

EARTHQUEST NEWS

n°8

Before 1984

In this issue - Runwell Update 2.
Synchronicity in a Cathedral. The Circle
of Perpetual Choirs. Photographic
evidence of the Plymouth hay-fall.
The Cuffley Lioness sightings.



Experts discuss the possibility of a lioness on the loose. Left to right: George Fay, owner of Broxbourne Zoo, Phillip Fontaine, a tracking expert, and Yvonne Bickers, the wild animals keeper at the zoo.

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Lead In

It was my intention to cut down the size of Earthquest News as from this issue. The cost of producing the past two issues has cost over £110 on each occasion. As we only have about 50 paying subscribers it has been impossible to even cover costs, despite having raised the cover price to 95p. The time involved with producing an issue is well over a month of evening work. As there are four to be completed in a year, this means that nearly a third of my year is taken up producing Earthquest News. With the limited response so far one wonders, once again, whether it is all worth it.

Of course it's worth it, and yet it should be approached in a sensible and economic way. However, a few kind words concerning the production and contents of past issues has prompted me to keep the usual size, for the time being at least.

In this issue we have some very interesting pieces including Michael Lewis' excellent report on the Cuffley lioness sightings and John Merron's lengthy archive and field work on the Circle of Perpetual Choirs. We also have what would appear to be a "scoop" in finding and printing the first photographic evidence of a Fortean hay fall in progress. There is an example of an archetypal synchronicity which took place earlier this year at Canterbury Cathedral and involved the Earthquest group.

Due to the Collins syndrome (definition: everything I write seems to get longer and longer and longer) the article on psychic quest work and the Somerset terrestrial zodiac has been scraped. All is not lost though, as the piece will now appear as the next in The Supernaturalist series under the title "Clue to Kingweston." See you there, in the meantime, happy reading.

Andy Collins. Samhain 1983

Earthquest.

Earthquest is an Essex based group studying and promoting the multi-disciplinary subject of the Earth Mysteries. Among the topics covered by the group and this publication are psychical research, paranormal phenomena, esoteric knowledge, prehistoric and mystical sites, religious history and mysteries, folklore and geomancy.

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Credits: Production and editorial - Andy Collins. Calligraphy - Dave Hunt. Typing - Carole Young.

NEXT ISSUE: The Knights Templar, warrior monks of the Crusades, whose history is steeped in legend, controversy and mysticism. Earthquest announces its project to uncover the history of the Templars in Essex, their knights, lands and stories.

Contents

	Page No.
THE CUFFLEY LIONESS	4
A detailed study and case report on Hertfordshire Lioness sightings by Michael Lewis.	
SYNCHRONICITY IN A CATHEDRAL	9
Your editor reports on a remarkable series of synchronicities during an Earthquest field trip to Canterbury.	
THE CIRCLE OF PERPETUAL CHOIRS	14
John Merron introduces his findings concerning the sacred geometry and reality of the Perpetual Choirs of Britain	
PHOTOGRAPHIC HAY FALL EVIDENCE	19
Exclusive review of actual pictures showing a phantom hay fall in progress over Plymouth in 1969.	
RUNWELL UPDATE 2	23
More legends, tales and stories from Runwell.	
DEVIL TALK	26
Templars on Television. Holy Blood, Holy Grail, Holy Paperback. The Legacy of the Cravens. Masonic Expose Mystery. The Tribes of Armageddon.	
HOT GOSSIP FROM LUCY FUR	31
A personal review of some recent Earth Mysteries and Paranormal occasions by our lady on the spot.	
EXCHANGES ROUND-UP	33
A look at the publications currently available in the paranormal, Earth Mysteries and Fortean scene.	
LIFE TO A MARKSTONE!	38
Some recent correspondence concerning the ancient markstone in Old Leigh, Essex.	

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THE CUFFLEY LIONESS

By Michael Lewis.

In EN5 Michael presented a detailed report of the controversy surrounding Derek Mahoney and Arthur's Cross. Now he turns his attentions to Fortean phenomena in the form of out-of-place feline sightings in Hertfordshire.

* * *

At 6 a.m. on 16th May 1983 Mr David Messling was having breakfast in the kitchen of his detached house at 2, Sutherland Way, Cuffley. Sutherland Way is a short road on the outskirts of the village, in a fairly well wooded area (OS TL 300 032): it is what estate agents describe as a high class residential area. DM's kitchen has a commanding view over his 60 yards of garden, which slopes away from the house. It is enclosed by a thorn hedge on both sides and by a small copse at the bottom, it is laid mainly to lawn, with a patio near the house and a swimming pool about 60 feet from the house. An outhouse some 20 feet long is situated alongside the hedge below the kitchen window.

As he gazed out of the kitchen window, DM saw a large animal leap over the hedge from the garden of 3, Sutherland Way. It was sandy coloured and short haired, about 2'6" in height and 4' between the legs, with a long tapered tail. DM immediately identified it as a fully grown lioness. The animal paused by a child's swing beyond the swimming pool (i.e. about 30 yards distant), then trotted across the garden to the opposite hedge, where it was momentarily lost to view because of the outhouse roof. The animal was seen to trot (DM used the term 'swagger') alongside the hedge, which it had apparently decided not to leap, down the garden and disappeared into the copse. DM grabbed his camera and rushed down the garden in an attempt to photograph the animal. However, he could not see it and wisely decided not to venture into the copse.

DM did not wake his sleeping wife, and left for work at Potters Bar without taking any further action. However, once at work DM became concerned that the lioness, which he assumed 'had escaped from somewhere', might attack schoolchildren, so he reported it to Potters Bar police station at 7.20 a.m. Two police cars were despatched to investigate, arriving at 7.30 a.m. DM's wife was still asleep and knew nothing, so one of the policemen searched the garden. At the bottom of the garden he looked over the hedge (which is not so high at this point) and saw the lioness jump over the fence on the far side of the garden of No. 3 Sutherland Way, at a distance of no more than 50 feet. Convinced, he then returned to summon assistance, at which point Mrs. Gwen Shipman enquired as to the reason for his presence. On being told to stay indoors because of an escaped lioness, she went to the rear of her

detached bungalow and from a window saw the face of the lioness as it crouched in long grass in the garden of No. 4 Sutherland Way, at a distance of some 150 feet. She could only see the animal's face but was adamant that it was definitely cat shaped. She told the policeman but the animal had gone when they returned to the window.

THE HUNT BEGINS

By 8 a.m. a police helicopter had arrived, and the police, worried that a lioness was on the loose, began a massive operation to recapture it. Some twenty or so police cars converged on the normally quiet residential area, and residents were warned by loudspeakers to stay indoors. Experts from nearby Broxbourne zoo were summoned, and a tracking expert armed with tranquillising darts was rushed to the scene. DM, alerted by his wife as to the turn of events, returned home and assisted the police in looking for tracks: the lawn beyond the swimming pool was waterlogged and the grass wet, about 2" high; some tracks, not less than 3" across, were found where the animal had crossed the garden but it appeared to have slipped on the muddy grass and the tracks were indistinct. The prints had five separately discernible parts. DM was unable to state positively that they were in fact made by the animal he has seen.

An extensive search for tracks was also carried out in the garden of 3, Sutherland Way: GS stated that policemen swarmed everywhere but were so meticulous that none of the bluebells in the copse which extends into the bottom of the garden were damaged. In the soft earth of a compost heap in the far corner of the garden a print was discovered and a cast taken. This was apparently where the policeman had seen the animal leap the fence. The grass in the garden of no. 4 Sutherland Way (about 6" high) where the animal was seen lying by GS, was found to be flattened. However, no damage to plants was found in any of the gardens.

By the afternoon a mobile command post had been set up at nearby Great Wood, which was searched by large numbers of armed police. Great Wood adjoins the residential area in question (OS TL 280 040), and it would in fact be possible for an animal to reach it from Sutherland Way without leaving the protection of trees, except to cross roads. Great Wood itself extends to some 2½ square kilometres, and there are adjoining wooded areas as well.

No further sightings were made and the police finally called off the hunt later in the day. By this time the attention of the media had been attracted by the intense activity and the hunt was featured in an early evening TV programme. The next day several national newspapers carried reports, including the 'Financial Times'.

SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

Rumours of missing pets and mauled livestock were rife in the area, but both DM and Potters Bar police warned against credence. However, DM stated that he had it on good authority that sheep on a local farm had been mauled, and Potters Bar police stated that a local farmer's wife had told them livestock were missing. There were no further sightings of the creature, and the affair died down as suddenly as it began.

