Some locals wrongly thought boar would be roaming free and able to charge at people.'*

21st March, 1996. *New Forest, Hampshire.* 'DAILY MAIL'.

GIANT EEL NETTED

A giant eel which has eluded fishermen for years off the Scottish coast has finally been caught by a Dutch skipper.

The 10ft, 80lb Conger was put up for auction in Amsterdam.

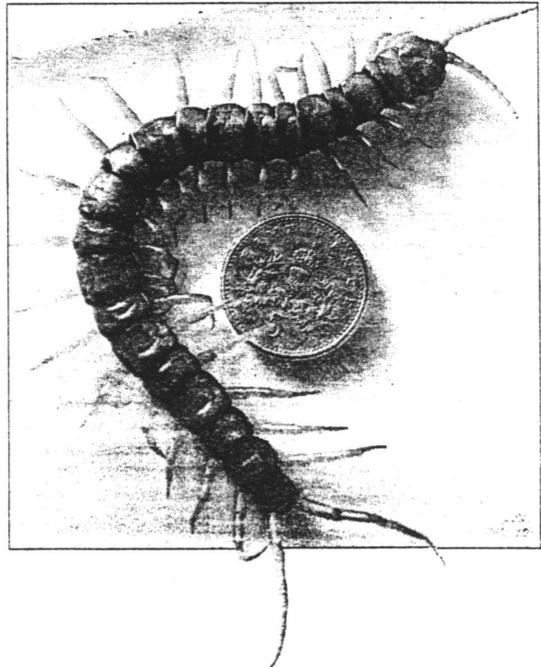
Auctioneer Jan Doorn said; *'It's a real monster from the deep. It's a legend.'*

25th February, 1996. *Scottish Coastline.* 'MAIL ON SUNDAY.'

Bite Of Death In The Bananas

Grocer's Managers Diane King was amazed to find a 4in-long centipede in a box of West Indian bananas. But it was only when she called in the experts that she realised she had encountered a potentially lethal insect.

It was identified as a Scolopendra, a creature that has venomous fangs at both ends that can cause a human limb to swell to twice its normal size, and in extreme cases, can even kill.



Mrs King, from Chard in Somerset, was later quoted as saying; *'I opened the box and saw something moving. I used a knife to part the bunches and there it was. Thank goodness I didn't touch it.'*

Fellow grocer Tony Barton-Harvey wore thick gloves to lift it out and place it in a jar before contacting local wildlife experts.

Jon Flynn, animal care lecturer at Cannington College, Cricket St Thomas, said; *'It took us just a few hours to discover the centipede's identity and now we know it is aggressive, venomous and potentially deadly. This is one insect our students will not be allowed to handle.'*

All manner of dangerous insects and reptiles have arrived in Britain courtesy of the (ahem) banana boat, said Mr Flynn, but he has never come across a Scolopendra.

'They feed on insects that live in deadwood so it is quite unusual to find it in fruit which is cut from high up in banana trees.'

This lucky specimen has been granted permanent residence in Britain...In Bristol Zoo's collection of venomous insects.
8th March, 1996. Chard, Somerset. 'DAILY MANC'

THE DOG WITH THE WHISTLING EARS

While most owners have to whistle for their dog, Zac, the West Highland Terrier whistles to his owner.

The eight-month-old pet does it 24-hours-a-day...Through its ears.

Raymond Burroes, the dog's owner, first noticed the sound about two months after purchasing the dog. 'I wondered what on earth it was,' he said. 'I put down my book, turned to my wife Rhoda and asked her whether she could hear the whistling noise.'

They went over to the dog, lying asleep on the carpet, and realised that the sound was coming from both ears. When it failed to go away, the couple took the whistling Zac to their local vet Ian Millar, at the Earlswood Veterinary Hospital in Belfast.

Mr Millar said; 'They had been wondering whether in fact they had been hearing things. I'm not surprised. I have never come across another case like it.'

When Mr Millar sounded out other members of the British Veterinary Association and doctors for help, the mystery of Zac's singing ears was solved. It was shown that whistling ear syndrome - octoacoustic emission - is similar to reverse tinnitus. In Zac's case, parts of the ear, including the drum, send out a series of vibrations.

'The sound is like the high-pitched whistle you get from a radio that isn't tuned in properly,' explained Mr Millar. 'Zac gets a little anxious from time to time, but mostly it doesn't seem to bother him. I sat at home with him for 15 minutes listening to it. There seems to be no cure.'

Mr Burrows however, is hopeful that a remedy can be found...And soon.

'If anyone knows of a way to stop this whistling, I would like to know. The sound is quite unnerving and sometimes takes on a rippling tone.'

8th March, 1996. Belfast, Northern Ireland. 'DAILY EXPRESS'.

Bird Of Doom Swoops Back

For 400 years 'The Bird Of Doom' has stayed away from England's cities.

Ravens normally soar high above isolated crags far from the maddening crowds of civilisation. But now, for the first time since medieval days, the birds are back in town.

The superstitious among us would nod their heads sagely and say that death is never far behind when ravens are on the wing.

So, not surprisingly, their are fears about what these nesting birds' arrival in historic Chester's town hall - right next to the municipal clock - might herald.

Birdwatchers however, are delighted to see them, though they are baffled as to why the pair Have chosen to make Chester their home.

Andre Fararr, of the Royal Society For The Protection Of Birds, said it was 'one of life's mysteries' why ravens had suddenly chosen to nest in the centre of a city.

The Tower of London ravens - whose departure, says legend, would herald the fall of the monarchy - are 'domesticated' and don't count when it comes to city living. Chester's tourism bosses are reported to be pleased that the visitors are settling in for a long stay.

Others though, remain wary. The memory of Shakespeare's reference in MACBETH to the Bird Of Doom is too well remembered:

'The raven himself is hoarse

*That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements.'*

11th March, 1996. Chester, England. 'DAILY EXPRESS'.

EXTINCTION CATCHES UP WITH ONE OF THE WORLD'S SLOWEST MOVERS

The last remaining specimen of a small tree snail that is (or rather was) one of the slowest moving creatures on Earth has died after a ten-year battle to keep the species from extinction.

Curators at London Zoo found *partula tugida*, the Polynesian snail about the size of a broad bean, motionless in its plastic box. a zoo spokesman said its tombstone would bear the legend; '1.5 million years BC to January, 1996.'

The death of the snail, known to staff as Turgi, was discovered by Paul Pearce-Kelly, assistant curator of lower invertebrates; 'Species extinction is an almost certain daily phenomenon but actual documented cases are relatively rare.' Studies in the wild indicate that this group of snails move at less than two feet a year. But Mr Pearce-Kelly said that they knew it had expired;

'They are not so slow that you cannot tell they are dead.'

The demise of *Partula turgida* marks another sad chapter in the tragic history of Polynesian tree snails, creatures that have become celebrities among evolutionary biologists and akin to Darwin's finches in importance.



*"This is ridiculous,
they're still on the
funeral march"*

The snails, which feed on the rotting stems of hibiscus trees, have engaged some of the best scientific minds since the turn of the century. Free from predators, *Partula* evolved into 117 species in the Society Islands, northwest of Tahiti, all occupying distinct ecological niches. Some are still evolving or halfway between two different species.

However, in 1967, a local entrepreneur introduced the giant African snail for farming. But the snail escaped. Flame-throwers and poisons were used in an effort to control it until in 1978, a Florida snail was shipped in as a biological control.

Unfortunately, the snail, *Euglandia rosea* and known as the Exocet of the snail world preferred the taste of the tree snails. Within a decade it had wiped out 27 species of *Partula*. Why *Partula turgida* passed away remains a mystery. A post-mortem examination was to be carried out.
30th January, 1996. London Zoo. 'DAILY TELEGRAPH'.

THE LOTTERY FISH

The discovery of a fish with a number painted on its scales reportedly inspired about 300 people to play the lottery...And win \$1.1 million.

A street vendor cleaning a fish in the Caribbean port of Turbo, found '1124' written on its side. No one knows how the number got there.

Hundreds of poor people thinking the number was good luck, used it in a national lottery game called 'Chance,' in which lottery players try to guess the last three numbers of any regional lottery.

The winning number in Cundinamarca region, home of the capital Bogota, was 1124 on the relevant Tuesday night.

But when about 300 fishermen, street vendors and others in Turbo went to collect their prizes, officials didn't have enough money to pay all the winners.

Lottery officials said they would not pay up but will investigate whether fraud may account for the huge number of winners.

15th September, 1995. Turbo, Caribbean. 'COLUMBUS DISPATCH'. Via COUD-I

SEX AS SUICIDE

Generations of biology students have learned to their morbid delight, insect-mating behaviour can be somewhat bizarre. The classic example is lovemaking among the Praying Mantises, where the female has sex with her partner, and then eats him for dessert.

But even the Mantis has nothing on its distant cousin, the Australian Redback Spider. The spiders too have turned copulation into a girl-eats-boy story. In this case though, the male not only lets himself be devoured; he also performs acrobatics to make it happen.

As soon as the male has put what is delicately known as his intromittent organ into his much larger mate, he turns a somersault, without slipping out, and dangles his juicy abdomen right in front of her mouth. The female then sets about chomping straight away.

On the face of it, this seems pretty insane. Since most Redbacks do it, however, there has to be an explanation.

Somehow, the male's odd behaviour must have offered an evolutionary advantage, or it never would have become entrenched.



Now, Maydianne Andrade, a University of Toronto graduate student, reports on the current issue of 'SCIENCE' that she has discovered what it is. A female who is chewing on her boyfriend is distracted and allows him to copulate longer. That lets him deposit the maximum amount of sperm, giving him a better chance of passing along his genes. Beyond that, a sperm-filled female tends to spurn new suitors, ensuring that the suicidal male, not a rival, has the offspring.

This would still seem a dubious strategy, since the male necessarily mates only once. But male Redbacks have a short life-span and rarely live after copulation anyway. 'It appears likely,' says Andrade, 'that one shot is all a Redback male gets in.'

By yielding to the female's consuming interest, he makes sure it's his best shot.

15th January, 1996. General. 'SCIENCE'.

...AND HERE'S A SUICIDAL SALMON

The previous case may well come replete with a ready-made explanation for suicidal Redbacks, but just what was the motive for this fish with a death-wish?

Angler Ronald Lyle, 49, had had a lousy day fishing, and was just about to reel in his line when a 9lb Salmon leapt from the River Tay, hit him square on the head and landed at his feet in the bottom of the boat!!!

23rd March, 1996. River Tay, Scotland. 'DAILY MANC.'

WHALE BURIED AT TOXIC WASTE SITE

A Sperm Whale found dead off the Danish coast contained so much mercury and cadmium that its intestine had to be buried at a dangerous waste site. The amount of cadmium was 20 times higher and the quantity of mercury double that normally found in fish.

20th March, 1996. Copenhagen, Denmark. 'THE TIMES'.

Top (Of-The-Tree) Cat

Staff at Felicia Park nature reserve, Hampshire, are caring for a cat which amazingly delivered a litter of kittens...20ft up a tree in a bird's nest.

12th May, 1996. Hampshire, England. 'DAILY MANC.'

THE INCREDIBLE STRENGTH OF THE BEETLE MANIACS

It's only three inches long but the Rhinoceros Beetle, researchers have discovered, is so powerful, it can carry one hundred times its own body-weight. That's the equivalent of an Olympic strongman pushing seven tons.

Tests by American scientists have revealed that the beetles were also able to keep up the pace even when bearing loads 30 times their weight. The results were so impressive they may help in the design of robots for use in space and undersea research.

A team from the University of California at Berkeley designed a set of weights which they placed on the insects' backs until they reached 100 times their own weight. Even more surprising was the tiny amount of oxygen used when they were put on a treadmill to test their endurance. Tests showed that they were using a fifth of the energy the scientists thought would be necessary.

And a bigger mystery was how they managed to move such huge weights with so little effort. There are many varieties of the beetle - some of which can be found in British woodlands - but they tend to be quite small. In the tropics, like the rain forests of Costa Rica, they are much bigger.

Research leader Rodger Kram said; 'It is a mystery why they are so strong. It shook us. But we will have to wait until August to do anymore research. The adults only emerge in that one month of the year, and they only live a few weeks.'

9th February, 1996. California, USA. 'DAILY MAIL.'

An Out-Of-Place-Pelican

A Pelican is living wild beside a city river. Normally found only in warm areas such as Florida, the bird is believed to have escaped from a private collection, although, somewhat typically in such cases, no-one had actually reported the bird missing. It regularly perches on the roof of a factory in Enfield, north London, to keep warm. Barry Smitherson, who runs a wildlife rescue service in the River Lea area, said; 'It must have found things pretty cold in the last few weeks, but as long as it has a good food supply I'm sure it will survive. The rivers and reservoirs around here are well stocked with fish.'

20th March, 1996. Enfield, London. 'THE INDEPENDANT.'

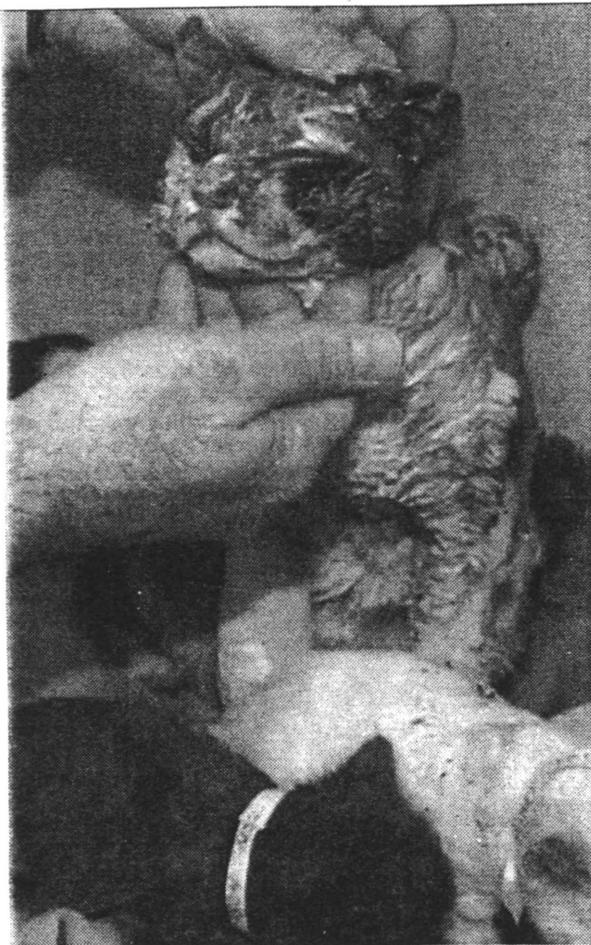
Animal Intelligence And Kindness

CAT'S AND DOG'S TO THE RESCUE

Here's a story to move even the most hard-hearted of people and proof, if it were needed that animals are not merely the cold, unemotional creatures of instinct we tend to assume they are:

A cat raced into a burning building to rescue her five kittens, one-by-one, in a motherly show of courage that has touched the heart of the people of New York.

With her eyes blistered shut and paws burned, she made a head count of her young ones, touching each one with her nose to make sure they were all safe.



Scarlet, the courageous mother cat who risked her own life to save each and everyone of her kittens

The heroics of the cat nicknamed Scarlet, have turned the once-homeless brood into the most coveted kitties in an animal shelter. While they recovered from their wounds, more than 700 people called seeking to adopt them.

2nd April, 1996. New York, USA. 'LIVERPOOL DAILY POST.'

Meanwhile, in Minehead, Somerset, Sparkle, another cool cat, saved her owner's life when a fire broke out in their home. The Burmese cross breed could have escaped out of the cat flap but instead ran upstairs and woke her owner by jumping on the bed and miaowing.

2nd April, 1996. Minehead, Somerset. 'LIVERPOOL DAILY POST.'

Suki, the crimebusting cat, was hailed a hero by a judge for catching a burglar breaking into the house next door.

The fluffy brown Persian began scratching frantically at her back door in South Shields, asking to be let out after spotting Stephen Nichol, 26, tampering with the patio doors. He fled, but returned next day. Suki began miaowing loudly and her owner David Brown called police who arrested Nichol nearby. He was subsequently jailed for 30 months at Newcastle Crown Court.

16th April, 1996. South Shields, Tyneside. 'DAILY SLUR.'

And here's a story worthy of Rin Tin Tin, Rebel (the alsation from 'CHAMPION-THE WONDER HORSE') or even Lassie Herself: Lyric the Irish Setter saved her owner's life by dialling the emergency services and barking into the phone...

When asthma sufferer Judi Bayly collapsed, the eight-year-old dog knocked the receiver off the hook, hit three pre-programmed buttons and kept up her noise until the call was traced. Judi, who sleeps with an oxygen mask because of her breathing disorder, has had her pet specially trained to carry out the routine. She was moved to say: 'I feel like I've got some kind of guardian angel sleeping over my bed with me - even if it's red with a fur coat.'

6th March, 1996. Nashua, New Hampshire, USA. 'DAILY EXPRESS.'

Just as incredible is the following case concerning diabetic Roz Brown's West Highland Terrier. Holly, who saved her life with a packet of Jelly Babies.

Roz, 45, had collapsed at her home in Cambridge and slipped into a coma for lack of sugar. But Holly fetched her a bag of Jelly Babies from the coffee table and tipped two by Roz's nose. Roz ate them and got enough energy to get up. The RSPCA said; 'Some animals have an uncanny understanding of when their owners are in danger.'

4th April, 1996. Cambridge, England. 'DAILY SLUR.'

Not so much in the good books was Rupert - a Springer Spaniel - who caused police to respond to a 999 call in Lincolnshire...Only to find that the dog had dialled the number...

Owner Jean Morris was reported as saying (and one can't help wondering if she was struggling to suppress a smile as she uttered the following words) 'he's the naughtiest dog I've ever met.'

15th February, 1996. Stamford, Lincolnshire. 'DAILY MANC.'

Slightly less believable is the story of Tom the black Labrador, who can apparently add, subtract, multiply and divide - and is now learning the nine times table.

His owner, ex-teacher Carol Norton, asks the questions and Tom either barks an answer or bangs his paw.

Carol, from Newquay in Cornwall, said; 'I've had two dogs that can do this so it must be a skill all dogs have. I believe they have a basic understanding of numbers.'

16th April, 1996. Newquay, Cornwall. 'DAILY SLUR.'

Talk about life imitating art: Sheep farmer Stuart Proctor watched in amazement when his flock was rounded up by a Pig!!!

Just like in the Oscar-winning film 'BABE', the stray Vietnamese pot-bellied pig scampered round the field like a sheepdog.

Mr Proctor said: 'My kids said it was "BABE" come to visit - they couldn't believe it. It thinks its a dog.'

9th April, 1996. Rhiwderin Farm, Newport, Gwent, Wales. 'DAILY SLUR.'

MONKEYS PROTEST DEATH OF ONE OF THEIR PACK

The tradition of political protests in India's only Communist-ruled state took a beastly turn when a pack of furious monkeys reportedly stormed a West Bengal police station.

More than 50 primates shrieked outside the station for hours after a schoolteacher on the state capital Calcutta, shot and killed a monkey that entered his garden.

The wounded monkey hobbled off to the police station and lay there. Neighbours took it to a veterinary clinic, where it later died.

When the dead monkey was brought back to the police station, the dozens of monkeys gathered and shrieked outside.

14th December, 1995. Calcutta, India. 'COLUMBUS DISPATCH' Via COUD-I.

A Giant Panda pushed its way into the home of Chinese farmer Gu Yingming in Northwest China's Shaanxi Province, and decided it was so comfortable it stayed for four days.

3rd April, 1996. Shaanxi Province, China. 'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'

And finally, Helen Saif managed to trace her missing pet Cockatiel, Rixy, in a bird sanctuary, by whistling the 'LAUREL AND HARDY' theme tune. Helen, 41, of Barry, Glamorgan, said; 'He whistled it straight back.'

29th February, 1996. Barry, Glamorgan, Wales. 'DAILY MAIL.'

REVOLT OF THE CREATURES: VI



KILLER HIPPO'S AND ELEPHANTS

Shocked safari guide Paul Templar told of how he vainly tried to save a colleague from the jaws of an enraged Hippopotamus.

'It just went berserk, biting into whichever one of us it could,' said the 27-year-old Briton, who lost an arm in the terrifying encounter.

Fellow guide Evans Nemasango, 25, drowned after he was bitten and fell into the water. The pair were paddling near a group of tourists in canoes near Zimbabwe's 300ft Victoria Falls.

'We were drifting down to Big Tree, just above the Falls, in the late afternoon, when we saw this Hippo cutting across a channel,' said Paul. 'We tried to get out of the way but the boat with Evans in didn't make it. I went back and tried to pull him out of the river but the Hippo bit me too.'

He escaped death after the one-ton bull clamped its huge jaws on him, severing his left arm and 'punching several holes in me.'

Paul, whose family live in Uttoxeter, Staffs, was said to be out of danger by hospital doctors. He expressed grief at the death of his friend but was relieved to hear the six German and French holidaymakers had survived unhurt.

Paul, who was flown 250 miles to Bulawayo for emergency surgery, said it was the mating season and Hippos were a hazard on the Zambezi River. He did not have time to defend the canoes with his .45 Magnum pistol.

25th March, 1996. Zambezi River, Africa. 'DAILY MAIL.'

And an Elephant whose trainer poked its backside with a sharp stick during a parade responded by crushing him up against a wall, and then pushed his body through a closed door at Carpentras, Southern France.

4th April, 1996. Carpentras, Southern France. 'DAILY SLUR.'

HORSIN' AROUND

A runaway horse left two guests seriously hurt when it rampaged through a wedding party at a country house reception.

Bride Jane Ashley's page boy brother Scott, 9, and Wendy Rodgers, 48, were tossed into the air like rag dolls. The animal broke free from a carriage-driving event at Haigh Hall Country Park, near Wigan.

Wendy's husband Malcolm said: 'She had hoof marks all over her body.'

1st May, 1996. Haigh Hall Country Park, near Wigan, Gtr Manchester. 'DAILY SLUR.'

ATTACK OF THE KILLER CATERPILLARS

Deadly caterpillars are spreading fear in Southern Brazil.

Twenty people have been taken to hospital after touching the insects. The caterpillars which secrete a potent venom through their skin, have killed nine people over the past two years.

Contact with the venom causes a burning sensation. If left untreated, it can lead to high fever, bleeding, kidney failure and death. The caterpillars become harmless after they transform into butterflies.

22nd January, 1996. Southern Brazil. 'LIVERPOOL ECHO.'

GEESE CAUSE AIR CRASH

A flock of geese caused the first air crash ever of a four-engine AWACS radar plane, according to the US Airforce.

The crash killed 24 people on September 22nd, 1995, at Elmendorf Air Force Base near Anchorage. The report faults airfield managers and a flight controller for not keeping geese off the airfield and for not warning the crew that the Canada geese, which knocked out two engines, were in the area.

12th January, 1996. Anchorage, USA. 'USA TODAY.'

Meanwhile, a couple of deer almost caused a disaster when they bolted into the path of an aircraft accelerating for take-off at 125mph.

The pilot managed to halt the Jetstream 3200 safely at Teeside Airport after the animals wrecked one of the plane's propellers and damaged its undercarriage. None of the 20 passengers and crew on board was hurt in the incident which occurred in January, 1996. One deer died instantly and the other had to be destroyed.
13th March, 1996. Teeside Airport. 'DAILY MAIL.'

