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BARW

A PUBLICATION OF PAGANISM, FORTEAN & EARTH MYSTERIES, etc.

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This magazine is forever dedicated to Jonathon Livingston Seagulls everywhere,
And to Jon Tilleard...

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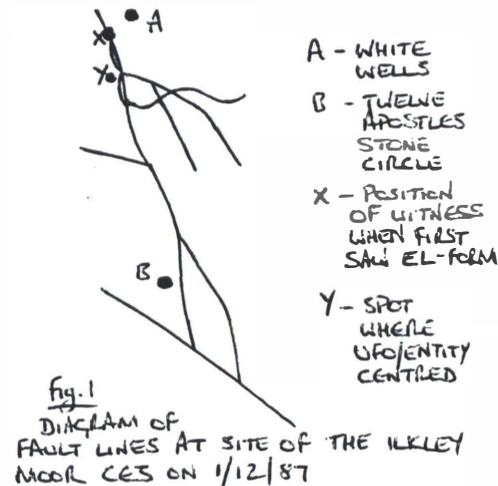
Another exciting, cram-packed issue of varying things to tickle your toe-nails! A literary orgasm no less! The longest editorial yet, but one which is called for: initially due to the information postulated on the Ilkley Moor CES case (you must remember it - I got a bit of a slamming from Jenny Randles and Peter Hough about it in a lengthy letter's section in E12), and furthermore on the literary ufological disclosures made in an attempt to justify a careless investigation on the report itself. I apologise for the editorial length, but I hope you'll find it an enlightening excursion. Apologies for the late arrival of the expected British Magickal Herbal, but it'll be out soon. Please be patient. But, in the meantime, what's been going on? Much in some quarters as you'd expect, with of course (in Yorkshire anyhow) the recent talk on that much-reviewed Ilkley Moor case, alleged to have occurred in December '87. And so, without much further ado, here's the news...

It was a wet and farty afternoon on Saturday, April 22, when the Bradford Central Library played host to a joint BUFORA-IUN session on ufology and, in particular, the aforementioned CES. David (madcap) Barclay introduced the forthcoming speakers, who kicked off with Andy Roberts briefing us on the short history of UFO photos, mainly in Yorkshire. Most have today been shown to be extremely dubious pictures and Andy highlighted the errors made by both the authorities who affirmed their authenticity and the ufologists who spent so much time crying their validity as UFO evidence. Following that, Phil Mantle reviewed the much-explored photographic case of Peter Beard. Although it took a long time to uncover, the case seemingly is a good-looking fake. Mr Beard says otherwise, but the ufologists disagree.

But then came my favourite. Peter Hough began the tale of the copper who, one morning, took to walking onto Ilkley Moor with intent to cross it. On the way however, he encountered both a UFO and entity. The resultant demonstration of the copper's legitimacy of his tale came in the form of a good colour photograph of one 4 1/2" tall manifestation. Good ufological stuff this one, it seemed. Following this initial encounter and report, it was established that there was more to come. Anyhow, to make it short, following hypnotic regression, it was found that the guy was subsequently abducted (levitated there to make it more interesting) before he consciously remembered seeing the entity and UFO. He talked about some of the stuff he was shown whilst aboard this object (the geo-structure of the Earth, for one); progressed through archetype images so typical of other such encounters and, after backing-out, found himself to be back, relatively close to where he was initially walking. Subsequent site investigations (only about six weeks later) found that immediately beneath where the alleged UFO had been reported was "some sort of crater," as Hough said. All good stuff, of course.

There was a lot more told about the encounter, which was aided by the use of a slide projector showing the creature, the site, etc. And although the discussion of this tale covered most aspects which were considered pertinent, some very important aspects weren't even hinted at. For example, if this case is legitimate, the site area where the event occurred should have been looked at immediately. It wasn't. In the terms with which ufology is today progressing, the geo-structure needed looking at stringently. It wasn't. And in this aspect, not only by the primary investigating team, but by other ufological by-standers! Indeed, until looking at this aspect myself, after now hearing the relative fullness of the case, it transpires that the very areas with which one needs to examine UFO phenomena seen in close/direct ground proximity have been utterly neglected! The geophysical propositions propounded by a growing number of scientists and EM-students simply haven't been considered (Peter certainly indicated nothing to the contrary to me in our brief remark on this aspect). But the fact that this incident took place smack-bang where fault lines occur is probably of considerable importance. How the hell this was overlooked by the ufologists looking into this account astounds me. Their incompetence here - if the incident is indeed real - typifies ufology. In the sketch made below, we can see blatantly that a correlation between the site where the UFO/entity was seen and the rich incidence of faulting is vociferous in its exclamation! Note too, that the same fault continues north to White Wells, barely 500 metres away - an ancient spot where black dogs and faerie were seen. Not to mention UFOs. Follow this same fault just a kilometre south and it closely passes the twelve Apostles stone circle. Quite an eventful geological disposition we have here...

Another point in this case which may call even more to the listening of the geophysical aspects, involves the alleged perturbations affected upon a magnetic compass which the witness was carrying. Peter related that instead of pointing north, the compass deviated and didn't act as it should have. He then disclosed that some analyst (with knowledge in electromagnetism) said this simply couldn't have happened under the circumstances alleged by the percipient. Even as incompetent ufologists, they should have known that referral on such matters wasn't needed. Where geological faulting takes place, electromagnetic anomalies and discharges can occur. These measured agitations of varying electromagnetic frequencies at points where tectonic disturbances manifest have been confirmed scientifically and, over recent years, the highly acclaimed Dragon Project has found such disturbances at both megalithic and other sites. Compasses have been bugged up at stone circles and such sites and, along faulting - where discharges of electromagnetism arises - this is readily explainable. Ignorance of this aspect in this case astonishes me. A possible point of interest may be derived from the witness's allegation (under hypnosis) of him levitating to the UFO: where geological faulting occurs, gravitic anomalies can occur. Following the exact levitational route the witness took to the UFO, we find the coincidental fault line. Make of that what you will.



Two days following the lecture (which, I must say, was very well put together). Nigel Mortimer, Dave Barclay, Phil Bennett and myself took a trip to the moors to look at where this alleged abduction had taken place. Walking virtually on top of the fault line, we turned into where the UFO, and subsequent abduction was alleged to have taken place. At the spot where the "UFO" had been (OS coordinate, SE 14 NW 118446405), we found the "crater" referred to by the investigating ufologists. It was a bell pit! And probably a thousand years old! We here found that, whilst

magnetic variations weren't detected by the ufologists, a home-made compass wouldn't work in the manner expected of it, but this could have been due to a number of factors (as I'm sure our intrepid investigators will know). We're going back to try with better equipment very soon. A number of dowsing and pendulum readings have been made in subsequent visits, the results of which have yet to be thoroughly assessed.

Regarding the photograph of the "entity": near the top-right side of it, 'pon a hill the other side of which hovered our "UFO", is to be seen a patch which, initially, Peter Hough posited as being a "box" that the witness described as being atop the object he was subsequently taken aboard. Andy Roberts, following a trip to the spot where our copper'd been nabbed, found that the "box" on the photo, which Hough thought may have been the top of the UFO, was in fact a clump of grass! *Deschampsia caespitosa* as we've now found out. Is this really acceptable as ufological investigation? Thinking - nay, idly speculating - that some blob on a photo is attached to a UFO? And grass for God's sake! Laughable isn't it!? Serious students of the subject can do nothing but shudder when such "peers" postulate such waffle. I'll give them credit though, they've realised this little error in their case!

Yet even with these erroneous revelations, our two reporters in this case (Randles and Hough) just don't want to listen (they have their images to keep up, I imagine). In the very latest Northern UFO News, they again try to excuse the poor showing on this case. I quote, "Some stupid ufological sources (notably Paul Bennett...) have criticised MUFORA for inept investigation and, quite ridiculously, for taking too long to follow up this case..." Firstly, how dare they call me stupid? Me, for God's sake! My reputation's ruined! And yes again, I do criticise this extremely lengthy investigation: 18-months and still going is somewhat of a time-lapse in itself, I'm sure most will agree (certainly, every ufological source bar themselves thinks so). In the same same issue, vindication is attempted by citing that, "I (Randles) regard the follow up by Peter on this case as first-rate." I don't. There's no personal attack meant here, but it could have been done faster and more efficiently whether Randles likes to think so or not. Her attempt at further vindication reads, "A case needing follow up of photographic, physical, electromagnetic and psychological/hypnotic research cannot be published five minutes after it happened. Especially (A further vindication attempt! Ed) not one as complex and controversial as this." Admittedly, five minutes is pushing it a bit! Perhaps that's the reason our impeccable and respected ufologists have missed so much out! But who the hell ever suggested five minutes? YUFOG? BUFORA? Randles? Hough? One of the latter two I'll bet. Whoever...it's certainly quite a childish remark to make. All I want is simply a full, open, enthusiastic account of it all. No excuses. No digressing. We have at our disposal here, all of the elements cited (from photographic to hypnotic) so let's stop trying to make excuses. What about the things you haven't explored that we have? Local folklore? Immediately adjacent recent and historical cases? Geological structure? Botanical references? There's more if you wanna hear it. As ufologists of such alleged talent, it amazes me of their intolerance to positive and applicable criticism.

The last thing I went from this case is a continuing perversion of waffle and excuses from students who really ought to know better. Investigative ufology in Britain is, unfortunately, going to the dogs because of this typically pedantic attitude adopted by our "peers" (ha ha!). Indeed, in the very same edition of Northern UFO News a case from Bridgwater, in Ross & Cromarty is briefed. The ufologists make attempts at possible explanations, but then ends with the remark, "The only other option is earthlights but the geology does not seem to be ideal." (my italics) I don't wanna sound too critical, but that's a lot of crap: Where the hell do they think Bridgwater really is - Norfolk!? Get a bloody geology map out and look for yourself! If ufologists want scientific recognition they really ought to be more considerate. In the likely case, surely any fool knows that aspects of it would have been better handled by chaps from this part of the country. Deny it and be laughed at. So let's sod all this ego-playing and get the case sorted out. Surely

* I rang my solicitor on this point and he said, "Yes, there is a case to be answered here - you are stupid!" Idle gossip of course!

that's what's wanted? We know the pertinent elements of the case and you know the aspects you've missed out, just as I, and now everyone else knows. So get off your high-horses and listen to the informative criticisms which you know have bearings on the report.

Although investigations into the Earthlight aspects of this case were not done, Peter did tell me that they are soon to examine again the magnetic variations where the alleged manifestation appeared, which is of course both sensible and very good to hear. But eighteen months later!? Still, I hope to hear of their results. If however, the ufologists finally return this case as an unexplained in terms of non-hoax, non-misidentification, etc, then we are most likely looking - yet again - at the confirmation of an earthlight manifestation. This probable disclosure of the case leans yet again upon the supposed objectivity of UFO students to incline where beneficial results are becoming more and more plentiful. "Look this way," is the message to ufologists everywhere. And, my God, some of them need telling... But still, coincident though all aspects of this case may be within the setting of a geological explanation, there's something about this case. It doesn't smell right, if you know what I mean.

So, apart from incompetence, ignorance, habitual digressions and - dare it be said - stupidity, we have the potential of a bloody good case here. It is hoped that Jenny and Peter may help us undertake an independent evaluation of this potentially brilliant case - although I now doubt it. In a brief note that Randles got from me requesting help on these lines (the case report itself [if one's been assembled] but without the witness's name), I've as yet received no reply. But as the two of them know, confirmation of the possible reality of this account would be all the better if it came from two separate investigative sources. And, if they will possibly help in any way we would like to publish an overall independent assessment of the case in either the next or following edition of Earth. Hopefully we can help each other with this fascinating report.

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Following all that (which the respective students can reply to) what else has been going on? Of some interest to some perhaps, is the formation of our long-awaited Earth Mysteries group in the West Yorkshire region. At the moment we're still getting ourselves together and obviously if anyone thinks they might like to be involved in research and general goings-on, please get in touch with me. If you have any interests/capacity in such fields as megaliths, radiesthesia, earthlight's ufology, folklore, astroarchaeology, parapsi, scientific astrology, high energies, leys and so on, let's see if we can work with one another. There's a lot of work to be done in West Yorkshire alone, but we'll cover further afield hence our likely name, Brigantian Earth Mysteries, or BEMs. (Keel fans take note!) We will hold regular fortnightly meetings to discuss what is to be done; what's been done; who is doing what; latest findings; sites to visit...and all that's pertinent. If you think you can be of help and are willing to wander, get in touch. NOW! I hope to hear from you.

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**BOOKS for SALE:** Copies of the following works are available from the editorial address. All prices include postage and packing, & cheques/POs should be made payable to the editor:-

Richard Cooper's, A Guide to British Psilocybin Mushrooms, 1.75.

Aleister Crowley's, The Complete Astrological Writings, 2.30.

Charles Fort's, The Book of the Damned, 2.50.

Hans Holzer's, Psychic Investigator, 2.30

Don Irving's, A Guide to Growing Marijuana in the British Isles, 1.95

John Michell's, City of Revelation, 2.50

Mary Jane Superweed's The Complete Cannabis Cultivator, 1.20 and Herbal Highs, 1.20. Some back issues of Earth are still available at just 75p + 14p postage: copies 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13. If you haven't got 'em, get 'em before they go!

### Haunted Skulls of England - Steve Jones

One peculiarity of ghost lore and legends is the number of cases of skulls being preserved in houses because of the fear of what is reputed to happen if they are removed. The most common effect of removing one of these skulls is usually an outbreak of screaming or rattling noises which persist until the skull is restored to its usual place, or at least restored to the building. The probable origin of these beliefs lies in the Celtic Head Cult, in which the head was seen as the seat of the spirit, and the severed heads of enemies were set up as protections against great evil, and as spiritual guardians and protectors of sacred sites and settlements. The mound upon which the Tower of London stands is reputed to be the site where the burial of the head of the God Bran lays, whose symbol was the raven - hence the keeping of ravens there to this day.

All current locations of screaming or haunted skulls are in England, and most of them are in the North and West - if we ignore the area of Greater Manchester and stick to the old Lancashire boundaries (which, as a Lancastrian, I prefer!), then Lancashire comes out of the top of the skull league with a grand total of four screaming head cases! The locations of all skulls in England are as follows (although not all of these are accessible to the public):

**1. Burton Agnes Hall, Humberside (Tel. Burton Agnes 324):** The skull here has been identified as that of Anne Griffith, one of the three daughters of Sir Henry Griffith, who began building the Hall in the 17th Century. He died before completing it and his daughters carried the work on. Anne was the most dedicated to the project but unfortunately, shortly after the Hall was finished she was mugged and was taken back to Burton Agnes where she lingered for several days before dying. She asked that her skull be kept to preserve the house. Her wishes were ignored, but after various unexplained crashes, groans and door-slammings her coffin was re-opened and it was found that although her body was relatively intact, her skull was devoid of flesh! It was then taken to Burton Agnes where it has remained ever since. A portrait of the three sisters hangs above a staircase at the Hall and the skull is thought to be behind an ancient screen.