When visiting DM I took my camera, a Kodak Tele-Ektralite 600 electronic flash, with the intention of photographing the spot where the animal jumped the hedge, from DM's viewing point. As a summerhouse had been erected near the spot since the sighting, with consequent excavation of soil, I decided a photograph would be misleading. The camera was not used until eight days later, while on holiday in Sussex. Although only 15 months old and never having given any trouble previously, depression of the electronic flash indicator button failed to activate the indicator light. The battery was checked and said to be flat, but replacement did not cure the fault. Prior to returning it to the retailers for attention under the guarantee on my return from holiday, the camera was checked and the indicator light found to be in working order. Camera malfunctions are sometimes reported in cases of anomalous phenomena, and this incident is recorded in case it may be of any significance.

INVESTIGATION

The principal investigation was carried out by the police. The only registered owner of a large cat in the area, at Hatfield, six miles to the northwest, was checked but the animal was secure. A travelling circus had passed through Cuffley early that morning and it was traced and stopped; no animals were found to be missing. A thorough search of the area by large numbers of police aided by a helicopter was fruitless.

Broxbourne zoo was contacted but no animals were missing; experts from the zoo examined the tracks in DM's garden and stated that they were too small, the wrong shape, and too shallow to be those of a lioness; they admitted that the tracks were 'very bad', and DM pointed out that he had observed dogs, deer, foxes and other wildlife in the garden at various times which might be responsible for the tracks. Regrettably no reply was received to a letter I sent to the zoo seeking more information.

I made considerable efforts to locate the tracking expert mentioned in the local newspaper report, but to no avail. Attempts to gain more information from the police led up a blind alley: Potters Bar police were polite and helpful, the officer I spoke to having been involved in the hunt and of the opinion that the animal was a Great Dane; he referred me to Enfield police who had organised the hunt, but a disinterested WPC declined to answer my questions about the officer who had seen the animal, stating that the matter was closed as the animal had been a large dog; all enquiries were being referred to the Scotland Yard press bureau who had issued a statement that the animal was a Rottweiler dog. It was not possible to check the missing livestock stories as no-one could recall the name of the farm mentioned in the TV programme.

ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

Clearly the creature either was a lioness or the witnesses misidentified it as such.

The case for a lioness hinges upon DM's initial identification: he saw it leap over a tall hedge onto his lawn at a distance of 30 yards in good visibility under daylight conditions; he had not heard

of any reported sightings of a lioness in the locality nor had other than a passing interest in mystery animals. I submit that there was no good reason for DM to conclude that the creature was a lioness unless, as seems to have been the case, the circumstances were such as to preclude any other conclusion. The normal reaction in such a situation would be to preclude any other conclusion. The normal reaction in such a situation would be to rationalise, i.e. to decide that the creature must be a dog, but it was viewed in such good conditions that DM was driven to the conclusion that he was indeed looking at a lioness.

The policeman viewed the creature at an even shorter distance and surely could hardly have failed to make a correct identification. It is true that he had been told to expect to see a lioness but it may be assumed that he regarded DM's sighting with some degree of scepticism. As a result of his sighting a massive police hunt was launched.

GS is perhaps the weakest witness, as she saw only the creature's head at a greater distance and had been expecting to see a lioness.

Assuming that the creature was a lioness, there are three possible explanations:

- (i) it had escaped from captivity: police enquiries eliminated this possibility, although the animal could have escaped from an unregistered owner; this is not considered very likely, especially as it was presumably recaptured by its owner, since there were no further sightings. It has been suggested that the travelling circus is too much of a coincidence and must have lost a lioness as it passed through Cuffley; however, there would only have been half an hour between the last sightings of the lioness and the commencement of the police hunt in which the lioness could have been recaptured without detection, and it was last seen in an area inaccessible by road and bordered by the gardens of private houses. We are thus left with the preposterous scenario of a lion tamer and travelling cage trying to inveigle the creature back into its cage (having first located it), at the same time managing to avoid detection in the face of a massive police hunt !!
- (ii) the animal had been living wild in the countryside: the theory that there is a rare breed of big cat, indigenous to Britain, which shuns man and is therefore rarely seen, is well argued in Di Francis' book "Cat Country - The Quest for the British Big Cat" (David & Charles); certainly the stories of mauled livestock fit in with this explanation. However the lioness in this case walked openly through the gardens of houses, and remained in the same relatively small area for some ninety minutes. Furthermore, despite massive publicity, no further sightings were reported in the relatively well-populated countryside.
- (iii) the animal comes into the category of a 'mystery animal', in this instance a large cat-like creature, which suddenly appears from nowhere, stays long enough to be seen in circumstances which seem to rule out

misidentification, and then disappears as mysteriously as it appeared. The Fortean coincidence of the travelling circus, and (possibly) the camera malfunction are all well known accompaniments of such events; however, the nature and origins of such creatures are far from understood, and explanations that they belong to the realm of the supernatural have been rejected by some critics on the grounds of lack of evidence.

Misidentification by the witnesses is the explanation given by the police. However, Scotland Yard's assertion that the creature was a Rottweiler dog can be authoritatively dismissed: these animals do not exceed 2 feet in height, are black with brown markings, and have the more elongated face typical of a dog, which could not be mistaken for a cat. A Great Dane would be a more likely candidate, but we are faced with the problem of the hedge over which the creature leaped: this was a substantial thorn hedge, five feet six inches in height and three feet in width. I contend that no dog could possibly jump this hedge, let alone in one leap, and any proponent of the dog explanation must name the breed of dog which could achieve this feat.

The police's explanation also flies in the face of the testimony of one of their own officers. I believe that it was dictated by the necessity to allay the fears of local residents who had been warned to stay indoors until the creature had been captured; in the absence of further sightings the explanation would acquire credibility and allow the affair to be quietly forgotten.

If the creature really was a dog then it seems likely that such a large-scale hunt would have succeeded in capturing it, unless its owner had recaptured it; unlike a big cat, a dog would not conceal itself to avoid detection. However, the final argument against the dog explanation must be the testimony of DM, which has been discussed above.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Sightings of big cats, such as this one, which have been thoroughly investigated by the authorities, provide valuable evidence of a phenomenon which is being increasingly reported (e.g. the beast of Exmoor). Although I was unable to get to the bottom of the vexed question of the cracks in this case, the circumstances of the sightings, and in particular the leap over the thorn hedge, lead me to the conclusion that this was indeed a lioness; I would not, however, like to venture any opinion as to whether these big cats are indigenous to the countryside, or whether there is a more complex, paranormal explanation.

* * *

Editor's Note

The strange coincidence of a circus being in the vicinity at the time of the Cuffley lioness sightings brought a smile to my face. It so happens that on the day of the first two Horndon black panther sightings in November (see next issue and stop press at the end of this issue) there was a travelling circus passing through nearby Billericay.

There was no link, that I'm sure, but the circus "passing through" syndrome appears to be another Fortean synchronicity factor often found in such cases, showing the evidence of parapsychical phenomena. If this is the case then perhaps the conditions of manifestation of out-of-place beasts is reliant upon the collective consciousness of an area, producing all sorts of obscure and meaningless synchronicities involving witness and place-names, local events, current news and local lifestyles and situations.

SYNCHRONICITY IN A CATHEDRAL - A REPORT BY YOUR EDITOR.

The act of synchronicity is currently defined as an incident beyond coincidence which is considered to have been co-ordinated by some form of outside guidance. Interpretation of this outside guidance varies according to the personal beliefs of those concerned. However, one suitable explanation currently in vogue among parapsychological circles is Rex Stanford's theory of Psi Mediated Instrumental Response (PMIR), a kind of "holy guardian angel" formed within the subconscious mind, which acts on behalf of the person utilising telepathically gained information, unconscious memory recall and experience, along with a mild form of psycho-kinesis. In other words, this theory suggests that the subconscious mind can work independently to the conscious mind on your behalf and usually to your advantage.

Synchronicity is undoubtedly a major facet of personal belief systems and our understanding of the processes involved will certainly prove instrumental in discovering the ultimate boundaries of human capability. The events which befell the Earthquest group during a recent visit to Canterbury cathedral can only be described as synchronicities. So curious were they that the group felt they should be used to show a basic form of this phenomenon.