REAL-LIFE VAMPIRES ON THE ATTACK

Vampire Bats have reportedly attacked more than 40 peasants in a village in eastern El Salvador in a search for food.
3rd April, 1996. El Salvador. 'LIVERPOOL ECHO.'

TORTOISE SETS HOUSE ABLAZE

A pet tortoise apparently set fire to a house in Munich, causing more than \$20,000 worth of damage. The tortoise was unharmed.
The creature upset a lamp that ignited curtains causing a blaze that quickly spread through the building. Two women were treated for smoke inhalation.
21st September, 1995. Munich, Germany. 'COLUMBUS DISPATCH.' Via COUD-I.

Jeezly Ol' Crow: The New Ferry Terror

And would you believe it...Right from smack in the middle of the editor's humble home-town (and no more than a block or two from where this very magazine is put together) comes the following account of avian terror.

A huge Crow was reportedly causing havoc with the residents of New Ferry. The aggressive bird flew at two women in the town. The first was a 38-year-old who swung her shopping bag to scare it off as it swooped down on her in Beaconsfield Road.

Another woman, aged 62, was walking her dog on the same street the day before when the crow flew down and flapped around her head.

PC Geoff Goodwin, at Bromborough Police Station, said; *We have had reports of a very large crow making a nuisance of itself in the area. People have been genuinely concerned that it might attack a child.*

There is very little we can do. It is unfortunate but we can hardly arrest the bird.

The RSPCA was also informed but cannot act because the crow had not been harmed.

Tim Melling of the RSPB said; *The bird may have been released from an aviary and associates humans with food (I'm sure he didn't mean it to sound that way, but that hardly comes across as being reassuring!!! - Ed). They are not particularly territorial so it's up to someone to catch it and take it to safety in the wild.*

There were no further reports at the time of going to press.
13th March, 1996. New Ferry, Merseyside. 'LIVERPOOL ECHO.'

THE WARMINSTER HOUSE-BREAKER

The town of Warminster is well-used to mysterious phenomena, the UFO-wave of the late mid-to-late 1960's brought the area to the attention of the world's media. None of that however, could have prepared Lorraine O'Neill for the sight that greeted her upon arriving home to her bungalow one January morning.

The burglar alarm was sounding and her house was in chaos. The lounge was littered with broken ornaments and lamps. Soot and pot pourri were stamped into the carpet, sofas and chairs. Her favourite painting had been torn off the wall. But strangely, nothing seemed to be missing. After she dialled 999, Mrs O'Neill, 41, found out why. She found herself face to face with the intruder...A very guilty-looking grey squirrel. It had run amok in panic after falling down the chimney of her home, setting off the alarm.



'I can't believe the damage he caused - about £300,' she said later. 'When the police arrived I felt so silly.' The squirrel escaped the clutches of the law. It bolted through an open door and has not been seen since.
1st February, 1996. Warminster, Wiltshire. 'DAILY MAIL.'

A noisy Hamster caused the police to be called to search a house in Falmouth, Cornwall, (coincidentally(?) another place renowned for a high incidence of strangeness).

The raucous rodent had broken out of its cage and was chewing a door so loudly that the sleeping owners thought their house was being raided. They dialled 999 and while four officers searched the house, Sandy the hamster gave herself up and was put back behind bars.

20th February, 1996. Falmouth, Cornwall. 'DAILY MANC.'

And yet another rodent was found to be the culprit of crime, this time wanton vandalism, on parked buses. Undercover police officers hunting the villain who had been cutting through electronic gearbox wiring on the buses discovered the saboteur was a rat with a craving for the plastic covering. Manager Ian Gray said; *'He was going through them like we'd munch a hamburger.'* Poisoned bait eventually stopped his nightly feast.

3rd March, 1996. Blandford, Dorset. 'DAILY MANC.'

And to round this mini-section of animal saboteurs off, thousands of homes were blacked out in Wrexham, Wales on 6th May, this year when a cat died after climbing into a power sub-station. *'Curiosity killed the cat,'* an (ahem) witty Manweb official was quoted as saying.

7th May, 1996. Wrexham, Clwyd, Wales. 'DAILY EXPRESS.'

MORE INSECT INVASIONS

An invasion by rare, Yellow Pharaoh ants is plaguing students at a Exeter University. The ants, originally from

the Middle East, are extremely hard to kill. They are resistant to poison and form new colonies if attacked. Now hormones that repress growth have been put down and students must wait 200 days for the queen ant and her colony to die.

13th February, 1996. 'DAILY EXPRESS.'

An ambulance crew was called to remove a 1.5 inches cockroach trapped in the ear of a 19-year-old Swedish backpacker staying at a Sydney hostel.

28th February, 1996. Sydney, Australia. 'LIVERPOOL ECHO.'

Strange Deaths

SON KILLED LIKE FATHER

A man died in a freak accident at the same quarry where his father plunged to his death.

Shit-firer John Dickinson, 31, caught his sleeve in a conveyor belt and slammed chest-first into a stone crusher. John's dad George was killed at the age of 38, in a fall at Creeton Quarry, Lincolnshire, in 1975.

His widow Pauline said; 'I never thought I'd have to face up to it a second time.'

1st April, 1996. Creeton Quarry, Lincolnshire. 'DAILY MANC.'

KILLED BY KINDNESS

A British soldier was killed as he stopped to help a family on a blizzard-hit motorway. Kevin Dailey, 35, who was married with a one-year-old daughter, stopped to help a stranded British couple with two children on the autobahn near Nottuln, Germany. He was talking to them at the roadside when another vehicle skidded into him. Warrant Officer Dailey's death was less than a week after he'd phoned his mother Josie in Sunderland, to say he was being promoted.

2nd April, 1996. Nottuln, Germany. 'LIVERPOOL DAILY POST.'

KILLED BY A KITE

A fun-loving man was killed by the huge kite he had built. The kite, measuring 20ft by 6ft, pulled him 23ft into the air before he was forced to let go.

He died on the way to hospital at Venelles, France.

16th April, 1996. Venelles, France. 'DAILY EXPRESS.'

THE UNKINDEST CUT

Gardener Barry Hope was attacked by a bee while mowing his lawn at home in Texas. In the panic of trying to swat the insect away, Barry fell off his mower...And was promptly run over.

7th April, 1996. Texas, USA. 'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'

THE COSMIC JOKER STRIKES AGAIN

Doctors in Izmir, Turkey, cured Ahmet Koral's heart condition. But when they presented him with their £4,500 bill, he collapsed and died of shock.

3rd March, 1996. Izmir, Turkey. 'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'

Truck driver Paul Hebert was killed in New York, when he was hit by a lorry loaded with coffins. Paul had been delivering tombstones.

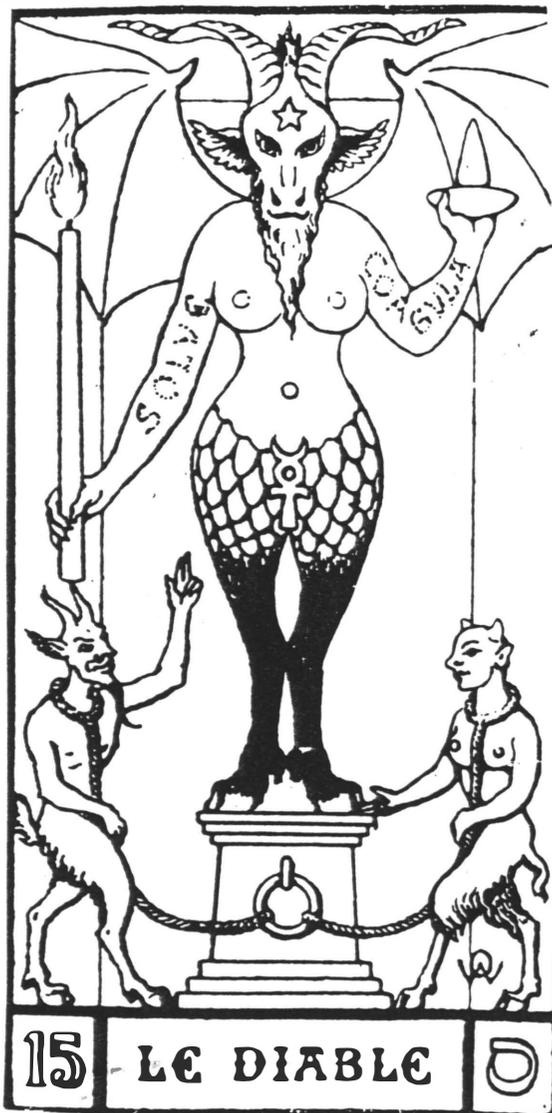
7th April, 1996. New York, USA. 'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'

And finally, doom merchant Jose Ricart, 73, was proved spot-on correct as he carried a banner proclaiming; 'The End Of The World Is Nigh.'

He was knocked down and killed while crossing the road in Madrid, Spain.

10th April, 1996. Madrid, Spain. 'DAILY SLUR.'

Witchcraft, Curses And Demonology In The 20th Century



'THE EXORCIST'

A man stabbed his father to death with a Swiss Army knife, dismembered the body and ate part of the brain in an attempt to free what he believed were Evil Spirits, police said.

Joseph Garner, 37, was charged with murder and was being held for psychiatric evaluation. He told police he had stabbed Paul Garner, 76, in the back with a knife he had given his father for Christmas. He took a shower after the killing and went to free spirits from a neighbour's body too. But the neighbour didn't answer and Garner drove away. After making a wrong turn and getting stuck in a snowbank, he stopped at a church, and the pastor drove him to police.

28th December, 1995. Indianapolis, USA. 'THE TORONTO SUN.' Via COUD-I.

The Curse Of Tutankhamun

The ancient Curse Of Tutankhamun has allegedly struck a wood-carver who made a model of the Egyptian boy king's coffin.

Eddie Stechman has had a run of illness since shaping a life-size model of Tut. Accidents and sickness also befell Eddie's friends.

The king threatened death to anyone disturbing his tomb. Lord Carnavon, leader of the infamous 1922 expedition, died soon after the tomb was discovered in the Valley Of The Kings. Eight colleagues died soon afterwards.

Since Eddie finished his gilded carving, he has suffered two heart-attacks and nine strokes and discovered he was diabetic. The retired builder had his first heart attack a few weeks after making the model six years ago. It was followed by another within eight months.



Eddie with the latex model of King Tutankhamun. The object of a curse???

'I decided to get shot of it pretty quickly and donated it to a museum in the Isle Of Wight,' he said. 'But things still kept happening. Four of my friends have died since I made it. And my next door neighbour was hurt in a nasty accident when I was making a model of a mummy out of foam, latex and bandages in my back garden. He was working on his garage roof at the time and laughing his head off at what I was doing. Then he took a step backwards and fell straight through, badly gashing his leg.' Eddie, who lives in Portsmouth, has been fascinated by ancient Egypt since

boyhood. He has carved models of other relics from King Tut's tomb. *'When I was working on the model I can remember people trying to warn me. Perhaps I shouldn't have ignored them, but I never thought the curse would come true.'* 9th April, 1996. Portsmouth, England. 'DAILY SLUR.'

Vampirism - The Latest Rage



In Mobile, Alabama, young people with a thirst for love and meaning are tasting blood as a substitute, according to youth counsellors and Vampire hobbyists in the South of the good ol' US of A.

The new breed of Southern Vampires - from 10-year-olds - to twentysomethings - have become deeply involved in Gothic literature, romanticism and fatalism, the experts say. While the subject of Vampirism has become a national obsession some people can't seem to separate fact from fiction.

The obsession has led some to dress like Vampires, shy away from sunlight and, in many cases, sample the blood of friends willing to share.

The bloodletting usually doesn't occur through Christopher Lee-style biting. A person interested in sharing someone's blood will ask them to make a minor cut so the drinker can partake by licking the wound. *'It's a trendy thing that's become very popular,'* says T.W. Martin, probation officer and worker at the James T. Strickland Youth Centre in Mobile. *'We've had a lot of runaways from New Orleans who are into this.'*

Christian Zane, 27, of Mobile, is not a Southern Vampire, but has been fascinated since childhood with Vampires and their immortal allure. Zane says she is alarmed by the fact that some have turned fascination into imitation. She considers it to be an immature expression of an alternative lifestyle. *'I have a couple of friends who live in New Orleans who actually live the lifestyle,'* says Zane, a hair designer. *'They are a group of people who consider themselves to be Vampires. They might have night jobs and some of them have gone to the dentist and gotten their teeth capped with fangs. These people are really young and they are really "out" - they are so obsessed with the glamour of the whole thing.'*

Zane who experimented with the austere Gothic look as a teen, says the new 'Children Of The Night' are pretty harmless, but are oblivious to the health risks of their hobby.

Most who drink blood say they ask someone to cut themselves slightly with a razor along the arm or hand, then ingest the rendered blood.

'I think the thing that makes it dangerous is that there is a risk of contracting HIV,' says Zane.

This risk is something that kids shopping for immortality just don't stop to consider when they bargain for blood in the night, according to New Orleans youth crisis counsellor Darryl W. Bruno.

'That risk doesn't factor into their thinking at all. You find a lot of kids in the last couple of years who are gravitating towards drinking each others' blood and fantasy-role-playing. I've worked with kids 10, 11, and up to their 20's. Sometimes the kids say they get into it with the idea of reaching higher levels of mortality with each initiation (blood consumption).'

Kids who experiment with Vampirism don't necessarily believe they are possessed by the supernatural, Bruno adds. They just need some meaning to their lives, or a way to express overwhelming angst and apathy.

12th February, 1996. Mobile, Alabama, USA. 'THE PLAIN DEALER' Via COUD-I

CROCODILE BURNING

A male and female Crocodile, captured on the outskirts of Cameroon's capital, were burned alive in public by traditional healers who said the animals were bewitched.

Up to 300 residents of Yaounde's Madagascar and Nkomkana districts watched as the healers adorned the male reptile with a beard and pants, and the female with hair and red nail polish on its claws, before setting them ablaze.

Locals, who chipped in for the cost of the gasoline, blamed the male for a spate of road accidents on a bridge under which it lived, and some believed that both of the beasts were responsible for the disappearance of small children.

Sightings of Crocodiles are rare in Yaounde, a city of nearly 1 million people.

1st October, 1995. Yaounde, Cameroon. 'COLUMBUS DISPATCH' Via COUD-I

RIPLEY'S GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Believe it or not, the Ripley's museum in Orlando, Florida, may well be the place to take a pregnant pause.

Apparently, women have found themselves unexpectedly pregnant after touching fertility statues in display at Ripley's Entertainment Inc, which operates 20 oddity-filled museums.

Since late 1994, when the ebony statues - a woman holding a baby and a man holding a mango - were placed in the office lobby, three employees have become pregnant, as have wives of staffers.

So have eight women who visited the office, including an Airborne Express Delivery-person.

All had touched the statues, which Ripley's says came from Africa's Ivory Coast. So far, all seven babies have been boys.

Ripley's paid \$960 per statue to display them. But they happened to fit in a spot in the firm's headquarters that needed decorating. It was there that staffer Kimberli Martin, 24, had an ultimately happy accident. She had been married 2 and a half months (and hoped to start a family in the distant future) when *'I tripped and caught myself on the statues...I touched the female. I touched the baby. I was taking birth control pills and still got pregnant.'*

Not surprisingly, the fertility icons are attracting a lot of attention amongst the childless. After receiving dozens of calls, the company moved the statues to the lobby of the

Ripley's Orlando museum, where the mother-wannabes can visit without paying the admission charge. A spot check of those paying homage turned up a couple married only two days and a Texas woman with five daughters who was hoping to conceive a son. Statue-assisted pregnancy *'sounds a little wacky.'* says Doctor Robert Visscher, executive director of the American Society For Reproductive Medicine. It puts stock in statistics: Of every 100 couples trying to concieve, 25% get pregnant during the first month. How about the all-boy results?

'In general, it's about 103 boys to 100 girls born.'

Candice Prizer, 39, was unaware of Ripley's 'baby boom' and touched the statues every time she walked in. Now, she's half-convinced the statues helped her work a little reproductive magic in the birth of 3-week old Benjamin. Her spouse is a realist. He doesn't believe any of it.

Her obstetrician's professional opinion amounted to nothing more than a derisive laugh.

Philip Ravenhill, chief curator of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African Art in Washington D.C., is an expert on the Ivory Coast. He hasn't seen the sculptures but says tribal beliefs are much more complex than reach-out-and-touch-a-statue.

'We've had a lot of pregnancies,' says Andrea Nicholls, an assistant curator at the same museum. *'People are having children because it's their time. Here's a museum full of African art and nobody is saying; "It's because I touched this statue.'*

17th January, 1996. Orlando, Florida, USA. 'USA TODAY' Via COUD-I

THE COSMIC JOKER'S LATEST PRANKS



Even the normally dour police were amused when they were called out to round up a runaway flock of sheep which were causing mayhem on the roads in the Dorset village of...WOOL!!!

12th February, 1996. Wool, Dorset. 'DAILYSLUR.'

*Twins Tommy and Lee Taylor, who grew up in Pine Ridge, Kentucky, in common with most twins were very close and did just about everything together.

As fate would have it, (or rather as that ol' granddaddy of laughs, The Cosmic Joker would have it), they even *died* on the same day - less than three hours apart on their 81st birthday.

20th February, 1996. Pine Ridge, Kentucky, USA. 'DAILY MANC.'

*Met office weather man Nigel Bolton, 33, was absolutely spot on when he warned of thunderstorms....Hours alter a bolt of lightning blew a hole in his own roof at Southampton. He said, somewhat dryly; *'It was a very good forecast.'*

20th February, 1996. Southampton, England. *'DAILY MANC.'*

*And just to show, even the Clown Prince sometimes has a heart of gold...Lucky Pieter Thyssen, 31, found a brooch in Amsterdam and recognised it as one he had bought for a girl when he was 13.

Police managed to trace her, and the couple are now happily engaged.

21st February, 1996. Amsterdam, Holland. *'DAILY MAIL.'*

*John Mason met his son Robert, 24, for the first time since his birth when they were sent to the same prison in Kimberley, South Africa, for burglary.

25th February, 1996. Kimberley, South Africa. *'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'*

*Teacher Helmut Luuck lived up to his surname when he tried to show his class the evils of gambling at an Austrian casino...And promptly won £27,000.

17th March, 1996. Austria. *'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'*

*Education bosses ended up with red faces after trumpeting a scheme to improve spelling on the Isle Of Wight...Instead of Wight.

The error came in a press release about a new literacy centre. An education Department spokesman said; *'We're a bit embarrassed. Our chief press officer is making us write out Isle Of Wight 1,000 times.'*

2nd April, 1996. Isle Of Wight. *'DAILY MAIL.'*

*And finally for this section (although not for this issue. Check out the special feature on *'Classic Cosmic Jokes'* elsewhere in these pages)...A man who was quizzed over two robberies was named by police as being none other than Mr Rob Rob.

The 21-year-old changed his name by deed poll before being arrested by police investigating the raids in Durham.

10th May, 1996. Durham, England. *'DAILY MANC.'*

WHEN FATE SMILES DOWN MIRACLE CURES

Cop Gary Dockery came out of a coma 7 and a half years after being shot in the head by a drunk.

Gary, 39, suddenly began joking with relatives keeping a bedside vigil at Walden, Tennessee. Then he asked for his sons, aged 12 and 20, whom he last saw when they were 5 and 13. A friend said; *'It's a miracle.'*

15th February, 1996. Walden, Tennessee, USA. *'THE SCUM.'*

*Canadian window cleaner Peter Patterson, who had been dumb since a car crash 17 years earlier, was able to speak again after falling off a ladder. His first words were, (aside from *'Owww!!!'*, presumably), *'Praise the Lord, everyone!!!'*

4th February, 1996. Canada. *'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'*

*And last, but certainly not least comes the wonderful story of blind Jim Davies, 86, who was enjoying a dip at his local swimming baths when suddenly, his sight came back.

Jim, from Yelverton, Devon, lost his vision eight months after suffering a stroke. He said; *I can see my wife Heather's*

face now, which I never thought would happen again in my lifetime. Now I can tell her how beautiful she is.'

8th March, 1996. Yelverton, Devon. *'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'*

SAVED BY FAT

Marjorie Daley fell out of her flat window when she was trying to rescue her pet cat. She dropped 100ft and was only saved from certain death by her excessive flab.

The 45-year-old mother who weighs in at a massive 30st, quite literally bounced when she crashed to the ground below her 11th-floor apartment in Sydney, Australia. Marjorie escaped with minor cuts and bruises...However, the cat wasn't quite so lucky...She landed on it and crushed it to death.

15th February, 1996. Doddington, Essex. *'THE SCUM.'*

WHEN FATE TURNS ITS BACK...AGAIN

Art lover Joe Arnold ate a tray of doughnuts thinking someone had left them in a New York art gallery by mistake...But it turned out that they were a sculpture called *'Nude Boys' Dancing'*.

8th September, 1995. New York, USA. *'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'*

Driver Eleana Hagmann escaped unhurt when her car rolled over six times after a crash in Brazil...But when police arrived in their cars they knocked Eleana down...She died instantly!!!

8th September, 1995. Brazil. *'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'*

Lightning struck a key chain on Frank Elli's jeans. They were ripped to shreds and his boxer shorts caught fire. He was taken to hospital in New York and treated for serious burns.

8th September, 1995. New York, USA. *'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'*

A man attempted to rescue his friend trapped in the compartment of a lorry by firing his gun at the lock.

Unfortunately, the wannabe cowboy was charged by the police with grievous bodily harm...He wound up shooting his friend in both feet.

17th March, 1996. USA. *'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'*

Psychic Brenda Fletcher claims she lost her powers when a plank fell on her at a Brisbane DIY store. But the judge ruled that she should have predicted the injury and dismissed the case.

7th April, 1996. Brisbane, Australia. *'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'*

Klaus Henkel went to the toilet before skiing at Poprad in the Czech Republic, but got frozen to the seat. After two days he finally ripped the seat off and skied back to civilisation...with it still attached to his bum!!!

7th April, 1996. Poprad, Czech Republic. *'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'*

Italian Sergio Mazzaro tried to kill himself by sticking his head in the oven, but the cooker exploded. Fourteen people were killed when the blast wrecked flats in Bologna. Mazzaro, predictably, survived!!!

7th April, 1996. Bologna, Italy. *'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'*

Pensioner Ludwig Masching is suing doctors for £400,000 after they amputated the wrong leg. Ludwig was quoted as saying: *'I expected to find the left one missing but they'd cut off the healthy right leg.'* Three days later the apologetic doctors at the hospital in Bamberg, Germany, had to amputate the 63-year-old diabetic's other leg.

16th April, 1996. Bamberg, Germany. *'DAILY SLUR.'*

The Curse Of Superman

Virtually the whole of the tabloid press ran lurid stories about the so-called 'Curse Of Superman', in the wake of actress Margot Kidder's (Lois Lane in the latest film adaptations) was reported to have been residing in a mental hospital ward.

This 'curse' has apparently struck many of those involved with the comic strip over the years, and most recently, of course, there was the tragedy that befell Christopher Reeve.