**2. Tunstead Milton Farm, Tunstead, Derbyshire:** This farm is three miles north-east of Guxton and visible from the nearby railway. Known locally as "Dickies", it houses the skull of Ned Dixon, who is said to have been murdered by his cousin in the house. The skull itself is called Dickie, and various things are said to have happened when it was moved, including pigs and cows dying and crops failing. The farm is in private hands so the skull is not accessible to the public.

**3. Bettiscombe Manor, nr Bridport, Dorset:** The skull which resides at this manor was originally thought to have been that of an 18th Century negro slave who died there, and requested that his body be sent back home to the West Indies. Instead it was interred in Bettiscombe Churchyard, but caused so much disturbance in the Manor that the body was dug up. Somehow the head got detached and was left in the Manor. History doesn't tell us what happened to the rest of the body, but as there are no reports of nearby houses having a headless neck kept in them, it is thought that it was either re-interred or shipped home. This story suffered a drawback in the 1960s

however, when the skull was analysed and found to be that of a woman in her twenties and was around two thousand years old!!! Current thought is that it was possibly dug up, or perhaps found in nearby Pilsden Pen, a Celtic Sanctuary. Bettiscombe can be visited, but by appointment only.

**4. Wardley Hall, Worsley, Lancashire (Gt. Manchester):** The skull here was originally thought to have belonged to Roger Downes, who remained the owner of the house just before the Civil War and the equivalent of a modern lager-lout, who managed to get his head cut off in a quarrel with a night-watchman in London. His head was then sent, in a box, to his no doubt delighted sister. This was the accepted legend until 1779, when Roger's tomb was opened and his skull found to be firmly attached to his body, although the top had been sawn off for the purpose of a post-mortem. The skull is most likely to be that of Father Ambrose Barlow, a Benedictine who secretly administered mass at the Hall during the years of the Catholic Persecutions. Unfortunately for him, in 1641, he was captured, taken to Lancaster, and then hung, drawn and quartered; his head being taken secretly to Wardley Hall as a relic by Francis Downes, the owner of the Manor at that time. The skull vanished until 1745, when Bonnie Prince Charlie's army was marching to Scotland via Lancashire and they commandeered from Matthew Moreton - the then owner of Wardley - all his horses and carts. Moreton was then left without much money and so decided to convert part of the Hall into a weaving shed. It was at this point that the skull turned up, falling into a box out of one of the walls. It is still in Wardley Hall, which now belongs to the Bishop of Salford. The thoughts of the present incumbent on this fact are not known. The Hall is not open to the public.

**5. Higher Farm, Chilton Cantelo, Somerset:** The skull here has been definitely established as that of Theophilus Bromer, who died in 1670, requesting that his head be kept in the house. It is kept in a special cupboard, wherein is also a manuscript dating from 1829 that describes various misfortunes which happened to people who tried to bury it - including some workmen in 1825 who drank beer from it (lager-louts strike again!). The skull may be seen if one applies in writing to Mr & Mrs Kerton, the owners of Higher Farm.

**6. Warbleton Priory Farm, Sussex:** This farm had two skulls, one of which was reputed to have come from Hastings Priory. The other was reputed to be that of an idiot (lager-lout again perhaps!). One of these skulls was advertised for sale in The Times in 1963 for 10 guineas. I can find no record as to whether either of these skulls are in their original "home".

**7. Skull House, Apperley Bridge, nr Wigan, Lancashire:** Nobody is too sure as to who this skull belonged to. It is kept on a beam in the living room. Some say it is that of a monk; others, that of a knight killed nearby. It is said to have been thrown into a river and returned of its own accord and ill-luck comes to those who move it. This is a private house and not open to the public.

**8. Turton Tower, Turton, nr. Bolton, Lancashire:** This tower houses the remains of two skulls which were preserved, kept at nearby Bradshaw Hall (now demolished and underwater) and originally at Timberbottom Farm, near Bolton. One skull is a mere fragment, the other nearly complete. When the skulls were sent to be mounted in silver in 1939, disturbances broke out at Bradshaw Hall. They are supposed to belong to two barons who broke into Timberbottom Farm. However, one of them is female and they are probably of prehistoric origin. They are displayed on a table in the Chateau room at the tower where I saw them a couple of years ago. Turton Tower also has at least five other ghosts, including a phantom coach and horses and a haunted cradle! It is owned by Blackburn Council and is open to the public.

Finally a couple of stories about skulls no longer on public view. Gargath Hall in Westmorland was haunted by the skulls of Maester and Dorothy Cook, who were deliberately framed for a crime by one Miles Phillipson who coveted their land. They were executed and afterwards their skulls magically appeared in the Hall where they obstinately refused to go away until Phillipson's family had died out. No one knows what happened to them.

The skull of the murderer William Corder who was executed for the famous Red Barn murder in 1828, was stolen by a doctor at the hospital to which his skeleton was sent. In 1870, a Dr Kitzler secretly swapped skulls and took Corder's skull home. He was then haunted by Corder's ghost and so gave it to a friend, Frederick Hopkins, a former prison officer. He experienced several misfortunes until he eventually buried the skull in a local churchyard.

Incidentally, I'm trying to organise a visit to Turton Tower to see the skulls, etc, but as I can't drive I'm looking for someone willing to drive a few people there if we pay expenses. Turton Tower isn't far from Pendle so a joint visit could be made. Anyone interested in getting together? If so, contact me c/o Earth's editor.

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An Examination of Possible Earthlight Phenomena in West Yorkshire, Part 3

Investigation by Peter Chattaway, with Earthlight Notes from Paul Bennett

The following account appears all but adiabatic in the earthlight mould. Its main problem rests upon the fact that the event occurred within a built-up area of Bradford where, one would think, the conditions necessary to allow ELs to manifest were zero. And so it looks. Thanks to Pete Chattaway's picture of the event we get a clear sight of where we're looking at. Fortunately, I knew the region well myself and so can look at it from the varying objective angles. Here's the case.

It was a Tuesday night in September, 1987 (exact date not recalled), when Mrs Irene Norland of Larsteroyle, Bradford was saying goodbye to her friend, Mr John Wright. Standing on the outside doorstep, Mr Wright looked up into the clear, star-clad sky and was about to remark upon the clarity of it, when he saw two very large, and very bright spherical objects several hundred feet above them, immediately to their north. The two of them puzzled over what on earth they could be, as they just hung there for what Mrs Norland describes as "about five minutes," all through that time, the objects were letting out a persistent humming noise. The two witnesses described the objects as having a circle of smaller white lights ringing the edges of them, which "looked like static all round." The diagram here shows what they saw.

After staring at the objects and occasionally remarking as to what they could be with one and other, the large spheres took off, but curled in their trajectory as they did so, moving more to the north-east in an arc before then shooting off towards Yealand, "straight up at approximately 900 feet." This point in the case has interesting connotations. The thing which mainly struck the witnesses was the sheer size of the objects, described by Mrs Norland as, "approximately the size of... industrial sea-holders." Bigger, big things as you'll all know! They described



Fig. 1

OBJECTS SEEN ON A SEPTEMBER NIGHT, 1987

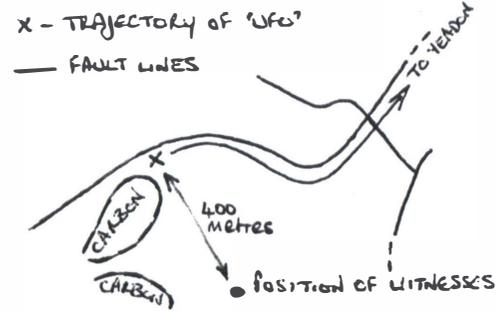


FIG. 2

So what were these things? Well, you obviously know what I'm gonna screw, but don't let that detract you from reading the rest. From the general description of these large balls of light, described as being controlled by a ring of smaller lights, the archetypal earthlight manifestation appears far from evident - I'll admit it myself. But the geological faulting coincident to the objects' positioning and direction of travel is utterly striking. The diagram here shows that. The "arc" or curvature in the trajectory of the objects, before shooting off towards Yealand, is mimicked in the direction of faulting. The substance of the Earth under which our UFO appeared however, is somewhat disappointing when it comes down to the hard-core material expected of EL phenomena (correct me if I'm wrong Paul): it's simple boulder clay. But for me, the structural rock differences are simply the agents that create the differing EL reactions and make-up. ...But there's one other aspect here.

Apparent in a number of other cases I've come across when examining UFO-into-earthlight cases, are the repetitive incidences of coal and graphite deposits in the Earth exactly where these events are being recorded. I can't remember if Paul Bennett or his acquaintances have found these similarities in their investigations, but it's becoming more and more conspicuous in the reports we're looking at around West Yorkshire.\* A large deposition of graphite can be found where the Ilkley Moor CE3 occurred. Balloon Moor, the site of a damn good flap in 1980, has excessive coal and graphite layers. There are even a number of "strange creature" sightings where carbon depositions have usurped all other geological elements under the spot where they were seen. Indeed, 90% of Sombald's Moor (where UFO phenomena have abounded over the years) is a botanical-geological cooking pot for these rock forms. The important thing about these - coal and granite - is that they are exceedingly rich in Carbon which, along with water, is the elemental ingredient which makes life itself. In its purest crystal form, it has been revered for millennia as a magical gem; and is today the world's most sought after treasure - diamond.

But what's in all this for the UFO enigma? Well at the moment, only conjecture. Certainly there is an element here which may well have considerable relationships to electromagnetic field effects, affined to water as carbon is. And certainly water plays a very large part in the natural and new higher-physical energy fields explored, not only by dowzers and EM students in their present scientific capacity, but also by biophysicists and their ilk. Carbon as a more stable form may play a part in the physical manifestation process inherent in Fortean phenomena, which has puzzled researchers so much over the years. Certainly it has played a part in the workings of magickians over the centuries; and Lethbridge found it of importance in his pendulum rate experiments. Ufologists might do well in looking at the geological distribution of this in their investigations. It might have bigger all to do with anything - but then I could be wrong...

\* In some parts of Yorkshire there are large coal fields, which may make the statistical side to this point somewhat invalid. Other "windows" need checking.

For a moment I thought the BBC was softening up! Chronicle (8.10pm, BBC2, 19 April) on Palaeolithic and later rock painting was certainly a near-revelation for that most conservative of organisations. What with the mention of shamanic trance-dances, entoptic forms, spirit flight and the shaman's metamorphosis into animal and/or bird, I almost enrolled for a crash course in palaeoanthropology! (Or should it be, after all, palaeoanth-apology?) Admittedly, the term "hallucination" was used in relation to the shaman's fundamentally transformed vision - and, at the end of the programme, we were informed that the "real meaning" of the ancient rock paintings will probably never be known; though it's quite OK for university departments to spend huge sums funding this, by implication, futile research. The obvious rejoinder to the "never-be-known" put-down, is to become a traditional shaman and find out for oneself. (There's still a chance while the last tribal/shamanic peoples exist - note, for instance, the present-day bushman ritual filmed for this Chronicle programme.) How about it professors? See you at the next trance-dance, maybe...?

However, if the rationalist's boat had been ever so slightly rocked on 19 April, then QED (9.30pm, BBC1, 26 April) on the issue of Spontaneous Human Combustion (SHC) put the monsters of the unknown deep back into their places. This programme was a travesty of the truth and justified only contempt for the BBC's legerdemain with the available information and case histories on this subject.

SHC was explained (away) by summoning the "wick effect" as the rationalist's saviour - despite Michael Harrison's thoroughgoing dismissal of this as a possible cause as long ago as 1976 (see his Fire from Heaven, an exhaustive study of SHC cases). Anyone who hadn't read Harrison could not be blamed for thinking the good old Beep had wrapped this bothersome subject up nicely. It's Operation Mindfuck again, of course (see article in Earth 13). Anyone who thinks SHC is now a dead issue should read Harrison, or Randles' and Hough's Death by Supernatural Causes, or go back to the source material on the best known cases of SHC. Just read the cases of Hamilton, Larber, Peterson, etc. Where was the "obvious external source of combustion"? Where was the "wick effect"? And what of those unfortunate folk who simply burst into flames: like the servant girl at Binbrook Farmhouse, Lincolnshire in 1905 (see Harrison); or Jacqueline Fitzsimon (see Randles & Hough)? As the author of Operation Mindfuck stated: "What dalls is not so much that they (our society's power-holders, for example, the BBC) lie to us, but that they do it so badly."

For those on the fringe of the lunatic fringe who are seriously concerned with the truth of such issues, one thing now seems certain: SHC begins internally. (See FT50 for a couple of interesting theories) This, of course, is unacceptable to the closed-mindedness: it suggests there's more to the human being and to creation than the establishment want us to believe - limitlessly, infinitely more, perhaps...

But can one effectively criticise the BBC? Like the Vatican and the United Grand Lodge, they pull the strings while the slavish million roll on their backs like beaten dogs. In the absence of effective criticism what can one do? Uphold the virtue of individual responsibility, perhaps - don't pass the buck. Awareness, after all, starts here: quod erat faciendum.

In Earth 15: Tao, Zen & Notes on Seeing...Dowsing the Lost Stone Circle of Ilkley Moor.. Hallucinogenic Tales...The Earth Mysteries of Apsaltee-riwick...Meditations...Fortean Tales...and lots more.



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This is the second part of the Meditations article. Last time we dealt with the use of the mantra and the prerequisites for successful meditation. Assuming that the reader is to follow the guidelines for successful practice, we shall now turn to other meditation techniques. Please note however, that different techniques cannot be swapped about from day to day - your concentration will definitely not improve and you will become frustrated and completely disillusioned with meditation.

Stay with one technique (say, the mantra) for two weeks and then move onto something else (say, the serene reflection method). Find which one works best for you and then, by all means, explore belief systems, etc, that complement the type of meditations you are practicing. But remember, by itself meditation is doctrinally neutral and so is the essence of your true self - true self is no self, no self is true self. This is the "summum bonum" of all the great mystics, from Lao Tzu to Crowley. "He (the adept) is perfectly safe so long as he sticks to meditation, doing no more and no less than that which we have prescribed; but the mind will probably not let him remain in that simplicity" and, "Before concentrating the lower principle, the mind, one must concentrate the higher principle, the will" (Magick, RKP, 1980).

We can see that the essence of our true self has nothing to do with Buddhism, Vedanta, Zen, Taoism, Qabalah, Krishnamurti. These are only "fingers pointing to the moon". They do not represent the Moon.