The intention of the group field trip, which took place on 17th July 1983 was a sight seeing tour of Canterbury cathedral, along with a visit to the Kent village of Cobham to see its many sandstone erratics and the Runwell Cross-like designs on the sepulchral slabs within its church.

The village of Cobham proved very interesting. A lunchtime drink in a local pub followed, then it was on to Canterbury, a town steeped in Christian tradition dating back to the time of the Saxons. However, just before we reached the city gates two of our group, Carole Young and Caroline Wise distinctly felt a very oppressive atmosphere beginning to build up, as if Canterbury held some strong negative presence. These subjective feelings led to a very agitated feeling for Carole who felt that we should turn back. In fact, when we finally arrived at Canterbury Carole got out of the car and immediately started walking away from the cathedral on purpose. The rest of the group called her back and reluctantly she eventually came with us.

COSMOLOGY

In the cathedral tourists swarmed about with souvenirs and booklets, among which I found the two people we had arranged to meet - Valerie Martin, a Kent Earthquest member, and Colin Dudley, a remarkable man who has for years been studying the sacred geometry and cosmology of the cathedral. Colin took us down into the crypts and gave the group a fascinating talk on the cathedral's cosmology which is based upon the

intricate mosaic design in the chancel, of obscure and ancient origin, called the Opus Alexandrinum. He explained how the master masons had reflected the divine principles and cosmic order in the microcosmic form and structure of the cathedral's sacred geometry which itself was based upon the Opus Alexandrinum. Within the mosaic itself is yet another very small design showing that the cosmic form was repeated in miniature showing that the sacred geometry went in ever decreasing proportions, just like in mathematics when a number is halved.

To Colin this intricate design and its relationship with the cathedral's construction indicated that the sacred geometry was used to channel the cosmic energies onto an exact spot upon the Opus Alexandrinum. Here, probably, a holy man would stand to receive the divine influence and in a reverse fashion be able to send out powerful emanations by using the ever expanding cosmology of the place, thus believing that they could send out their sphere of influence throughout the world. He also mentioned that the placing of Thomas a Beckett's tomb directly beneath the Opus Alexandrinum in the crypts was surely more than just coincidence.

Once Colin had finished his talk the group split up and wandered around the cathedral. Carole and Caroline still felt the very oppressive atmosphere and both felt strong pains in the head as if some strong negativity was present. Another member of the group said they felt sick and had to leave the cathedral. The others were not particularly concerned with this uneasiness, since they were engulfed in the splendours of the cathedral.

THOMAS A BECKETT

Carole felt the negativity was in some way connected with the terrible death of Thomas a Beckett, who was murdered in the cathedral during 1170. She said she could trace the source of this strong negative influence and immediately took the group to a spot in the sanctuary where, we realised, Beckett had been slain. This act of psychometry was remarkable in itself but it seemed more than purely this as the negativity seemed to generate from the whole cathedral itself, with the focus on the place of Beckett's murder.

The group was at a loss to explain why we should pick up these curious psychic emanations. It was a total mystery. People on Earthquest field trips often experience weird presences and atmospheres, so this was nothing new. What I could not understand was why a place such as Canterbury cathedral, surely one of the sanctified sites in Britain, should radiate this negative atmosphere.

Time wore on, and we had to leave to go home. Just as I got back to the car I realised I had lost an important folder which contained a considerable amount of documents pertaining to my situation over the book *The Running Weil Mystery*. It included press cuttings from local newspapers which disgracefully described me as dealing with "black magic," along with a letter I had typed out to one newspaper asking them to retract erroneous statements. It was imperative that I had these documents and so could not leave without them.

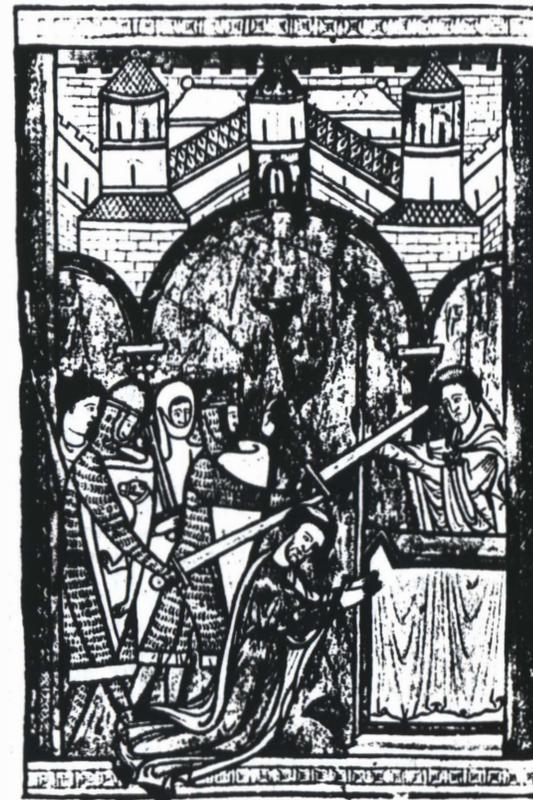
I realised that they were probably somewhere inside the cathedral, which was by that time closed to the public. The only way I could regain entrance was to explain my predicament and see if they would allow me to search for them. It was likely they had found my folder and so would have read its contents. This made me feel very low, lending me to believe the negativity of the place was now rubbing off on me. I did not feel much like going back to the cathedral. However, Carole said she would come with me while the others waited in the cars for our return.

There was only one entrance still open and this led down into the crypts where, we found, that a rendition of T.S. Elliot's "Murder in a Cathedral," the DEATH OF BECKETT was coincidentally being re-enacted at that very time. It was in the crypts that I last recalled seeing the folder.

We approached the clergyman guarding the entrance to the crypts and he said that we could go down into the crypts but that we would have to wait until the play was over. To this Carole and I agreed and so sat down in the cathedral awaiting the play's finish which we were told would be in a few minutes.

For fifteen minutes we waited. Then, and without warning, Carole perceived the image of a white monastic figure slowly rise out from the side chapel in which Thomas a Beckett had been murdered. Somehow she knew the figure was Beckett. We both wondered why she should see this vision and tried to rationalise the situation. At this point a harmonious choral of chanting began emanating from the play still in progress within the crypts. So coincidental was its timing that we felt it was somehow related to the apparition seen moments earlier. Then there was clapping, clapping from the play's audience, it was all over. The clergyman who had barred our way before now said we could go down into the crypts as the play had finished. We thanked him and made our way through the corridors.

As we entered into the crypts, with their low roof and beautifully decorated piers, we saw the stage illuminated with three monks kneeling over the body of Thomas a Beckett. The audience waited with eager anticipation for the next movement in the play. It was not over as the clergyman had thought. It was just the end of a scene - the scene in



which Beckett had been murdered!

Carole and I walked silently towards the monks at which we heard these words:

"Your strength? The Church lies bereft,
Alone, desecrated, desolated, and the heathen shall build
on the ruins, Their world without God. I see it. I see it.

THE NEXT PRIEST: No. For the Church is stronger for this action
(the death of Beckett), Triumphant in adversity, It is fortified
By persecution: supreme, so long as men will die for it.
Go, weak sad men, lost erring souls, homeless in earth or heaven.
Go where the sunset reddens the last grey rock
Of Brittany, or the Gates of Hercules.
Go venture shipwreck on the sullen coasts
Where blackamoors make captive Christian men;
Go to the northern seas confined with ice
Where the dead breath makes numb the hand, makes
dull the brain;
Find an oasis in the desert sun,
Go seek alliance with the heathen Saracen,
To share his filthy rites, and try to snatch
Forgetfulness in his libidinous courts,
Oblivion in the fountain by the date-tree;
Or sit and bite your nails in Aquitaine.
In the small circle of pain within the skull
You still shall tramp and tread one endless round
Of thought, to justify your action to yourselves,
Weaving a fiction which unravels as you weave,
Pacing forever in the hell of make-believe
Which never is belief: this is your fate on earth
And we must think no further of you.

As these words echoed around the crypts Carole and I both felt that these words were there to give us a timely explanation of the negativity experienced by the group in the cathedral. Our interpretation of T.S. Elliot's words was that the brutal murder of Thomas a Beckett was not only a desecration of the cathedral, but also a desecration of the whole of the Church, something which reverberated throughout Christendom influencing everything that was seen as totally evil and negative at that time. Like Colin Dudley had explained earlier that day, the cathedral formed a microcosm of the macrocosmic universe. Therefore everything which happened inside was reflected outside in wordly events.