The accounts went on to reveal that the 'curse' has also afflicted other actors, writers and producers. Little wonder then that Dean Cain, the latest incarnation in the '*New Adventures Of Superman*', shown on British TV on Saturday nights, should have demanded a \$2 million insurance policy from the show's producers, refused to do any dangerous stunts, and chosen to stay out of the risky limelight 'in favour of quiet nights at home with a book.'

The reports delved into the 'history' of the misfortunes that have plagued those involved with 'Superman' beginning with George Reeves, the original TV prototype for the character. In 1959, two years after the programme ended its four-year run, he shot himself. Since then, friends have come forward - and books have been printed - claiming that Reeves was murdered, punishment for an affair with a powerful producer's wife.

The truth, however, is probably more mundane: Reeve's career had collapsed. An icon for an earlier, simpler age, his identification with 'truth, justice and the American way.' had typecast him to the point of permanent unemployment. He became, not surprisingly, acutely depressed, cheated and trapped by the positively divine image he had helped to create. And whether it was murder or suicide, the proponents of 'the curse' believed they had pinpointed their first victim.

Christopher Reeve's (Cosmic Joke Surname Name Game, or pure coincidence...You decide), case eerily parallels his near name-sake's. '*Superman-The Movie*' made the former unknown actor into a regular household celebrity. However, on the downside, he too was now irreversibly typecast and his long-term ambitions were cruelly dashed. Other movies (including '*Somewhere In Time*' and '*Deathtrap*'), flopped at the box-office, and he was forced to once more don the blue tights and the red cape.



Journalists invoked 'the curse' again in 1993 when the headlines screamed; '*Superman star hit by 105F malaria attack!!!*' Then came the terrible riding accident which left the actor paralysed.

Mark Wilder, a correspondent for '*The Daily Mail*', pointed out that it was very easy now, with hindsight to see a pattern in all this tragedy. '*A pattern in which Kirk Alyn, the Superman of the Forties' Saturday morning movie serial, so proud of his body, lived to see it and his brain ravaged by Alzheimer's disease. No? Then why not a pattern in the way*

Margot Kidder, desperately low-profile after the generally unwanted attention afforded by playing Lois Lane, found herself flung from a car crash in her native Canada and onto the front pages, there to have every detail of her damaged spinal cord discussed. And after being found sitting dishevelled in a Los Angeles suburb, being admitted to a mental ward. Margot (47) was reported missing by her publicist when she turned up to catch a flight from Los Angeles to Phoenix, Arizona, but never boarded the plane. She was found in the garden of a house in Glendale, California, 'dazed and crouched like a frightened animal. Her front teeth had been knocked out and she had slashed her hair with a razor.'

When police tried to remove her, she told them; 'Someone is following me. They're out to get me.'

When she was told by Glendale house owner William Minarik. to get up because there were Black Widow Spiders in the bushes, she replied; 'I'm hiding from something much worse than spiders.'

When she visited Reeve in hospital last June, (1995), did she tell him how 24 months in a wheelchair felt; how she was forced to sell her jewellery, furniture and art to buy the expertise to help her walk again? How at one point she was £250,000 in debt? Did they discuss the curse?

The pattern is evident again with Jerry Siegal, who as a teenager in 1938, co-created 'Superman' along with artist Joe Shuster. They pursued one court case after another trying to regain control of their baby from DC Comics, who had fired them for demanding a pay rise in 1947.

The pair were the legend's first casualties. There attempts to wrest him back were to no avail. Court costs took their savings, and blindness eventually struck Shuster, whose death in 1995, went unnoticed for days by neighbours.

But why should Shuster and Siegal be exempt from the curse - if curse there is - when even Superman himself has succumbed? DC's ruthless culling of the comic character in 1992 was both PR ploy - the death issue toted a black armband - and desperate act (sales had slumped from a peak of one million to around 200,000)

If the sales graph hadn't moved upwards, and it jumped eightfold, Superman would not have been resurrected. For resurrection is part of the myth (Christopher Reeve would undergo it in Superman II), as is reinvention

Reinvention requires fresh blood. So you wonder about the curse and ponder whether George Reeves, Christopher Reeve, Kirk Alyn, Jerry Siegal, Joe Shuster and now Margot Kidder have provided the mortal flesh which keeps the myth meaningful.

25th April, 1996. General. 'DAILY MAIL.'

UNLUCKY 13

Accounts clerk Mike Williams moved into Flat Number 13 six months ago and has since lost his car, his pet cat and his girlfriend. Mike, 28, even missed out on a £105,000 fortune on the National Lottery because he stopped playing..The week his numbers came up.

He was quoted as saying; '*I've become Britain's unluckiest man. I'm moving out as soon as I can.*'

His torment began just three days after moving up to Heston, west London, when his beloved cat, Chopin, disappeared. Three weeks later his car was stolen. Mike was forced to ride a push bike -and ended up in hospital after a crash.

Then he slipped and broke an elbow. In January, Mike stopped playing the Lottery because he thought he was too unlucky to win - and straight away, his numbers came up. Three weeks ago he was dumped by long-time girlfriend Jane. Mike said, not surprisingly; '*I've had enough.*'

12th April, 1996. Heston, west London. 'DAILY SLUR.'

Motorist Jose Ricco caused a collision when he slammed on the brakes and opened his door on a busy highway...Because

on the scene and booked him.
12th March, 1996. Madrid, Spain. 'DAILY MANC.'

And finally, a man in search of magical powers climbed to the top of a 45ft high tree...And promptly fell to his death.
9th April, 1996. Indonesia. 'DAILY SLUR.'

MORE WEIRD CRIME



'DR SMELL' Is Finally Sentenced

A former Drexel University security guard, dubbed, 'Dr. Smell' for his foot fetish, was found guilty by a Philadelphia jury of murder in the beating and strangulation of a student who was found barefoot with her socks and trainers missing.

'Dr Smell', whose real name is David Dickson Jr, aged 35, received a sentence of life imprisonment after the verdict on the death of Deborah Lynn Wilson, 20.

Dickson wasn't arrested until 1993 when authorities learned he had been discharged from the army in 1979 for stealing women's shoes.

4th December, 1995. Philadelphia, USA. 'USA TODAY' Via COUD-I.

A PAIN IN THE ARIAS

A frustrated husband named Camelo Buglo, 28, decided to beat up his wife because she sang opera every time they had sex. Carmelo said it put him off when ever she belted out 'Madame Butterfly. He attacked his wife, Maria, 28, at their home in Italy, and said later; 'the singing frightened the life out of me.'

7th November, 1996. 'Naples, Italy. 'DAILY SLUR.'

FAKE NURSE JAILED FOR THREE YEARS

A bogus nurse was jailed for tricking his way into hospitals and treating patients for an amazing seven years.

Huw Evans, 28, lied about his medical qualifications, and even gave powerful drugs to seriously ill patients. But he was caught when he nearly killed his own son with a massive overdose of insulin in hospital, Cardiff Crown

Court was told. When arrested, Evans told police he had posed as a nurse because it 'made me feel good.'

Jailing him for three years, Mr Justice Owen said; 'This was an extremely dangerous and stupid thing to do.'

9th November, 1995. Cardiff, Wales. 'DAILY SLUR.'

WIFE COOKS 'EVIL' HUSBAND

A wife knifed her husband to death and then dished him up in a stew to equally hated relatives, including her son-in-law.

She told a court in Tashknet, her husband had killed her unborn baby in a beating then battered their five-year-old son to death. She was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment.

15th November, 1995. 'Tashkent, Russia. 'DAILY MANC.'

Meanwhile, over in the (ahem) civilised United States, Joseph Garner, aged 37, killed his elderly father, then set about dismembering the corpse and feasting on part of the brain.

28th December, 1995. Indianapolis, USA. 'USA TODAY' Via COUD-I

HOPELESS THIEVES AND ROBBERS

A thief who stole a wheelbarrow from a garage in Swindon was arrested after police simply followed his tracks left in the deep snow back to his home address.

A police spokesman was quoted as saying; 'It wasn't a very sensible thing to do.'

7th February, 1996. Swindon, England. 'MAIL ON SUNDAY.'

**And a short-sighted thief stole 15 pairs of glasses from an Alabama opticians - but failed to notice there was \$250 lying on the till.

8th February, 1996. Alabama, USA. 'DAILY MAIL.'

**Getaway driver Arnie Crabtree drove around the block while two friends held up a bank in Texas. Unfortunately, he got stuck in the traffic and took an hour to get back to the bank.

25th February, 1996. Texas, USA. 'DAILY MANC.'

**Another potential bank-robber, named Carl Dixon, was arrested in Oregon, USA, after a cashier told him she'd need permission before she could hand him the cash. Incredibly, Dixon sat down to wait, giving the police plenty of time to arrive on the scene and arrest him.

3rd March, 1996. Oregon, USA. 'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'

**And finally, for this issue at least, Chicago shopper Oscar Crane stole a courgette from Herve Costra's trolley...Because it was the last one. When Costras tried to grab it back, Crane stabbed him in the chest. Costas is recovering in hospital.

31st March, 1996. Chicago, USA. 'MAIL ON SUNDAY.'

WOMEN BEHAVING (understandably)BADLY

A lover took dramatic revenge after her ex-boyfriend jilted her at the altar...Mary Lewis caused a stink in his flat by dumping a foot-high pile of horse manure on his bed.

3rd December, 1995. New South Wales, Australia. 'MAIL ON SUNDAY.'

**And a less than grief-stricken widow was arrested for dancing on her dead husband's grave and shouting 'Hooray!' on the first anniversary of his death.

Stella Jackson, 36, said; 'I've never been happier.'

She was fined £500 for breach of the peace.

15th February, 1996. Alabama, USA. 'THE SCUM.'

Weird Human Behaviour

'SANTA'S GOT A GUN'

Department store Santa's were forced to flee from their grottoes after a man claiming to be the real Santa Claus phoned and threatened to shoot 'the impostors pretending to be me.'

Police in Denver, USA, said; 'It might just be a stupid joke, but we're taking no chances.'

24th December, 1995. Denver, Colorado, USA. 'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'

A joker who changed his name to Gross Contempt has died aged 57. Gross, originally David Goddard of Somerset, said he did it to tell the world what he thought of them.

6th November, 1995. Frome, Somerset. 'DAILY MANC.'

DIVORCED FROM REALITY

A wife won a divorce....Because her husband wouldn't stop throwing eggs at her.

Jobless Claude Thomas, 41, was arrested for splattering eggs in the street. Wife Mariette, 39, decided the whole affair had gone too far and went to court in France. She said; 'Every time I walk to the house after work he throws eggs at me, laughing constantly. I think he needs professional help.'

2nd November, 1995. Bordeaux, France. 'NEWS OF THE WORLD.'

**Meanwhile, sculptor Johann Klaus was unwittingly chipping away at his 14-year-old marriage when he made a nude statue of his wife, Annie.

When he unveiled his work before friends and neighbours in their garden Annie burst into tears and smashed it with a hammer.

She told a divorce court; 'It was frightful. He made it look exactly like me...Even down to the sagging breasts and my double chin. I had expected him to use poetic licence and sculpt me as he truly sees me in his heart.'

Johann shrugged; 'But I did use artistic licence. That's exactly how I see her in my heart...A great fat thing with a double chin and tits down to her knees.'

7th November, 1995. Landshut, Germany. 'DAILY MANC.'

**And another justifiable divorce was granted to Ny Chong, a bride of six months. She told a Chinese court that her mother-in-law had insisted upon sleeping under the married couples bed, thereby making sex between the them impossible.

27th November, 1995. Hegang, China. 'DAILY SLUR.'

PUTTING A SPARK INTO THE RELATIONSHIP...

A woman apparently gets turned on whenever she watches the TV...Because it makes her contraceptive coil vibrate.

'It's not painful, I just get a deep vibrating feeling,' the mystified (and doubtless breathless) woman told her GP.

Doctors writing in the 'FAMILY PLANNING JOURNAL' say it's not a health risk.

15th November, 1995. Britain. 'DAILY SLUR.'

Kinky cab-driver Peter Edwards fried himself by clamping electric clips to his nipples for a sexual thrill.

Edwards, 39, flicked on the power switch and killed himself as lover, Patricia Woods, 38, slept feet away. She awoke to find cross-dresser Edwards slumped on the floor in his underpants...The couple obviously enjoyed bizarre sex games.

27th November, 1995. Barry, South Glamorgan, Wales. 'DAILY MAIL'

THE MUMMY'S SHROUD

Mark Holliday killed his lover in a bizarre suicide pact then tried to mummify her. When police found Vicky Bramwell, her legs had been tightly wrapped in blankets and a pen had been pushed through her nose to pierce her brain, Leeds Crown Court were told.



The Egyptians used the same grisly method to prepare the bodies of the Pharaohs.

Vicky, 24, had been stabbed in the heart and dressed in a bra and a slip by Holliday, who heated the bedroom in a bid to preserve her corpse. Vicky and Holliday apparently suffered from delusions that people were trying to kill them and decided to take their own lives. After killing Vicky in 1994, Holliday tried to drown himself. He was immediately sent to Rampton for an indefinite period.

14th February, 1996. Scarborough, North Yorkshire. 'DAILY SLUR.'

A lover who'd been given the elbow bit off his ex-girlfriend's nose and swallowed it when an argument erupted as they were dividing up their belongings.

Surgeons in the Russian town of Zbourievka were unable to retrieve the nose from angry 29-year-old boyfriend Ivan Ilyoch's stomach.

6th January, 1996. Zbourievka, Russia. 'MAIL ON SUNDAY.'

SOLDIER EATS MAN'S LIVER

A mercenary who ate the liver of a murdered captive was arrested by police. The soldier sent pictures of his cannibalistic act to be developed and disgusted photo lab staff decided to shop him.

He says he was training rebels in Burma where cannibalism is the custom. 'Eating the liver of your enemy gives strength,' the unrepentant fighter told investigators in Paris. A police officer was quoted as saying; 'One picture shows a captive, his eyes wide with fear. Another shows the grinning mercenary eating his liver.'

2nd February, 1996. Paris, France. 'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'

THE GREAT PIGEON-NAPPER

A mystery man has been kidnapping pigeons from London's Trafalgar Square. He has been spotted sweeping up to 40 at a time into a box and taking them away. When challenged by tourists, the bird-napper said he was collecting the birds for racing. But he is strongly suspected of selling them on to restaurants.

Up to a quarter of the Square's population - a major tourist attraction - may already have vanished.

5th March, 1996. Trafalgar Square, London. 'DAILY EXPRESS.'

TALK ABOUT OVER-REACTIONS...

Farmer Charles Soames, 47, shot dead his brother Raymond, 43, in New Mexico for the heinous crime of using too much loo paper.

He told police; 'He insisted on having the most expensive paper.'

6th February, 1996. Clovis, New Mexico. 'DAILY SLUR.'

Police answering an emergency call in Rio de Janeiro, found Rod Valez trying to stuff mother-in-law down a manhole. Valez, who was jailed for 6 months, said; 'She nagged me so much, I felt the best place for her was the sewer.'

8th January, 1996. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. 'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'

Cliff Latta protested lack of dental coverage under Oregon's health plan by pulling his own broken tooth. He did the yanking on church steps after a community meeting.

23rd January, 1996. Coos Bay, Oregon, USA. 'USA TODAY.' Via COUD-I.

A woman shot her husband after a 20-year nightmare marriage, then she cut off his head and boiled it for two days.

Suspicious neighbours called the cops after 'revolting smells' wafted from her kitchen. The unnamed woman from Jordan, faced trial for murder.

6th April, 1996. Sarawi, Jordan. 'LIVERPOOL ECHO.'

Trucker John Robles got his revenge on neighbours with three boisterous dogs...By having their house eaten by termites.

The couple, whose riddled house collapsed on a storm, claim Robles deliberately put infested planks on their roof in Little River, Texas.

12th April, 1996. Little River, Texas, USA. 'DAILY SLUR.'

And last but not least, oddball parents of a boy in Sweden, refused to give him a first name. So hotelier Lassie Diding, 43, and Elizabeth Hallin, were fined £500 by a judge and ordered to furnish a name pretty quick to the lad, now aged five.

They came up with this Roman numeral of a tongue twister: *Brfxxccxxmnpccclllmmnprxvclmncckssqlbb11116*, or Albin for short...But the court still wouldn't have it.

Now the couple are appealing against its rejection, saying; 'Who are they to tell us how to name our children?'

12th April, 1996. Varberg, Sweden. 'DAILY SLUR.'

GENERAL WEIRD BEHAVIOUR

Hindu holy man Nayir Bagnar has recently ended an 18-month mission, pushing a radish 211 miles with his nose...to atone for his sins in a previous life.

7th March, 1996. India. 'SUNDAY PEOPLE.'

Jose Pinto, 95 per cent blind, who has driven to work for three years, navigating seven miles of traffic by avoiding

shadows, was arrested after a tip-off by his employer, Spain's national blind organisation.

Police stopped him last year for not having a licence but failed to notice his poor vision.

4th April, 1996. Madrid, Spain. 'DAILY TELEGRAPH.'

A dog owner has been jailed for 11 years for murdering a friend who ate his pet. Miroslav Bartos beat up and strangled Josef Opa who lived next door after he admitted skinning a roasting the dog for the family dinner at his home.

16th April, 1996. Prague, Czech Republic. 'DAILY MAIL.'

PREMONITIONS AND ESP CIA USED PSYCHICS TO FIND INFORMATION

According to press reports in America, the CIA has for 20 years, secretly been using psychics in attempts to hunt down Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, find plutonium in North Korea and help drug enforcement agencies.

Their success rate however, was at best minimal.

The ESP spying operations code named 'Stargate', were found to be unreliable, but three psychics continued to work out of Fort Mead, at least into July, 1995, said researchers who evaluated the programme for the CIA.

The programme cost the government \$20 million, said professor Ray Hyman of the University of Oregon in Eugene, who helped prepare the study. The psychics were used by various agencies for remote viewing - to help provide information from distant sites, he said.

Up to six psychics at any one time worked on assignments that included trying to hunt down Gadhafi before the 1986 bombing of Libya, find plutonium in North Korea in 1994, and locate kidnapped Brig. Gen. James Dozier in Italy.

Gadhafi was not hurt in the bombing. Dozier, kidnapped by the Red Brigades in Italy in 1981, was freed by Italian police after 42 days, apparently without help from the psychics. News reports at the time said Italian police were assisted by U.S. State Department and Pentagon specialists using sophisticated electronic surveillance equipment.

The study reported mixed success with the psychics. Hyman was sceptical, while his co-author, Professor Jessica Utts of the University of California at Davis, said some of the results were promising.

Hyman said; 'My conclusion was that there was no evidence that these people have done anything helpful for the government.'

Utta said the psychics were accurate about 15 per cent of the time. On some tests, when given four choices, the picked the right answer a third of the time. She said; 'I think they would be effective if they were used in conjunction with other intelligence.'

On Tuesday, November, 28, 1995, CIA spokesman Mark Mansfield confirmed the existence of 'Stargate' and the study.

'The CIA is reviewing available programmes regarding parapsychological phenomena, mostly remote viewing, to determine their usefulness to the intelligence community.'

But he noted that, when the CIA first sponsored research on the program in the 1970's, the program was found to be 'unpromising' and later was turned over to the Defence Department. The Defence Intelligence Agency made the psychics available to government departments that needed information, Hyman said. At one time as many as six worked for the government.

The psychics regularly were tested by the Stanford Research Institute and later Science Applications International Corp.

Utts said testing consisted of three basic efforts. In one, a 'sender' would travel to a remote site and view an object, while the 'viewer' back in the laboratory would try to describe and draw it.

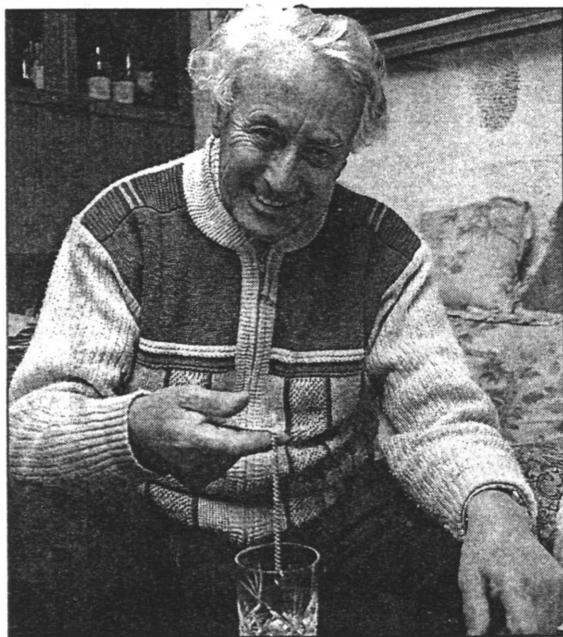
A particularly talented viewer accurately drew windmills when the sender was at a windmill farm at Almont Pass in California and later a footbridge across marsh when the sender went to a San Francisco Bay area wildlife refuge.

30th November, 1995. San Francisco, USA. 'ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH' Via COUD-1.

LOST PUPS FOUND BY 'DIVINER'

Two lost pups have reportedly been located by divining intervention.

The West Highland terriers Skippy and Skay were snatched from during a raid on a farm owned by dog-breeder and Crufts judge Andrew Thomson, 83. But the rustlers hadn't banked on Andrew using ancient 'divining' skills he learned as a boy, to find his twelve-week-old pups, worth £600 each.



CHAIN REACTION: Andrew and his gadgets

Andrew held a chain above a glass and whispered questions. The answers led him to a car park -and to the missing pets, inside a vehicle.

16th April, 1996. Scotland. 'DAILY EXPRESS.'

HOME FOR SALE AFTER PSYCHIC DREAMS OF HUGE QUAKE

A university lecturer put his 100-year-old cottage up for sale after dreaming that it will be destroyed by an earthquake.

David Mandell of Stanmore, Middlesex, had repeatedly dreamed that London would be hit by an enormous earthquake in the spring of 1996.

Dave, a 62-year-old teacher said at the time; 'I have to sell before this terrible quake hits East London in April, 1996, and my house is devastated.'

He has had three dreams of impending geological disaster, the first in April, 1992, the second in spring 1993, and the final one on May 30th, 1994. The first two were in East London, but the last one was in Holland Park, West London. 'It was this one that mad me realise this quake was going to be big. Of it was powerful enough to hit Holland

Park, my house was in danger, and I had to be out before next spring.'

He has been having premonitions since he was six in 1939 when he dreamt that the Second World War was about to break out. As soon as he awakes from a dream he does a sketch and goes to his local 'Barclays' to have his picture taken in front of the calendar clock, to prove the exact date of his dream. In 1993, he painted a picture of a crashed Hercules plane crash in which nine people died, just three days before it actually happened.

On September 11th, 1988, his vision of an earthquake in Armenia was so vivid that he phoned the Russian Embassy. In December that year, his nightmare became reality and thousands died.

On October 3rd, 1987, he sketched his dream of a storm. On October, 16th, the Great Hurricane brought death and destruction to the South of England.