Other points to recall:

1) Do meditation before you eat, or an hour or more after a meal. The reasons for this are quite simple. Eating makes you lethargic and the requirements for meditation are awareness and concentration - thus a good, discerning mental state is required for dissociation from thoughts and concentration on the job at hand. In addition, if you try meditating on a full stomach, you will feel sick! I've tried doing it and, for some physiological reason (I presume) I nearly vomited! I've heard similar reports from other meditators. Also, your system will be a lot cleaner and healthier if you eat wholesome vegetarian foods. It will profit your mind. Anyone who eats meat, fish or the flesh of any living creature and purports to be spiritually aspiring, should meditate on the pain of the slaughtered creature and the barbaric ways of man's inhumanity in raising and killing livestock. When you have a successful result you may, if you possess any intelligence or compassion, cease from such disgusting behaviour and firmly resolve to obliterate any desire for flesh, and to eliminate the debased social conditioning from your mind which actively supports the worldwide murder of innocent creatures who have equal rights to existence. ("All is the Buddha Mind. All is Tao. All is endowed with the Divine.")

2) Keep your meditation practice in a darkened room, as far from noise as possible.

3) If you feel negative during the course of a particular meditation - stop! You may continue if you believe in heroics in self-discovery, but quite honestly misery and depression isn't very nice. You could watch your negativity during the course of the meditation and probably underlying feelings/causes will arise, but this is conducive to pain sometimes. You can do very little about memories of things which still disturb you at the moment. A more productive attitude is to do something which cheers you up. Change the technique and come back to that point when you feel stronger and more able to cope. Of course it isn't always necessary to go into such things at all, so just let go if your sadness or past anxieties concern you and resolve to change your current course of behaviour/personality through the river of time. Meditation will change your karma. And no, karma doesn't mean you will be reborn as a pig if you're rotten to the core - it simply means action, the course of cause and resulting effect which cannot be separated. Change your karma through the process of meditation and therapeutic insight, and you will liberate yourself from many neuroses, hang-ups, etc. We all have them because we live in a dirty, grey product of human excrement called "society"! On the other hand, if you feel yourself in your meditation coming to a stage where you are on the brink of losing yourself, then continue. Don't stop. But just bring yourself back to breathing,

posture, mantra, whatever. Watch your thoughts without pushing them away or getting caught up in them. Just continue as normal. Watch your fear (and you will be afraid!) and then lose yourself. When you go down to the bottom, you will come back to the top and you will float! Of that there is no doubt. This is the highest surrender, the ultimate sacrifice. We go back to the true self.

4) Indian and Chinese tradition asserts that there exists a vital force called in Sanskrit, Prana, and in Chinese, Chi. It is taught by yogins of all traditions that circulation of this vital force in the body is conducive to good meditation. The Indians and the Chinese have both studied Prana/Chi for millenia and have come up with a variety of techniques for good circulation of the vital energy in the body. The Indians have the well-known Hatha Yoga and its related system of Pranayama (Vital Energy Restraint). The Chinese nurtured Taoist Yoga and Tai Chi Chuen and other 'soft' martial arts: Hsing I, Pa Kua, Chi Kung, etc. It would be a good idea to adopt one of the above for meditative practice and common-sense health reasons. All the breathing practices and concentrative associative techniques work for the intention of opening up stagnant energy channels and allowing the vital energy channels to permeate them freely. Later stages of breathing practices, such as the Bandhas in Yogic Pranayama and visualisations in Taoist Yoga, are for the purpose of stimulating dormant energies which act as powerful tools in the art of cultivating altered states of consciousness. The Indians call this, Kundalini. But don't worry for the time being about all this. Let's now look at some meditation techniques.

A. Serene Reflection Meditation - This comes from the Soto Zen Buddhist traditions of Japan and China (T'sao Tsung). One sits - and simply sits! It is just sitting and it is no more. Serene Reflection (like other meditations) is designed to cultivate awareness of Being - Being simply to be with no other purpose in mind. Indeed, Being is not a purpose. Being, simply is! One sits and watches the posture and the mind and the breathing - the body, the mind, breath. Should a thought arise, one watches it without involvement and lets it go like a cloud moving across the sky. Then just come back to the central act of watching the posture, making sure it is straight and balanced with the left hand placed in the right, with the thumbs touching, and the tip of the tongue touching the roof of the mouth. One does not try to do anything at all. To try and obtain a special state is to lose oneself in duality. The aim of the exercise is to transcend duality so that the simple act of Being - the body, the mind, the breath - all become one unified whole. The mind should be mushotoku - without desire or profit, going nowhere. This is the essence of Taoism too - wu wei - action through inaction. When I first did this type of exercise after doing Mantra Yoga for six months, I understood more than what I previously had with my aforementioned type of practice! Indeed, I was inspired to write the following:

I am atom  
With head pushed up  
Supporting the sky,  
With my knees anchored to  
The ground.  
Two opposing tendencies  
Only one breathing  
One body  
One mind  
All the thoughts have blown themselves away.

All thoughts end only in thought.  
All aspirations, ideals, end only in dreams.  
Only meditation ends in the End,  
The "best and highest support".  
With spirit dispersed and not collected  
Can you claim yourself to be free?  
Can you really say you are whole?  
Your thoughts are fluid.  
They run from season to season,

From seed to stem,  
But if you watch the stream  
You will become emmersed in the river  
And if you let yourself  
The river will carry you to sea.

It may sound a trifle corny, but serene reflection meditation is the meditation I use exclusively and I consider most profitable for Understanding.

As a footnote to the above, I recently asked a Theravada Buddhist what he did in his meditation practice. He replied that he watched his breathing and his thoughts. I replied that I did the same. I think we were both perplexed with such unity in meditation that Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism (of which Soto Zen is an emanation) could be considered as two separate schools of Buddhism!

B. The Meditations of the "Bubble" - Once posture is established and breathing normal and deep, visualise sitting at the bottom of an ocean. Slowly bubbles rise up and you watch them. See how they float slowly to the surface and are released - popping open. In each bubble there will be a word, or a colour, or a picture. Don't force things in the bubble, just watch them. The elements within will come by themselves.

This is an exercise derived from contemporary psychotherapeutic techniques for freeing emotions and repressed memories. You may experience an unlocking of tension in your body when a significant "bubble" comes to the surface. This is a good and healthy sign of this meditative form which leads to an effective personality integration. A variation of this exercise is to visualise a flower (a lotus? a rose?) and to watch the bright petals, and to allow the associative emotions/feelings/memories, etc, to come up by "one-pointing" the flower! Or you could use American Indian smoke signals as representations of the hidden aspects of yourself. Most importantly, let the bubbles or whatever come by themselves. Don't force things into them! If nothing comes up, continue - it will work eventually.

C. The Meditation of "Who Am I?" - Ranana Mahavishi and Meister Eckhart have used this. In addition it is a well-known Rinzaï Zen koan! Sit as previously, but intone in harmony with the breathing, "Who am I?" Let the words resound in your consciousness. In: Who am I?...out. In: Who am I?...out. Slowly, very slowly. Should any thought arise, watch it. "No, I am not this thought - Who am I?" Come back to the central questioning.

Stripping yourself of the outer-layer of self-concept, self-image - that which our respective egos firmly believe about us - is a damned hard thing to do! Dr Paul Brunton, in *The Hidden Teaching Beyond Yoga*, suggests we should ask "What?" instead of "Who?" I think it's up to the individual reader to decide, but I would advise that "What?" suggests objectifying reality and, since we are all that all-embracing "is-ness" derived from the quantum field structure, I would suggest that reality cannot be objectified - only subjectified. Read, *Towards a Philosophy of Zen Buddhism*, by Toshitiko Izutsu!

So we now have four meditation techniques in our possession. Explore freely and learn! We'll look at more meditative forms in the next *Earth*, but now, because I'm so pretentious, I'll finish with some quotes:

*"...How you labour in vain! If you don't understand that the mind is Buddha! That is truly like riding an ass, looking for me."*

- Pao-Chih, 6th Century Chinese wonder-worker.

*"The Tao that can be expressed is not the eternal Tao. The name that can be defined is not the unchanging name."*

- Lao Tzu, *Tao te Ching*.

*"The sensible is nothingness. Nothingness is the sensible. The sensible is no other than nothingness. Nothingness is no other than the sensible."*

- The Diamond Sutra.

In the last issue of Earth the editor kindly let me tell you about myself and, as he'd crossed my palm sufficiently well, I let him into the secret that I'm not really a bad-tempered old hag, but perhaps the last surviving Goddess in this area. Some of you might think I'm just putting on airs and graces, but nobody talks like that about the Old Gods from round these parts - they're recognised for what they are, even by those rather dreary academic types.

For a start, it is often said that King Lear, son of the magical monarch, Bladud, built Leicester or "Leirecestre". Lear is supposed to have been buried in a vault under the River Soar in Leicester, which had originally been built for the god Janus. And a temple, thought to be dedicated to Janus, has been discovered in the remains of the Roman Forum in Leicester, which is only a big toad's jump from the river...

As you must already know in the British Celtic literature, Llyr is a God of the Sea, otherwise spelt, Lór. Geoffrey of Monmouth created his King Lear around him and gave Shakespeare plenty to plagiarize for his play. Another writer, Robert Graves in his book *The White Goddess*, links Lear/Llyr with Janus, who he says was an oak god and associated with the thunder gods such as Thor, Zeus and Jupiter. Nice chap Robert. Full of wonderful ideas, but I'm not too sure I believe everything he thinks up.

As I suppose you've read the *Mabinogion* and stuff like that, there's not a lot more I can add about Llyr. Or is there now? When those parsons started thinking they could tell everyone round here what they should believe, they tried to make out Llyr was written about in their Bible, only he was called St. John the Baptist. Well, as no one except them could read at the time, it was a bit difficult to call their bluff. As it to prove their point they decided St. John's day should fall on June 24, just after the midsummer Solstice, when the more traditional-minded used to light oak fires.

Which reminds me...there used to be a big sandstone block not so far away from Leicester Abbey which was known as St. John's Stone or Little John's Stone. For a long time folk used to go there and dance around it on Midsummer's Day, but the children all used to go home before dark because it was said then the fairies came out to dance. Well, between you and me, I suppose everyone needed to be sure the kids were well out of the way as, if I remember right, some interesting things of the two-by-two kind did happen after dark, if you get my meaning. The stone was a bit soft though and got worn down to a stump and finally disappeared altogether. Still, the council was nice enough to name a nearby street of houses after it - St. John's Close. Suppose it would be too much to expect they'd get any support for calling it Llyr's Lane.

Over in the north-east of the county, around Sproston (that's pronounced, *Sprees-ton*, just like Croxton I told you about last time. Don't say you've forgot...), there is a massive linear earthwork associated with several burial mounds. Eleven round barrows form a roughly east-west alignment and partly straddling these is King Ludd's Entrenchments, which consists of three banks and two ditches. About five-hundred yards south, under the present Salkby aerodrome, is another ditch system known as Folding Oves. Those archaeologists have put their spades into a bit of the Entrenchments and one of the round barrows in recent years.

Ludd or Liudd was a Celtic sky-god. Tradition says he's buried in the most easterly tumulus, called "The Lion". History books say that a Mercian king called Ludoca was killed in battle in 825, so this is a bit later than the making of the earthwork, but some smart-ass has said that doesn't stop the Entrenchments being either the place of his death or his grave being dug in an existing barrow. However, only about twenty miles away, at a place called Redhill on the Nottinghamshire border, which was a hillfort overlooking the confluence of the rivers Soar and Trent and occupied for a long time in Iron Age and Roman times, it is also said that King Ludd was buried. Some of us Old Ones got around a bit, don't you know.

It has been suggested by an eminent local prehistorian that these Entrenchments are part of a continuous ditch system that ran all the way from Daventry to the Humber, making it comparable to similar late Bronze Age boundary systems in Yorkshire and Dartmoor. He should know, he spends most of his spare time flying around in what they call an airplane looking for crop marks and what have you in the fields around these parts. Found masses of barrows and linear earthworks that way. He thinks that around thirty thousand tons of soil had to be removed for each mile of construction of the Entrenchment ditches. These days I suppose they'd call it King Wimpey's or King McAlpine's Entrenchments.

Some time last century someone who didn't know any better said Ludd and Llyr were the same. Well, of course, once the mistake's been made, everybody keeps repeating it. Believe me, in all the old Celtic tales I know Ludd is a separate God. Whether or not he gave his name to London's Ludgate Hill and Ludgate Circus, I can't say for certain. The Celtic tales tell that London takes its name from Caer Llundein, that is Ludd's Castle, but I'm not very sure about that.

I don't want to bore you with them old legends, so let me get straight to the point. What is clear is that Ludd is identical with Nuada of the Silver Hand. On the continent he was Nodens, as he was also known at that super Roman temple overlooking the Severn at Lydney in Gloucestershire, which revealed to everyone what an important water shrine that had been, with all that healing going on. The Romans saw similarities with their Mars; but as Mars the patron of healing, rather than Mars the warrior. As that splendid lady, Anne Ross points out, it must be remembered that even the Gods of healing must be Gods of war when their people required military aid. Some have said that Ludd is the same as Myrddin, who became transformed into the Merlin of Arthurian romances. However, in the tales of Arthur it is Kai who has the greatest resemblance to Nuada/Liudd, in being single-handed, although there are few other connecting traits.

The principal tale of Ludd tells how he is plagued by oppressions and is instructed to measure out the length and breadth of his country, thereby discovering its exact nature (and I could tell you of at least two places in Leicestershire that have good claims to be this country's Mesomphalos, but I'll save that for some other time). Anyway, Ludd does all this measuring nither and yon and, as forecast, discovers at this centre a dragon's lair. He overcomes the dragon's power and the kingdom's oppressions are overcome (no, one of the dragons wasn't called Margaret T. (*the thought of her never entered my head - honest! - Ed.*)). Them that know about the Classics have said this sounds just how Apollo made Delphi his own by killing its dragon, but I'm sure it's just coincidence - we never had much to do with all those quick-tempered foreigners who came up here and complained about the weather.

In another tale, Ludd goes off into the Other World. In the midst of a landscape of breathtaking loveliness, he stands underneath a tree so huge it stands above all the others (what Substances was he into at the time, me wonders). Delicious ripe fruit hangs from it and underneath is a pool of crystal clear water. Some have said that this story might be the oldest of all, as it makes Ludd sound like an ancient shaman with the tree of life. Well, I know fashions come and go, but we Old Ones've never really forgot about all that stuff. It's still deep inside within my heart anyway.

What gets a bit confusing round these parts is that when the Danes plied part of England, we were right on the edge of their bit, so some of their words have stuck round here. In fact along the Wreake Valley - that is, between Leicester and Melton Mowbray - most of the place names are from Scandinavian words. Not only that, but us old Ones got called by our northern names. So Ludd/Nuada becomes Tyr. Llyr becomes Regn. The God everyone celebrated at Lughnassadh, Lugh, becomes Odinn or Odin, or even Oinn. Now this is, well, seems to get a bit confusing. But as only bits of the Celtic tales were ever written down, and them mostly at a late date, those more mortals who can't use their memories the way I can have found that the old Norse stories of Asaen are more complete and the relationship between the Gods - and Goddesses - more defined. That's what they say. And who am I, Celt through and through, to start to argue about Asaen?

tell you what though. Next time you're out near Melton Howbray, find a sleepy little place called Grimston. There, right on the village green, in the shade of a large tree, is a rather big boulder - at least a yard across. Doesn't take much to see that it's Grian's Stone. There's even an old set of stocks right by to make it look more picturesque. And if you look at the side of a nearby road, you'll come across a smaller mark stone too. The Church of St. John the Baptist is not far away, perched on top of a tall wall where the hill falls away.