Colin Dudley had explained this universal principle, now it was being explained to Carole and I within coincidental wording that we happened to overhear because I had left my folder behind. Somehow the negativity in the cathedral made sense, it was that of Beckett's brutal murder, a residue of something past, personified on this day by the re-enactment and attention of his death by the T.S. Elliot play coincidentally being staged actually where Beckett was buried. Also, Carole saw the apparition of what she believed was Beckett at the point of his death in the play. Certainly, there were a few synchronicities here.

Quietly, and now somewhat excitedly, Carole and I slipped to the side of the stage to where I felt I had left my folder, at which the monks finished their dialogue and began chanting in unison. So authentic

was this that it could hardly be distinguished from real chanting. It was an unbelievable atmosphere.

I finally realised my folder was in a side chapel, off the crypts, where the actors were using as a changing room. As we raced to get inside this room before the play ended, we were stopped in our tracks within the side gangway by a whole group of monks carrying the body of Beckett in procession, with mourners behind them. They came to a halt right in front of us. The play then ended and everyone began to clap. Before they could enter the changing room I ran in, found the folder. All the actors, including the now "resurrected" Beckett followed me in.

Once we had left the cathedral Carole felt that the negative atmosphere in the cathedral had somehow lifted. The atmosphere was far brighter and we both felt very happy, following the events inside the crypts. Yet none of this would have taken place if I had not left my folder there in the first place.

Just outside Canterbury the whole Earthquest group stopped for a swift break in a public house and there Carole and I explained to the others what had taken place. Everyone felt this somehow explained the oppressive feelings picked up in the cathedral, and we all left in goodspirits.

If the acts of synchronicity already mentioned were not enough then one further event rocked even the most objective of the crew. For during the early evening, at the same time that "Murder in a Cathedral" was being re-enacted in Canterbury, BBC Radio 4 broadcast their own version of the play throughout the nation. Once again we have the concept of something which takes place in microcosm within the cathedral is reflected on a macrocosmic scale on a much larger scale.

Synchronicity, whatever its explanation, is I believe an important element in understanding the nature of reality as we know it, and it certainly seems that if you are looking for it, you will undoubtedly find it. I have presented the events of this article as food for thought, although I think you will share my view that what took place seemed in some way beyond normal coincidence.

* * *

PSYCHIC GROUP INTERCHANGE: On Wednesday, 16th November, a group of people from KASPR the Kent Association for Psychical Research based in Sidcup, travelled to Essex to meet members of the Earthquest group.

The visit followed a lecture given to KASPR the previous month by your editor on psychic quest work in which he highlighted details of his recent work, including the Somerset saga of earlier this year. The group were extremely interested in carrying out their own earth mysteries related psychic work. For this reason they wanted to meet the various active members of Earthquest in the hope of gaining a few tips during an informal discussion.

Eileen Barnes, KASPR'S leading light, outlined their group's recent "sitter" group activities which have included quite remarkable table-tilting phenomena. However, they felt that they needed a new direction as they had come to a standstill.

It appeared that there were inherent differences in our approach to psychic work. Our emphasis being to follow up psychic information without openly questioning the data whilst theirs was more prove it first. During an evening of lively discussion the subject of meditation, quest work and methods of psychic communication were debated. Hopefully the two groups will be able to work together much more in the future.

THE CIRCLE OF PERPETUAL CHOIRS.

An Introduction By John Merron

John Merron has been working hard in the Earth Mysteries subject for some years and is now, not before time, putting together some remarkable field work and ideas. This article on the Perpetual Choirs is, I believe, very significant to psychic quest work, even in its infant stages.

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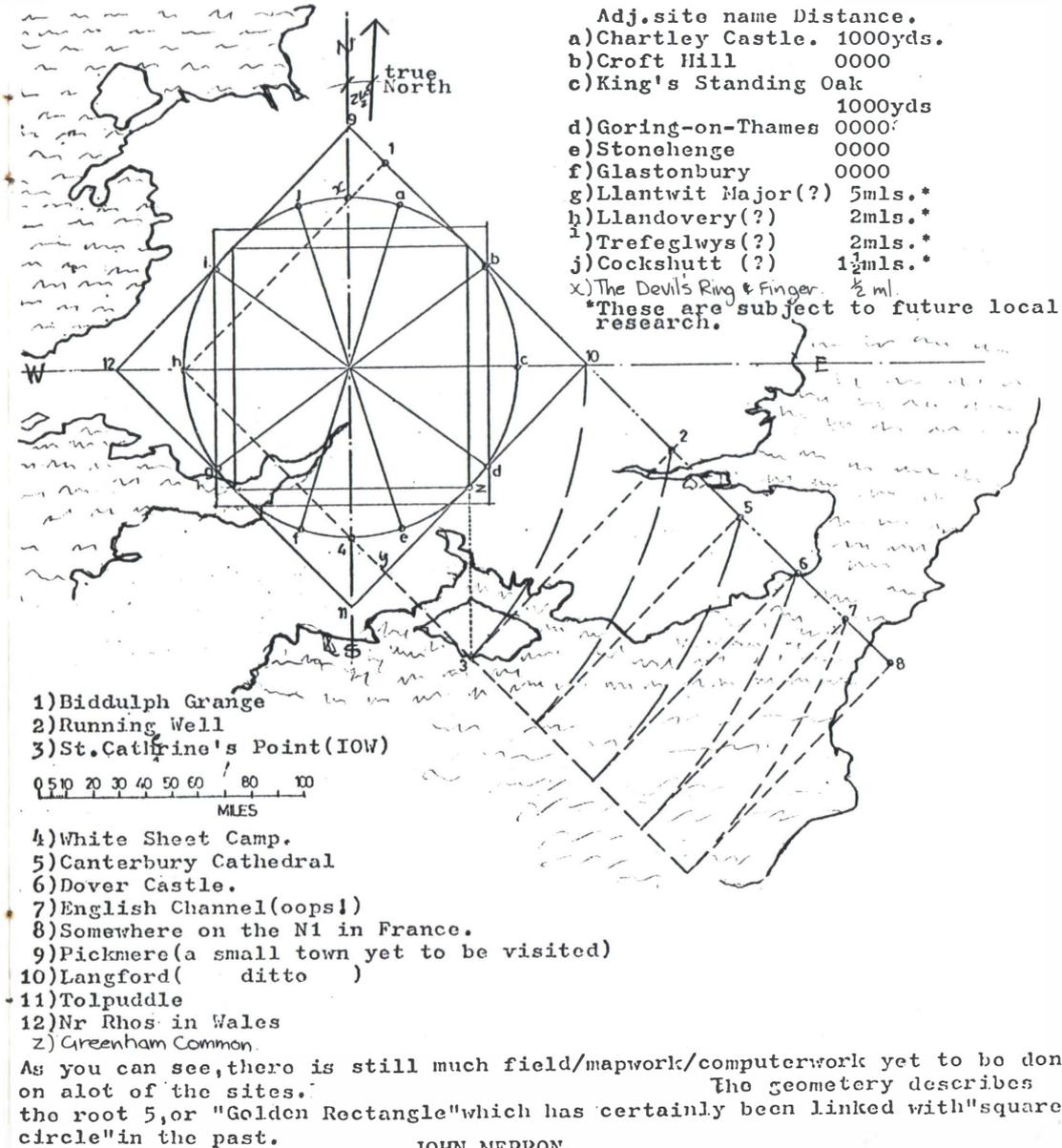
Before I outline the work I have carried out, it must be stressed that the geometry in terms of geolinear accuracy is to be looked at in the same light as the St. Michael Line. That is as a symbolic narrow strip of land, holding through time a concept of alignment. Not necessarily an exact or precise alignment, but exact enough to stimulate intellectual discussion.

Where it has been physically possible, time and travel being expensive and in short supply of late, my colleagues and I have tried to visit relevant sites in connection with other arrangements in various parts of the country. Just recently we spent 2 days in Cambridgeshire at the convention between archaeologists and ley hunters. On the second day between running round Saffron Waldon turf maze and drip-drying in various pubs and visiting Ely and Bury St Edmund's Cathedrals, we also had a look at the two remaining round towered churches in the area. The sites in the area implicated with the geometry are Hinxtion Church, Bartwell Church (one of the round-towered churches) and a bank-and-ditch site a little to the NW of Clare Castle. These sites are on the East-West line where it is extended out of the Circle of Perpetual Choirs, through Sutton Hoo and into the sea.