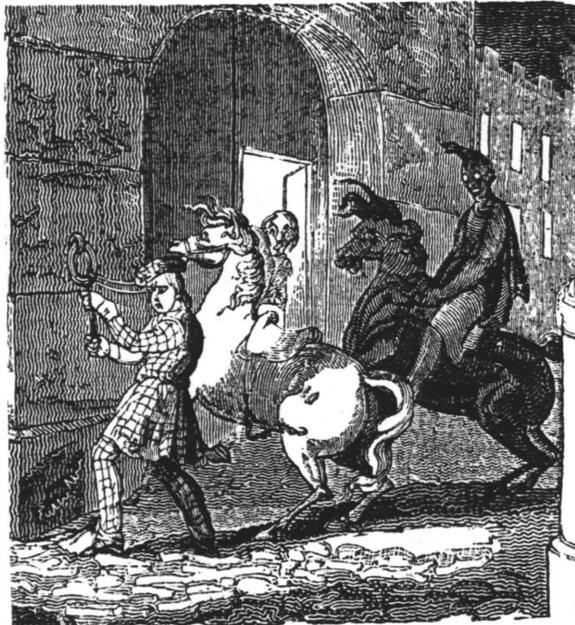
University colleagues of Mr Mandell have been amazed when his predictions have come true.

But David Redmayne of the British Geological Survey was proved right this time, when he stated; 'This London earthquake is very unlikely to happen.'

Oh well...Maybe next year, eh?'

15th December, 1995. Stanmore, Middlesex. 'DAILY MAIL.'

Ghostly Tales



THE HAUNTED POLICE STATION

Inspector Michael Fieldhouse was forced to call in a medium and a 'Ghostbuster' to probe the eerie goings on at the police station in Cleethorpes, North Lincolnshire. An investigation was ordered after bobbies based at the station reported seeing an apparition in the basement offices and cells.

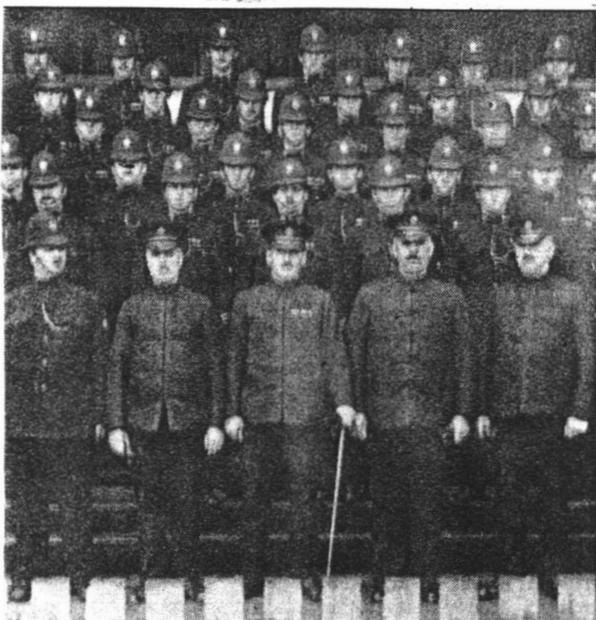
The figure, wearing an old style uniform, suddenly appears and then vanishes in a lingering whiff of pipe tobacco. It can be heard clumping on the stairs, leaving a chill in the air, and has brushed past staff, and burglar alarms have gone off without reason.

One theory for the disturbances is that entity is the discarnate spirit of a former chief inspector who either committed suicide or was murdered more than 60 years ago. A possible clue is a brown and faded photograph

hanging at the station showing officers lining up for drill at the time.

None of their names is known but it is likely that the tragic chief inspector is one of the faces staring out. (See photo below).

Inspector Fieldhouse, stationed at Cleethorpes for nine years said; *'Many officers have heard and smelled it, and a couple have recently seen a uniformed figure which later disappeared. I must admit, I've heard it myself. There was the sound of footsteps climbing stairs when I was alone in the building. I investigated, but no one was there.'* Inspector Fieldhouse is now going through pre-war coroners' files in a bid to unearth more information.



Does this faded photograph hold a clue as to the identity of the Cleethorpes police station ghost?

Medium Margaret Turner, who visited the station, said she felt a presence in the basement, containing criminal files, in offices converted from bedrooms and in the cell area.

She said; *'It was obviously a violent death of some kind. I felt a chill presence. The ghost is not nasty but he is worried and unhappy.'*

One constable, who refused to be named, went into the basement and emerged ashen-faced, saying something had brushed past him in the shadows.

PC Bill Whitney, who has 26 years' service, told how he glanced into an office and saw what he thought was a colleague. *'There was the outline of a man standing by the window, and when I looked again he wasn't there.'* he said.

Self-styled Ghostbuster Robin Furman went to the station armed with electronic equipment. He said; *'Electrical levels in the cellar and offices were unusually high. The people who have seen the apparition are trained observers, which leads one to believe this is a genuine spirit.'*

If all else fails, police planned to call in a Church of England exorcist.

Sergeant Nigel Lewis, who works in one of the 'haunted' officers, said; *'I have seen and heard nothing, but a ghost wouldn't be a bad thing. It is the best burglar deterrent you could have.'*

11th April, 1996. Cleethorpes, Lincolnshire. *'DAILY EXPRESS.'*

A GHOSTLY FRAGRANCE

The ghost of contraceptive pioneer Marie Stopes is said to haunt her family planning clinic in Whitfield Street, central London, say staff who speak of doors opening and shutting

of their own accord and of objects moving amid a smell of lavender.

27th March, 1996. , Whitfield Street, Central London. *'LIVERPOOL ECHO.'*

HOLY GHOSTS WITH A HABIT OF APPEARING IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT

Jane Furnival of the *'DAILY MAIL'*, reported the following in an article for the aforementioned newspaper;

'It was the first night of my first term at Oxford in 1976. I was 19 years old, one of the few women in an 80-man college. My room was part of a 16th-century warren of buildings. Soberly, I decided to have an early night.'

At about three in the morning, something woke me - not the drunks singing 'Jerusalem' from the pub outside, one of Inspector Morse's favourite haunts. I had the feeling that someone's eyes were on me.'

I sat up and saw a black-cowled figure sitting at the bottom of my bed. His head was hooded but, as he turned and leaned towards me, I heard a rustle of rough fabric and saw a long, strongly profiled nose and jaw. I screamed and he vanished.'

Was it a nightmare or a student prank?

I checked my wardrobe, then spent the rest of the night with the light on. Next day, I phoned my mother and said I wasn't sure whether it was a burglar. "It's an intruder darling", she said comfortingly. "Always lock your door."

During the whole year, I spent perhaps five nights in that room. Instead, I slept on girlfriend's stone floor. It was hard and cold but I felt safer

Why did the monk come to my room? I think he was from a time when churchmen could study at the university. He was surprised to see a girl, so he came for a closer look. It has taken years to summon the courage to describe what I saw. Yet, whenever I tell the story, other women admit that they too, have seen ghostly monks. "It's psycho-sexual," a friend tells me. "Something to do with repressed longings."

Dr. Cosmo Hallstrom, consultant psychiatrist at the Charter Clinic in London's Chelsea, thinks monks on the bed symbolise safe sex. "They're hooded, and you don't see their face," he says. "Sexual, but sincere, vulnerable and unthreatening; in other words they don't actually perform." Sexual or not, ghosts are definitely sexist, thinks Susan Bell. Her bedroom ghost wasn't a monk but a woman who had been strangled in her parent's 300-year-old cottage near Frome, Somerset.

"I couldn't sleep in my room ever," says Susan. "If my parents absolutely made me, I woke up with an awful feeling that someone was there watching me. In the end, I swapped with my brother. When my mother went to wake him one day, he said; "Go away, you've already woken me once. You came out of the fireplace wearing your long white nightie and smiled."

Local historians told the Bells about the murder. "I think this was the victim, who didn't like women as a result of being strangled by another woman," adds Susan.

At Battle Abbey, near Hastings, during April, 1996, a lady involved in a falconry demonstration was scared by a monk in the old dormitory.

Joyve Pain, 80, also saw a monk in the Abbey. "It was in 1960," she says. "I was walking along beside the churchyard. A monk appeared walking ahead of me. I couldn't see his face because he had a black hood over it. He walked 15 or 20 yards, then vanished. I wasn't frightened but I was surprised. I hadn't believed in ghosts before then."

June Bishop saw a monk in the Templar Church in the Surrey village of Shere. "I was at a pew when suddenly there was a terrible smell of damp earth. I became aware that I wasn't alone. There was a person in a dark habit kneeling at

the pew. Then he vanished. It still gives me goose pimples. The smell was horrible. Very real."

At Beaulieu Abbey, Hampshire, Lord Montagu's sister, Elizabeth Varley, heard ghostly chants. "I must have been 14," she recalls. "I thought it was gypsies in the night. Our archivist said it was a Gregorian chant. After that, other people admitted hearing it."

She recalls old Miss Cheshire, who lived at the Abbey and knew the ghosts by name. "She'd say things like, "I do wish Brother Francis would do something about hi boots. They squeak."

Psychoanalyst Kester Bramwell, 65, who lives at the Old Shires, a former rectory in Elm, Cambridgeshire, hears the footsteps of a ghostly monk known as Ignatius every night above his room at 3:30 am. "The foundations of my house are a very old abbey," he says. "The monk used to walk the battlements and died during the floods of 1312."

The landlord of the Old Bell pub next door has seen him walk through the wall. Locals say Ignatius is trying to apologise for falling asleep and failing to sound the alarm when the Wash burst its banks killing hundreds.

Perhaps only the select few actually see monks on the end of their beds. Virginia Phillips woke one night to see a black-cowled figure there and told it to be off. When her son denied all knowledge of a prank the next morning, she realised she'd seen a ghost.

"I wouldn't say loads of ladies see loads of monks," says Tom Perrot, chairman of The Ghost Club. "Sometimes people claim to processions going up the aisles of churches. One can't generalise, but there's a theory that somehow everything is recorded and some sensitive people can hook into the past."

Another theory is that those who've undergone a traumatic experience are more vulnerable than most. They externalise that feeling into reality. It's also thought that ghosts could be people who have come back to earth to complete something they've not done when living."

Mine wasn't the only monk hanging around Oxford. One man rushed from his room ashen-faced after seeing a pair of leather shoes emerging through his ceiling. He hadn't been drinking. People sometimes see legless ghosts because the floor level has moved since their lifetime This student saw the ghost's feet as it walked in the room above.



Carolyn Butler, press officer for the Catholic Church, says studies show that religious apparitions are common, but people don't talk to them. "The most ordinary people - not those who are close to death - see visions or have very powerful dreams. It's part of spirituality and people keep it with them all their lives," she says.

Dr Raymond Goodman, consultant in psycho-sexual medicine at Hope Hospital, Salford, says that he has never come across a monk fixation in 28 years. Mentally ill people are more likely to see dead lovers

Mystic visionary St Teresa of Avila would agree with modern psychiatrists that such apparitions are mind games, thinks Dr David Hay, who researches religious experiences at Nottingham University.

"We have old descriptions of visions. St Teresa was concerned with classifying them - are they from the Devil or God? As a rule, of thumb, she's suspicious of visions. For her, the most trustworthy, religious experiences are purely intellectual."

Dr Heather Montford, specialist at the Institute of Psycho-sexual Medicine in London, believes that seeing monks isn't a sign of illness. "My feeling is that it's not a medical problem. It's a sexual fantasy to do with forbidden fruits. The kind of women who have these visions wouldn't have sexual problems. The opposite! Most people complain of having insufficient desire for sex, not too much."

But another sex psychologist, who wouldn't be named, took the monk's point of view and asked; "Are the monks sexually repressed and coming back?"

21st March, 1996. Various Locations. 'DAILY EXPRESS'.

GENERAL WEIRDNESS

ICE FALL IN ESSEX

A chunk of ice plunged through the roof of a house at 120mph in the depths of last winter. The block, as per usual

in these cases, was attributed to frozen sewage from a plane passing overhead.

It pierced the first-floor ceiling of Ken Palmer's home at Doddington in Essex.

22nd January, 1996. Doddington, Essex. 'THE SCUM.'

THE YEW TESTAMENT

A sacred tree has been saved from being chopped down outside Hereford Cathedral to make way for a restaurant because a legend says that if it is killed the city will suffer Biblical plagues of locusts and boils.

29th February, 1996. Hereford, England. 'THE DAILY SLUR.'

STAFFORDSHIRE EARTHQUAKE

An earth tremor measuring 2.8 on the Richter Scale woke people in parts of North Staffordshire on the morning of 6th May.

This area is notorious for seismic activity in recent years. 7th May, 1996. North Staffs, England. 'DAILY MANC.'

WOMAN DEAD FOR SEVEN YEARS

The fully-clothed skeleton of Graziella Villa was found in her flat in Monza, Italy, by her estranged husband after having lain there for an estimated seven years.

Mrs Villa, who had a history of depression, was last seen alive in 1989, when she was 47. She had once tried to commit suicide. Neighbour's thought she had simply left town. Her husband broke into the flat only because he and the couple's teenage daughter had obtained a court order to take possession of the furniture.

2nd May, 1996. Monza, Italy. 'LIVERPOOL DAILY POST.'

DISCOVERY MAY HELP EXPLAIN MOVEMENT OF CONTINENTS

A discovery deep below the South American continent may help explain the forces that are moving Earth's continents across the face of the planet.

A 'keel' extending at least 300 miles down beneath Brazil, connecting it with a semi-molten layer of rock called the upper mantle, may be anchoring the continent to the movement of the mantle, said John C. VanDecar of the Carnegie Institution in Washington, USA.

VanDecar two other geologists, David James and Marcelo Assumpcao of the Universidade de Sao Paulo, published their findings in 'NATURE'.

According to the currently accepted theory, the crust of the Earth is broken up into about a dozen large pieces and many smaller ones, rather like a cracked eggshell. All of these fragments some of them comprising entire continents, are drifting over the mantle in different directions. The fastest is moving about the speed of a growing fingernail.

Most plates, it is believed, are pushed apart by the pressure of molten rock perpetually welling out at mid-ocean ridges, or pulled toward regions where a thin oceanic crust is being sucked down under the edge of a continent.

New evidence in South America suggests that the continent is being carried along by the mantle, like a raft in a current. The deep, 120-mile-wide cylinder of rock below the continent, VanDecar has said, has apparently remained attached to South America for about 130 million years, during which the continent itself has drifted many hundreds of miles. If the continent and the mantle below were not locked together, this cylinder would have broken off or melted away, rather than keeping its original shape.

Finding it still there where it started out is surprising. VanDecar said; 'Nobody would have predicted it. It means that we have to rethink how continents are tied into this mantle flow. It suggests that the flow of the mantle is driving movement far below the crust. That is driving the continents.'

The findings VanDecar concluded, show that 'The Earth is a more complicated planet than we realised.'

(Sheesh, I could have told him that without going all the way to South America. Ed)

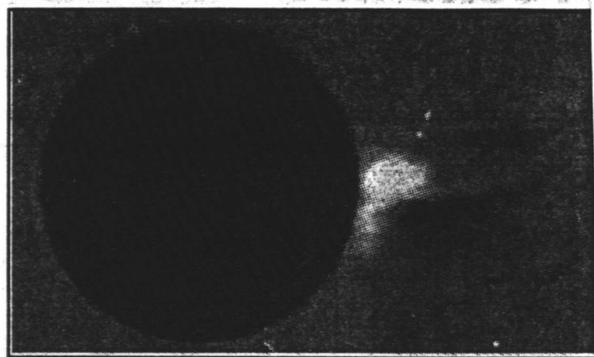
23rd November, 1995. South America. 'NATURE'.

THE THREE MILLION-MILE BUBBLE

Reproduced below are some of the clearest pictures yet obtained of the enormous bubbles of gas that regularly explode from the surface of the Sun.

The phenomenon, known as coronal mass ejections, was discovered only 23 years ago. Scientists found they occur every few days, bursting from the Sun at 250 miles per second.

Every few months, some manage to penetrate the Earth's atmosphere, disrupting satellite and radio communications, power and telephone lines. These pictures were taken on January 15th, 1996, and could help scientists understand why CMEs occur and predict when they are about to strike.



Two pictures taken by an optical coronagraph on the SOHO (Solar and Heliospheric Observatory) spacecraft, launched from Cape Canaveral in Florida in December, 1995.



In the first of the two pictures, the bubble seems little more than a blur next to the Sun, which has been blacked out for clarity. It gradually expands, and four hours and 45 minutes later, it is a massive 3.5 million miles across. 16th February, 1996. General. 'DAILY MAIL.'

SCIENTISTS FIND SECRETS OF AGEING

The first human gene known to affect the ageing process has been identified, unlocking a range of opportunities - and ethical dilemmas for medical science.

The research provides the first glimpse of the genetics of why we age. Some scientists believe it may help to curb the cost of caring for the elderly by making them healthier, or point the way towards treatments for grey hair, wrinkles, deafness and fragile bones.

But others fear a nightmare future in which lifespan is extended without maintaining the quality of life, when genetic tests can detect maximum life expectancy, putting those with a poor outlook at a disadvantage when seeking

insurance or a mortgage, or a foetus with a short expectancy to be aborted.

A team from Darwin Molecular Corporation, a Seattle biotechnology company, and Dr Gerard Schellenberg's team announced in 'SCIENCE' that they have found the gene for a rare hereditary disease, called Werner's Syndrome, that causes premature ageing.

12th April, 1996. *General. "DAILY TELEGRAPH."*

'Iron Angel' Watching Over The A1 Motorway

The Arts Council have defended plans to build a huge statue of an Angel by the A1 at Gateshead on Tyneside.

Lord Gowrie, the chairman of the Council called the statue 'visionary and inspirational' after announcing that the Council was giving £584,000 of National Lottery money to help pay for the project.

And the statue's creator, the artist Anthony Gormley, a past winner of the Turner Art Prize, attacked critics of his Angel for being 'illogical' and 'ridiculous.'

The 100-ton, 65ft high statue, with a wingspan of 175ft, will be made of pre-rusted steel and erected at a total cost of £800,000. It will dominate the scenery for several miles when it is erected on the outskirts of Gateshead next year.

The project has divided the town, however. More than 4,500 residents have signed a 'Stop The Statue' petition in protest over the amount of money being spent on a statue when it would be better spent on local hospitals and schools.

Mr Gormley however, has (ahem) in all modesty hit back by stating 'This is money that has been allocated from the lottery for the Arts. The idea that it could somehow be used for housing or schools is ridiculous. It hasn't been earmarked for that. It is brilliant, and its stupid and just not true to imagine it can be spent on anything else.'



A photo-montage showing how the 'Iron Angel' will dominate the skyline above the A1 on the outskirts of Gateshead.

The structure, already nicknamed 'The Iron Angel Of The North', is so large that the engineers Ove Arup have been brought in to ensure that it will not topple in a high wind by anchoring it to 60ft deep concrete piles. The statue will cost £350,000 and engineering works, landscaping and a car park a further £550,000

Lord Gowrie said he believed that local people would come to see the project as a 'message of hope and anticipation' for the new millennium.

12th April, 1996. Gateshead, Tyneside. 'DAILY TELEGRAPH.'

SHOCK THERAPY FOR 'THE 999 WOMAN'

A mother with an uncontrollable urge to make hoax 999 calls agreed to aversion therapy - getting an electric shock each time she tried to dial the number.

Thelma Dennis allowed hospital doctors to connect her to a machine which administered the current. After wires were taped to her fingers, she was told to call 999 on a specially-rigged handset.

Every time she dialled the last digit, she was left screaming in pain as electricity shot through her body. The shock treatment was prescribed not as you might think by 'Quitter's Incorporated', but by magistrates at Aberdare, Mid-Glamorgan, three years ago after Dennis admitted a string of bogus calls.

But the three weeks of 'therapy' didn't work, and on 18th April she was back in the same court accused of making a hoax call to the fire service.

Her solicitor, Denis Bryant, said; 'She is drawn to the telephone under certain circumstances.'

Thelma, of Mountain Ash, admitted the offence, and the case was adjourned for reports. After the hearing, she said; 'I've made hundreds of hoax 999 calls. I just can't help myself. I've been to prison seven times for the calls, so when magistrates offered me the electric shock treatment, I agreed to give it a go. It left me in agony. The pain was terrible and I felt like I was in a torture chamber instead of a hospital. I still have problems with my arms. It was barbaric. You wouldn't expect a dog to be treated like that.'

Dr. Brian Harries, medical director of Cardiff Healthcare NHS Trust, said the therapy was a form of aversion treatment, but patients had to want to help themselves. The shock itself will not cure somebody. The question of ethics has been raised in recent years and professional tend to use it only as a last resort.'

19th April, 1996. Mountain Ash, Mid-Glamorgan, Wales. 'DAILY EXPRESS.'

ROBIN HOOD OF BARNSDALE WOODS

Usurpers of the legend of Robin Hood are trying to claim Nottingham's most famous son.

Historians in Pontefract, West Yorkshire, claim to have unearthed evidence that the bandit was really a Yorkshireman and are planning to erect a statue of him.

Author Brian Lewis said; 'The early Robin Hood ballads precisely locate him as camping out at Barnsdale Woods near Pontefract.'

Sixty miles south in Nottingham, the move has caused outrage. Tourism officer Kevin Liepins said; 'We get half a million visitors each year from all over the world who associate Robin with Nottingham. Everybody knows he's not a Yorkshireman.'

19th April, 1996. Pontefract, Yorkshire. 'DAILY MAIL.'

FIRE RIDDLE HOTS UP

A spate of fires that have broken out in the French village of Moirans-en-Montagne have mystified experts.

For 15 weekends on the trot, mysterious blazes have ignited and when the latest conflagration broke out scientists and paranormal investigators were waiting with special monitoring equipment. The fire originated in a cupboard of a house that had been hit before. A favourite theory is that a new 20,000 volt power cable laid beneath the streets had been to blame. But two local people have already died and ghoulish sightseers have, at the time of going to press, been flocking to the area.

No final explanation has as yet been forthcoming. We certainly won't be holding our breath.

2nd February, 1996. Moirans-en-Montagne, France. 'MAIL ON SUNDAY.'

GATEWAY TO A LOST WORLD

A cave has been discovered, shut off for five million years, deep below the surface of the Black Sea.

Already, 33 previously unknown species of life have been found inhabiting the cave. In an environment devoid of light, all are blind. They live in an atmosphere of hydrogen sulphur that would poison most life on Earth. There, in the land of the scorpion that breathes through its tail, food comes from an alternative energy source, chemicals in water seeping the rocks.

The 'Lost World' was discovered after builders tipped off cave experts ten years ago that something unusual lay below Dobrogea, west of the Black Sea in Romania's Casimcea Valley. A shaft was sunk when scientists at the Speleological Institute in Bucharest heard the news, and among the experts who went down was biologist Serban Sarbu. *'What we found was the most exciting discovery of my life,'* he says. Experts combing what is now known as the Movile Cave discovered new types of spiders, crayfish, beetles and scorpions. Five million years without light has meant the creatures have had to adapt, and in addition to losing their eyes, their pigment has gone too. All are a pale, yellowish colour. Their species had somehow arrived underground and never found the need or inclination to leave. Only air and water could filter through tiny fissures in the limestone rocks.



The Movile Cave...The entrance to a 'Lost World' hidden from man for over 5 million years.

It was only after the downfall of the Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu that Sarbu could make known to the world his great discovery.

'As yet,' Sarbu says, *'we have discovered only invertebrates living there. In the absence of sunlight, the microbes living at the bottom of the food chain have turned to using hydrogen sulphide to live.'*

The air in the Movile Cave has 100 times as much CO₂ as the air we breathe, and less than 10 per cent as much oxygen.'