So, we Old Ones are still around if you'd care to come and find us. Gets a bit lonely at times, so you're always welcome to stop and talk if you happen to come across one of us...

#### Pterodactyls or Condors in the Aire Valley? - by David Barclay

Once upon a time in September, 1982, an American condor with failing eyesight mistook the Pennines for his native Rockies and ended up sitting on a rooftop in Pudsey, West Yorkshire, to the consternation of one particular man and his dog!

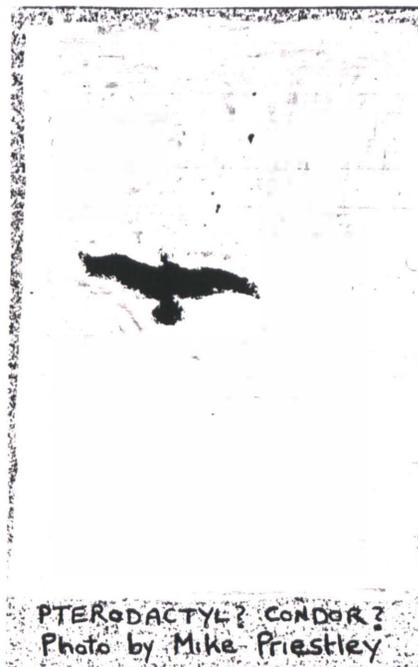
Unlikely as such an occurrence might sound, it was once proposed to explain an even unlikely series of events that took place during 1982-1983 in West Yorkshire, bordering on the Leeds-Bradford conurbations. From the documented material available it would seem that something resembling a fugitive from a Hammer House scenario, was flapping its way around the Aire Valley.

According to the information from the files of our veteran anomaly researcher, Paul Bennett (*let's have less of the "veteran" - I'd prefer "whippersnapper"!* Ed), the "Big Bird" was first seen during the late afternoon of Sunday, 12 September, 1982, when it appeared from a wooded area known locally as the Devil's Punchbowl, at which time, "It appeared to be flying in a rather haphazard manner, keeping fairly low. The silhouette was quite eerie. Its wings seemed to represent the shape of a bat or, more realistically, a pterodactyl!"

Had this been the only report, the manifestation could have been dismissed as a misperception, or even an outright hoax attempt. But it was also seen by a resident in nearby Eldwick, where further details came to light. Apparently the creature was grey in colour, had short legs and a short, pointed beak. This would seem to make it an incongruous mixture of part owl, part bat.

More from our editor's files, and confirmed by a report in Bradford's newspaper, the *Telegraph & Argus*, it would seem that whatever it was, just after midnight on September 15, 1982, gave a virtuoso performance in Pudsey to an audience of one man and his dog. The press report of the time is headed, "Definitely no Heron!" and begins by saying, "The giant bird mystery becomes more dramatic by the day, as reports continue to come in." Even at that time the Big Bird had been the cause of much speculation, being variously "identified", on the basis of very little evidence, as a large owl, a heron and even a condor. But as the newspaper articles continue, "...to scupper any such mundane solutions comes an eye-witness account." The report goes on to describe in detail how a resident of Woodhall Park Drive in Pudsey, while walking his dog, had a close encounter of the petrifying kind with the Big Bird. In the hallowed tradition of horror stories it was just after midnight when, "The quiet dull air was torn by a horrifying scream, which was followed by a dull groan." Fearing a midnight mugging, or worse, the man looked around to see if some lady in distress was in need of immediate assistance. "Then the sounds were repeated, from rooftop level, and the man looked up to see a large bird towering above the chimney-pots on a neighbour's house. It was making the screaming call with its beak open, the grunt with its beak closed. As he watched, it launched itself from the roof, its weight causing it to drop below roof-level, before its slow winchboat carried it off into the darkness."

The witness described the Bird as "enormous", and although admitting that the semi-



grown on a disused railway embankment. Once again it was the size of the creature that caused the most astonishment in the witness. As she told the newspaper, "It was enormous, and it flew with very laborious strokes."

As reports again increased in frequency, Mike Priestley, twice Yorkshire Reporter of the year and Features Editor of the *Telegraph & Argus*, decided to take a more active interest. As he put it to me, he decided, "To see for myself if there really is anything to it." He had taken upon himself no easy task as for some three weeks he followed up on incoming reports; along with scanning the skies over Bradford for a glimpse of the Big Bird. In the end his patience was rewarded and he got what he was after - a photograph (see illustration). However, the bird was at such extreme distance that even his 300mm telephoto lens was unable to resolve the mystery. Yet it would at least indicate that a genuine Big Bird did in fact exist. He told me that during his weeks long pursuit he had seen the Bird several times, but that it was only on one occasion it stayed in view long enough for him to take a picture.

Reports continued to come in. The Bird was sighted throughout the area: witnesses coming from Baildon, Shipley, Crossflatts, Pudsey, Yeadon and Thackley; the Big Bird's territory covering a considerable area. Finally, in November 1985, another freelance journalist, Malcolm Hodds, told Mike Priestley that he too had seen it, and to him it had appeared, "...Black and although hard to estimate size, I would say, the wingspan was around five feet; there were feathers that looked like fingers on the end of the wings." But then almost as suddenly as it had appeared, the Big Bird vanished from the sky over the Aire Valley and the "flap" was over.

Even to date there is no decent explanation for the anomalous "pterodactyl" or "condor" of the Pennines. In many ways its appearance and behaviour is similar to that of the Mothman of West Virginia, USA, as described by John Keel in his *The Mothman Prophecies*. And even there, despite Keel's investigative experience, no real explanation for what he reported was forthcoming. So in the final analysis it is perhaps as well to adopt Mike Priestley's attitude when pursuing such anomalies. "It'll be quite a relief if it's gone!" he said.

Very soon sees the publication of my work, *The British Magickal Herbal*, in which are highlighted nigh on sixty psychoactive and hallucinogenic flora of Britain, including more than twenty species of mushrooms - twice the amount previously recognised as such in this country. The following is an edited extract of just one such floral species covered in the work. Well known to everyone, this species is an archetype of psychedelic experience. It is the *Amanita muscaria*, or otherwise called, Fly Agaric.

The most widely-known fungus on Earth. It has been described, and known of, as the Fungus of Immortality, Soma, God's Flesh, Ambrosia, the Plant of Life, *Li Chih*, and God knows what else! Cultures the world over have worshipped and used this plant in their religious rites for thousands of years. Some consider that Christianity was founded upon a cult that deified *Amanita muscaria*. Numerous books have been written on this single mushroom. Found in the *Agaric* family, faerie have scattered their voluminous tales from the seats of these shimmering red-and-white-spotted forms. That Lewis Carroll seated his dope-smoking snail upon its flecked cap, and asked Alice to take a bite to induce a most peculiar effect speaks volumes for it. Unfortunately, space forbids volumes being written here...but I'll cover some of what I think are of particular interest...

In the Chinese legends of the Isles of the Blest, there grew a remarkable "plant of life" called the *Li Chih*, or Fungus of Immortality. Botanist and mycologist, W.P.K. Findlay, remarking upon the *Li Chih* in his *Fungi Folklore, Fiction & Fact*, tells how Japanese snroom-friends identified it as *Ganoderma lucidum*, an edible species with no marked properties other than its red colouring. Although an earlier look at *Li Chih* by Berthold Laufer in 1912 tells that "it is a species of *Agaric* and considered a felicitous plant because it absorbs the vapours of the Earth." He too remarks upon its edibility, but the inference in this and other writings may be good reason to think it as *Amanita muscaria*. The classical collator of world myths and legends, Donald A. Mackenzie, writing on the Easterns' "plants of life", tells us, "The souls drink the water and eat the herb or fruit of the tree to prolong their existence." Few need telling that the Fly Agaric is a fungal fruit of the Silver Birch, Pine and other trees. He continues, "Those who eat of the fungus...renew their youth and acquire the power of floating like down through the air from island to island." And certainly this is an exhilaration found by those who have consumed Fly Agaric.

A number of great tales speak of the search for the *Li Chih* - and in them comes more evidence that what the ancients sought and spoke of was most probably our red-and-white-spotted faerie dweller.

In ages past, Chinese Emperors set missions out to search and bring back the sacred fungus. One such traveller, Hsu Fu, came back with a remarkable tale. In his voyage over the eastern seas, he told how a God had risen from the waters and inquired if he was the Emperor's representative. "I am," he said. "What seek ye?" asked the sea-God. Whereby Hsu Fu answered, "I am searching for the plant that has the power to prolong human life."

The God told him that although he had brought great offerings for the sacred plant, they were not enough as payment for it. However, the sea-God allowed Hsu Fu to see it for himself so as to affirm to his Emperor of its existence. His ship was thence sent south-westerly until the Isles of the Blest were reached. Once there, he was allowed to land on the chief island, P'eng-lai. Here, according to Japanese myths, the fungus of immortality grows in the shade of one of the three holy trees there, usually the pine. And also under the Tree of Life, described as having "branches of gold, roots of silver." Also on P'eng-lai was the golden palace of the ocean dragon king. Here he was shown vast crops of the sacred fungus of immortality, all guarded by a ferocious dragon. He was therefore unable to take home not one of them.

The old mariner stood before the sea-God and asked what would be worthy gifts for the sacred plant. "Many many youths of beauty and honour," he was told. To which, upon returning home, he told to his Emperor. And forthwith, the ruler dispatched a

fleet of vessels with three thousand young men and virgins with the hope of receiving the magickal plant. But neither fleet nor fungus ever returned to his land. Legend speaks of the people sent to P'eng-lai still living there, enjoying the pleasures brought about by the plant's magical abilities.

That *Li Chih* is *Amanita muscaria* seems undoubted after the description of it standing under the shadow of pines, and under the silver-rooted tree of Life - probably Silver Birch. Respected botanists and anthropologists, R. Gordon Wasson and Peter Furst have made the same remarks, likening it to Fly Agaric.

Another fable tells how the *Li Chih* was able to restore life from death. Long ago, the caps of *Li Chih* were carried by ravens to the mainland from one of the Chinese Isles of the Blest and there dropped onto the faces of slain warriors. Although three days in death, the men immediately sprang back to life. On one of the Blessed Isles, Ying Chou, there are to be found great precipices of jade; and from these flows a brook, "the waters of which are as stimulating as wine." Tales are told that those who can reach this isle may ensure a thousand years of physical existence, by powdering the fungus of immortality and mixing it with the jade waters. This tale is remarkably alike authenticated ones in which hallucinogenic fungi are crushed, mixed with waters and drunk as an intoxicant. Indeed it rings somewhat of the well-known Siberian shamans who used just such a way to incite their ecstasies and frenzies with our *Amanita muscaria*.

In Siberia, where much of the mythical base for *A. muscaria* first emanated thanks to the lengthy works of Wasson, much can be told. The religious ingestion of this fungus was found to stretch across a huge region: from the Baltic sea in the west, across to Kamchatka in the far east. It was found that tribesmen and shamans of many groups had participated in the visionary eating of it for an estimated three-and-a-half-thousand years; although the earliest written account of it in this part of the world came from a Polish prisoner of war in 1658. Then, in 1730, a Swedish colonel wrote of the Siberian Koryak tribe who would pay handsomely for a certain mushroom which the Russians would call, *Muchimor*, or Fly Agaric. The Koryaks themselves however, gave a different name to their special mushroom and wrapped it great legend. It was known as *Hapaq*. At the turn of the century a Russian ethnologist, Vladimir Jochelson, said the Koryaks believe that the *Hapaq* would tell any man who ate them, "What ailed him when he was sick, or explain a dream to him, or show him the upper world, or the underground world, or foretell what would happen to him."

The mythical hero of the Koryaks was a great man called, Big Raven. Once upon a time, Big Raven accidentally captured a great whale but found himself unable to help it back out to sea because of its huge weight. So he appealed for help to Vahiyinin, the great God of Existence, who told Big Raven to go to a certain place where he would find spirit forms. Once there, he was to eat of them and would then find that he had the strength to assist the whale home. And so as Big Raven walked, Vahiyinin spat upon the Earth, and where it fell there appeared the spirit forms Big Raven was to look for: small white plants with red hats on, which the God's saliva transformed into white spots. These spirit forms were *Hapaq*.

After some time, Big Raven found the *Hapaq* and ate them as he had been told. Very soon following, he found that a great strength came to him and then found himself easily able to help the whale and his supplies and, without much ado, returned him to its ocean home. *Hapaq* showed Big Raven the course the whale was taking to the great sea and the way in which he would return home to his friends. And so, upon seeing all this Big Raven spoke, saying, "O *Hapaq*, grow forever on this Earth," and to all his people he told them of the gifts within these spirit forms and to learn whatever *Hapaq* could teach them.

Most of us know the tales told of Siberians drinking the urine of those who've previously consumed *Hapaq* - and in doing so, enhancing further the visionary experience. The drinking of one's own urine wasn't (isn't?) a universal Siberian trait, but was nevertheless widespread. In a number of cases other men's urine was drunk, then passed around for use by members of the immediate group. There were also

considerable accounts of 'shroom-fiends indulging on the urine of reindeer who had eaten the sacred mushroom. R. Gordon Wasson: "Suppose, for example, that two mushrooms were needed on the first day for an ordinary intoxication; then the urine alone is enough to maintain the intoxication on the following day. On the third day the urine still has narcotic properties, and therefore one drinks some of this and at the same time swallows some fly-agaric, even if only half a mushroom; this enables him not only to maintain his intoxication but also to tap off a strong liquor on the fourth day. By continuing this method it is possible...to maintain the intoxication for a week or longer with five or six fly-agarics." These days, few indulge in such practises - although if anyone does, I'd love to hear from them.

...And then there was Soma...

Mistakenly charged as being "the only known plant to be deified" by Richard Alan Miller in his otherwise grand book, *Soma* too, was Fly Agaric. Again it was that man Wasson who made the exposition on it. In relation to the other forms and names Fly Agaric adopted in times past, the importance of *Soma* was considerably more vast. If Wasson's treatise on *Soma* is correct, as is thought today, "the whole of Indian religion, and everything of a mystical nature within that religion is pertinent to the identity of (this) plant." Effectively, this postulates that the entire foundations of Hinduism are founded upon a mushroom-cult. An idea John Allsgro later paralleled and persuasively pursued within Christianity. *Soma* was described in the earliest Hindu text, the Rig-Veda: described as rootless, blossomless, leafless and inducing visions of great splendour. Interestingly, the people who wrote and spoke of *Soma* were quite probably the Siberians themselves. It was the Aryans, as they came to be known, who introduced and spoke of *Soma*, and who came from a northern land before first appearing in Afghanistan. And with them came their sacred plant, which the Rig-Veda describes as having a ceremony of urine-drinking allied to it. Sounds familiar, doesn't it...?