Hinxton, called Hyngeston in taxation records of AD.1291, may imply etymologically, that a stone site maybe called the Hynge-Stone once existed on or near the site, but without extensive archival work it is impossible to verify. You may say why not check it out? Well, with approximately 1000 sites on the various lines, it would prove a monumental task. Hinxton Church is dedicated to SS Mary and John, St John's Revelation being a central theme to John Michell's book City of Revelation, the book that set me onto this project.²

In City of Revelation John Michell quotes an ancient Welsh Bardic tradition which relates how a circle of 10 sacred sites, each with a choir of some 1000 saints, surrounds the throne of the Lamb, singing praise for eternity in one hour shifts. Hence the name collectively being The Circle of Perpetual Choirs. Michell expands upon this and implies that at the dawn of the New Age, (or the Apocalypse) the choir will change their chant or pitch, and only then will mankind be able to attain the New Jerusalem.

BRITAIN'S CIRCLE OF PERPETUAL CHOIRS.



JOHN MERRON.

ORIGINAL MAP.

Re-reading this I became very interested in terrestrial geometry, a subject largely ignored at present in EM literature. So I set out with some large scale maps to do some primary investigations. To begin with I had several reservations on the concept as the diameter of the circle being 1008 furlongs (126miles) brought in the "long-distance-Ley-curse"-earth curvature. Upon discussion it was decided that as the main concept of this was a circle, it was not susceptible to earth curvature. For example; if you put a straight line on a ball, the line would be bent out of recognition, but if you put a ring on a ball it would stay as a ring. Therefore a circle on a curved plane should not be corrupted.

So my first objection was over-ruled. Secondly, if I were to connect the sites with straight lines, what would happen then? Well, the sites as you progress round the circle are connected by lines 39.6 miles long, or 316.8 furlongs, 3168 being an important number in gematria. 39 miles is nearly double the "official" accepted ley length. So if an intermediate site could be established for surveying purposes, it could come within the realms of possibility. This brings me on to White Sheet Camp.

On our way to collect the core samples for the "rock-crushing experiment (New Scientist 1st Sept. 1983 Vol.99 N^o1373 pp.627-630)", we stopped at a few sites enroute, three of which were actually on the circle. At a "Hill-Fort" called White Sheet Camp, Carole Young (no stranger to Earthquest News readers), attempted a psychometric reading at the site.

Carole was in a 'double blind' situation, in that she had never heard of the Circle of Perpetual Choirs, nor had she read City of Revelation. The sites we visited were also a mixture, some connected with the circle some not; some were churches, earthworks, henges, and a sacred hill. What she picked-up was astounding. She heard joyful men and women singing a beautiful mantric type chant, and felt that the site was connected to other sites like steps on a spiral staircase, each site representing a spiral step. This is further reported in the Xmas edition of The Ley Hunter.

These and other visits to the various sites that have taken place with Carole have confirmed to me that there is something in this geometric pattern, but there are still many sites I wish to visit. One in particular is Croft Hill, Leicestershire, which Paul Devereux has quite often cited in various articles as being important for various reasons.

Checking round the circle on OS maps borrowed from the library, Croft Hill proved to be one of the most accurately placed.

Nearly a year ago a friend pointed out that a line passing through many churches and ancient sites, seemed to connect an earth-work at Ratby near Leicester with the Running Well. When I looked at this alignment I was at first a bit dubious, but with further investigation it did seem to hold up on site investigation. After studying the alignment for a period the line went into the "fairly interesting" file, and was left for a time. A few months later whilst drawing the Circle of Perpetual Choirs on the map, I found that the line I had previously drawn between Ratby and Running Well joined the circle perfectly.

Was this just coincidence, or does it fit into the geometry somehow?

What sparked off the next spate of research was a trip to Canterbury with Earthquest. The main reason for the trip was to look at a mosaic on the floor of the Cathedral which apparently was geomantically placed over the original position of St Thomas Beckett's tomb.³ The importance of the design, as far as Earthquest were concerned was that the pattern is identical to the Running Well design. It occurred to me on returning to my maps that the Ratby-Running Well line, if extended might pass near to Canterbury. When I checked this on the drawing board I found that the line passed directly through Canterbury Cathedral! I also found that if I extended the line further south-east it passes through several other significant sites and terminated at Dover Castle. The next task was to check angles and aspects between the sites.

The first thing to do was to find the north-south (NS) axis. This was achieved by taking the mid point between Stonehenge and Glastonbury which I had worked out earlier on to be White Sheet Camp, hence the earlier visit. From this point take a line up through Whiteleafed Oak, the geometric centre, and up to a point between Mucklestone Church and The Devil's Ring and Finger, both incidentally featured in the first issue of Earthlines.⁴ The east-west (EW) axis is already given by the inherent geometry on the 36^o divisions. The line runs about 2½^o West of North, and therefore 2½^o North of East. The line between Ratby and Dover Castle is about 2½^o East of Southeast. This means that the line joins the circle at an angle of exactly 45^o. Experimenting with these points and lines I took a line SW from Running Well. This line hit the Isle of Wight at its ultimate point, and terminated at a place called St Catherines Point, which I understand has a lighthouse. (Is this some cruel pun on Catherine-Wheel and the rotation of the lighthouse?). From St Catherine's Point I then took a line NW, which when extended goes through White Sheet Camp and on to the point in the circle adjacent to Llandovery. From there another line taken NE went through the point adjacent to Mucklestone/Devil's Ring & Finger and if carried on, meets the extended version of the Ratby/Running Well alignment at a stately home called Biddulph Grange. Biddulph Grange, as the philatelists amongst you will know, was featured recently on a 20½p postage stamp as a special edition by the Post Office, along with some other famous gardens and follies. It was also involved in part of the Meonia story i.e. Keatman & Philips' The Green Stone,⁵ another coincidence?

With this last set of points we now have a square, delineated by, at the South corner, a point between Sixpenny Handley and Cranbourne. At the West corner, Llandovery, at the North corner Biddulph Grange, and at the East corner, a point a little to the West of Biggleswade (!?) This gives a square with sides about 105 miles long. It occurred to me that the distances between the sites on the line to Dover were spaced so that each gap reduced at a proportionate rate which I recognised from somewhere. After a short time I remembered, it was the points used to construct what is called the "Golden Rectangle" or the "root 5" rectangle. To construct such a rectangle you start with a square, then you put a compass point on a corner and from a diagonal corner, strike an arc to a point in line with one of the sides. From this point take a line at 90^o to the line you've struck the arc to and this will give you a root 1 rectangle. To achieve the root 5 rectangle just repeat the procedure 4 more times.

So, taking the square as described above i.e. Cranbourne-Llandoverly-Biddulph-Biggleswade, put the compass point on the point at Llandoverly and strike an arc from Biggleswade southwards to St Catherine's Point. This gives us a rectangle taking in Llandoverly-Biddulph-Running Well-St Catherine's Point. Next strike an arc (compass in the same point) from the Running Well, again southwards and you have a point in the sea. From this point make another rectangle, Llandoverly-Biddulph-Canterbury-sea. Do the same again and you have another rectangle, Llandoverly-Biddulph-Dover Castle-sea. The next rectangle is Llandoverly-Biddulph-sea-sea, and the last rectangle, the "Golden Rectangle" gives you; Llandoverly-Biddulph-a site in France near the N1 route (a sight I intend to investigate soon), and the sea again.

The majority of the sites investigated have, so far, been mystically significant, also about 3/4 of the sites I've checked on the map have "Roman Roads" running either parrallel, or actually along the various lines. So there is the possibility that the Romans may have set these sites out, but what of Stonehenge etc. The Romans called Stonehenge The Choir of Ambrosius, so they may well have been aware of the Welsh Bardic Traditions. Who knows, they might have invited an old bardic Druid to dinner to discuss terms of lease on the old straight tracks so the Romans could build their roads on them and maybe the subject of sacred geometry came up over the after dinner mints?.

Editor's Notes

1. The St Michael's Line is a series of sites connected with St Michael and the dragon of Christian tradition, which run in a straight line from Cornwall across the country to Bury St Edmunds. This idea was originally conceived by John Michell and first introduced in his book "The View Over Atlantis."
2. Michell, John "City of Revelation" published by Garnstone Press, London 1972.
3. See the article "Synchronicity in a cathedral" within this issue.
4. See the first issue of Jonathan Mullard's "Earthlines" journal. Address may be found in the exchanges listing at the back of this journal.
5. Phillips G. & Keatman M. "The Green Stone" Neville-Spearman Ltd 1983.