The new species include at least two earthworms, three pseudo-scorpions, five spiders, two mites, a millipede, four

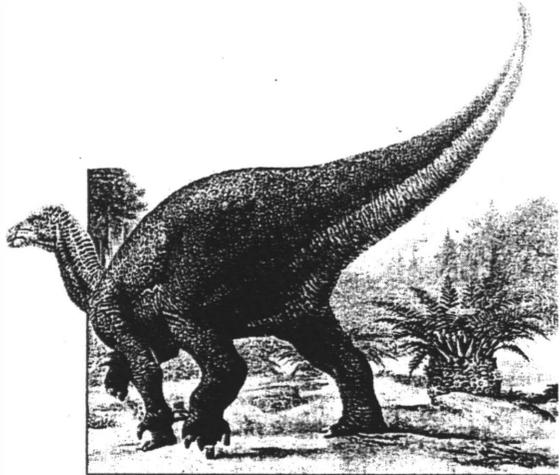
primitive insects, five beetles, three roundworms, a flatworm, a leech and a snail..

15th February, 1996. Romania. 'DAILY EXPRESS.'

THE ALLFOURS-ASAUR

For the past 100 years the skeleton of the Iguanodon has stood on its hind legs in natural history museums across the country.

But now, the curator of the Sedgewick Museum of Geology in Cambridge has discovered that the animal never adopted such a pose when it roamed the earth 120 million years ago. It went around on all fours. He said the Victorian scientists who put the bones together were working from the heights of ignorance.



How the Iguanodon would really have looked when it roamed the earth, 120 million years ago.

'People didn't have a clue what Dinosaurs looked like,' he said. *'It was constructed with the skeletons of a kangaroo and a bird as guides. Its tail had been broken to give it a curve which shouldn't be there, and its pelvic bone is on the wrong way around. Theoretically, it was in agony.'*

Dr Norman wants to reassemble the beast to make it stand on all fours, but this may well cost as much as £15,000.

However, as he rightly says; *'We would like to put it right because over the years people that have come to see it haven't seen the real thing and have been deceived.'*

8th March, 1996. General. 'DAILY MAIL.'

THE HOST OF GOLDEN DAFFODILS, ON ONE STALK.

Mary Edge-Partington, 68, has grown a daffodil which is a host all by itself. She spotted the freak, six-headed plant in the garden of her home in Gloucestershire.

'It's very weird,' she was quoted as saying. *'I've been growing daffodils all my life and this has never happened before.'*

1st May, 1996. Cirencester, Gloucestershire. 'DAILY MAIL.'

There's A Fish On The Line

And finally, anglers are reportedly catching record hauls off Borneo...By using handsets stolen from call boxes.

The phones attract the fish by giving off a loud screech when attached to powerful batteries.

25th April, 1996. Borneo. 'DAILY EXPRESS.'

Compiled by Lee Walker April-July, 1996. Special thanks due to 'COUD-I', Tommy 'Pieman' Brown, and Jason and Matt for supplying many of the clippings. Cheers chaps. 'No more head forwards for awhile.'

A Dictionary Of Folklore And Popular Superstitions



Part One; From Aconite To
Asthma Cures

Introduction

One of the saddest things about growing up and becoming a (so-called) responsible adult is the eagerness with which we cast aside our capacity for open-minded belief and leave it lying discarded like an unwanted toy or an item of clothing we've long grown out of.

Profess a belief in just about anything when you've left your primary school days behind and you'll find yourself regarded as at best, quaintly eccentric and at worst, dangerously fanatical.

And by the time you've left school altogether and you're ready to take your first tremulous steps out into the real world, the chances are you'll have become so cynical about life, the universe and everything, mere belief (aside from faith in your ego, money, sex, power and more money, although not necessarily in that order), is seen as a sign of inherent weakness, a potentially fatal flaw in your character.

Something for your enemies to descend upon like vultures.

And so, we keep our credulity well in check and if we have faith in anything other than The Accepted Order, we conceal it under a cloak of invisibility..

Except...

Except, more than a few of us still Touchwood before a first date. Avoid walking under a ladder on the way to an important job interview. Throw salt over your left shoulder if we should spill it in a restaurant. Plead with the hotel manager for a change of apartment if you're booked into room 13 on the eve of a business conference.

Some of us do all of these things and a great deal more besides, although we can't for the life of us say why, and we'd very likely die of embarrassment if one of our family or friends observed us in action.

But, like the terminal alcoholic and the drug-crazed junkie, we carry right on doing it anyway, because the uncertainty of life fills us with...with...oh, let's face it, superstitious dread. And we need to seek comfort in *something*, no matter how tenuous or insubstantial..

And who knows.

Perhaps the superstitions featured here and in subsequent articles, act as a reminder, however brief, of how it is to be children, secure in belief and enraptured by the wonder of the world.

Aconite

Also known as Wolf's Bane, Leopard's Bane or Monk's Hood, Aconite has been used since ancient times as a source of powerful poison. Many species are as deadly in local application as when taken internally. It's Anglo-Saxon name was *thung*, a general name for any poisonous plant. One fiftieth of a grain would kill a sparrow within seconds and arrows dipped in the juice were said to kill wolves.

It was also an essential ingredient of the infamous 'Flying Ointment', used by Witches in the Middle Ages. They would smear their bodies with a concoction derived from the plant. Combined with Belladonna, it would produce an extremely potent hallucinogenic, which would definitely give one the mental sensation of flying.

According to ancient Greek legend, Aconite came from the froth of the mouth of Cerberus, the Guard-Dog Of Hades.

English Wise Women have utilised the plant for treating gout and rheumatism.

Acorn

The fruit of the Oak (*quercus*), was used by the ancient Celtic Druids, who ate the Acorns of their sacred trees in preparation for prophesying the future.

If you carry an Acorn on your person, it is supposed to prevent you growing old. The good news for women, is that it is supposed to work best for the fairer sex, especially if they carry the seeded nuts in their pockets of their handbag.

Also, Acorns brought into the house can be used as a talisman against misfortune and evil spirits.

Adder

Sighting an Adder is said to be a good luck omen, and if you are cruel-minded enough to kill the first one you see in the Spring, you will be sure to triumph over your enemies.

To allow the snake to escape however, is to court disaster.

Paradoxically, An Adder seen by the front door of your house is a sure-fire presage of death. In many areas around the world, it is still believed that if you hang the

dried skin of the snake by the chimney, it will bring you good fortune, whilst to place another skin in the rafters or the hearth, will ensure that the house never catches fire.

Aetites

The Aetites (or Aquilaeus) is a stone found in an Eagle, usually in the head, neck, or stomach.

It is a powerful talisman that brings courage and good fortune to the wearer. It also aids good health and longevity. If tied to a woman's thigh, it will help ease the pain of childbirth. If it is worn on the left arm it is supposed to bring love to a couple who's marriage appears to be on the rocks.

Agaric

Agaric is a fungus of the Mushroom group (order *agaricales*). The Agarics of folklore are the Fly Agaric (*Amanita Muscaria*) whose deadly Poisson is often used in a decoration for killing flies.

In Europe, Scotland, Ireland and various Celtic Islands, another kind of Agaric (most likely *polyporus officinalis*) which grows on trees, is looked upon as having great mysterious powers and properties. It is an extremely combustible fungi and it was often used in the kindling of Beltane Fires.

As a bearer of light and heat, it is little wonder that it is considered to be a powerful talisman against evil forces and various diseases. It was also thought to render poison impotent.

Agate

Agate is a variety of Chalcedony with coloured bands or other markings.

To prevent snake and insect bites, it is believed necessary to engrave a serpent or a man riding on a snake, and wear it as an amulet. The amulet also makes a person well-disposed towards people in positions of power, and calms and refreshes the wearer in body and mind.

On top of all this, it is also said to be a truth talisman. You need only place it upon the left breast of a sleeping woman, and assuming you're not arrested for indecent assault, she will wake and tell you truthfully whatever you wish to know.

Ague

A cure for this illness can be effected, providing you're not the tiniest bit squeamish, by wearing a necklace of three dead spiders.

Agrimony

A yellow-flowered plant of the genus *Agrimonia*. A handful of the leaves, steeped in a pint of water, have been used to cure jaundice and diseases of the liver or blood. Agrimony was once called 'Church Steeples' because of its tall flower spikes and its blooms produce a yellow dye.

Tradition dictates that you should take Agrimony mixed with wine as a protection against snakebite, and if you keep it in your bedroom you are sure to sleep soundly.

Albatross

Folklore about this great sea-bird includes the belief that it sleeps in the air because its flight appears motionless, and that an Albatross hovering about a ship brings continued bad weather.

There is also a common belief that to kill one of these birds brings excessive bad luck.

They are particularly revered because every bird is said to contain the soul of a dead seaman.

Alder

A tree or shrub (genus *Alnus*). In Ireland the felling of an Alder was once punishable by law, and even today, its destruction is still generally avoided.

It was held in such awe because when it's cut, the wood turns from white to blood-red. The tree was also favoured by elementals and various species of Faerie.

Alectorius

Alectorius is a stone from a cock and is a powerful amulet for courage and wealth.

It is supposed to bring about harmony between husband and wife, and dissolves all magic spells. If it is held in the mouth, it is said to prevent thirst.

It is also a general good-luck bringer and will make people subservient to the bearer's wishes.

Now here comes the difficult part...To obtain the stone, you have to first of all kill a rooster and then lay it on an ant hill for nine days...Only then will you find the magic stone.

Almond

The Almond is a small tree which, according to Pliny's '*Natural History*,' purports that eating five Almonds (the fruit of the tree), will permit one to drink alcohol without becoming totally inebriated.

Amber

Amber is the translucent fossil resin, that is said to acquire a negative charge by rubbing.

Necklaces or amulets are worn around the neck against many diseases, especially fever, rheumatism and eye diseases. To look through Amber is supposed to improve one's sight and a piece of Red Amber is excellent protection against poison, plague and the evil eye.

Anemone

The Anemone (or Wind Flower), can cure inflammation of the eyelids by anointing them with an ointment made from this herb.

Water obtained from boiling the leaves brings on menstruation.

Angelica

Angelica is a plant of the genus *Angelica*, with edible stalks and roots that are used in potions and recipes against all forms of disease.

Whilst fasting, you are supposed to eat the roots candied or steeped in vinegar against infection.

Water distilled from the roots and mixed with wine is a good cure for the common cold and lung disease. Angelica leaves (whose fragrance gives the plant its name) protect people from Witchcraft when worn on the body, carried, or placed about the house.

Ants

The Ant is said to be a powerful ingredient in love potions.

It is also used in plasters and ointments to staunch bleeding (the reason being, the insects themselves are bloodless).

To cure a person who has been poisoned, it was believed that all you had to do was to take a lump from an ant hill, fasten some of it onto the person's arm, and give them some of it in water to drink.

In India, the bites of Red Ants are thought to cure rheumatism.

The ancient Hebrews believed that Ants were very wise and possessed of great knowledge, and amongst Hindu's, Black Ants are sacred. In Bulgaria and Switzerland, they are considered to be a bad omen, and in France, they are also thought to be a portent of doom.

Apple

The Apple has always been a symbol of fruitfulness and plenty.

The origin of the old saying; '*An Apple a day keeps the doctor away.*' may well lie in the Norse myth of Loki who stole some Apples which the goddess Ithnun gave to the gods to inhibit old age. The gods withered and Loki had to retrieve the Apples.

Warts can be cured by rubbing the two halves of an Apple which are then buried. As the Apple decays, so the warts disappeared.

A poultice of rotten Apples can also cure rheumatism.

Little wonder then, that felling an Apple orchard was considered to be almost sacrilegious.

Folklore dictates that you should never leave a last Apple on the tree. To do so means there will be a death in the family, although conversely, in Yorkshire, one *must* be left as gift for the Faeries. It is supposed to be lucky to see the sun through Apple branches on Christmas Day. Out of season Apple blossom had sinister portents.

Girls will dream of their lovers if they place an Apple under their pillow, and at Hallowe'en, there are various games aimed at divining future lovers. One was for several people to twirl Apples on strings and the first to fall showed the first person to marry. Another one is to place a pip on the bars the fire with the words; '*If you love me, bounce and fly.*'

If you hate me, lie and die.'

In Devon, girls would gather crab Apples from the hedge and arrange them in the shape of their intended's initials. At dawn on old Michaelmas Day they would sneak out the house and look at them. The initials in the best condition were those of the future husband.

Yet another divination was practised by peeling an Apple and holding the peel in the right hand while standing in the middle of a room on 28th October, saying;

'St. Simon and St. Jude, on you I intrude,

By this paring I hold to discover,

*Without any delay, to tell me this day,
The first letter of my own true lover.'*

After turning three times the enquirer should throw the paring over the left shoulder and it will fall to form the initial of the husband's name.

If it breaks, then the girl will never marry.

The Apple, of course, was also the fruit with which the Devil tempted Eve, and superstition says that to eat one now without first rubbing it clean, is a challenge to the Evil One.

Apron

The apron has earned itself quite a significant place in superstition.

Primarily, of course, because it was once virtually part of every woman's attire, day in day out. In England, it is considered lucky to inadvertently put your apron on inside out, and should you have a day beset by small accidents, this can apparently be changed by simply reversing the apron.

It is said to be a good sign if an apron suddenly falls off, while in some places, it is an omen that the wearer can expect a baby within a year. The falling apron is also a sign that their lover is thinking of them at that moment.

The garment also features in two German traditions; still very much alive today. The first is that if a man wipes his hands on a girl's apron, he will fall head over heels in love with her. Once a girl is engaged however, she is best advised *not* to let her fiancée use her apron for this purpose, for it is said that this will lead to a humdinger of a quarrel.

The explanation behind this superstition is said to be that it is the smell of a person's perspiration which plays a major part in the attraction of the sexes, and naturally a man would 'smell' a woman on her apron.

Ash

The tenebrous remnants of a fire have often been used in charms and divination because they were believed to retain some of the magical properties of the fire from which they came.

In many places, the ashes from ritual fires, like those at mid-summer, have been spread over crops to ensure a good harvest. In many European countries, the remains from Easter bonfires have even been mixed with seeds being prepared for the next sowing. In much the same way, ashes were put into the feed of the cattle and other farm animals such as pigs, and chickens to ensure that they grew up strong and healthy.

In some places too, ashes were regarded as good luck charms. In France, they would prevent damage by thunder and lightning if scattered over the house.

In England and America, they were used as a protection against Witches and Evil Spirits.

There is also a superstition, still prevalent in the UK that if the ashes of the fire are spread smoothly over the hearth on New Year's Eve, and footprints leading in the direction of the door are found in the morning, someone in the family will die during the year. If however, the footmarks go in the opposite direction, there will be a birth.

In some districts of Britain, when a death had occurred, the chaff and straw from the dead man's bed were burned in an open space, and the resulting ashes were allowed to lie untouched throughout the night. Here, too, a footprint was looked for in the morning, that of the person who would die next. There was no time limit in this case, however. Years might elapse before the omen was fulfilled.

Ash Tree

The Ash has always been regarded as one of the most magical and valuable of trees.

It has acquired a large reputation for Witchcraft and various forms of divination. Druid's wands were made of Ash twigs and the tree is said to be sacred to the Faeries. In early homeopathic practice, children suffering from rupture or rickets were passed through split Ash trees which were then bound up. If the tree grew again soundly, so would the child.

Its bark is ground up into potions and recipes for spleen and liver disease. For jaundice, nine young shoots from the root of an Ash tree that was cut down are buried in a bottle in a secret place, without the patient's knowledge. If the bottle is broken or taken away, the patient will have a relapse. A drink of the distilled water of Ash-leaves in the morning will decrease weight.

On St. John's Eve, the red bud of the Ash is eaten to prevent Witchcraft and the Evil Eye.

A failure in the crop of Ash-Keys, the winged seeds of the Ash, foretells a death in the Royal Family within the year. When there was just such a failure in 1648, it was connected with the execution of Charles I in January, 1649.



The sap of the tree is said to be a protection against all forms of Witchcraft.

In many parts of England, warts were transferred to the Ash, sometimes by rubbing them with a piece of bacon round the bark of an Ash tree, sometimes by saying a charm such as;

'Ashen tree, Ashen tree, pray buy these warts off me.'

while a pin was stuck first into the tree, then into the wart, and finally, into the tree where it remained.

An old Christmas custom was to burn an Ash faggot bound with green twigs on the hearth, and make a wish as each brand snaps.



In Yorkshire a girl would sleep with an ash leaf under her pillow to dream of her future husband.

In Scotland and the North of England, a bunch of Ash-keys saved you from being accosted by Witches. Snakes will never rest under an Ash tree, or on its fallen leaves

according to popular belief. An Adder could be killed by a single blow from an Ash stick; a circle of Ash twigs around the neck cured Adder bite.

Its highly magical powers ensured that the tree was extremely dangerous to destroy.

In Lincolnshire, the berried Ash, the female tree, was called Sheder and would defeat a male Witch, while the male tree, Heder, was equally useful against a female Witch.

Asparagus.

Asparagus wine on which roots of Asparagus were boiled helps relieve toothache when held in the mouth.

To arouse lust, you simply need to take drink the wine several mornings in a row whistle engaged in a bout of fasting.

If you bathe in the liquid, you can ease away cramps and pains in the lower body.

Aspen

The Aspen, also called the Shiver-Tree because of its trembling leaves which move in the slightest breeze, is said to quiver with shame as it remembers how it provided wood for the Cross at Jesus Christ's crucifixion, although many other trees have been accredited with this somewhat dubious distinction.

If you put a leaf from this tree under a woman's tongue, you can cure her of dumbness.

It is associated with the curing of agues and fevers. A paring of the patient's nail would be pressed into the bark of the tree and as the bark grew over it the cure would take place.

Ass

Sleeping upon the skin of this animal helps keep at bay Devils, Witches, and nightmares.

Ass's hairs are often used in love potions; *'If the hairs of a he-Asses ear be burnt and powdered and given to a woman in drink she will never cease panting. And the curing of this thing is, of you burnt the hairs of a she-Ass, and give them to drink.'* (Cyranus, *"The Magick Of Kirani, King Of Persia"*).

The right testicle of an Ass is worn as a bracelet to bring love.

If you anoint yourself with Ass's milk, you can win the love of the one you most desire.

If you're in pain, superstition decrees that you should sit on an Ass, facing its tail, and your pain will be transmitted to beast.

Mounted in a ring, its hoof is an amulet against epilepsy.

When an Ass brays excessively and twitches its long ears, then no matter how clear the skies may be, rain is soon on the way.

A child suffering from whooping cough will be cured of if it is sat on the mark that's shaped like a cross on an Ass's back and walked in a circle nine times.

This 'cross' incidentally, is traditionally associated with the legend that Christ had ridden on a Donkey when he entered Jerusalem.

In Britain and Europe, it is said that the Ass knows when its about to die and hides itself away for this purpose.

If you do see a dead donkey then it will bring you unlimited good luck.

Asthma Cures

A 16th Century superstition claims that asthma can be cured (of you have the stomach for it) by eating raw cat meat or, even worse, by drinking the foam from a mules' mouth.

If these suggestions sound just a mite too unpleasant, a fortnights diet of boiled carrots will apparently be just as effective.

Aurora Borealis

The comparatively rare appearances of this beautiful, awe-inspiring phenomenon, have almost always been regarded as omens of terrible disaster or imminent wars. The Northern Lights, to give them their more colloquial name, have always been attributed with the bad things in life; bloodshed, the deaths of great kings or heroes. This may well explain the other name given to the Lights by the people of the regions far south of the Arctic Circle; 'The Burning Spears.'

In Northern England, especially in Northumberland, they are still called 'Derwentwater's Lights', because of a strong local tradition that they flared all over the sky with incredible brilliance on the night when the much-loved Earl was executed for his part in the 1715 rebellion.

Even though science has proffered explanations for the origin of the Lights, people still regard them with both wonder and dread.

As recently as 1939, when a second terrible war between Germany and the Allies seemed imminent although still avoidable, the appearance of the Aurora Borealis was enough to convince some folk that their worst fear were about to be realised.

Axe

In all European nations which have been troubled by the horrifying spectre of Witchcraft at some period in their history, (and that's just about the whole of the continent) there exists a belief that if cattle are forced to step over an axe when they are taken out to the pasture for the first time in Spring, they will be invulnerable to Evil magic and Witches' spells.

To carry an axe into your house is not the wisest of things to do, as it will invariably bring about a death within the family.

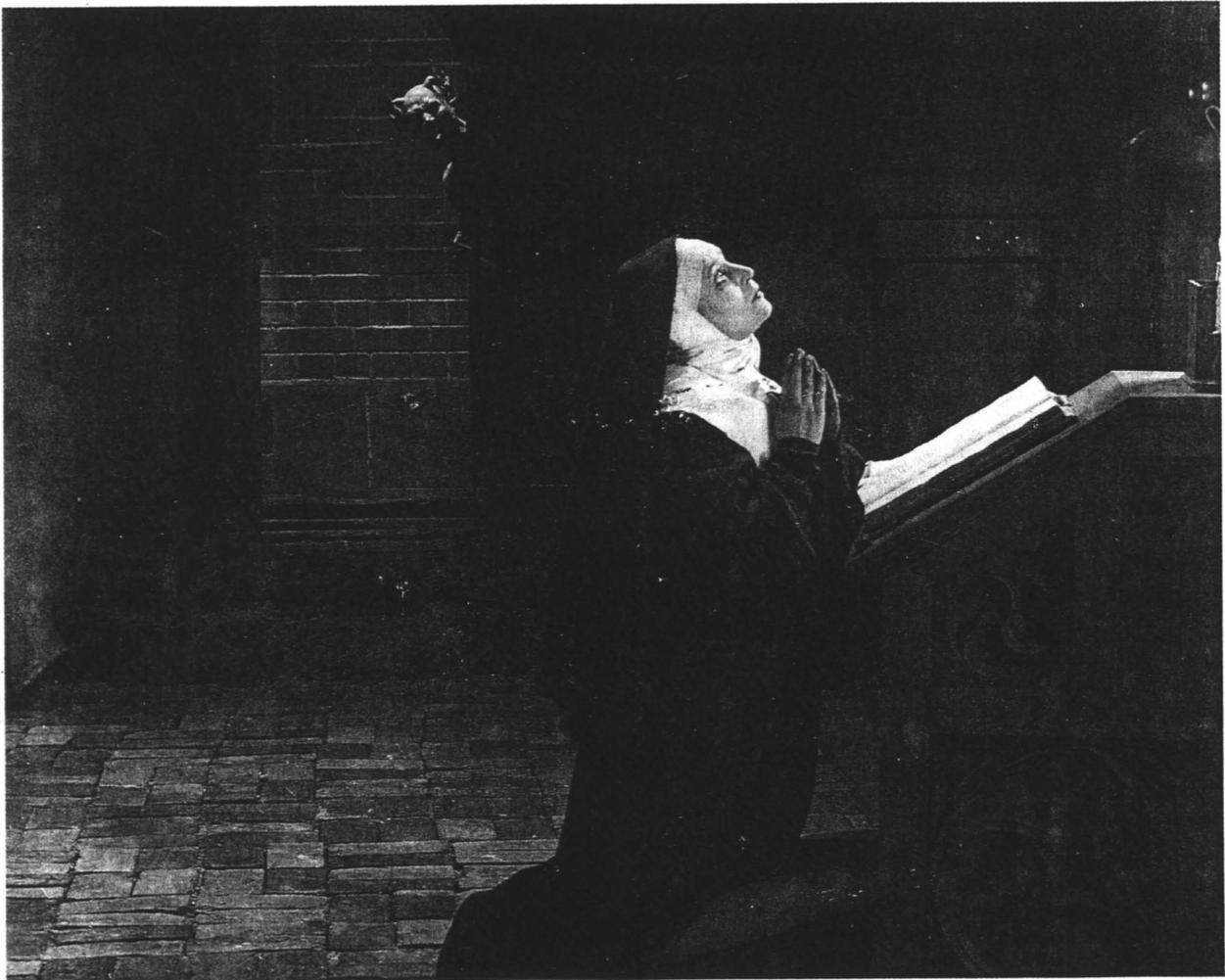
This less than cheerful belief seems to have its origins in the old Scottish tradition that to take a spade or a hoe indoors when you return from your work out in the fields, is considered to be very unlucky.