Robert Anton Wilson, who followed the observations made by Wasson and others as they developed on Fly Agaric, concluded that "This single mushroom (has) played a larger role in religious history than any other single factor." It is now thought that it was the delirious ingredient of the ancient Greek Dionysian festivities; it was the fungus consumed by those well-known Berserkers of the tenth-century AD; Central American shamans have consumed it in rituals for centuries, deep in forests hidden from civilisations till only the middle of the 1900s; and in a series of remarkable experimental parapsychology tests undertaken by Andrija Puharich in the 1950s using the fungus, medium Harry Stone revealed, under influence, the personality of Ra Ho Tep - an Egyptian Royal from the period 2700 BC, who informed them of the ritual use of a "beautiful sacred plant of life...with a red crown" which facilitated visions and such things. Aldous Huxley entered the scene of some experiments and, after some while, it was ascertained they were looking at a previously unknown mushroom ceremony from Egypt's great past. *Amanita muscaria* appeared once again.

As my book is to deal with British psychoactive flora I should obviously mention our own country where, it must be said, the least has ever been scribed on it. In legend we ashame ourselves. The only real tenable grasp to Albion's historical use of the Agaric comes from half-bait wiccan references. There are always those witches who will allege that it was used in ointments by their wiccan granny, and her granny before her and so on. In Harold Hansen's *The Witch's Garden*, which covers the realm of magical plants specifically employed by European witches, he can't seem to find any references to this sacred mushroom. Robbins' classic work, *The Encyclopaedia of Witchcraft and Demonology* offers a similar lacking; as indeed do all other respected texts. In the 17th Century text that dealt with flying ointments, de Mynauld's *De la Lycanthrope*, didn't bare a mention of this fungus. Our grimoires (correct me if I'm wrong) do us a similar injustice. Even Doreen Valiente seems to affirm this lack of Medieval use, but then says, "However, to my own knowledge, this is not true of all present-day covens." Indeed! But since the writings of Schultes, Wasson, Furst and their psychogenic ilk, what are we to expect? The first real nudge of its magical use in Britain comes from the mid-1930s. Then, according to Francis King, the New Forest coven apparently used it "orally in extremely small doses." Extremely

small doses of *A.muscaria* however, in the vast majority of cases is not enough to accelerate the effects which the witches here alleged; which may point to the incident being little more than a rather tall story. Over the last twenty years though, the ritual use of the Fly Agaric has been increasing. But it's still for the established mycophiles in most cases. Toxicity is still a scare - even amongst witches.

The principal drug responsible for the intoxicating effects given by *A.muscaria*, was first thought to be the powerful psychoactive, muscarine, which had been isolated from this fungus in 1869. Although present within *A.muscaria*, it is in far too small a quantity for it to have such deliberate effects as those caused. It wasn't until 1967 before the responsible agents, muscimole (an hallucinogen that acts upon the central nervous system), ibotenic acid and later muscimone, were isolated. Indeed, even the one-time editor of the outstanding *Psychedelics Review* magazine, Ralph Metzner, in his 1970 essay published in Aaronson and Osmond's, *Psychedelics on mushrooms and the mind*, mistakenly affirmed muscarine - along with atropine and bufotenine (psychoactives that have also been found in *A.muscaria*) - as being the most causative agents. This was already known *not* to be the case. In particular, muscimole was the chemical reagent which, unaffected by its passage through the kidneys, made it possible to enhance again the intoxication by the intake of urine.

Preparation of *A.muscaria* for the most efficient psychoactive effects has been a great argument between 'shroom-fiends over the years. Fasting is essential if the visionary wishes to succeed. Do 24 hours. A virtual worldwide practice is that of sun-drying the fresh mushrooms, picked as early in the season as possible when the most effective concentration of muscimole and ibotenic acid is in them. The potency of the 'shrooms decreases as the season goes on. This is so in Siberia, Mexico and is known to be so in Britain. If sun-drying is impossible, Stafford tells of the method of putting a wire through each specimen and drying over a fire. Another is drying them in low ovens, but the psychoactivity is lessened. In drying out, the essential muscarine content alters to muscimole, giving greater psychoactive potential. If the shaman wishes to consume the *Soma* later in the season, "we must either greatly increase the dose or try specimens gathered in the summer," writes Wasson. The increased dose has, for some, exceeded ten - but this is an extremely dangerous venture. Two is the average intake; but don't start on this. Half is suffice.

Wasson found an ancient way of consuming *A.muscaria* by simply pressing them out and drinking the juice. This is how *Soma* was taken according to the Vedic scripts. Another way, adopted by Mexican Indians, was to eat them raw, but with honey. Another is using the fresh specimens and boiling them for a minute in milk. Another is the same way, but using salt water. However in another text of Wasson's, he told that "the almost unanimous testimony, extending over two centuries (told)...that the fly-agaric must *not* be eaten fresh: it should be dried, preferably sun-dried." This greater effectiveness was confirmed by the pharmacist, Conrad Eugster in 1957, and later in others succeeding him. In cases I know however, fresh specimens have resulted in some amazing results. But all this aside, you must respect these powerful instruments. The Earth has not made them as toys. Don't treat them as such...

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ESSENTIAL OILS, MASSAGE OILS, JOSS STICKS, INCENSES, HERBS.

### Right Hand, Left hand: A Natural History of Palmistry - by Bryn Ormsford

For years palmists have been branded as gypsies, witches and weirdoes. Never does one stop to consider that palmistry has been used for medical, scientific and criminal investigation purposes. The hands themselves are a vast map of information, character-wise; and, not forgetting their psychic element of course. Over the next few issues I will explain in detail the logical side of palmistry - or at least try; giving the novice, or just the curious, a deeper insight into the fascinating mysteries of our hands...from the times when our primitive ancestors first grasped at sticks and stones with rudimentary fingers...

Many myths have developed about the distinctive meanings assigned to the left and right hands. Many cultures, such as the Chinese, have viewed the function of them as contradictory but balanced in importance, where the majority of cultures sadly, to this day, have not. The Chinese believe the right hand to be important, the left inferior.

Various groups have defined the left hand as disreputable, psychotic, murderous, impure and weak. To Moslems, touching the left hand of another is classed as an insult. The Maoris of New Zealand equate the left side with death and destruction, therefore protecting themselves with amulets and charms on their left arms, so as not to encourage evil deeds or spirits.

Today, modern religions further promote the right-hand-path myth of superiority - glorifying the "Right Hand Path of God." Many paintings of a religious bent depict the right hand pointing towards heaven. In Nordic mythology, the God Tyr, places the right hand into the wolf, Fenrir's, mouth. Unfortunately the wolf bites it off. Was, therefore, the right hand of important significance to the Vikings? bearing in mind that a form of palmistry was in use at that period to a beneficial degree by shamans. Also, the painting of Saphomet has a strong significance with the "Right Hand of God" syndrome, with the right hand pointing to heaven, the left to hell. Rather than believing both hands to be equal, we can gather from global evidence that there is a strong imbalance. The right must therefore be superior in a shaman's view.

The prejudice towards the left hand is deep rooted - even in language. The Anglo-Saxon root for "LEFT" (left) literally means weak; or the broken French language denotes *GAUCHE*, meaning socially inept or awkward. The almost forgotten word, *sinister*, as left or to the left, comes from the old French and Latin usage in divination, when this side was thought to be inauspicious. The word *left* therefore has evil connotations. As "right" in old English means morally upright, correct, normal or genuine, we can take note from these old words and their denotations that this was apparent long before christianity - especially in England. The religious paintings in particular have followed suit somewhat on these beliefs. These

perspectives help us to understand the *myths* of the right and left hand, although they differ radically in the Chinese system - where it is told that the forces of *yin* and *yang* can represent a balance, even in our hands.

But we find, even today, examples of left hand prejudice within our own society, e.g. teachers encouraging children to use their right hand, as left-handedness is a condition to be cured. Being left-handed myself, I found great pressure with this brainwashing at school, which was an old established boarding school. However much to their disapproval I'm still left-handed - not converted to the *right* way of writing. It is unfortunate that even the study of the lines upon the hand has historically inclined to the belief system of the right hand, encompassing the *positive* and *masculinity*; with the left being manifestly *feminine* and *negative*.

Recent research has highlighted the functions of the two brain hemispheres which has provided some clues as to why the right hand has been given the superior position. Since the revolutionary split-brain studies conducted in the fifties and sixties in California, scientists believe the right controls the left hand and vice versa; but both sides of the brain are involved in higher cognitive functions, and the two hemispheres merely employ different methods or modes of processing information. The left brain/right side controls the intellectual, rational and the objective functions one could class as reasoning. Whilst it is thought that creativity, intuition and emotions reside in the right hemisphere which controls the left side.

Cultures throughout history relating ideas upon the right/left hand syndrome - encouraging rational intellectual development - is in many peoples opinion, mine included, quite wrong. Bearing in mind, centuries before scientists had such investigative technology, the Chinese were using the *yin-yang* structure to build up a unique study pattern of complimentary relationships between *male* qualities (*yin-yang* right) and *emotional female* qualities (*yin-yang* left). Although this society was *male-dominated* (as all Eastern cultures still are today), the *feminine* side was encouraged, appearing in art, poetry and music. This resulted in a cultural balance between the powers of intellect and intuition.

I would like to propose a reconsideration on the meanings of our two hands, travelling towards a new paradigm of analytical studies of the palms, *balanced* and *holistic*. I would like to move away from the two hand differences, towards an holistic conceptual balance of the hands in regard to their relationship with themselves and the body as a whole. I intend to balance the outlined hand analysis in which both hands will be considered as equals. In which the two distinct hemispheres of the brain take action on opposite sides of the body. This will eventually bring us round to the obvious factor that the brain is in control of more than we are aware of!

Palmistry is not just lines on the hands, and they are not just caused by the folding of the skin. We have three major lines: life, heart and head lines, from birth. But we must also consider the fingers: nails; moons; cuticles; finger-tip shapes; length and width of the finger-spread; thumb-shape of the hand and its length and width; texture and colour of the skin; dominance and dexterity; skin print formations known as dermaglyphs, etc. The holistic application method not only considers the emotional state but also the medical, as these two are inseparable. And, by blending the old ideas with the new, this method becomes a promising blend of the wisdom of the Ancients and the New Age knowledge.

*Part 2 of this article will appear in the next edition of Earth.*

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The British Magickal Herbal: A Concise Guide to the Psychoactive Flora of Albion
For the patient ones who've been asking, it'll be out with the next *Earth*: The collected material of more than fifty of Britain's psychoactive flora. Herbs, roots, fungi, etc: their legends, medicinal & magickal uses. Info on extraction, dosage, side- and after-effects. The greatest singular collection of such material ever assembled on such flora in this country. It will be a limited print run of 250 copies, numbered and signed; approx 100 pages. Cost will be around 3.00 (I think!).

Some time ago the editor of Earth told me that there were a number of readers desirous of Taoism in this mag. Musing upon this, I decided that the best course of action would be to string together Chinese legends of Taoist origins which, by themselves, would beautifully display the charm and pure living poetry of Taoist essence. Anyone remotely interested in the Earth from a spiritual angle, be that person a witch, pagan, magician - or simply someone of a quiet natural orientation - cannot possibly be disinterested in this archaic Chinese spiritual tradition. It dates back thousands of years; transcends philosophy and religion; totally lacks dogma and, like its off-spring, Zen Buddhism, relies completely on an intuitive perception of the cosmos in its entirety - a perception which comes through alternately sitting in serene reflection, meditation and observing nature and change inherent in the cosmos. It has no ogre God, though is no stranger to an array of beautiful and romantic deities - though one would be no less a Taoist for not believing in them! Taoism also disdains and laughs at moral piety, believing that to continually talk about ethics and what is right and wrong, is a sure sign of the absence of such things. It prefers rather that spiritual knowledge liberates one from negative action - one simply sees by perception of the way of the universe: that to act in accordance with it is best. To stray is folly.

Taoism is not an "ism", a faction, a sect. It is a way of life that embraces individuality and harmonises and attunes the aspirant with the cosmos. "Tao" itself simply means, the Way. The "Way" is. It is a vast unified field structure which embodies and binds the whole universe. It is the whole universe. What is not Tao is not in the universe. There is nothing outside the universe. Indeed, there is no inside and no outside. The Tao is not dualistic. It is all-embracing, unified. And, although words are inadequate to describe it, it is the quantum field of the nuclear physicist. (1) It is the Sunyata, the Great Void, the Tatharta, the Dharma-body, the Buddha-nature of the Buddhists, the Brahman of the Hindus.

Inherent in itself is change. Change is recognised as the unending flux of cosmic processes in the I Ching, thought to be of Taoist origin. To act in accordance with this change and way of Tao is to be the true Taoist sage. To be blind to Tao is to act as modern humanity does: a dangerous, psychotic, subversive element, chaotically out of line with the natural harmony of things, "Suffering, following, like the cart which follows the beast." (2) It is so important that the human race as a whole learns the valuable lessons that Taoism can offer, in addition to the other Oriental mystical ways, along with our own esoteric tradition. (3)

...But for now let us explore the beautiful Chinese Taoist imagination and beckon a few dragons for soaring into Taoist myth and fantasy. The most beautiful story I have ever heard of Taoist origin is that related in Blofeld's, Taoism. When I first read it I simply cried. Allow me to relate some of its magic.

When the Communists finally took over China in 1949, they forced Taoists and Buddhists alike into leaving their homes, temples and hermitages. The Communist ideal had no room for people serenely sitting in meditation and admiring Nature. People should work for the State and many Taoist and Buddhist recluses were put to work in the towns and the fields.

Around this time, Blofeld (4) tells us that somewhere in the southern provinces, a Chinese student girl visited a very old Taoist hermit every weekend. She asked him once, what he would do in the event of a Communist take-over and, as she did, she wept at the thought of the Red Cadets driving him from where he had lived almost all his life.

"You are sorry for me, Li," he answered. "Why? Wouldn't it be laughable if a life-long disciple of Lord Lao Tzu, the alleged author of the Taoist classic (the Tao te Ching) were to be afraid of change? I am too old to be put to work and these people care too much for the look of things to let me starve in a neighbourhood where so many poor folk have come to love me." As the girl sobbed she

asked how he would live. The sage replied that at his age he could see into the future far better than he could recall the past! "When they drive away the others, they will let us old and useless ones stay on, living as best we can on what we manage to grow in our vegetable garden. From kindness? Not exactly. This place is too small and remote for them to be in a hurry to use it for some other purpose; and as three or four of us are very old, they will look to death to relieve them of the problem - rightly so! The Vasty Gate Recline and I propose to leave this world together on the evening of the mid-Autumn festival next year. No, No! Be calm, little Li. Do you suppose we shall hang ourselves, or swallow a liang or two of opium? Preposterous! With wine, incense and other things we intend to hide away, we shall perform the festival rites as usual, walk up to the terrace to admire the Autumn Moon and there sit down. Passing in meditation to the very source of yin and yang, we shall plunge together into the ocean of the void."