* * *

GLASTONBURY GATHERING ... Over the weekend of 29/30 October another earth mysteries calendar event took place in Glastonbury. Billed the the Glastonbury Gathering it was organised by Jamie George, of Gothic Image bookshop and Palden Jenkins, a local ley researcher. The idea was to bring together people from all over the country to join in an informal series of talks, discussions and new age activities, with a central theme of the "the earth mysteries". However, this weekend was a marked contrast to the Northern Moot of the previous weekend showing the more inspirational and social side of the subject, and this led some to feel particularly out of place in this setting. Those, that is, who were more familiar with the hard line research carried out in the name of earth mysteries. Still, it was a good weekend, especially the meditation on Chalice Hill during the Sunday afternoon.

THE PLYMOUTH HAY-FALL PHOTOGRAPHS - A PRELIMINARY REPORT

Earthquest News has acquired actual photographs of a fall of hay which took place at Plymouth in Devon during 1969. Almost certainly they are the only examples of their kind in existence and must therefore be considered valuable evidence for the existence of such phenomena.

The three photographs in question were taken by a Southend man named Mark Hughes, with whom your editor became acquainted with in April 1983. He owns his own business in advertising and uses the same typesetter as the newspaper to which I contribute. He knows of my interest in matters strange and eventually showed me the pictures which I have since studied in great detail and have had copies made.

THE FALL

The fall took place during September 1969 when Mark was on holiday with friends in Plymouth. One hot and humid afternoon, without wind, rain or other peculiar meteorological conditions, just a very high cloud base, Mark and his friends were amazed to see hay falling from the sky and littering the ground all round. Stalks and clumps fell in abundance for about five minutes and covered an area of what was estimated to be about one quarter of a mile.

Luckily, Mark realised the peculiarity of this event and reached for his 35mm reflex camera which was loaded with colour slide film, and took three shots, two during the fall and one as it came to an end. The details of these are set out below each of the photos.

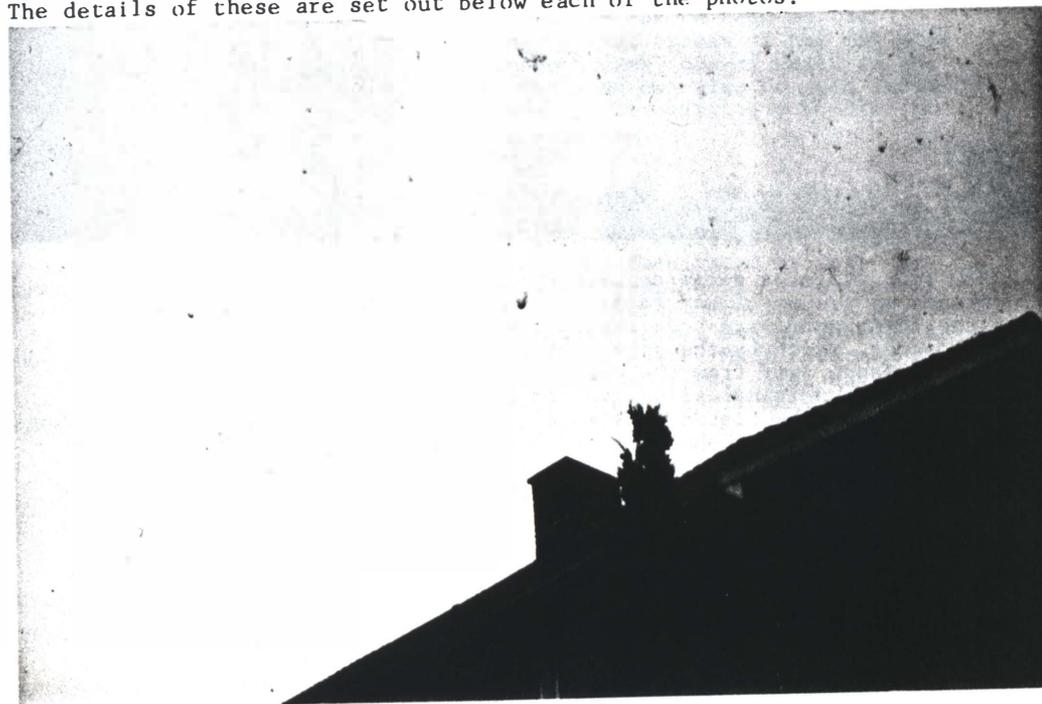


PHOTO ONE: This shows the roof and gable of the rural situated house in which Mark was staying. Approximately 3/4 of the picture shows the sky with what he claims to be a thin, high cloud base. Within the sky hundreds of pieces of hay can be seen falling, along with at least two small clumps in descending flight.



PHOTO TWO: Again, a large section of the picture shows open sky with hundreds of pieces of hay falling towards the ground. On the right and in the foreground is a tree. Another may be seen in the bottom left-hand corner, which by the size of the leaves could only have been a short distance away from the camera. However, along the bottom of the frame (on the original slide, not in the print published here) and undoubtedly in the distance is an electric generating station and another tree. Behind these is the horizon, all markers which indicate the true perspective of the picture and comply with the witness' testimony. As in Photo One one particular clump of hay appears to be falling with the densest part nearest the ground.



PHOTO THREE: This was taken just as the fall had come to an end. It shows the Plymouth street littered with hay over an area of perhaps 150 yards. Although the hay covers the entire streets evenly, certain build ups of clumps can be seen showing possibly that a light breeze was present at the time, swirling the loose hay into small bundles. Mark's Capri Car is in the foreground and hay can be seen on the windscreen. One other interesting point is that traces of hay may also be discerned on the roofs of at least two houses, one of which is the one with its gable facing the camera. Children can also be seen standing in the road some distance away. One seems to be carrying a bundle of the hay assumingly collected up from the ground.

* * *

Mark, then in his early twenties, took the pictures for prosperity. He had never seen such a sight before and was fascinated by what had taken place. People suggested a mundance explanation of the harvest's hay being wipped up by a freak whirlwind and being deposited in Plymouth. The incident was not reported to any local newspaper and no subsequent report appeared in the press, as far as he is aware. Mark returned from his holiday and eventually the film was processed, the three hay fall shots remaining pure "holiday snaps" so to speak, until they were brought to my attention earlier this year.

It is my belief that Mark Hughes is a reliable and intelligent person who would have little reason for concocting a hoax or fabricating the affair.

Although these photographs are presented here in this journal on an interest level only, I wish this report to be taken as a short case

summary containing all available information known to the editor. I will, however, be taking up the matter further and follow up this report in the next issue. I have spoken to Bob Rickard, editor of Fortean Times, and he confirms that these photographs are the first known photographic evidence of freak hay falls. He also checked to see if he had any recorded hay fall for the Plymouth area in September 1969 but unfortunately found none.

PLEASE NOTE: Permission to use these pictures in research journals and magazines will be granted free of charge on request. Photos are copyright Mark Hughes/Andy Collins.

NORTHERN EARTH MYSTERIES MOOT '83

This year was held in York over the weekend of 22/23 October.

Attendance was healthy and during the Saturday the audience was treated to a series of breathtaking lectures by hardcore earth mysteries researchers presenting first rate research projects.

Ted Armstrong delivered an admirable talk on his discoveries linking Albanian Dervishers, the pre-Raphaelite painters, and Templars. Paul Devereux brushed up the audience on the earth lights latest, while announcing plans for a archaeological ley debate at Aston University in 1985. Chris Castle, the earth mysteries artist, showed a series of slides from sites throughout Europe, all to traditional ethnic musical accompaniment.

Johnathan Mullard gave sound research on Shropshire standing stones, while Sieg Longren performed an exhilarating lecture on his dowsing and energy work in both the Americas. But the prize must be saved for Jeff Saward who presented a slide accompanied talk on his and Debbie's trek to East and West Germany, Ireland and the Scilly Isles this summer in search of lost turf mazes and labyrinths. His dedication continued right through the night, as whilst everyone else was tucked up nicely in a warm bed, Jeff went out on his own to Dalby Turf Maze just to take photographs of the site in the dawn sunlight.

The Sunday included a meander along the York City ley joining various churches, a Norman Keep and York Minster's Tower, where the mootgoers climbed to see the ley in visual form. It really is remarkable and is a typical example of the Medieval Gothic ley phenomena.

After leaving York minster the mootgoers split up, some heading for the impressive Devil's Arrows near Boroughbridge. Whilst others journeyed to the Alkborough turf maze.