The reason such a belief took hold can be seen when you consider that the tool symbolises the profession of the grave-digger and therefore is associated with death.



WITCHCRAFT, ORACLES AND MAGIC

By Roy Kerridge



I have recently read a very interesting book; *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among The Azande.* by E.E. Evans Pritchard, first published in 1937 by the Oxford University Press.

The Azande of the title are an African tribe from the Southern Sudan, a district now plagued by famine and civil war, but secure and peaceful in Evans-Pritchard's day.

Presumably a Welshman, Pritchard obviously felt a great affinity for the Azande, and tried to live as Azande-like as possible during his sojourn in a remote village. Halfway through the book, I realised that Pritchard's Azande acquaintances wore no clothes except for bark loin-cloths. Yet Pritchard describes them in friendly tones, almost as if he had been brought up among them and saw nothing extraordinary about their way of life.

Like most Africans, the Azande of Pritchard's day believed that no misfortune save death of extreme old age could happen by chance -all trouble was the work of Witches. These Witches were ordinary people, sometimes compelled to work mischief against their will, thanks to the *'Witchcraft Substance'* in their bodies. At night, their Witch Spirits left their sleeping bodies and roamed abroad to breathe bad luck or disease into other sleepers. Witch Doctors, important members of society, knew how to smell out Witches. A person accused of Witchcraft, if they confessed their guilt, need only perform a ritual with chicken feathers and the matter would be closed. Normally, people *'confessed'* for the sake of peace, even if they felt themselves to be innocent. Some would no doubt believe they had harmed someone in their *'Witch Self'* without consciously knowing it.

I know nothing of Azande, but as I live in London, I am familiar with the ways of the Jamaicans. Again and again, I was struck with similarities between the two peoples. Azandes wore whistles hanging round their necks as protection against silence (something that most Jamaicans abhor). That is a superficial similarity, but the deep-rooted Azande belief in Witchcraft is

paroled by the church-going Jamaican's belief that all trouble is the work of Satan, continually plotting against man. Mere inconveniences, such as missing a train, are said to have been caused by the Devil in his ceaseless war against 'God's People (The Born Again). Small triumphs, such as catching the next train, are described in church as proof that 'God Gives Us Victory!!!' Such an outlook makes day-to-day life extremely significant and interesting.

In Pritchard's day, the Witchdoctors of the Azande sometimes held communal dances, reserved for members of their profession, in order to commune with ancestors and other spirits. Local villagers formed the audience, and at the height of the dance, were able to ask the 'possessed' Witchdoctors questions about the future, or about personal problems. Never breaking step, the dancer replied from the depths of his trance. As with most oracles and prophets, these replies tended to be enigmatic and open to various interpretations.

Long ago, I came to the conclusion that ceaseless dancing to a steady rhythm, with no rest or food, eventually enables the dancer to see, hear or feel any half-expected vision, voice or sensation, possible or impossible. #

The dance is the basis of many a religion, the Holy Rolling Evangelist a city version of the village Shaman.

This does not mean to say, of course, that dance-and-trance induced visions and voices are nonsense.

Some can be profound, similar in feeling to deathbed visions, voices and summonings. Shamanic and excitable-Evangelic lore always includes descriptions of souls leaving bodies and returning again from the Beyond. Few dancers are as wild as the Azande Witchdoctors, who gashed and mutilated themselves in religious frenzy, as the drums pounded on.

According to Pritchard, the audience at the sacred dance were not affected by the rhythm and emotion in the same way as were the Witchdoctors. Some looked on in awe, while others laughed irreverently and mocked the oblivious dancers.

By the light of a Kalahari moon, my mother had watched the desert bushmen in a remote part of Botswana, Southern Africa, perform an Antelope Dance. Dressed only in loincloth strips of springbok hide, the bushman pranced and cavorted, 'possessed' by an Animal God who made them behave like springbok. Completely oblivious to their audience of chanting women and sleeping children, the menfolk imitated springbok antelopes with ludicrous accuracy, jerking their heads around, leaping, licking and grazing. With Azande-like irreverence, the bush-women mocked their entranced menfolk, and performed obscene gestures before their unseeing eyes. A large fire blazed, and the men darted in and out of the flames without getting burned. Twangy thumb-pianos played rather than drums, augmented by harmonic 'mouth music.'

In three 'immigrant' churches I know in London, one for Jamaicans, one for Grenadans, and one for Yourbas from Nigeria, 'Holy Spirit Possession' is often the climax of a successful day's service.

Tambourines or drums play a repetitive rhythm and almost the whole church takes the floor for a juddering dance, many speaking in tongues as they jerk or spin wildly around. Everywhere are echoes of the dance described so brilliantly by Pritchard.

Members believe that if only the 'tongues' were interpreted, they would reveal the workings of God's plan for His people.

Here in London, the irreverent, unaffected audience consists entirely of children.

I have never seen a child under thirteen years of age 'receive Holy Ghost Power'. Until they reach that age, the grown-up goings on in church seem highly comical to children. Small boys get up and imitate dancing adults in an absurd parody. When the Holy Ghost, or Spirit, descends on a church, the adults go wild and the children take an unofficial Playtime.

At the Celestial Church Of Christ, bright-eyed children of the Nigerian Yoruba congregation told me that sometimes they had to stay in church for as long as seven days, sleeping on the floor as a protection from the 'evil spirits outside.'

"Do you like this church?" a nine-year-old boy asked me wonderingly.

"Yes, very much. Do you?" I asked back.

"Yes, it's alright here, I suppose. We try not to laugh at the church." he replied earnestly.

In the 'spirit-filled' churches, adulthood is the time for unquestioning Faith, childhood for satirical scepticism.

Twice, in two different Yoruba churches, I have seen 'Spirit-possessed' members fall into barking fits, like hysterical dogs. On the first occasion, the barker was a man, but the second time it was a woman in a church run on fairly prim American Pentecostal lines. Suddenly, the woman screamed and ran the length of the church, violently dashing her head against the wall. Staggering back, she began to bark repetitively, occasionally screaming. The pastor led her into the vestry and tried to calm her. Two hours later, when the service was ended, she was barking as wildly as ever. I suppose she must have eventually recovered her wits.

Perhaps the phenomenon of barking humans, whose antics fill me with an equal amount of terror and pity, need not be taken too seriously.

At an impromptu secular YMCA dance, where members of Uganda's Acholi tribe played python-skinned drums and danced rising from a squatting position, dog-like barks, howls and yelps rent the air. These seemed to be the ecstatic Acholi equivalent of the whoops and yells of Scottish or cowboy dancers when fiddles fly and accordions wheeze.

A spirit-filled Jamaican preacher once announced, at a Revival, that "I want the spirit of a lion! I want the spirit of a lion! I want to roar like a lion!"

Most of the audience seemed impressed at the display of such godliness, but my thoughts turned irreverently to the American Negro saga of Stackalee, a mythical pimp said to have sold his soul to the Devil. Satan tricked him into murdering an innocent family man, Billy Lyons. One of the subsequent ballads of this event declares that in the condemned cell, Stackalee is haunted by Billy Lyons' ghost, who appears not as a man, but as a 'Mountain Lion'.

Furthermore;

*"Down in New Orleans,
There's a place called the Lion's Club,
And every step you take you're stepping
In Billy Lyons' blood."*

Could echoes of a Lion Cult from Africa have somehow reached the New World/

It is astonishing how often a spirit-filled congregation begin to behave like animals or (more frequently) birds.

Roy Korrige. May, 1996.

KEEP WATCHING THE SKIES!!!

UFO UPDATE

The Ros Reynolds-Parnham Abduction

An alleged abduction that was said to have occurred in September, 1982, was back in the news in early April this year courtesy of the tabloid press.

According to the (ahem) ever-reliable 'SUNDAY PEOPLE', who resurrected the story as part of their 'SECRETS OF THE PARANORMAL' previews, Ros Reynolds-Parnham and her boyfriend Philip were driving along a quiet country lane on their way to a relative's house, when they both saw a strange light in the sky. The light suddenly became a blazing horse-shoe shaped object, "about the size of a helicopter with multi-coloured lights" that hovered above them and terrified, Philip put his foot down. At that precise moment, the car died and the couple were thrown into a blind panic. The last thing Ros remembered was her saying; 'I'll count to three and then we'll both get out together.'

But then everything went blank.

The next thing she knew she was sitting in the back of the car, her head spinning, and a gash on her neck throbbing. The engine was running normally and desperate to get away from the place they drove in dopey silence to their destination.

When they arrived however, it was 2am. They should have been there at 10pm and they realised that four hours had somehow elapsed without them being aware of it.

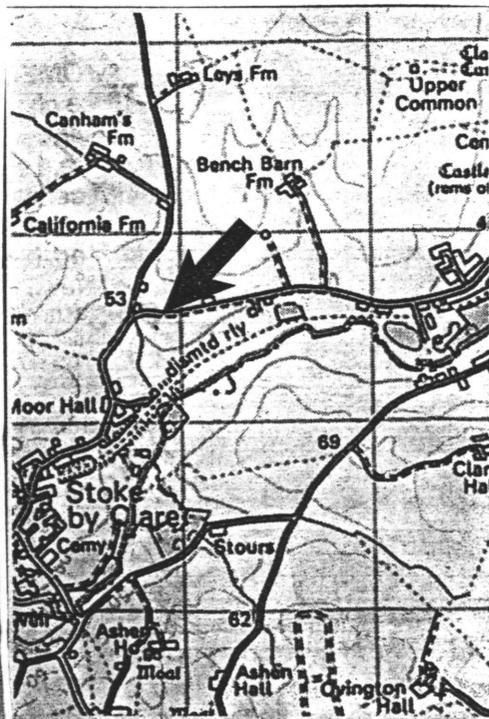
Neither of them could explain where the missing time had gone.

In the days and nights that followed, Ros claims she began to 'sleep-write. I'd get up in the night and draw things in dots. I looked at the first one and it was a pair of large eyes. Then I'd write strange formulas or type odd letters. I couldn't remember doing it.'

Her symptoms grew steadily worse; 'I got terrible headaches, as if someone were sticking a red-hot needle into my head. I'd also hear a noise at the same time, like a fax going off. I was backwards and forward to the doctor's but he only gave me pills.'

Eventually, the strain proved too much for the couple and they split up. She spiralled into the depths of despair as she slowly began to 'remember' exactly what had happened, (unusually in this case, without the dubious benefit of hypnotic regression)...She believed she had been abducted and raped by aliens.

The incident was said to have occurred in the A1092 in Sudbury, Suffolk, and was said to have had a devastating effect upon Ros. She alleges that she has been denied the any prospect of future motherhood and has not had a period since the events of 14 years ago.



(left); Ros's sketch of the one of the 'alien beings' she says abducted her in September, 1982. (right); A map of the area in which the incident is said to have occurred.

Understandably defensive, the show-dog breeder, now aged 35, is quoted as saying, 'I'm not a weirdo. I'm telling the truth. I'm just so scared that THEY will come back. After the abduction, I can remember being on a perspex pedestal in this pinky-grey oval room. I can't remember any door. There was a bright light above it, I just felt terror. I couldn't move, scream or faint. It was as if I was an onlooker. There were grey figures all around me.'

They had very large heads and big black eyes. They didn't have a nose, had a slit for a mouth, no ears, and they were about 3ft 6ins. They smelled like rotten eggs. They had long spidery hands with four fingers.

These aliens were very cold, very calculating and they did some experiments. I know they did something because of the scars at the top of my legs. I felt raped, abused, dirty. They were saying something about "juice".

I don't know exactly what they did to me, but I haven't had a period since.

The interviewee from the 'PEOPLE' was shown a small white scar on Ros's neck, the result, she claims, of the four-hour 'examination'.

Philip Mantle of *BUFORA* is brought in at the conclusion of the article, doubtless to lend some credence to the account, and is quoted as saying:

'Some abductees report seeing hieroglyphic type writing, or grey figures who smell like rotten eggs. More females are reporting this type of incident. Others report removal of sperm or ovum -perhaps for interbreeding. There are still many questions but this is one of the most convincing cases I've heard.'

13th April, 1996. Sudbury, Suffolk, England. 'SUNDAY PEOPLE'

ARGENTINEAN UFO

The crew of an Aerolinas Argentinas airliner, and aviation officials on the ground, reported that a luminous object approached the aircraft as it was about to land at Bariloche Airport, about 870 miles from Buenos Aires.

Captain Jorge Polanco told reporters that all of the lights in and around the airport went out just as the object departed and he was about to land.

Control tower personnel reported all of their instruments started behaving strangely at about the same time.

Ground observers said the UFO appeared to have lights on the underside.

13th August, 1995. Bariloche Airport, Argentina. 'COLUMBUS DISPATCH' Via COUD-I

CRATER MYSTERY

Scientists in Brazil's north-eastern state of Piaui are said to be completely baffled by a crater that was punched into the tropical rain forest shortly after witnesses reported seeing a bright light streak across the sky.

Researchers are uncertain whether the crater, 16 feet wide and 32 feet deep, was left by a meteorite or a piece of comet. Physicist Paulo Frota of the University of Piaui, believes it was caused by a block of ice from a comet because the surrounding vegetation isn't burned and the crater's rim is not raised.

An independent researcher was scouring the site in hopes of finding traces of the object that fell from space.

At the time of going to press, there were no further details.

1st October, 1995. Piaui, Brazil. 'COLUMBUS DISPATCH' Via COUD-I.

DOUGHNUT-SHAPED UFO OVER KOREA

South Korean air force personnel monitored a dough-nut shaped object that hovered over a provincial park in Taegu. According to the news agency Yonhap, the strange object glowed with a light and passed silently over the hilly park.

Radio and television stations were swamped with reports of the UFO, and a large crowd gathered to watch it move across the evening sky.

6th January, 1996. Taegu, South Korea. 'COLUMBUS DISPATCH' Via COUD-I

DOCTOR TO PROBE OBJECTS REPORTEDLY LEFT BY ALIENS

A Californian surgeon, who perhaps understandably, wishes to remain anonymous, has come forward with stories of how he participated in operations upon alleged UFO abductees.

'I'd probably be ostracised, I'd be criticised, maybe I'd even lose my licence,' he was quoted as saying. 'People with

credibility who put themselves forward in this field could wind up dead, in jail, or out of business.'

He claims he performed the operations before witnesses and a video camera. He cut into the big toe of a woman and into the back of a man's hand. Both believed they had been abducted by aliens. From both persons, he says he extracted small foreign objects with some unusual properties.

'No one has the answers,' he said. 'But we all know something's going on.'

The unnamed doctor has been active in UFO groups for five years. Through them, he met a Houston UFO researcher who sent the purported abductees to Ventura, California, for surgery in August 1995.

The patients didn't know each other. Neither bore any nearby scars or punctures. In both cases the objects came to light in X-rays for minor, unrelated injuries.

In decades of practice, the doctor claimed he had never seen anything like that which he fished out.

The objects were encased in a thick, dark membrane. These weren't cysts, he said. They were so tough, his scalpel couldn't cut them.

The object in the man was the size of a cantaloupe seed; one of the woman's two was T-shaped. Both patients jerked back when the surgeon touched the objects - an unusual reaction for people claimed by hypnosis and placed on local anaesthetics.

Back in Texas, the membranes were dried out and cut open, revealing tiny, highly magnetic pieces of a shiny black metal. Under ultraviolet light, they glowed a brilliant green - same as the 'fingerprints' on the thighs and backs of some who claim to have been abducted, the doctor said.

Strange items have been pulled from 'Abductees' before, but many somehow have disappeared before independent scientists have had the opportunity to examine them.

Barry Kerr, director of the Centre For Scientific Investigation Of Claims Of The Paranormal remains highly sceptical of these and similar accounts:

'We haven't heard of anything that, without the shadow of a doubt, couldn't have been made here on Earth. Let's see the evidence.'

Who knows, maybe he'll get the chance.

The objects have reportedly been sent to Houston for electrical, chemical and microscopic analysis. The patients who unwittingly carried them say they feel liberated.

The doctor figures he'll be called on to perform more operations before too long.

If you're not watching the skies, watch this space!!!

8th November, 1995. Ventura, California, USA. 'THE PLAIN DEALER.' Via COUD-I

ROCK OF AGES AND AGES

Scientists have identified a chunk of Mars said to be billions of years old which fell to Earth as a meteorite and was discovered in the frozen wastes of the Antarctic.

By analysing the structure of the rock that have worked out that it probably came from a heavily cratered area of the red planet's southern hemisphere.

The rock, known as Allan Hills 84001, is thought to have blasted off Mars during a period of intense meteorite bombardment about four billion years ago.

It would then have drifted through space for millions - possibly billions - of years before falling under the influence of the Earth's gravity.

The rock has been examined by Dr R D Ash, of the Department of Earth Sciences at Manchester University, and colleagues from America.

It was picked up from the Antarctic ice about 10 years ago but was only later discovered to have properties suggesting it might have come from Mars.

12th March, 1996. *Antarctica*. 'LIVERPOOL DAILY POST.'

MORE NEWS FROM MARS

Scientists have also discovered that there may be life on Mars after all...By drilling down more than 3,000ft into our own planet.

The main objection to the idea of life existing on the Red Planet has been the fact that the experts have told is nothing could exist on that bleak, barren surface, as most forms of life depend heavily on sunlight.

However, the new clue as to another potential way of life is a group of rock-eating bacteria called, ominously, *SLIMES*. These creatures have been found in test wells in north-west America by the U.S. Department of Energy. They rely for survival on hydrogen generated by water reacting on the surrounding basalt rocks.

On Mars, *SLIMES* could survive beneath the frozen deserts where conditions are similar to those found in the test wells. Significantly, in a fluorescent micrograph the *SLIMES* showed up as *RED* patches...

25th April, 1996. *North-west USA*. 'DAILY MAIL.'

IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT'

As we've already seen this issue, (contained within the pages of 'CHASING THE UNKNOWN'), the penchant for predicting Armageddon has never been more hip and trendy. I'm fairly certain we can safely disregard most of these 'Monster-Shouter's', to use the label accorded to the prophets of doom in Stephen King's 'THE STAND, as being nothing more than paranoid, attention-seekers trying to cash in on our worst fears...

But when the normally reasonable, level-headed Timothy Good starts making equally dire apocalyptic warnings, methinks we have to at least sit up and take some degree of notice...

According to Tim (author of the excellent 'ABOVE TOP SECRET') the world is about to be threatened by a real-life 'INDEPENDENCE DAY' -type alien invasion.

To illustrate his point, he has just published 'BEYOND TOP SECRET' (a full review of which will appear in the next issue) and in the pages of the tabloid press he has issued the following snippets as 'proof' to back up his claims...

* A US jet, scrambled to intercept a UFO over Japan, disappeared before the very eyes of horrified radar operators. After watching his missiles explode harmlessly before even reaching the unidentified object, the pilot screamed; 'They've turned on some kind of beam and they're turning... They are coming after me.'

The two blips on the radar screen became one. The pilot and plane were never seen again.

* In 1983, two US Air Force jets were scrambled from the NATO base at Incirlik, Turkey, and were seen by witnesses circling a much larger UFO before all three headed out to sea. Only one jet returned.

* University professor Dr. Robert Jacobs filmed the test firing of an Atlas missile which was destroyed by a UFO.

Watching the film he said; 'Another object flew into the frame from left to right. It approached the warhead package and manoeuvred round it...at 18,000 miles an hour.'

The object then fired four flashes of bright light at the missile, which tumbled out of its orbit.

* Cosmonaut G M Manakov, orbiting the Earth in the Russian Space Station Mir, said; 'I saw an unidentified flying object...It was a great silvery sphere. There was a clear, clean sky. It is difficult to determine, but the object was at a great altitude, perhaps 20-30 kilometres.'

* And finally, two UFO's were reported to have hovered over the Baikonur Space Centre in Kazakhstan for 14 seconds.

According to Tim; 'The following day, bolts and rivets were found which allegedly had been "sucked out" of the support towers, causing welded sections to come apart.

Thousands of panes of glass were smashed in the complex, knocking the entire cosmodrome out of action for two weeks.'

Tim was quoted as saying, in summing up the 'evidence'; 'I believe man's progress on Earth has been monitored by beings whose technological and mental resources make ours look primitive and theirs supernatural by comparison.'

21st April, 1996. *General*. 'SUNDAY PEOPLE'

NICK POPE - UFO BELIEVER

Hang on a minute...What's going on here? First we have Tim Good's warnings about possible invasion from outer space. Next we have Nick Pope, the man who for three years, ran the official UFO desk at the Ministry Of Defence, also publishing a book called 'OPEN SKIES - CLOSED MINDS', in which he relates evidence that persuaded him that not only do UFO's exist, but that they may well pose a threat to the future of mankind.

I don't wish to come across as being one of those paranoid conspiracy theorists, but it's getting to be hard as all hell to shake the notion that we, the Great Blessedly Ignorant Public At Large, are being made the subject of an attempt to raise our awareness...Are we being prepared for something???

Read on and make up your own minds;

In an article published in 'THE DAILY MAIL' Nick describes the amazing events that caused him to completely rethink his attitude towards the subject.

'Were I to name one day in the three years I spent as the MoD's UFO expert that convinced me that extraterrestrial spacecraft are regularly visiting the Earth, it would be March 31st, 1993.

It was a day I will never forget. I arrived at work at 9am, as usual, to find there had been a major wave of UFO sightings in Britain the previous night, with many police and military witnesses.

The first call came from a police constable in Devon. He and his colleague had been on routine patrol in their car the night before and had seen a UFO. He was the first police witness I had come across directly, and I remember listening particularly carefully to what he had to say.

The constable was often on duty at night, so he was used to the sights and sounds of the darkness. But what he and his colleague had seen was like nothing they had ever come across before.

They saw two bright lights, together with a third, fainter one, flying in perfect formation ahead of vapour trails. I probed carefully over the phone. From what they told me about their colour and movement they were clearly not aircraft lights. They were simply unidentifiable.

As the morning wore on, the calls came in thick and fast. Other people had seen the three lights, two bright, one fainter, in the same perfect formation. The police report suggested three craft in some sort of squadron. Some of the reports described the lights travelling at high speed, others talked of a virtual hover. There were references to a high altitude as well as statements putting the lights low in the sky.