At this, the girl cried. She had grown very fond of the old Taoist master. And so, disturbed by Li's outburst of emotion, the concerned Taoist (we're not told his name) took hold of Li's hand and asked her if there were any herons in her home of Singapore.

"Herons, Master? I...I...no, no, there are not."

"Good," answered the old recluse. "Rather than have you sad for us, we shall gladly postpone eternal bliss for an hour or so. Be sure to remember what I am going to say. Next year, at the hour of the boar on the night of the festival, go to a high place and watch the sky just above the ocean that surrounds your island. I have a great desire to see the sea by moonlight, never having seen it in all my years. There we shall meet and bid each other a joyous farewell."

The girl sadly nodded, thinking he was just trying to comfort her. Then Li and the Taoist said goodbye.

The following year when the Autumn festival came around, Li's father took her to dine with her fiance's family. The meal started late and was a noisy, long drawn-out affair. When the clock struck ten (mid-point of the hour of the boar), Li suddenly felt very dizzy and went out onto the balcony of the flat, which faced directly onto the seashore. The brilliant moon shone down on foam-capped waves. Presently, two of these foam-caps rose strangely into the air and sailed rapidly towards Li! They were two beautiful, large white herons!

Flying very low, they came very close to where Li was sitting - flying round and round uttering happy-sounding cries, long-sustained and beautiful. While this was happening, a sensation of bliss and ecstasy made Li tingle from head to toe. Her old Taoist friend had not only kept his promise, he had also imported her with the spirit of the union with the void!

Whether we interpret this story literally or metaphorically (I must admit I'm inclined to do both!), its message is simple. For the Taoists, death was a transition from the finite to the infinite. Their dew drops indeed had slid into the shining sea. (5) Though if they were around as individuals today, they would probably refute this and say that there was never a moment in their lives, nay, never a moment in the existence of anything in the world of particulars, when they were never a part of the sea. As Zen Buddhism affirms, "Nirvana is Samsara. Samsara is Nirvana."

Our next story is a much older one. It is a lively, comical story, contrasting two well-known Chinese sages - Lao Tzu and Confucius. Lao Tzu, the legendary hermit who formerly worked as a librarian in imperial China, left city-life being discontented and disillusioned with the "world of dust." He left to become a spiritual recluse in the Chinese wilderness. Some legends say he left to merge forever with the Tao. Before he left however, he was alleged to have written the Tao te Ching. Confucius meanwhile, is the father of Confucianism - a moral and ethical system which dominated China's thoughts for thousands of years. Taoists were already poking fun

at the piety of Confucian thought, and the following story is an allegory of the division between these two belief systems.

One day Confucius happened to come across Lao Tzu bathing in a stream. Having not a shred of prudishness the old sage emerged from the water to receive him stark naked.

"Sir," cried the great moralist, hastily averting his eyes, "I perceive you are lacking in a proper sense of human dignity. If humans were to go around unclad, in what way would they be distinguishable from birds and beasts?"

"Sir!" replied Lao Tzu, "Is it such a bad thing to put ourselves on the level of birds and beasts? They are strangers to lust for fame, covetousness, stinginess, wallowing in luxury and countless other vices. You will excuse me if I go on bathing."

Another day, Lao Tzu spied upon Confucius preaching to a handful of disciples on the subject of benevolence. The master Taoist came up to Confucius flapping his arms and squeaking like a crow. At this the benevolent moralist leapt up, roaring angrily.

"Sir," teased Lao Tzu, keeping nimbly out of reach. "I was edified by what you had to say about benevolence. Now why this sudden change? If humans were to go around tearing at the eyes of old gentlemen who like a bit of fun, in what way would they be distinguished from famished tigers?"

Hoping to get his own back, Confucius on one occasion saw Lao Tzu tipping in a wine shop. "Sir?" admonished the outraged sage, "Is this your sense of decorum? Do you hope to teach the Way by imbibing in view of all and sundry?"

"Sir," replied Lao Tzu smiling. "Do you not approve of this demonstration of my being neither bird nor beast? I have not heard that such creatures tipple."

"But," replied Confucius. "For a learned Master to disgrace his grey hairs in public is worse than being bird or beast," he exclaimed.

"You must be joking, sir," laughed Lao Tzu. "Once you reprimanded me for behaving in the manner of birds and beasts; now you admonish me for not behaving like our befeathered and fanged friends. Clearly, you stand in need of some instruction. The Tao, you must know, is the progenitor of all and sundry, of you and me, of birds and beasts, of this wine-pot and this wine. Imbibing the Tao is a very fitting occupation for a Taoist, one would think. Everything surely beneath the wide canopy of heaven is imbued with holiness!"

Confucius was thunderstruck. "Aah, what wisdom has this gentleman. His life will be hard to find this side of heaven! He is a very phoenix amongst crows!"

For those who want to learn more of Taoism, the best lesson of the Way of the Tao is to meditate and observe Nature in the open countryside. Although the following is a list of works which are thoroughly recommended reading: John Blofeld's, *Taoism: The Quest for Immortality*, is a splendid introduction; his *Beyond the Gods* also being so, looking at Buddhist and faoist mysticism, and his *Gateway to Wisdom*. Others are Alan Watts' *Tao: The Watercourse Way*; Chee Sook's *Taoist Yoga*; Da Liu's *The Tao of Health & Longevity*; Lu K'ian-yu's *Taoist Yoga*; T.C.Lai's *The Eight Immortals*; Robert van Gulik's *Sexual Life in Ancient China*; Howard Reid's *The Way of Harmony: A Guide to the Soft Martial Arts*; and, of course, Lao Tzu's essential *Tao te Ching*...

References:

1. see Fritzjof Capra's *Tao of Physics* and Gary Zukav's, *Dancing Wu-Li Masters*.
2. Maspero, Juan (trans.) *The Dhammapada*, Penguin, 1973.
3. Taoism has imparted a strange influence on our contemporary theatre. *Yoda*, of *The Empire Strikes Back*, is based on a faoist hermit archetype. *The Force* is the Tao.
4. John Blofeld's, *Taoism: The Quest for Immortality*, 1984.
5. Edwin Arnold's, *The Light of Asia*.

Are you interested in learning new skills and exploring alternative activities (i.e. anything from Aromatherapy to Zen) but have been put off by the exorbitant charges for workshops and courses? Well, the answer has arrived: a group of people who are interested in organising and running courses and workshops on just about anything that comes under the broad spectrum of "alternatives". The aim of the network is to bring the people who want to learn together with those who have skills to offer, and to run courses that won't cost you an arm or a leg to attend.

The network also intends to publish a regular newsletter detailing all forthcoming events and courses, and reviewing existing courses which run both within and outside the network. The first study course is on Meditation - giving an overview of techniques and systems, and not applying a singular doctrine. It is a six week course, at Shipley Library Meeting Room 1, starting at 7pm. The dates of the course are 7 July, 14th, 21st, 28th, 4th and 11 August. A voluntary donation of a quid wouldst be appreciated to help cost of room hire. There are also courses being planned on Tarot and Earth Mysteries.

So, if you consider yourself able to organise and lead courses, or if you just want to find out more about what will be on offer, write to Stephen Hart, Centre for the Dissemination of Alternative Studies, c/o Earth magazine. Ideas and gestures of encouragement, help, will be genuinely welcomed. Get in touch with it...

Earth Mysteries, PaganLink, Occult, & UFO Meetings, Moots & Lectures, etc.

The Ley Hunter's Moot, 1989 - Britain's top annual Earth Mysteries gathering, this year to be held on Saturday, July 22, at the Guildhall Art Centre, 23 Eastgate St, Gloucester. Speakers include: Caitlin Matthews on the Mabinogion; Caroline Malone on Abergury and Earth Mysteries in Malta; Peter Kennedy on folk dances & traditions; Glenn Bishop on sacred landscape geometry; Ralph Noyes on the mystery crop-circles phenomena; Bill Lewis on energy dowsing; and Paul Devereux on dream incubation at a Pagan site. Tickets: at the door, 9.50; in advance, 8.50; OAFs and unemployed, 6.00.

The Fourth Merlin Conference will be held at Caxton House, Archway, London N19 3RU on September 23-24. Tickets, 19.00, from BCM 3721, London WC1N 3XX. International UFO Congress - to be held at the London Business School, 9 Baker St tube, on 14-16 July. Write, PO Box 314, Penn, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP10 9PB for details.

PaganLink Gatherings: Birmingham - Meetings every Monday, from 8pm onwards; contact Norman Clinton, 54b Bletchley Rd, Erdington. ||||| Bradford - Pagans meet on the first Friday of every month at the Crossroads Club, Leeds Rd, Lathford, from 7.30pm onwards. ||||| Crewe - Dionysos Group meets monthly; contact Frank on 0477 34177 for details. ||||| Darwen, Lancs. - Pagans meet on the first Tuesday every month at the Mission, 8pm onwards. ||||| Harrogate - Pagans meet monthly; contact Chris Smith for details on Harrogate 62683. ||||| Leeds - Pagans meet on the first Thursday of each month at 8pm onwards. ||||| North London - Meetings on alternate Thursdays at The White Lion of Northway, 56 Broad Green Rd, London N4; ring Gary Todd, 01-901-4502 for details. ||||| South London - Meetings each Friday at The Catford Ram; ring Hasta Tyrspirest on 01-708-4629 for info. ||||| Manchester - Meetings on the first Thursday of the month (change the date snapp - Leeds moot clashes); ring Gordon (the toad) 061-905-1100 for details. ||||| Preston - monthly meetings; ring Neil or Brian on 0772 34675 for details. ||||| Sheffield - Pagans gather on the last Thursday of the month at The Pomona, Ecclesall, 1st, from 7.30pm. ||||| South Lancashire - Contact Margie Heatherington, c/o Chinese Information Centre, 15 Micklegate St, Manchester for details. ||||| Wakefield - Meet on the first Wednesday of the month at the Beer Engine, Bestgate, from 7.30pm.

If there are any other such goings-on around the Midlands to the North such as UFO meetings, Psychic Fairs, Earth Mysteries moots, Occult, Magickal lectures, etc., let us know and we'll mention it here.

This month sees the publication of *Witches Eat Babies, Really*, by the Reverend Logan Berry. In it is a fearless and frank expose of the occult scene in Yorkshire. Reverend Berry explains the strange rites of witches, and how they culminate their orgies of sex and sacrifice with the dropping of a three-wilton nuclear warhead on local villages.

"It's true," he told us when we arrived at his home to interview him. "Every Halloween they detonate a tactical nuclear weapon over Yorkshire, often over some of the most beautiful countryside. Thousands of people die in the blast and the no-estimation stretches for miles."

When we asked him why this had never been reported in the news, he explained that reporters were too scared of being "cursed" to say anything publicly. He mentioned one Sun reporter who asked "too many questions" and was later "blasted" by occult powers. "It was terrific," said Berry. "He was found lying in a heap outside the Rolloch drinking club in Scho, hardly able to walk or speak properly. His eyes were all bloodshot, and his nose had gone a bright red colour...and, like a good many occult victims, he stank of a strange Scotch-like substance."

The Reverend's book contains a good many anecdotes by those who have witnessed the rites of so-called "witches". Mr Rupert Drugs, an unemployed shelf-fitter, says: "I was on my way home one night, when I heard this strange singing coming from the woods. When I went to look I saw a circle of naked people dancing round the blazing effigy of a rabid gay psychopath wolf-man, chained to an inverted cross and singing the ancient Thelemic folk-song, "On Ilkley Hoor Faar Kraat." Then three hooded figures carrying Uzi's appeared and started murdering a lorry-load of kittens."

But Reverend Berry is not the only one cashing in on the current occult "craze". Last month, *Her* magazine published an explicit article detailing the practices of black magic. Secret practices, including making young children eat quiche lorraine over which Satanic invocations had been made, were revealed. We spoke to *Her* reporter, Brent Crude: "I heard that the magazine wanted a story about the occult, so I went to see child welfare expert, Mrs Diane Twatt, and offered her five hundred quid to tell me about the occult. I was shocked to hear what she told me, and frankly, some parts, like the bit with the virgin ostrich and the SS officer's boots were a bit hard to believe. But I printed them anyway."

We sent off for one of Mrs Twatt's Child Protection Packs - a group of leaflets explaining how children get into the occult, and how to spot the tell-tale signs. "If children are going around with swords, knives and so on sticking out of their bodies it's possible they may have been involved in magical rituals. But often the signs are more subtle. Walking, talking, doing homework, watching television and eating food, are all signs that your child may have been possessed by occult forces."

When I went to interview Mrs Twatt, I was told by the Matron in charge that special appointments were necessary to see any of the inmates, and so was unable to speak to her. But, all in all, it would seem that witchcraft is as rife as ever in Yorkshire. Occult groups, many of them financed by the IRA and the PLO, are creating mayhem and destruction across the whole county. But some brave christian souls are fighting back. This week, the Reverend Logan Berry went with a torch-lit, hymn-singing procession, to Greeble Hill where, in 1643, four witches were burned for "looking at" someone's dog. Amidst great cries of Hallelujah, the Reverend Berry erected a three-hundred foot concrete statue of Jesus on top of the hill.

"It was my crowning glory," the Reverend said. "We all stood round and sang gospel music and looked up at the statue. Then a police car full of National Trust officials arrived and I was arrested!"

The Reverend Berry's book, *Witches Eat Babies, Really*, is published by Uplifting Books Ltd, a division of Christ is God (trademark) Inc, Alabama, USA and costs 9.50.

The mystery of the origin of living species has fascinated mankind for centuries. Until Darwin's Theory of Evolution emerged, the only explanation of origin was contained in the Bible (Genesis 1 & 2). Darwin provided scientists with an explanation that they could readily accept and thus the theory became dogma. Anthropological discoveries must be made to fit the evolutionary concept. But some palaeontologists, such as Dr Monty White,* now find that they cannot entirely accept evolution because it is not supported by the fossil record. In the television documentary, *Genesis Fights Back* (BBC1, 22 November, 1981), Dr White agreed that evolution took place within particular species but pointed out that the huge gaps between major animals, with no transitional forms, do not support Darwin's claims. Also, Dr White is not the first to state that, "Some discoveries have been suppressed because they didn't fit the evolutionary view."

The TV documentary concentrated on Darwin versus Genesis, and the third lesser known theory was not mentioned. The third theory is only a slight modification of the creation concept. The clue lies in one word, *Elohim*, from which *God* is translated in the Bible. All Hebrew words ending "im" are plural; therefore "elohim" means "the Gods." (In the beginning, *the Gods* created the heaven and the Earth.)