The unanimous opinion was that the whole weekend was a great success and compliments should go out to Philip Heselton and the other members of the Northern Earthmysteries group for organisation.

The subject of moots brings us to next year's earth mysteries calendar. On the back cover of this issue you will find details of the London Moot planned for May '84. Plans are also well under way for next year's Ley Hunter's Moot which is being organised by the Earthlines magazine run by Jonathan Mullard. It is to be held in Shrewsbury over a four day period between July 13/17. Details of speakers are still being finalised although it would seem that they have managed to secure the Abbots Bromley Horn Dancers who usually only perform once a year during September. They will do their Horn Dance during the Sunday morning, possibly even by an old markstone.

RUNWELL UPDATE II

Recently, some new material regarding the Runwell saga has come to my attention which I feel needs to be set down for prosperity. Some of this, as you will see, throws a new light on our previous speculations and ideas.

PHANTOM COACH AND HORSES

The first addition to the saga concerns an interesting legend associated with St Mary's church and the road which runs past the church from Rettendon to Wickford. Tradition has it that on Christmas Eve a phantom coach and horses has been seen careering its way along this road, called Runwell Road, from Rettendon. The original coach and horses, from which the legend is supposed to have stemmed, is said to have crashed out of control during the eighteenth century outside the church, by Church End Lane. It is said that by running round the church three times on Christmas Eve you will hear the cries and screams of the injured on the stage coach.

This legend, which was related to me by two separate sources, fits nicely into our interpretation of the already recorded legends of Runwell St Mary's. The period around Midwinter, Yule and Christmas has been cited as important to Runwell's past and here we find yet another legend associated with this time of year. It is also interesting to note that there was once a Christmas Hill by the side of the Runwell Road at Rettendon, next to the route the phantom coach and horses would have taken.

The spot where the coach and horses supposedly crashed is an accident "black spot" and Carole Young has psychically "picked up" that there is an accumulation of imbalanced earth energies or "black stream," here which might very easily cause unusual accidents to take place. Valerie Martin, the Kent earth mysteries researcher came to Runwell having never had a car accident before in her life. However, at the very spot concerned, at the bottom of Church End Lane, opposite the church, she was involved in an accident with a cyclist. She knew nothing of the legend or of Carole's impressions about the spot.

HORSE WORSHIP AT WICKFORD-ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

The second addition to our findings concerning Runwell's past is perhaps more significant as it suggests a confirmation of psychic information, earth mysteries speculation and local legend by independent archaeological research.

On page 81 of "The Running Well Mystery" I stated that, due to a number of reasons, mostly psychic imagery and synchronicities, the

EARTHQUEST team believed that the female deity concerned with the Wickford and Runwell landscape in the past was probably a localised form of the Celtic mare goddess Epona. Other reasons for suggesting this possibility were the various horse legends found locally, the horseshoes of the Runwell Cross design and the association of underground springs and streams within the area.

However, remarkable confirmation of this suggestion came to light during one of the series of meetings EARTHQUEST held at Runwell Parish Hall during August this year. A lady approached me and said that she had been actively involved with the archaeological excavations which took place at the site of a Romano-British settlement at Beauchamps Farm in Wickford between 1969 and 1973., under the guidance of a prominent Essex archaeologist named Warwick Rodwell. She mentioned that during the excavations they had uncovered a series of four third century AD shaft wells belonging to a settlement. Three had been classed as for domestic use only, while the fourth had undoubtedly been used as a pagan shrine. This conclusion was drawn after five horses' skulls were found at its lowest depth.

The implication of this find, which was accurately documented in the proceedings of Warwick Rodwell's dig, is truly remarkable for three reasons. Firstly, it shows that the people of this Romano-British settlement which falls within the area laid down by my Runwell Cross groundplan, undoubtedly worshipped the horse, the only clear example of their religious belief which has been found. Secondly, it connected this worship with wells, since Rodwell was convinced that the skulls were votive offerings into a pagan shrine. We had connected the religious devotion of the Running Well with the mare goddess in our own research. Thirdly, by virtue of the five skulls being placed in a well it suggests that those who carried out this act believed that by returning the horse souls to the ground they would reincarnate. The Celtic belief of head worship stemmed from the idea that the seat of the soul was contained in the skull, even after physical death, and that by returning the skulls to the land the soul would return to the underworld. Could this localised worship around Wickford have come from the knowledge that the underground streams of the area would carry away the soul to pastures new? Streams and springs are associated with the worship of the mare goddess which was widespread throughout Britain through to the Post Roman Iron Age. The connection between the mare goddess and Celtic/Romano-British shaft wells is outlined within Anne Ross' book "Pagan Celtic Britain." The bones and representational symbols of horses have often been found down the bottom of such shaft wells.

THE BATTLE WITH THE CHURCH

This concludes our review of the Runwell scene for the moment, but I would just like to bring you up to date with the developments locally over The Running Well Mystery which, as you may well know, led to my being banned from carrying out any further research inside St Mary's Church, Runwell.

The local church council have stuck to their decision to ban me despite letters from me to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the local Bishop of Bradwell who looks after the affairs of the diocese of Chelmsford, in which Runwell falls. My personal struggle has led me to some remarkable publicity in regional newspapers, on Essex Radio and

even on television. I appeared along with the Rev. Thomas of Wickford on "Thames News," ITV's regional news round-up during August. The camera crew were, amazingly, allowed to film inside the church but were refused a look at the now famous "devil's claw." Therefore the viewer was given a shot of the heavily draped velvet curtain covering the south door, on which the claw is to be found, all very mysteriously. This helped the sale of the book no end!

Another scene occurred at Halloween this year. The church council had suggested in public that the book might incite hooligans and practitioners of the black arts to converge on St Mary's on 31st October to desecrate the church. I said this was nonsense, although remembering how Eric Maple's coverage of Canewdon's supposed witchcraft background has and still does, lead idiots to converge upon the village at Halloween to generally cause a nuisance and vandalise the churchyard.

On the 31st I went to Wickford police station and asked if they intended watching St Mary's that night. I was informed that they had been requested to do so due, according to their job sheet, to my book! I returned home and thought carefully about this situation and decided that if anyone did want to play silly buggers in the churchyard it would be on this night. So, along with another EARTHQUEST member, we attempted to create some sort of psychic guardian to keep out any unwanted persons from the churchyard.

The following evening I went again to the police station and found that four representatives from the church council had kept watch over the church all evening, complete with flasks of tea (and hymns I suppose!) making sure no one entered. There was no reported trouble, I'm glad to say.

THE BOXING DAY WALK

I have spoken before about the way that the landscape seems able to perpetuate its own localised mythology by manipulating future generations to unconsciously perpetuate such myths. I found this so with the Glastonbury terrestrial zodiac and with the Running Well saga. However, further evidence of a quite remarkable nature came to my attention during the lectures I gave in Runwell parish hall on the book. It appeared that for the past nine years groups of people, led by a parish councillor named David De'ath (son of the Mr De'ath mentioned in the last issue of E.N.), has been going on walks along the Runwell footpaths on Boxing Day, some of which have involved visiting the well. David explained that the idea originally stemmed from the aftermath boredom of Christmas Day. He felt it was a good way of working off that Christmas dinner. Well, each year the numbers on these walks have increased, until last year the figure was around one hundred and fifty! Remember if you will, the time of year concluded as being the most important to the Runwell mysteries was Christmas, nee Yule and Midwinter. In fact, Sarah Hunt even clairvoyantly perceived a ceremony carried out at the well involving dead wrens, which if it did take place, would have been on St Stephen's Day, Boxing Day! David De'ath saw the obvious link even before I.

It has now been decided, between David and I, that this year the walk will end at the Running Well and that, unlike on previous occasions, it should be publicised. Also that it should take place every year from now on. This affectively means that an ancient custom of folklore origin

will now recommence in Runwell, surely a landmark in the re-activation of our sacred sites long neglected by society.

Anyone is free to go, so come along if you want. We meet in the car park of the "Quart Pot" public house, opposite St Mary's church at 10.30 on Boxing Day, 26th December. The walk will last about two hours, there and back, and will finish with a partake of beverage at the above mentioned hostelry. I will ask people to bring along a piece of holly, mistletoe or ivy to decorate the well. It is eventually hoped to start a Running Well Trust which would care for and preserve the well for future generations. It is likely I will announce this on the walk.