Most sightings had occurred between 1 and 1.30am, with a particular concentration at 1.10am. Having established a vague timing for the appearance of the lights, I needed to co-ordinate the sightings on a map, to mark each with a time, height, and compass bearing.

The resulting pattern didn't give me the straight line I'd hoped for, but sightings were concentrated over Devon, Cornwall, Somerset and Wales. There were sporadic reports too, from the Midlands and even Yorkshire. If all the sightings were of the same object, then it was zig-zagging in a random pattern, through our skies at an incredibly high speed.

By lunchtime it was obvious that I was right at the centre of the biggest wave of UFO sightings ever reported in Britain.

As if to confirm this, the initial police report said that officers all over Devon and Cornwall had seen the lights. I knew from experience that still more witnesses would come forward.



RECENT SIGHTINGS: Military personnel guarding an RAF base were startled by what they were convinced was a UFO and in March '93 reports flooded in from right across Britain. Rather than the traditional hubcap shape, descriptions incidate a more angular vessel. As large as a jumbo jet but much faster, it follows an erratic flight path, alternately hovering, then zooming off.

At that time of night, of course, most people would have been in bed, so the number of sightings would be reduced accordingly, but even so, I estimated that several hundred people had seen something extraordinary. And the sightings were not confined to mainland Britain. Other reports reached me from the Irish Republic and, in the days that followed, I heard of sightings in France and Belgium. My job, as Defence Ministry civil servant, was to warn of a threat to national security and I was doing my damndest to sort this mystery out.

An important report came in from a military patrol guarding an RAF base in the West Midlands. This was dynamite. But there were even more impressive sightings to come. One came from Wales, and was reported by a man with a vast experience of aviation and mathematics. He had watched an object flying low over the coast near Haverfordwest in Pembrokeshire and had timed its passage between two points on the shoreline, whose distance from each other he knew.

From that information he was able to calculate its speed at that point to be about 1,100mph - the same as the top speed of an American F-16 jet fighter.

In Rugeley, Staffordshire, five members of the same family saw a huge, diamond-shaped object flying steadily over their heads. They estimated its height at less than 300m and the diameter of the craft was about 200m. They also reported a low, humming sound of the frequency you'd experience standing in front of the speakers at a rock concert, feeling the sound waves passing through your body. It wasn't pleasant, but they decided to jump in their car and follow it.

Either they lost the UFO or it lost them; the chase was unsuccessful. They thought it was going to land in a field beyond the road because it was flying so low. They screeched to a halt by the gate, but when they clambered out, the craft had gone. They saw nothing after that...Perhaps they'd had a lucky escape.

Perhaps the most interesting report came from an RAF base in Shropshire.

The meteorological officer there saw the most astonishing sight of that whole amazing night. An object in the sky, at first stationary, moved erratically towards him at a speed of several hundred miles an hour. At one point, it fired a beam of light at the ground which swept the countryside from left to right, as though it were looking for something in the fields and hedgerows.

The sighting was not a second's glimpse, but lasted for five minutes, long enough for the witness to estimate the size of the craft as about that of a Jumbo jet. He heard the same low-frequency hum the family from Rugeley had heard.

He was a trained observer, considerably more familiar with the night-sky than I was. On the phone I agreed with him that there was only one conclusion; whatever he had seen was unknown.

I carried out my usual checks, looking for the explicable, but there were no unusual civil or military aircraft activity that night that came remotely close to fitting anything that had been seen. There were no weather balloons in the area of the densest sightings and no unusual planetary activity, said the Greenwich Observatory.

Then RAF Fylingdales came up with something. (Now there's a coincidence - check out back issues of 'DON' for a whole lot more on this mysterious site). It confirmed that debris from a Russian rocket, Cosmos 2238, had re-entered Earth's atmosphere that night and might have been visible from the UK.

But a piece of re-entering space debris would burn up like a meteor, and produce a flaming trail which would only last for seconds. This couldn't account for the five minute sighting from Shropshire or the low hum heard in Rugeley, neither would it be seen flying low over the coast near Haverfordwest because the debris didn't come down anywhere near Britain.

I took an unprecedented step and ordered a number of radar tapes to be impounded and sent to me. The results were disappointing. The blips faded in and out all night. RAF radar defence experts explained these conventionally enough. They were caused by ground clutter, tall trees picked up now and then around one particular radar head.

Whatever it was that zig-zagged across Britain that night, it wasn't picked up on radar.

It was time to take the problem 'upstairs'.

I drew up a carefully-constructed report of the March 30-31 sightings and sent it to the head of my division. I deliberately avoided the term 'UFO' and opted instead for 'Uncorrelated target' and 'unknown craft'. The report was passed up the chain of command until it reached the assistant chief of the Air Staff himself.

He noted my report - there was little else he could do. By now I had tried all possible lines of enquiry. There were no other avenues left. The March 30-31 sightings brought about a marked change in my attitude towards UFO's. I would play no future part in bland platitudes about UFO's being of "no defence significance".

I sensed that some of my colleagues thought that UFO's were only of defence significance if they aimed laser beams at cities. But any craft, conventional or otherwise, that can do what that triangle did, is of extreme defence significance in itself. Our radar couldn't trace it, our jets wouldn't be able to catch it.

We can all thank God that whatever it was it was not, on that particular occasion, anyway, hostile.

I was appointed the position of UFO desk officer - Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a, as the direct result of an internal shuffle, in July, 1991. At the Ministry, I inherited a situation where any UFO report, however bizarre, seemed to be attributed to aircraft lights; case closed.

At the outset, I certainly did not believe in UFO's.

But my next three years were literally a voyage of discovery. I was able to talk directly with those who have themselves witnessed UFO's and I had unprecedented access to the raw data on the subject - the files some will tell you the Government is anxious to suppress.

I now believe I have clear evidence that craft of unknown origin have been demonstrating a technology apparently far in advance of our own and are using it to penetrate our airspace.

During my tenure, I received about 800 reports of sightings, ranging from the easily explicable to the genuinely perturbing, but I only had one like the 'CAPITAL' sighting.

A call came from 'CAPITAL RADIO's headquarters in Euston, London, and the voice on the other end of the line was very excited. The caller was staring out his window, giving me a running commentary on a UFO about to land in Regent's Park. He was gabbling, his words jumbled, hysteria in his voice; a man on edge.

'It's almost down...It looks a bit like - like a big kite, but it can't be. It's down! My God, people are gathering around it...'

There was a pause. The voice seemed less strained, less panicked.

'It can't be a kite, can it? Oh, the people are putting it back in a box. It is a kite. Sorry for having wasted your time.'

He hung up. God knows what agonies he had gone through in those few mad minutes.

On the other hand, in the early hours of October 29th, 1993, something took place at St Austell in Cornwall, which I was utterly at a loss to explain. The witness was a young naval cadet from the prestigious Britannia Royal Naval College, at Dartmoor, 40 miles away. He had 20-20 vision and was trained in careful observation.

He saw a bright object glowing eerily in the sky over nearby houses, as it hovered silently over a sports field behind his home. In this position, its shape was clearly that of a disc and it appeared solid with a battery of different-coloured lights and three protrusions on its underside. The top seemed to turn anti-clockwise.

The witness claimed that he received telepathic messages of greeting, telling him not to be afraid. The craft's lights had by this time gone out and it hovered in front of a set of goalposts 80 yards from him.

A large bird, presumably a crow, flew close to the object then plummeted to the ground. A bright light glowed on the underside of the craft and it shot vertically upwards at great speed.

The cadet ran to wake his family. They saw the bird on the ground but no sign of the craft. Even the bird had gone by seven the next morning. The cadet was confused by what he had seen. He reported the incident to the local police at Launceston, the next day. They in turn, contacted me and put the cadet in touch with Ufologist, Doug Cooper, who phoned me to discuss the case.

The cadet had also told his superiors at the naval college about his experience. They allegedly told him to keep quiet. Doug Cooper obviously believed that this, in itself, implied some cover-up. I suspected that the advice was well-meant, designed to shield the cadet from the ridicule of his colleagues. In any event, no one from the college spoke to me. The sighting was clear enough, and the large bird, at least, was witnessed by several people. I was not able to come up with any explanation - and neither was anyone else. Disturbing as this was for the young man, it was by no means the most painful experience I had reported to me. In 1992, I received a letter from a woman whose husband had been walking in the Quantock Hills in Somerset, four years earlier, intent on photographing the scenery.

The sky was clear, the air still. This is one of those cases where the time lapse could be unfortunate, but even so, the woman's memory was vivid and so was that of her husband. He had heard a deep rumbling sound, ahead of him and above, and saw a huge black craft moving towards him, its body saucer-shaped, but with two bat-like wings, one on each side.

It hovered for about five minutes, close enough for the witness to see that the main fuselage had two decks and a dome on top. He could even make out a small figure, wearing some kind of helmet, through the windows on one of the decks. The craft flew directly overhead, no more than 50ft above the land. Instinctively, he threw himself to the ground and as the shadow passed over him, he felt a burning sensation. When he got home, he discovered that his clothes had been singed.

Over the next two years, the witness's health deteriorated. Like Antonio Boas, the first known abductee in 1957, the Quantocks man found it difficult to eat and experienced waves of extreme nausea, from time to time. He also had severe pain in his head and back. Perhaps unfortunately, the witness told his GP the story of the black craft and the doctor immediately suspected psychosomatic symptoms and mental illness.

The witness's was terrified that he was suffering from radiation sickness and would die, unless somebody could help.

My bosses were not keen on proactive investigations, but I could not ignore this cry for help. If I was unable to intervene directly, this man's health had no implications for the defence of the realm (though I would now dispute that), at least I now had contacts who could.

I shared my concerns with BUFORA who agreed that the main priority was to save the witness's life, and that the couple were not overstating the case. On of their top researchers intervened with the witness's doctor, having contacted Doctor Rima Laibow of New York, from the organisation TREAT (Treatment and Research into Experienced Anomalous Trauma). The man's medical records are, quite rightly, confidential. That said, I am aware that he was treated, and recovered.

No explanation was ever found for that black craft over the Quantocks.

It is incidents like these, for which, try as I might, I could find no scientific explanation, that changed my view of the world. By the time I ceased to be the UFO desk officer at Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a, I had formed the view that Unidentified Flying Objects were potential the most important issue currently facing the human race and that the military would be in the front line.

April, 1996. General. 'DAILY MAIL'

'BRITAIN'S SECRET FILES' VINDICATED BY MoD MAN

Jenny Randles contribution to the BBC2 programme 'BRITAIN'S SECRET FILES' was unfairly slated by most TV critics in the pages of the so-called 'quality' press, but according to a piece in 'THE DAILY MAIL', (written a month or so before it actually went on air) a senior Ministry Of Defence official had given the show his personal blessing, having confirmed the existence of UFO's.

The unnamed official was believed to have been a member of the RAF, and was coaxed into appearing on the programme by Jenny herself.

A spokesman for the BBC was quoted as saying;

'It becomes apparent that there are now people at the highest levels of Government who have not discounted the possibility of life on other planets. The MoD finally concede that they remain "totally open-minded" about extraterrestrial life forms.'

Typically however, a Ministry spokesman moved quickly to pour scorn on the claims, by adding; *'We have one person in the RAF Secretariat answering enquiries about UFO's...That's it!!!'*

30th March, 1996. General. 'DAILY MAIL.'

'KRYPTON' RIDDLE OF ROCK

Scientists are reportedly baffled by a beautiful blue but potentially deadly rock bought from a roadside souvenir stall in Morocco.

The mysterious pyramid-shaped rock could be the nearest thing in nature to 'Kryptonite', the fictional material that renders 'SUPERMAN' powerless.

The unnamed mineral has undisclosed, strange properties, and because its structure is so similar to asbestos, it could be lethal.

After a year examining the rock, scientists at the Natural History Museum in London said it was completely new.

The rock was bought by geologist and broadcaster Anna Grayson in Morocco 15 years ago and kept in her house.

19th March, 1996. Morocco, Africa. 'DAILY MANC'

ASTRONOMERS WILL NOT LEAVE ET ON HOLD

Radio astronomers were planning to tear up a key clause of a United Nations declaration of Principles that would prohibit them sending an immediate reply to any signal from extraterrestrial.

Item 8 of the Declaration of Principles Concerning Activities Following the Detection of Extraterrestrial Intelligence was drawn up in 1991 by the UN Committee for the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

It states that no response to any signal should be sent 'until appropriate international consultations have taken place.'

Professor Donald Tarter, a radio astronomer at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, and a member of SETI, said; *'This clause could unleash the very evil it seeks to prevent.'*

While politicians debated what reply to send, some irresponsible government leader, like Saddam Hussien, might send an immediate message to the aliens, claiming that he was the sole ruler of Earth.

If this happened, the aliens would probably believe him, for there is no chance whatever - since all radio signals travel at the speed of light and no faster - that the official message sent by all governments, could overtake the false one.'

Scientists believe that an alien signal would be easily understandable, probably a picture code.
9th April, 1996. General. 'DAILY TELEGRAPH.'

LOST IN SPACE

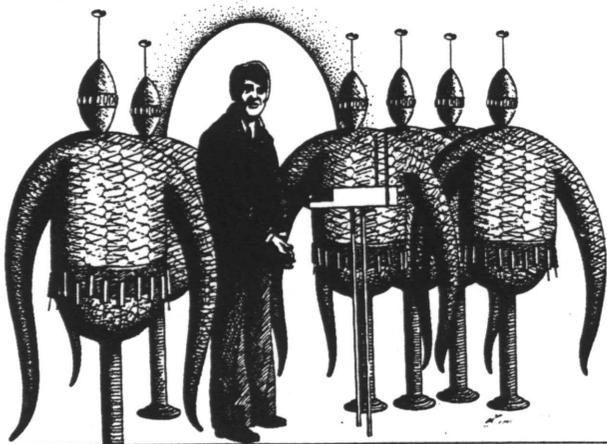
Robert Joe Moody, of Tucson, Arizona, claimed that space aliens had forced him to murder two women.
He has since been sentenced to death for his crimes.
25th March, 1996. Tucson, Arizona, USA. 'LIVERPOOL ECHO.'

DESERT UFO

An unidentified Flying Object was reportedly sighted in Saudi Arabia's oil-producing region.
A newspaper there said the sighting was reported by a couple of people who were camping north of the Gulf coast city. They said the area was illuminated for minutes by a brilliant oval bluer light which disappeared 'in an unnatural fashion.'
2nd April, 1996. Saudi Arabia. 'LIVERPOOL DAILY POST.'

OUR GOVERNMENT'S UFO SILENCE

Jonathon Dillon



The British Government hold the dubious honour of being the most secretive in the developed, free-world, despite promises to be more open with the public.

The USA, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, France, Denmark, Holland, and a host of other countries have a Freedom Of Information Act, which over the last few years has shown empowered investigators all over the globe, to supplicate thousands of hitherto classified documents and papers which refer to the UFO subject.

And on the Government's own admission, thousands more documents are being withheld in the 'interests of national security', thereby proving once and for all, that the subject is of great interest and gravity to those countries elected leaders.

Bit our own Government keeps quiet about *everything* and the general public can only gain access to documentation released under terms of Air Ministry, RAF, and Ministry of Defence, and roughly amount to half a dozen already released files covering the period; 1950-64.

Now, with the arrival of the Scott Report, the need for a British Freedom of Information Act has never been more great.

Sadly, Her Majesties' Government will be amongst the very last to willingly confess to the fact that our airspace is being penetrated regularly by intelligently controlled, anomalous aircraft.

However, there seems to have been something of a turnaround on the part of the authorities, particularly in recent years, with more and more credible military personnel, Government officials, and people in similar positions of power coming forward to tell of their UFO experiences.

Through the hard work of many UFO investigators across the country, it has been disclosed that several Ministry of Defence Departments at Whitehall and within the Armed Services have been, and continue to be, actively engaged in covert research into the subject of UFO's.

According to the word of several informers, investigations have been carried out by the Royal Air Force, the Defence Intelligence Staff (DI55) and the Directorate of Scientific and Technical Intelligence. The DI55 in particular, is a mixed organisation of serving officers and civilian research staff, scientific staff and linguists headed by the Chief of Defence Intelligence (CDI).

This essential element of the Governments central intelligence machinery has several tasks to perform and evaluates a range of studies, but one of its most important, certainly, are UFO's. Some reports are handled by the Provost and Security Police Special Investigators who are attached to the Flying Complaints Flight, based at RAF Rudloe Manor.

Illuminating news, which has been too long a time in coming, is the shock admission by the MoD's Kerry Philpott, of Secretariat Air Staff 2a, that RAF Rudloe Manor was indeed a 'co-ordination point for reports of UFO's'.

This facility is known to be staffed by senior non-commissioned officers trained in numerous methods of special investigations. MI5 also works out of Rudloe. Much of the collaboration relates to Rudloe's work in checking the credentials of RAF employees who work with classified data and they keep bulky files on RAF employees with 'highly subversive interests: e.g.; Animal Rights, CND, Liberty, etc. It is not known for certain whether or not the Security Services take an interest in UFO matters, but according to an ex-MI5 employee I managed to interview, they do monitor the activities of individual UFO investigators and civilian UFO research groups!!!

So beware. Big Brother is most defiantly watching!!!

The reports that come into the MoD are sent to DI55 who duly forward them on to the Director of Security and Provost Marshal (RAF) in London, who in turn will inform an infrastructure of other departments such as the Air Force Operations and Airborne early warning stations.

Some of these organisations are amongst the most well-developed technologically speaking, military systems in the world, and additional research has exposed an international liaison with other foreign intelligence authorities such as the American NSA, the CIA, the US Airforce Office of Special Investigations and the State Departments Office of Security, Assistance, Science and Technology. The Defence Intelligence Liaison branch of the MoD (DIALL) provides this affiliation through the Government Communications Headquarters.

Intense Government concern about the UFO problem doesn't end with the MoD's apparent interest. According to my source, the Home Office plays an operative role, maintaining computer files on the subject.

The MoD's Airstaff 2a has computerised UFO files, but most of them are pretty innocuous. Nick Redfern, an outstanding researcher, told me the data base held by the DIS is meant to be highly explosive and refers to National Security Agency files. My source told me that there is a

'main computer' within in the Home Office (F10 Division) which contains a database on several Governmental issues including, of course, UFO's. My contact also said that 'Only selected people can use the computer system as a matter of national security.'

He continued; 'I had a meeting with the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, and at the end of it, I asked him about the UFO enigma. Howard didn't say very much about the subject and instead went very quiet.'

The police force also take a reasonable proportion of UFO reports. In some cases, the UK Atomic Energy Authority Constabulary are briefed to prepare themselves for potential UFO sightings in the proximity of atomic energy installations. They are apparently warned not to take any action other than to compile a report, which they must then send to their superiors.

Unquestionably, our own armed forces are extremely diligent UFO researchers. Numerous instances have recently come to light involving UFO/RAF dog-fighting, crash-retrieval ventures and clandestine research into alien technology at places such as RAF Farnborough, where during the mid-1950's, secret research was conducted into UFO's, according to several RAF sources of mine. The Defence and Evaluation Research Agency have a facility at Farnborough, lately rumoured to be housing a crashed UFO and Boeing 747 Jumbo jet!!

During the 1970's, there was an impressive UFO encounter in Minley Manor Woods, not far from Farnborough. My contact, who I'll call 'Hannah', told me there was a strong military presence in the woods after several hexagonal-shaped UFO's had been reported in the district.

Nowadays, the area is a Mecca for enigmatic unmarked helicopters, and when questioned, the local Air Force, Police and airport deny that they know anything about the aircraft.

Last year, (1995), a helicopter hovered over the local housing estate early one morning. Several residents awoke and went outside to see what all the fuss was about. They saw four pulsating red lights above a corn field. As they watched, the helicopter began to close in on the unusual lights, and as it got nearer, the lights suddenly shot off at great speed towards Aldershot.

In summary then, it is now obvious, to me at least, that the British Government are investigating UFO reports. But do we have any worthwhile conclusions to draw from this?

Well, according to some sources, the RAF long ago decided that the answer to the UFO problem was indeed extraterrestrial, and that we humans are somehow related to the visiting aliens!!!

Was Darwin horribly wrong?

I dare not say.

But I have learned that during the 1960's, a building called Riverwalk House, (today, it is the Foreign Commonwealth Offices) which was used by the intelligence services for the compilation of Eastern Bloc and Russian affairs, did contain at least some of the most important answers. Apparently, during a document review in the building's library, two female colleagues came across a confidential file which stated the British Government had solved the UFO mystery: We really were not alone!!!

Certainly, some UFO cases have come to light through US documents released under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. Here in the UK, ministers still use the same degree of secrecy to suppress embarrassing findings and to protect themselves from public scrutiny.

But the findings about UFO's may be so panic-inducing, Governments acting in our names, may only be keeping their secrets because they feel it is in our best interests. After all, Government influence affects just about every aspect of our day-to-day lives. In matters of national

security therefore, it seems obvious that Governments may have no other option but to remain tight-lipped on the subject....But I believe it is time for the dark veil of secrecy to be lifted and for Governments, the world over to become more honest with society, at least in the things that really matter.

Well, I can dream can't I?

Acknowledgements; Nick Redfern, Matthew Williams of 'TRUTHSEEKERS REVIEW', Graham and Mark Birdsall, Robert Gray and several others whose names I can't mention, but who know who they are...

AIDS: THE NEW WORLD ORDERS FINAL SOLUTION!

A REPORT BY DR. WILLIAM DOUGLASS

I recently received the following article, originally printed in 1988, courtesy of Mark Fraser, Editor of the excellent 'HAUNTED SCOTLAND NEWSLETTER'.

Although it's old news in some respects, I have been asked to reprint it, and bearing in mind the apocalyptic theme of this issue (though not without a fair degree of trepidation), I have decided to accede to the request, purely in the interests of keeping our readership fully informed and, as per usual, to have the opportunity to make up their own minds...

WHO KILLED AFRICA

There is no question mark after the title of this article because the title is not a question. It's a declarative statement. WHO, the World Health Organisation, murdered Africa with the AIDS virus. That's a provocative statement, isn't it?

The answers to this little mystery, Murder On The WHO Express, will be quite clear to you by the end of this report. You will also understand why the other suspects, the homosexuals, the green monkey and the Haitians, were only pawns in this virocidal attack on the non-communist world. If you believe the Government propaganda that AIDS is hard to catch then you are going to die even sooner than the rest of us. The common cold is a virus. Have you ever had a cold? How did you catch it? You don't really know, do you? If the cold virus were fatal now many people would there be left in the world?

Yellow fever is a virus. You catch it from mosquito bites. Malaria is a parasite also carried by mosquitoes. It is many times larger than the AIDS virus (like comparing a pinhead to a mouse head) yet the mosquito easily carries this large organism to man.

The tuberculosis germ, also much larger than the AIDS virus can be transmitted by fomites (inanimate objects such as towels).

The AIDS virus can live for as long as 10 days on a dry plate. You can't understand this murder mystery unless you learn a little virology.

Many viruses grow in animals and many grow in humans, but most of the viruses that affect animals don't affect humans. There are exceptions, of course, such as yellow fever and smallpox.

There are some viruses in animals that cause a very lethal cancer in these animals, but do not affect man or other animals. The Bovine leukaemia virus (BLV), for example, is lethal to cows but not humans.