Genetic engineering has progressed sufficiently for scientists to create changes in life forms. The universe is old enough for inhabitants of a different world to have evolved millions of years ago, way beyond the scope of our scientists. They may well have been able to create a new world, complete with various forms of life, in six of *their* days.

Many religious writings speak of gods who descended and ascended: amidst smoke and fire; in fiery chariots; in ships; or in a "cloud". There are sufficient references in the Bible alone to fill a book. Though different from humans in appearance, the gods were humanoid in form. The exact words in Genesis 1:26 (King James Version) are: "And God said, *Let us make man in our image, after our own likeness...*" The words "us" and "our" can surely leave no doubt that it should read, "the gods."

The gods walked with Adam in the Garden of Eden. To produce Eve, Adam was anaesthetised and had one of his ribs removed by skillful surgery (Genesis 2:21-22). Humans were now able to reproduce, but the gods had also procreated children. In Genesis 3:4, it is written, "There were giants in the Earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of the gods came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."

A Frenchman, Claude Vorilhon, claims to have met a spaceman from the planet of our creators who told him that, upon his distant planet a long time ago, scientists were experimenting with DNA to produce life forms. Because the creatures that they made were hideous and a potential danger, their world government told the scientists to conduct their experiments elsewhere. This planet was both suitable and devoid of life. Every species of plant and animal was individually created over thousands of years. Some creatures, including mankind, underwent numerous improvements. There was no evolution (though environmental adaptations occurred) - each new model resulted from a revised plan, as do motor cars today.

After this revelation, Claude Vorilhon, known as Rael, founded the Raelian Movement, which now has an international membership of over twelve thousand. They believe that extraterrestrial scientists created life on this planet because this makes more sense than Darwin's theory and the Creation "concept" taught in christian churches.

Further Reading: Medina, David. *Elohim's Nursery*. Available from the author at, c/o Grand Court, 18 Spencer Hill, London SW19 4NY, for 6.50 inc.p&p.
Vorilhon, Claude. *Space Aliens Took Me to Their Planet*. British Raelian Movement, BOM Minstrel, London WC1N 3XX. Available for 6.50, inc.p&p.

* Wales University, Institute of Science & Technology, author of *What About Origins?*

The Megalithic Faults of Rombald's Moor and District

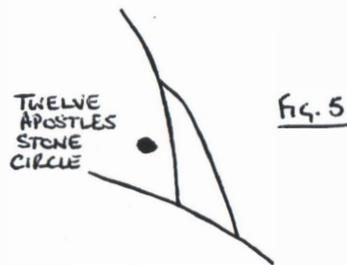
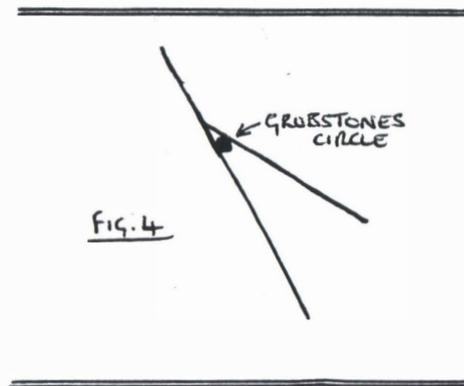
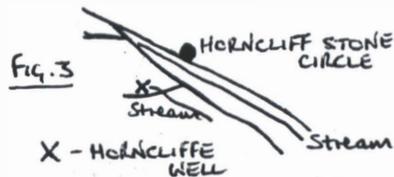
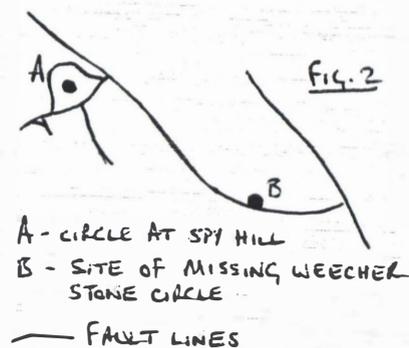
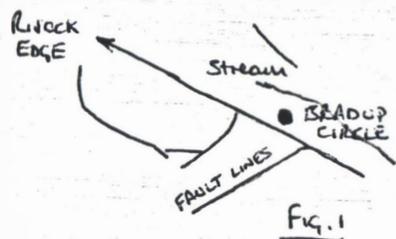
Rombald's Moor incorporates Keighley, Addingham, Ilkley, Bingley and Baildon Moors, plus a couple more, but these are enough for this article. Stretched across this relatively small geographical area are archaeological sites from the megalithic era that number around 500 - perhaps more! The majority of these sites are cup-and-ring stones (CRs for short). The rest are cairns, cairn circles, tumuli, monoliths and megalithic rings. (3) Of the old stone circles, none are too impressive when viewed against the panoramas of Callanish, Rollright and such ilk. But the people of those times found it worth their while to construct these now rickety-looking sites and, whatever their present guise, their significance cannot be overlooked.

Today, as the central core of Earth Mystery studies inclines attention once again to these fascinating old circles, legitimate scientific back-up is coming out with some damn good-looking results. UFO phenomena, long suspected by some hair-brained doods (myself included when I was 13!) to be linked to leys which linked to stone circles, turns out to have an indirect role by inference to the Earth's geological weak spots which also appear to commune with megalithic sites. (2) This in itself may sound a little hair-brained. Why the hell ancient man should wanna stand monoliths and stone circles close and in immediate conjunction with fault lines doesn't initially make any sense at all. I must admit that when first reading these remarks I was thoroughly sceptical. But, the standing stones and circles of this country seemingly were designed where, today, geologists have accurately mapped surface faulting. Similarly, the proximity of stone circles to running water has been remarked upon; with some researchers postulating a deliberate siting to it. Underwood's followers would undoubtedly nod vehemently at this. To some, it may sound a very trivial point; but water has extremely peculiar electromagnetic properties.

In the illustrations accompanying this article it can be noted with precise regularity the incidence of stone circle/geo-faulting relationship. At Bradup

circle (SE 04 SE 08974393), also known as Brass Castle (a site which was recorded by Turner in 1885 to have 18 stones), which has a history of hauntings, a fault line touches the south side of the now barely visible remains (Fig.1). A stream runs immediately to its northern side. The fault line adjacent to Bradup continues westwards until it meets Rivoek Edge, a highly significant rocky area containing many CR designs. It is thought that the CRs and the circle at Bradup have some geomantic relationship - probably with the circle being the focal point of practical use. The fault line which runs along its side here is the longest around this region of the moors.

At the picturesque little circle of Spy Hill (SE 14 SW 1236542518), which sits atop a small rise on the moors with its small outlying stones, a small fault line circles its way just around the site itself (Fig.2). It appears there are no immediate sites of relative significance which can encourage further thoughts on this circle; although barely 750 metres east of Spy Hill used to be a circle of free standing stones which were destroyed for the purpose of putting



FURTHER CORROBORATIVE EVIDENCE OF STONE CIRCLE DISTRIBUTION & THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO GEOLOGICAL WEAK SPOTS ON ILKLEY MOOR.

~ FAULT LINES

* The incidence of psychoactive plants at ancient sites is more common than you'd think. Near Bradup, Horncliffe, Brackenhall and around Weecher we have found the species *Panaeolus campanulatus*, *Panaeolus sphinctrinus* and *Psilocybe semilanceata*. There are probably more, but specific work along these lines has never been seriously carried out. Certainly in Cornwall, where a profusion of old stone sites clutter the land, a *Psilocybe*-species indigenous only to Cornwall has been reported by the mycologist and natural historian, John Ramsbottom. The possible growth of this species at the old stone sites there may prove blatantly incidental if anyone would care to look. You never know! Certainly such plants are reputed to grow adjacent to Rollright (*Amanita muscaria*), Castlerigg, Arbor Low and Long Meg. The hallucinogenic *Acorus calamus* may well profuse at a number of sites wherever boggy.

Weecher Reservoir there. Although we don't have clear-cut records as to its exact OS reference point, the figure SE 14 SW 13494209 was ascertained. Lo and behold, a fault line runs virtually right under this spot! A fast-running stream runs aside here. Additionally, this same fault when continued westwards misses Spy Hill by only twenty-five metres (Fig.2)! If any antiquarians amongst you can find anymore info on this destroyed Weecher circle, please let us know about it. There may well have been some very important geomantic relationship between these two sites which has unfortunately been lost to us by its destruction.

And now we come to the scruffy, but effective little site of Horncliffe Circle (SE 14 SW 1313943543). This site has a running well very close to it which has never recordedly dried up. Certainly it was the only place (bar Silver Well) on the moors in the summer of '76 which was still running. Faerie were reputedly seen here in times past according to local folklore. And according to the geology map, a close-knit clump of fault lines accumulate here (Fig.3). The south edge of the circle runs 10 metres from the closest one, and the well is equally close. Psychedelic fungi are also apparent here - which may bear relevance to the faerie-tale.*

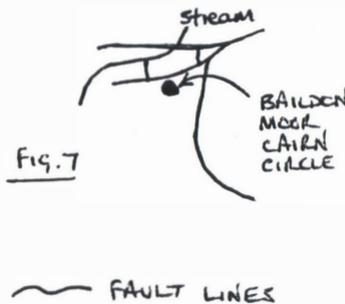
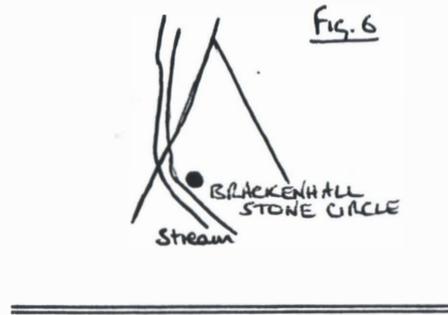
The other remaining circles upon Ilkley Moor are the Twelve Apostles (SE 14 NW 12624507) and the Grubstones circle (SE 14 SW 13634473). As we can see, the Grubstones site is actually enclosed by two adjoining fault lines. The north and south sides of the overgrown circle are just about touched by the faulting (Fig.4). This particular megalithic structure has the greatest geo-fault relationship. Its proximity to a number of large cairns, tumuli and CR designs undoubtedly made it an important geomantic point. An alignment here

appears evident to the midsummer sunset. This hasn't been confirmed however, so don't take it as gospel! The adjacent cairn-field to its north runs concurrent with the direction of faulting immediately below and around it. Perhaps the one circle with the furthest geo-fault distance from it is the one which everybody visits each Summer Solstice - with possibly as great a distant as 15 metres (Fig.5). Nevertheless, magnetic deviations have been recorded here with a compass, although only at one stone. Unfortunately this wasn't repeated when Paul and Charla Devereux looked at it recently - but such is the way with these bloody places! Nevertheless if it's any consolation, a UFO was seen over the site in 1976.

And now, shifting south to Baildon Moor (named after Baal-Dun, or Hill of Baal), we come to Brackenhall (SE 13 NW 13053908). This large and utterly unromantic large stone ellipse is also passed by a prominent fault in the Earth (Fig.6). A very strong stream is down the cliffs to its side. UFO phenomena were reported around this region in 1980, which were checked and found to be earthlights. One of the ELs was traversing the fault which here passes Brackenhall. The barely visible cairn circle site, 500 metres north of here (SE 14 SW 13254013), is also hemmed in by fault lines as Fig.7 indicates.

There are many others, and I could probably highlight these types of incidences for tens of pages. If Collyer's (1) brief remark regarding a possible stone circle above White Wells is accurate, its coincidence to faulting follows again the ascertained pattern. There are individual standing stones on the moors, all of which mimic this same model: one of them, the Pilchard Stone, below the cairn field north of Grubstones, stands right on a fault. Localised CR groups (there are four main ones here) appear to cluster where greater concentrations of earth faults are charted. A large number of the highly decorative ones, considered of high importance, are right on top of stones where faulting occurs. The Swastika, Pancake and even Badger Stone (stuck out alone where faults seem far from evident) still sticks to this rigid pattern. Evidently there's something odd in this geology lark! This opposition isn't just weird, it's utterly remarkable. How and why should this sort of thing take place? And not just here, but all over the country? (2)

Where we find weak spots such as fault lines in the Earth's crust, physical peculiarities not generally acquainted with the Newtonian concept of the universe are given the opportunity to occur. The electromagnetic spectrum sometimes behaves in ways that contravene the accepted system developed by old-time physicists. Along these ruggs in the planet's surface, gravity, and hence spacetime, is sometimes warped. This essence alone has prominent contributions to make purely scientific fields. There have been the rare incidences of reported time-slips at stone circles, which may well be explainable in the light of this geophysical anomaly. If the incidence of faulting becomes apparent at these spots and a "trigger" of a celestial nature (which is seemingly the case) activates the discharge of natural energies, we



have potentials that can stimulate what are generally called "supernatural" events.

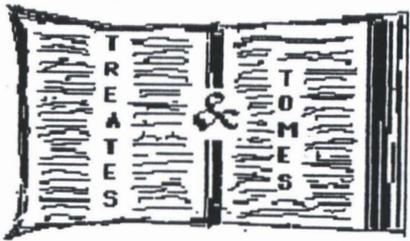
Where we find the large clusters of CR designs, it has been ascertained through ufological, astronomical and dowsing works, that the natural localised energies are affected by the movements of the heavenly bodies. And, as bursts of energy predominate more where faulting is associated, the clustering of the CRs around clusters of faulting would seem to be a calculated effort. In work that I've done in the past, it's been clearly demonstrated that natural celestial cycles and the waxing-waning of the Moon have triggered local emissions of electromagnetic energy, initiating the uprise of UFO flaps. (6) Keel found similar things in the late 60s and early 70s. (4) Michel Gauquelin's statistical works have confirmed other natural geocastellar cyclic relationships. Wiccans and magickians have known for centuries of the links between the Earth's weak spots and the activation that astronomical alignments can have on it. They've called it natural magick. Add to this the eerie properties found in water. At sites where its presence is visible, magickal potential is increased moreso. Water is extremely sensitive to the variations in the Earth's magnetic field, the Moon and the solar wind, which in turn form electromagnetic fields of varying proportions. Add this aspect to the geological emissions, and we have a very promising laboratory in a stone circle. This is "scientific magick".

Water has been described by Lyall Watson as, "Something tantamount almost to a separate sense organ." (7) He describes how a German engineer, Theodor Schwenk, did experiments with water when an eclipse occurred and found that it appeared to be both sensitive to events, as well as impressionable. His results mimicked somewhat the ideas of T.C. Lethbridge's, where he accounts water to a medium with the capacity to "record" events and emotions, as if on the occultist's etheric field. These are later "played back" when the Earth, Sun, Moon and whatever else are aligned, and are encountered by people who interpret them as ghosts, etc. Schwenk wrote, "A stream, bubbling mainly over stones, forms countless inner surfaces and tiny vortices, which are all sense organs open to the cosmos." (my italics) An article on water in a forthcoming Earth will highlight its further peculiarities.