There is another virus that occurs in sheep called sheep visna virus which is also non-reactive in man. These deadly viruses are 'retro viruses' meaning that they change the genetic composition of cells that they enter.

The WHO, in published articles, called for scientists to work with these deadly agents and attempt to make a hybrid virus that would be deadly to humans.

'An attempt should be made to see if viruses can in fact exert selective effects on Immune function. The possibility should be looked into that the Immune response to the virus may be impaired if the infecting virus damages, more or less selectively, the cell responding to the virus.'

THAT'S AIDS.

What the WHO is saying in plain English is; *'Let's cook up a virus that selectively destroys the T-cell system of man, an acquired immune deficiency.'*

Why would anyone want to do this?

If you destroy the T-cell system of man you destroy man. Is it even remotely possible that the WHO would want to develop a virus that would wipe out the human race?

If their new virus creation worked, the WHO stated, then many terrible and fatal infectious viruses could be made even more terrible and malignant. Does this strike you as a particular goal for a health organisation?

Sometimes Americans believe in conspiracies and sometimes they don't. Was there a conspiracy to kill President Kennedy? 25 years later, the debates still continue, and people keep changing their minds. One day it's yes. The next day it's no, depending on what was served for breakfast or how the stock market did the day before.

But it doesn't take a bad breakfast to see an amazing concatenation of events involving Russian and Chinese communist nationals, the WHO, the National Cancer Institute and the AIDS pandemic.

But what about the green monkey? Some of the best virologists in the world, and many of these directly involved in AIDS research, such as Robert Gallo and Luc Montagnier, have said that the green monkey may be the culprit. You know the story: A green monkey bit a native on the ass and, bam - AIDS all over central Africa.

There is a fatal flaw here. It is very strange. Because Gallo, Montagnier and those other virologists know that the AIDS virus doesn't occur naturally in monkeys. In fact, it doesn't occur naturally in any animal.

AIDS started practically simultaneously in the US, Haiti, Brazil and central Africa (Was the green monkey a jet pilot?). Examination of the gene structure of the green monkey cells proves that it is not genetically possible to transfer the AIDS virus from monkeys to man by natural means.

Because of the artificial nature of AIDS it will not easily transfer from man to man until it has become very concentrated in the body fluids through repeated injections from person to person, such as drug addicts, and through high, multiple partner sexual activity such as takes place in Africa among homosexuals. After repeated transfer it can become a 'natural' infection for man, which it has.

Dr. Theodore Strecker's research of the literature indicates that the National Cancer Institute in collaboration with the WHO made the AIDS virus in their laboratories in Fort Detrick (now NCI). They combined the deadly retroviruses, bovine leukaemia virus and sheep visna virus, and injected them into human tissue cultures. The result was the AIDS virus, the first human retrovirus known to man and now believed to be 100 per cent fatal to those infected. The momentous plague that we now face was anticipated by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) in 1974, when they recommended that *'Scientists throughout the world join with the members of this committee involuntarily deferring experiments (linking) animal viruses.'* What the NSA is saying in carefully guarded English is; *'For God's sake, stop*

this madness!' The green monkey is off the hook. How about the Communists?

Communists are in the process of conducting germ warfare from Fort Detrick, Maryland, against the free world, especially the US, even using foreign communist agents with the US Army's germ warfare unit euphemistically called the Army Infectious Disease Unit.

You don't believe it? Carlton Gajdusek, an NIH bigshot at Detrick, admits it; *'In the facility I have a building where more good and loyal communist scientists from the former USSR and Mainland China work, with full passkeys to all the labs, than there are American. Even the Army's Infectious Disease Unit is loaded with foreign workers not always friendly nationals.'*

Can you imagine that? A UN WHO communist Trojan horse in our biological warfare centre with the full blessing of the US Government?

The creation of the AIDS virus by the WHO was not just a diabolical scientific exercise that got out of hand. It was a cold-blooded, successful attempt to create a killer virus that was then used in a successful experiment in Africa. So successful in fact, that most of central Africa may be wiped out, 75,000,000 dead within 3-5 years.

It was not an accident. It was deliberate. In the Federation Proceedings of the United States in 1972, WHO said; *'In the relation to the immune response a number of useful experimental approaches can be visualised.'*

They suggested that a neat way to do this would be to put their new killer virus (AIDS) into a vaccination programme, sit back and observe the results.

'This would be particularly informative insipidships,' they said. That is, give the AIDS virus to brothers and sisters and see if they die, who dies first, and of what, just like using rats in a lab.

They used smallpox vaccine for their vehicle and the geographical sites chosen in 1972, were Uganda and other African states, Haiti, Brazil and Japan. The present or recent past of AIDS epidemiology coincides with these geographical areas.

Dr. Strecker points out that even if the African green monkey could transmit AIDS to humans, the present known amount of infections in Africa makes it statistically impossible for a single episode, such as a monkey biting someone, to have brought this epidemic to this point. The doubling time of the number of people infected, about every 14 months, when correlated with the first known case, and the present known number of cases, prove beyond a doubt that a large number of people had to have been infected at the same time. Starting in 1972, with the first case from our mythical monkey, and doubling the number infected from that single source every 14 months you get only a few thousand cases. From 1972 to 1987 or 15 years or 180 months. If it takes 14 months to double the number of cases then there would have been 13 doublings, 1 then 2, then 4, then 8, etc. In 15 years, from a single source of infection, there would be about 8,000 cases in Africa, not 75 million AIDS infected people. We are approaching World War II mortality statistics here without a shot being fired.

Dr. Theodore A. Strecker is the courageous doctor who unravelled this conundrum, the greatest murder mystery of all time. He should get the Nobel Prize but he'll be lucky not to get 'suicided'. (*'Prominent California doctor ties his hands behind his back, hangs himself, and jumps from the 20th floor. There was no evidence of foul play.'*)

Strecker was employed as a consultant to work on a health proposal for Secretary Pacific Bank. He was to estimate the cost of their health care for the future. Should they form a health maintenance organisation (HMO) was a major issue. After investigating the current medical market, he advised against the HMO because he found that the AIDS epidemic will in all probability, *bankrupt the nation's medical system.*

He fascinated with all the peculiar scientific anomalies concerning AIDS that kept cropping up. Why did the 'experts' keep talking about the green monkeys and homosexuals being the culprits, when it was obvious that the AIDS virus was a man-made virus? Why did they say it was a homosexual and a drug-user disease, when in Africa it was obviously a heterosexual disease? If the green monkey did it, then why did AIDS exploded practically simultaneously in Africa, Haiti, Brazil, the Us, and southern Japan?

Why, when it was proposed to the National Institute of Health that the AIDS virus was a combination of two bovine or sheep viruses cultured in human cells in a laboratory, did they say it was 'bad science' when that's exactly what occurred?

As early as 1970, the WHO was these deadly animal viruses in human tissue cultures. Cedric Mims, in 1981, said in a published article that there was a bovine virus contaminating the culture media of the WHO. Was this an accident or a non-accident? If it was an accident why did the WHO continue to use the vaccine?

This viral and genetic death-bomb, AIDS, was finally produced in 1974. It was given to monkeys, and they died of pneumocystis carni which is typical of AIDS.

Dr. R.J. Biggar said in Lancet, '*The AIDS agent could not have originated de novo.*'

That means in plain English that it didn't come out of thin air. AIDS was engineered in a lab by virologists. It couldn't engineer itself. As Dr. Strecker so colourfully put it, '*If a person has no arms and legs and shows up at a party in a tuxedo, how did he get dressed? Somebody dressed him.*'

There are 9,000 to the fourth power possible AIDS viruses. (There are 9,000 base pairs on the genome). So the fun has just begun. Some will cause brain rot similar to the sheep virus, some leukaemia-like diseases from the cow virus and some that won't do anything. So the virus will be constantly changing and trying out new esoteric diseases on hapless man. We're only at the beginning.

Because of the trillions of possible genetic variations there will never be a vaccine. Even if they could develop a vaccine, they would undoubtedly give us something equally bad as they did with the polio vaccine (cancer of the brain), the swine flu vaccine (a polio-like disease) and the hepatitis vaccine (AIDS).

There are precedents. This is not the first time the virologists have brought us to disaster. SV-40 virus from monkey-cell cultures contaminated polio cultures. Most people in their 40's are now carrying this virus through contaminated polio inoculations given in the early 60's. An increase in cancer of the brain, possibly multiple sclerosis, and God knows what else, is the tragic result. The delay between vaccination and the onset of cancer is with this virus is as long as 20-30 years. 1965 plus twenty equals 1985. Get the picture?

The final piece of the puzzle is how AIDS devastated the homosexual population in the US. It wasn't from smallpox vaccination as in Africa because we don't do that anymore. There is no smallpox in the US and so vaccination was discontinued.

Although some AIDS has been brought to the US from Haiti by homosexuals, it would not be enough to explain the explosion of AIDS that occurred simultaneously with the African and Haitian epidemics.

The AIDS virus didn't exist in the US before 1978. You can check back in any hospital and n stored blood samples can be found anywhere that exhibit the AIDS virus before that date.

What happened in 1978 and beyond to cause AIDS to burst upon the scene and devastate the homosexual segment of our population? It was the introduction of the hepatitis B vaccine which exhibits the exact epidemiology of AIDS. A Dr. W. Schumugner, born in Poland and educated in Russia, came to this country in 1969. Schumunger's

immigration to the US was probably the most fateful immigration in our history. He, by unexplained process, became head of a New York city blood bank. (How does a Russian trained doctor become head of one of the largest blood banks in the world? Doesn't that strike you as a tad peculiar?)

He set the rules for the hepatitis vaccine studies. Only males between the ages of 20-40 who were not monogamous, would be allowed to participate in this study. Can you think of any reason for insisting that all experimentees be promiscuous?

Maybe you don't believe in the communist conspiracy theory, but give me some other logical explanation. Schumugner is now dead and his diabolical secret went with him.

The Centre for Disease Control reported in 1981 that four per cent of those receiving the hepatitis-vaccine were AIDS infected. In 1984 they admitted to 60 per cent. Now they refuse to give out figures at all because they don't want to admit that 100 per cent of hepatitis vaccine receivers are infected with AIDS. Where is the data on hepatitis vaccine studies? FDA? CDC? No, the US Department of Justice has it buried where you will never see it.

What has the government told us about AIDS?

*It's a homosexual disease...Wrong. (The homosexuals certainly spread it but the primary responsibility wasn't theirs).

*It's related to anal intercourse only...Wrong.

*Only a small percentage of those testing positive for AIDS would get the disease...Wrong.

*It came from the African Green Monkey...Wrong.

*It came from cytomegalovirus...Wrong.

*It was due to popping amylnitrate with sex...Wrong.

*It was started 400 years ago by the Portuguese...Wrong. (It started in 1972).

*You can't get it from insects...Wrong.

*The virus can't live outside the body...Wrong.

The head of the Human leukaemia Research Group at Harvard is a veterinarian. Dr. O.W. Judd, International Agency for Research on Cancer, the agency that requested the production of the virus in the first place, is also a veterinarian. The leukaemia research he's conducting is being done under the auspices if of a school of veterinary medicine.

Now, there is nothing wrong with being a vet, but as we have pointed out, the AIDS virus is a human virus. You can't test these viruses in animals and you can't test leukaemia's in them either. It doesn't work. So why would your government give Judd, a veterinarian eight and one half million dollars to study leukaemia in a vet's college? As long as we are being used as experimental animals, maybe it's appropriate.

'*The London Times*' should be congratulated for uncovering the smallpox-AIDS connection. But their expose was very misleading. The article states that the African AIDS epidemic was caused by the smallpox vaccine triggering AIDS in thighs vaccinated.

Dr. Robert Gallo, who has been mixed up in some very strange snafus, supports this theory. Whether the infection of 75 million Africans was deliberate or accidental can be debated but there is no room for debate about whether the smallpox shots '*awakened the unsuspected virus infection.*'

There is absolutely no scientific evidence that this laboratory-engineered virus was present in Africa before the WHO descended upon these helpless people in 1967 with their deadly AIDS-laced vaccine. The AIDS virus didn't come from Africa. It came from Fort Detrick, Maryland, U.S.A. The situation is extremely desperate and the medical profession is too frightened to take any action. Dr. Strecker attempted to mobilise the doctors through some of the most respected medical journals in the world. The prestigious *Annals of Internal Medicine* said that his material '*appears*

to be entirely concerned with matters of virology,' and so try some other publication. In his letter to 'The Annals', Strecker said;

'If correct human experimental procedures had been followed, we would not find half of the world stumbling off on the wrong path to the cure for AIDS, with the other half covering up the origins of the damned disease. It appears to me that your Annals of Internal Medicine is participating in the greatest fraud ever perpetrated.'

I guess they didn't like that so Strecker submitted his sensational and mind-boggling letter with all the proper documentation to the British journal 'Lancet.'

Their reply; *'Thank you for that interesting letter on AIDS. I am sorry to have to report that we will not be able to publish it. We have no criticism, but their letter section was overcrowded with submissions.'*

They're too crowded to announce the end of civilisation and possibly all mankind?

What can we do?

The first thing that should be done is close down all laboratories in this country that are dealing with these deadly retroviruses. Then we must sort out the insane, irresponsible and traitorous scientists involved in these experiments and try them for murder. Then maybe, just maybe, we can re-staff the labs with loyal Americans who will work to save a remnant of people to repopulate and recivilise the world.

From the front page of 'THE TIMES', London, 11 May, 1987.

SMALLPOX VACCINE TRIGGERED AIDS VIRUS

by Pearce Wright, Science Editor.

The AIDS epidemic may have been triggered by the mass vaccination campaign which eradicated smallpox.

The WHO which masterminded the 13-year campaign, is studying new scientific evidence that immunisation with the smallpox vaccine Vaccina awakened the unsuspected, dormant human immuno defence virus infection (HIV). Some experts fear that in obliterating one disease, another disease was transformed from a minor endemic illness of the Third World into the current pandemic.

While doctors now accept that Vaccina can activate other viruses, they are divided about whether it was the main catalyst to the AIDS epidemic.

But an advisor to WHO who disclosed the problem, told 'THE TIMES'; "I thought it was just a coincidence until we studied the latest findings about the reactions which can be caused by Vaccina. Now I believe the smallpox vaccine theory is the explanation to the explosion of AIDS." Further evidence comes from the Walter Reed Army Medical Centre in Washington.

While smallpox vaccine is no longer kept for public health purposes, new recruits to the American Armed Services are immunised against possible biological warfare. Routine vaccination of a 19-year old recruit was the trigger for stimulation of the dormant HIV virus into AIDS. This discovery of how people with subclinical HIV infection are at a risk of rapid development of AIDS as a vaccine-induced disease was made by a medical team working with Dr. Robert Redfield at Walter Reed.

The recruit, who developed AIDS after vaccination had been healthy throughout high school. He was given multiple immunisations, followed by his first smallpox vaccination. Two and a half weeks later he developed fever, headache, neck stiffness and night sweats.

Three weeks later he was admitted to Walter Reed suffering from meningitis and rapidly developed further symptoms of AIDS and died after responding for a short time to treatment.

There was no evidence that the recruit had been involved in any homosexual activity.

In describing their discovery in a paper published in the New England Journal of Medicine, the Walter Reed team gave a warning against the plan to use modified versions of the smallpox vaccine to combat other diseases in developing countries. Other doctors who accept the connection between the anti-smallpox campaign and the AIDS epidemic, now see answers to questions that had baffled them.

How, for instance, the AIDS organism, previously regarded by scientists as *'weak, slow and vulnerable,'* began to behave like a type capable of creating a plague. Many experts are reluctant to support the theory publicly because they believe it would be interpreted unfairly as criticism of WHO!!!

In addition, they are concerned about the impact on other public health campaigns with vaccines and the continued use of Vaccina in potential AIDS research. This coincidence between the anti smallpox campaign and the rise of AIDS was discussed privately by experts at WHO.

The possibility was discounted on the grounds of unsatisfactory evidence. Advisors to the organisation believed then that too much attention was being focused on AIDS by the media. It is now felt that doubts would have risen sooner if public health authorities in Africa had more willingly reported infection statistics to WHO.

The smallpox vaccine theory would account for the position of each of the seven Central African states which top the league table of the most affected countries; why Brazil became the most afflicted Latin American country; and how Haiti became the route for the spread of AIDS to the USA.

It also provides an explanation of how the infection was spread more evenly between males and females in Africa that in the West and why there are less signs of infection among 5-11 year olds in Central Africa.

The greatest spread of HIV infection coincides with the most intense immunisation programs, with the number of people immunised being as follows; Zaire; 36,878,000; Zambia; 19, 060, 000; Tanzania 14, 972, 000, Uganda; 11,616,000; Malawai; 8,118,000, Rwanda 3,382,000 and Burundi; 3,274,000.

Brazil, the only South American country covered in the eradication campaign, has the highest incidence of AIDS in that region.

About 14,000 Haitians, on United Nations secondment to Central Africa, were covered in the campaign.

They began to return home at a time when Haiti had become a popular playground for San Francisco homosexuals.

AIDS was first officially reported from San Francisco in 1981, and it was about two years later before Central African states were implicated.

It is now known that these states had become a reservoir of AIDS as long ago as the late 1970's.

After a meeting of 50 experts near Geneva in 1987, it was revealed that up to 75 million, one third of the population, could have the disease within the next five years.

Some organisations which have closely studied Africa, such as War On Want, believe that South Africa's black population, so far largely protected from the disease, could be most affected as migrant workers bring it into the country from the worst hit areas further north.

Although detailed figures of AIDS cases in Africa are difficult to collect, the more than 2 million carriers estimated by the WHO are concentrated in the countries where the smallpox immunisation program was most intensive.

Reprinted from an article first appearing in 'BULLETIN', March, 1988

EXCHANGE MAGAZINE REVIEWS

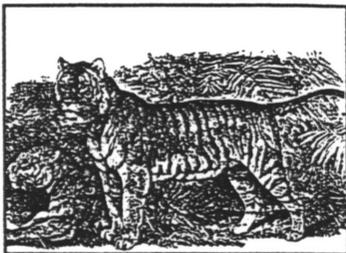
ANIMALS AND MEN# 9

Another excellent edition of my favourite Fortean publication. This issue carries splendid articles on Hong Kong Tigers, BHM Phenomena in Scotland, and best of all, a fascinating piece on the Horseman of Lincolnshire. Highly recommended!!!

£1:75 Sample issue. Subs; £7 for four. From 15, Holne Court, Exwick, Exeter. EX4 2NA

Animals & Men

The Journal of the Centre for Fortean Zoology



A Tiger in Hong Kong; The Congo Peacock; The Horseman of Lincolnshire; BHM phenomena in Scotland

Issue Nine

£1.75

WEARWOLF# 13

A pocket-sized mag that is nonetheless huge fun to read. The latest issue is dominated by the mysterious connotations of the Number 13 written with, healthy dollops of humour and lots of excellent poetry.

Price; The cost of two first class stamps...Sound as a pound, eh? From; Wolf's Head Press, PO Box 77, Sunderland, SR1 1EB

AT THE EDGE #3

Another nicely-produced, well-written edition from the team originally behind 'Mercian Mysteries.' This issue covers Paganism in British Folk Customs, Recovering the Lost Religious Place Names of England and Herne the Hunter. Excellent stuff.

£2;50 Sample Issue. Subs; £9 for 4 issues. From 2, Cross Hill Close, Wymeswold, Loughborough, LE12 6UJ

OVNI July Issue

Omar Fowler comes up trumps again with another fascinating update of the increasingly bizarre UFO phenomenon. Features this issue include the latest on the Flying Triangle's (including a perplexing photo) MJ 12 appearing on the Paramount Channel, latest Crop Circles and the always excellent 'Evening Sky.'

Price £1 sample issue. From 94, The Circle, Sinfyn, Derby, DE24 9HR.

UFO NETWORK NEWS INTERNATIONAL

A big improvement in production quality, this issue carries an intriguing UFO photo from Carlton Moor, Leeds, a selection of anomalous news-clippings, and some excellent case history studies of old and new sightings.

Price: £1 Sample. Subs: £4 for 4 issues. From 88, Whincover Drive, Old Farnley, Leeds, LS12 5JT.

NETWORK NEWS

The Sex Magick Sacrifice Issue contains just what it says. Lots of news clippings on Strange Animal phenomena, Beast

of Bodmin Skull Hoax, and tons more on the Alien Big Cat enigma. Excellent stuff.

Subs; £5 for 4 issues. From: Earthly Delights, PO Box 2, Lostwithiel, Cornwall.

GHOSTWATCH #11 Vol 2

Another superb edition from Mike Mckeown. This issue features pieces on Spooks From Cyberspace, the Croft Hotel Poltergeist, and the Living Doll. Essential reading.

New Subs rates; £10 for 12 issues in newsletter form. From 12, Washbrook Avenue, Bidston, Wirral, Merseyside. L43 7XX

FORTEAN TIMES # 89

As truly wonderful as ever, this issue features the very latest on Chupacabras - the Goat Sucker, Poltergeist phenomena in Rochdale, an alleged photo of the BVM a review of the FT'S third convention and the brilliant 'STRANGE DAYS' section. Indispensable!!!

£2:20 Sample. Subs; £26:40 for 12 issues. From John Brown Publishing, FREEPOST (SW6096) Frome, Somerset, BA11 1YA.

ANNALS# 27

Gerry Lovell's excellent 'zine really does get better and better...To my mind, this is the best issue yet. Articles include a comprehensive overview of the continuing Roswell saga, more on Chupacabras, Area 51 and Lunar Enigmas. A truly riveting read.

£1:75 Sample. Subs: £7 for 4. From 'Willow', 91a, High Street, Bangor, Co Down, BT20 580. Northern Ireland.

MAGONIA#56

Another well-written, though-provoking issue in which Peter Brookesmith looks at connections between UFOs and religion, a moving tribute to Roger Sandell, and an intriguing piece on the modern urban legend of Organ Snatchers.

£1:25 Sample. Subs; £5 for 4 issues. From John Dee Cottage, 5 James Terrace, Mortlake Churchyard, London, SW14 8HB.



NETWORK NEWS

NUMBER TEN: SEX MAGICK SACRIFICE ISSUE

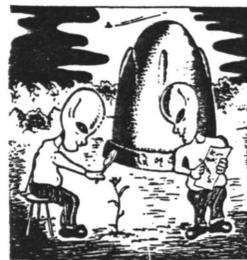
NORTHERN UFO NEWS# 174

Jenny Randle's bounces back from what has amounted to nothing less than a personalised media witch-hunt (for having the temerity to appear in a BBC documentary on UFOs) magnificently with another must-read issue of the best UFO publication around.

Features include; A Flying Man In Black, the Brave New World Of Ufology (we hope!) and the latest cases from Wales and Merseyside.

My fave UFO zine by the length of one the alien craft in 'INDEPENDENCE DAY.'

Subs: £7 for 6 issues. From 11, Pike Court, Fleetwood, Lancashire, FY7 8QF



STOP PRESS!!! IS THERE LIFE ON MARS AFTER ALL?



'Okay. It's only circumstantial evidence but let's take a vote. Hands up those who think there's life on Mars ...'

The sensational news from Antarctica that a meteorite discovered there might contain the fossilised remnants of life on Mars may well prove to be the greasiest scientific story of this, or indeed any age.

Is this the final proof that we are not alone?
The full story and background will appear in the next issue!!!