Where stone circles are found, the energies there are not to be played with. As any good magickian will tell you, don't mess around with the forms that you can activate at these places. You are very likely to be toying with the raw might of the electromagnetic spectrum. Others might call it, God! Keel's hypothetical proposition of a "superspectrum", (5) amidst which live the energies which affect every living thing and influence consciousness, is far from a loopy idea. Ufologists thought so when he propounded it in '75, but the thoughts he expounded then, reflect well in the light of recent discoveries in quantum physics. Everything - absolutely everything - is answerable within this superspectrum. Whilst consciousness can affect and, to a degree, manipulate the varying constitutions of it, there are very dangerous avenues pursued here. Again, any magickian will tell you this.

Microwaves, gravity, ultraviolet, ultrasound, bioenergy, gamma and X-rays...all are energies available to the planet where the surface grows thin. None are to be toyed with. And yet at the old sacred sites where concentrations of these energies appear at certain times - solstices, equinoxes, sunrises, sunsets - the entire potential of all this is at hand. UFOs and the host of what are generally known as supernatural phenomena dwell here. Keel told us all this twenty years ago. And now, with the capacities available to us today, through the progressive scientific workings into earthlight phenomena, all the old magick is coming back. But, because consciousness is a very large part of the energies which are waiting to be explored here, Keel's ultraterrestrials are still there...waiting for us to enter their domain...

1. Collyer, Robert & Turner, J.Horsfall. *Ilkley: Ancient and Modern*. Otley, 1885.
2. Devereux, Paul. *Earthlights*. Turnstone, 1982.
3. Hedges, John (Ed). *The Carved Rocks on Rombald's Moor*. WYMCC, 1995.
4. Keel, John A. *UFOs: Operation Trojan Horse*. Souvenir Press, 1971.
5. Keel, John A. *The Eighth Tower*. EP Dutton, 1975.
6. *UFOs and the Lunar Function*, UFO Brigantia, No.6.
7. Watson, Lyall. *Earthworks*. Hodder & Stoughton, 1986.



Lake Monster Traditions: A Cross-Cultural Analysis - Michel Meurger with Claude Gagnon. *Fortean Times*, 1 Shoebury Rd, East Ham, London E6 2AQ. 31 Photos, 141 Illus. 8 Maps, notes. Bibliography, 5 Indexes. ISBN 1 870021 002. 320pp. 12.95.

A book on lake monsters reviewed by a ufologist? Stranger things happen at sea and stranger things certainly happen in this book by Meurger and Gagnon. But it's why they happen, or are reported to

happen, that makes this book so fascinating. Meurger refutes the two main 20th Century arguments about lake monster origins, i.e. that they're either a) products of some shamanic-type experience, or b) they're creatures which have so far remained hidden from science. He says of these two conflicting camps, "The top hat of scientism and the feather-hat of neo-shamanism are full of holes." Thus stated, Meurger goes on to prove this statement by taking the reader on what is, for me, the best roller-coaster ride of lake monster sightings, beliefs, traditions, facts, fictions and ephemera that you will ever read. And I mean, ever. The writing style is dense but lucid. Bear with it and it pays dividends with gems of information. The illustrations are profuse, rarely seen and as pertinent as the text. The whole book is a delight to have in the hands.

"Evidence" and that hoary old chestnut, "the reliable witness" is often raised. As with other areas of anomaly there's little hard evidence, but soft evidence abounds in the form of a person who will, say, testify in court that he/she has seen a monster; or in an event such as when the Danish Royal Commission announced their belief in Mermen, because they'd seen one, and was used to back up belief in the solid nature of lake monsters. As Meurger says, the folklore of lake monsters was "scientificated and officialized" - from this reviewers point of view, just as the folklore of ufology is now similarly being treated.

The geographical areas covered include North America and Continental Europe and are covered in depth. The subject areas range from Abductions to Witches. Witness testimony and historical items dot the pages, all held together by Meurger's penetrating comment on, and analysis of, lake monster origins and analogies. Meurger's ultimate idea seems to be that the lake monster is a product of our own imaginations, spun from consideration and re-telling of the stimulus/event after it happened. The stimuli likely to be floating logs, big fish or strange waves; mirroring the psycho-social hypothesis so obvious, but yet so ignored in ufology. Those of you who think that because Meurger posits this idea and disputes the "occult" or "real" origins of these mythological monsters should think again. That the human mind can evoke these monsters and the attendant mythology from simple misperception and the cultural context in which it operates, is more fantastic than either of the refuted theories.

Besides lake monsters, Meurger also covers the whole range of other anomalies seen in conjunction with lake monsters, or in areas where LMs have been seen, thus showing the 'leakage' between anomalies and cultural conditioning of the same. We have UFOs, ghosts, mystery submarines (wonderful subject!), ghost-ships, humanoid connections with LMs, mermaids/men, underground passage lore and much much more, all skillfully woven into the tapestry of anomaly as folklore. From a ufologist's point of view this book makes mind-boggling reading. Just substitute "UFO" for "lake monster" and the events are the same. A vast myth conjured up and nurtured by the society which in turn feeds it. The whole thing is a carousel of sightings, media reports, books and back to the sightings again. As in ufology, we are not examining lake monsters, merely reports of lake monsters; and with the exception of the odd ambiguous photograph the two fields are exactly the same and frequently cross over.

As Tim Dinsdale said of the Loch Ness Monster, but which is applicable to any of the monster locations in this book, "This business (of Loch Ness) serves as a kind of mirror reflecting human behaviour." Lake Monster Traditions is one of the most

important books on the subject of anomalies in general to have appeared in the last forty years. No more, no less. Like *Fortean Times*, one of whose editors is behind this book's publishing, a review of this length cannot begin to do justice to it, and I have only scratched the surface of ideas and events dealt with in this book. Presumably of a limited-print run, this work may not be available for too long and it's my view that anyone interested in anomalies would be foolish indeed not to have this *Fortean Tome* on their bookshelf. Reviewed by, Andy Roberts.

A Folk Herbal - Jon Hyslop & Paul Ratcliffe. *Radiation Publications*, PO Box 345, Oxford OX4 3PZ. Illus. Biblio. ISBN 1-871889-00-6. 52pp. 3.50.

This small, but beautifully-produced book, is a delight to the eye. Its contents, although far from voluminous, capture the herbal arts in a manner that's well-presented and, I'd say, as they should be done. Although the authors only cover ten herbs here, they're each approached by covering their histories, folk names, medicinal and magickal uses. And within these ten herbs, five are well-known to entertainers into altered states of consciousness. We're told this of course! Perhaps of interest to psychoactive followers will be the authors' chapter on flying ointments - a subject covered in very few books these days, but one which is known to be interesting more and more people. Wiccan and mythical histories are presented within the contexts of each specimen, some with note of recipes to aid clairvoyance and such aids. It's very good stuff and a work that's very much worth adding to any herbal library. I only wish my British Magickal Herbal was going to look like this!

The Occult Census: Statistical Analyses & Results - Edited, Compiled by Chris Bray. *Sorcerer's Apprentice Press*, Hyde Park Corner, Leeds LS6 2NW, West Yorkshire. ISBN 1-872132-00-6. 40pp. Large SAE plus 2 x 19p stamps.

"The first ever statistical analysis of the population, involvements, interests and opinions of occultists in the United Kingdom," as it's described. Certainly it's that, and bases its conclusions on a poll of more than a thousand occultists across this land. Let's be honest with ourselves here: those who knew the analysis was being done had a good idea of good results at the end of it. Over 80% polled had vocations considered (socially) very respectable. Coppers, politicians, scientists, doctors, nurses, pilots...the list goes on. Other figures indicative of the social respectability aspect showed that 48% of those polled owned their own car/s. Higher than the national average. 45% own their own homes. Higher than the national average. Indeed, virtually all of the percentage figures detailing the thoughts and activities of Pagans/occultists, etc, showed explicit regard for Life, with an overall illustration overturning the Mr Geoffrey (big, fat and sweaty) Dickens crap that "occultists molest children/are pervies/disregard social values", etc. Hopefully he might listen to this (although I doubt it). From a sociological viewpoint, this report gives good press to "weirdoes" - the main problem now, is actually getting the Press to highlight the goodness within it.

Yorkshire Holy Wells and Sacred Springs - Edna Whelan & Ian Taylor. *Northern Lights Publications*, PO Box 113, Dunnington, York YO1 5JH. Illus. 18 Maps. Biblio. ISBN 1-869939-09-3. 80pp. 2.95.

Another little gem from this fast-growing publishing group - this is the first work of its kind in Yorkshire this century. Although this isn't a concise guide to the old wells and sacred waters of our county, it goes a long way towards that end. Herein, details of more than 100 old sites - many with accustomed legends and folk tales attached to them - are both illustrated and written of. Wherever possible the authors have attempted to trace information relating to their healing and medicinal properties. These, coupled with tales of local Gods and, more often, Goddesses, weaves us a guided amalgam of ancient sacred springs and wells that captivate the essence of the Pagan spirituality at such magical sites. At these old flowing scenes, the Earth Spirit itself suffuses in great webs. It's little surprise that the authors found numerous tales of faerie, ghosts, and entities like the malicious Jenny Greenteeth and even the Devil himself! Elsewhere, the great God Pan reputedly lived! Certainly, those of you who follow the ways of the Earth Spirit, and others whose interests lie within the local Earth Mysteries fields can't fail to pass this book. As an addition to the literature of Pagan folk and field studies, we have an invaluable contribution here. I eagerly look forward to the proposed Volume II...

EXCHANGE MAGAZINES

The Ley Hunter - The Magazine of Earth Mysteries, and probably the world's No.1 on EM, EL & other such matters. Excellent! Subscription is 6.00 for 4 issues, or 1.50 each from, PO Box 5, Brecon, Powys LD3 7LU, Wales.

Fortean Times - The Foremost Journal of Strange Phenomena. Quite brilliant! 1.75 each or 7.00 for 4 from, Bob Rickard, 96 Mansfield Road, London NW3 2HX.

Strange - Brilliant quality American Fortean mag with names like Keel, Anton Wilson, Devereux, Coleman & Chorvinsky. Single copy \$3.95 + \$1.50 postage, or \$18.95 for 4 issues, to Strange Magazine, Dept.2, PO Box 2246, Rockville, Maryland 20852, USA.

The Lamp of Thoth - Quarterly publication of the Sorcerer's Apprentice, covering all aspects of the occult, magick & Pagan matters, etc. 2.75 each or 10.60 for 6 successive copies from, 4-8 Burley Lodge Road, Leeds LS6 1QP, West Yorkshire.

Meyn Mawro - Ancient Stones & Sacred Sites of West Penwith, Cornwall. A Pagan-orientated earth mysteries mag. Sample copy 1.50 or 4.50 per annum from, 51 Carn Bosavern, St. Just, Penzance, Cornwall TR19 7QX.

Moonshine - A lively, informative Pagan magazine. Out 6 times a year. 1.50 each or 6.00 a year from, Rich Westwood, 498 Bristol Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 8BD.

The Hookah - Publication of the Legalise Cannabis Campaign. Occasional mag based on donations (send 95p and you'll get a Hookah). Back issues are available. For info on both the mag & the LCC write, BM Cannabis 2455, London WC1N 3XX.

New Dimensions - The Monthly Magazine of Esoteric Law. 1.00 each or 9.00 per annum from, Mark Saunders Publications, 1 Austin Close, Irchester, Northants NN9 7AX.

Vision Seeker & Sharer - Quarterly eco-Pagan, Amerindian & Aboriginal support mag, very good for just 75p each or 3.00 per annum from, Rainbow Publications (cheques/PDs to them), PO Box HK9, Leeds LS11 8JP, West Yorkshire.

Sut Anubis - The magazine of the occult & esoteric. Original articles on Paganism, Crowleyism, ceremonial magick, wicca, etc. 1.50 each or 5.75 for 4 from, Occultique, 73 Kettering Road, Northampton NN1 4AW.

Nox - The magazine of the Abyss. Magick, Chaos, Lovecraft, etc. 3.00 per annum from, Stephen Sennitt, 15 Oxford Street, Mexborough S64 9RL, South Yorkshire.

International UFO Reporter - Mag of the J.Allen Hynek Centre for UFO Studies. \$35 per annum from, 2457 West Peterson Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60659, USA.

Northern Earth Mysteries - publication of the group of the same name. 1.35 each or 3.00 per annum from, Rob Wilson, 103 Derbyshire Lane, Norton Lees, Sheffield S8 9EN.

The Kabbalist - Quarterly publication of the International Order of Kabbalists. 3.00 per annum or 1.00 each from, 25 Circle Gardens, Merton Park, London SW19 3JX.

Northern UFO News - Mag of the Northern UFO Network. 1.00 each or 6.00 per annum from, Jenney Randles, 37 Heathbank Rd, Cheadle Heath, Stockport SK3 0UP, Cheshire.

Dalriada - Pagan Celtic Journal. Quarterly publication @ 1.25 each or 4.00 per annum from, Dun-na-Beatha, 2 Braithvic Place, Brodick, Arran KA27 8BN, Scotland.

The Scotc Pagan - Published 6 times a year, and covering Paganism, EM, etc. 5.00 per annum or 75p each from, 16 Glen Kinglas Road, Greenock, Inverclyde PA16 9NW.

Out from the Core - A magazine about radical healing. Single copies 85p each or 2.50 for 3 issues from, Nick Totton, 23 Knowle Rd, Leeds LS4 2PJ, West Yorkshire.

UFO Brigantia - Magazine of the Independent UFO Network. 7.00 for 6 copies per annum or 1.25 each from, 84 Elland Road, Brighouse HD6 2QR, West Yorkshire.

Cosmology Newslink - International Magazine of the Cosmos. Bi-monthly UFO, ghost, parapsi mag from, 16 Newton Green, Great Dunmow, Essex CM6 1DU (no prices given).

UFO Newscipping Service - Large monthly UFO/Fortean mag. \$7 each or \$80 per annum from, Lucius Farish, Route 1 - Box 220, Plumerville, Arkansas 72127, USA.

Franz Bardon Foundation, 1388 Garrison, No.A307, Lakewood, Colorado 80215, USA.

Magonia - UFOs, Society & the Individual. Quarterly publication @ 95p each or 3.00 per annum from, John Dee Cottage, Mortlake Churchyard, London SW14 8BH.

Gnomon - Paganism, festivals, EM & UFOs. Quarterly publication at 50p each or 2.00 per annum from, John Harrison, 2 Baggrave View, Barsby, Leicestershire LE7 8RW.

Spiral - The Magazine of the Starcraft Network. Channeling, Paganism, magick, etc. Published quarterly. 1.50 each or 6.00 a year from, 8 King St, Glastonbury BA6 9JY.

Greenpeace, 29-35 Gladstone Road, Croydon, Surrey CR9 3RP. Friends of the Earth, 26-28 Underwood Street, London N1 7JQ. Ark, the new global conservation group.

Info/details from, The Ark Office, 500 Harrow Rd, London W9 3RN. Tel. 01-968-6780.