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Devil Talk! THE SECTION ON NEWS,
VIEWS AND OPINIONS FROM THE EDITOR.
SOME SNIPPETS ARE TO BE FOUND ELSEWHERE IN THIS
ISSUE.

EARTHMARCH '84

For some months John Merron has been trying to organise a major event for the summer of 1984, the year which will certainly be dominated by new age contemplations and Armageddon syndrome instilled originally by H. G. Wells' classic. John's idea is to arrange an "earthmarch" composed of groups, organisations and movements associated with the preservation of the earth. This list might include earth mysteries groups, new age, peace and liberal Christian movements, and various other mystically orientated organisations.

The essence of the plan is to arrange for a great number of people to take part in a mobile festival, travelling along the so-called St Michael line of mystical sites stretching from Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk to Cornwall (see John Merron's article in this issue). Whether those taking part will converge on a certain point or merely travel the length of the line is, as yet, undecided. However, the date most likely for this event is August 15th, the principal Christian festival date of the Virgin Mary. This day has been chosen because the idea of the march is to achieve harmony and contact with the Earth Mother, seen as the Virgin in Christianity. This date is also significant to the St Michael line as on 13th August, just two days before the festival of the Virgin, the rising sun will align itself along this pathway, as it also appears to do on Mayday each year. The combination of the two events, one solar, the other earth orientated, will hopefully symbolise the regeneration of the earth spirit through carrying out this march.

The whole event must be considered as a modern day pilgrimage of divine enlightenment for those participating. It is believed that the sheer psychic potency of such an event will influence the natural

energies of the earth and, therefore, ultimately spread harmony throughout the country, affecting the collective unconscious of the nation.

The exact details of the "earthmarch" are still being considered by the organisers, although John Merron has made some creative suggestions as to what can be done. I support the concept of the march and ask you to do so too. For further details contact John Merron at 49 Cobbold Road, Shepherds Bush, London W12 9LN.

* * *

TEMPLARS ON TELEVISION: How many of our readers managed to catch the six episodes of the BBC 1 series "Dark Side of the Sun" recently? I was informed that it was going to be about Templars and the supernatural and that the producer had been plagued by odd happenings during the filming in Rhodes. Apparently, he had been told to expect trouble if he delved into the Templars!

The series began with the discovery of a neo-Templar, masonic order on Rhodes, composed of some of the top European diplomats and businessmen, by a photographer and author named Donald Tierney. He is then killed by psychic attack for what he has seen and his wife, back in England, starts seeing his spirit as if he is trying to tell her something, a matter her psychiatrist is not too happy about!

Anne Tierney then travels out to Rhodes to carry on her husband's work. She becomes entangled with the uncovering of the neo-Templar order, the head of whom believes he is the reincarnation of an important Templar who went to Rhodes with a bunch of fellow knights after the arrest of the French Templars in 1307. They had sought refuge and were allowed on the island by the Hospitallers, their rival order who commanded Rhodes.

The Templar, one Tibbal de Montrefort, had a terrible reputation which followed him to Rhodes. He had supposedly killed his mistress because she was carrying his child, and it was said he had sold himself to the devil. According to the story, de Montrefort and his men had eventually been murdered by the Hospitallers and all record of their presence erased from the history books.

The story is complicated and well thought out. Anne Tierney, naturally, is psychic. The Templar' reincarnation, a man named Lavalliere, is Asmodeus incarnate and he falls in love with Anne because she resembles, or is, the mistress his ancestor had murdered. He tries hard to win her over, even to the extent of appearing to her disguised as the spirit of her dead husband and making love with her. At the same time she befriends a historical researcher named David Bascombe, who is working on Rhodes. He gradually unravels the mystery of the Templars and of Lavalliere's sinister masonic order which meets in Lavalliere's castle up on a hilltop. Psychic battles ensue, all in the best possible taste, and David Bascombe falls in love with Anne Tierney. It really is good stuff.

Most sensible series tend to end normally, with the good guy getting the girl, the villain being slain, the baddies exploding, etc. Not this one though. The last episode left everyone in total puzzlement.

Lavalliere is seemingly killed in a knife fight, but then resurrects! David Bascombe is given the brush off. Anne Tierney goes back to England in a state of shock and the Templar order, known as "the Survivors of the 13th," after the day in which all Templars in France were supposed to have been arrested, 13th October 1307, continue unaffected. The last scene is of Anne Tierney back in a mental home believing she is carrying Lavalliere's child, a phantom pregnancy apparently, and Lavalliere himself turning up there with a smile on his face having just purchased the mental home. All very mysterious.

The whole series was well acted and did not depend on cheap, all action supernatural thrills. It was very deep and tactful, with the characters very natural. However, there was one rather peculiar error in the last episode. Having shown a quite thorough background research for the series, David Bascombe quite blatantly refers to the date of the French Templars' arrest as 13th April 1307, not October as it should have been. This was strange as I'm sure the series was purposely co-ordinated to finish during the week of 13th October 1983. So why six months out?

The end was undoubtedly left open for a second series and if it comes around again I would seriously suggest you watch it.

* * *

HOLY BLOOD, HOLY GRAIL, HOLY PAPERBACK: So, "The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail," Baigent, Lincoln and Leigh's monster mind-shatterer has gone paperback. With its remarkable alterations in established history as we know it, including the concept that Christ married Mary Magdalene and had children who came to France, it is mind-boggling to think of how people out on the street are taking it. Remember, it also states that Christ was a false Messiah. Yet despite virtually no publicity it has become a bestseller. So who is reading it?

Obviously, every mason in the country has probably read it by now! I am informed that the concept of Christ marrying Mary Magdalene is unspoken knowledge among the more esoteric masonic lodges of Britain. Yet what can they be making of the rest of its contents? Perhaps the book has changed history as we know it.

It is still bizarre to see one of the most mind-blowing books of this century on sale in my local corner shop!

* * *

THE LEGACY OF THE CRAVEN CURSE: On 24/10/83 various national newspapers ran the story of the sudden death of the Seventh Earl of Craven who was found dead of gun shot wounds at his East Sussex farmhouse the previous Saturday, aged just 26.

The Seventh Earl's death has once again fulfilled an ancient curse condemning all the Earl Cravens to an early death, a legacy he lived in fear of becoming a reality.

The so-called curse of the Cravens was allegedly imposed hundreds of years ago after an ancestor made a village girl pregnant. A "witch"

cursed the family saying that all male Cravens would die young. The curse has unfortunately proved correct so far. The Sixth Earl died of leukaemia when he was 47 and his father drowned at 35 when he fell from a yacht during a wild party.

Now the seventh Earl's brother Simon, aged 22, stands to inherit the title. Yet there is a problem, the Earl's former girlfriend, Anne Nicholson, claims he fathered and was paying maintenance to her two year old son Tommy. So far no will has been found to decide the title.

Police believe the Earl took his life at his home of Peelings Manor, Hankham near Eastbourne. He was said to have been depressed and was known as an eccentric character.

That may have been the end of the story had it not been for two further interesting developments in the Craven curse saga. The first involves the two year old son of Anne Nicholson and was reported in the Sunday Mirror of 31/10/83. The story stated that at the same time the Earl was fatally wounded, Tommy, 600 miles away flopped on to a sofa apparently lifeless, or so Anne Nicholson revealed to the Mirror. She said she went across to the boy and asked what was wrong to which he answered "Tommy dead. Tommy dead." Within 24 hours, Anne learned of the Earl's tragic death - who was also called Tom.

Incident two seemingly took place within a day or so of the Earl's death. Apparently, according to one reliable source, his brother was involved in a serious road accident. Confirmation of this has not been gained as yet, and I have no further information as to his condition or the circumstances of the accident.

It certainly seems that the Cravens are plagued with what might be termed "bad luck", although how paranormal this is I am not sure. I am informed that the rest of the family will not admit to believing in the curse due to some inconsistency in its origin. Nevertheless, it has to be at the back of their minds all the time, especially after the recent incidents.

* * *

MASONIC EXPOSE MYSTERY: A beautiful piece appeared in the Daily Express of 27/10/83 over a book said to contain an expose of freemasonry, written by one Stephen Knight, which has been mysteriously withdrawn from publication by its publisher, Granada.

The publishers claim that the book, which contains such intriguing chapters as "The Devil in Disguise," "The Threat to Britain" and "The KGB Connection," was withdrawn due to printing errors. Apparently, the 8 to 10,000 copies produced were found to have been bound in the wrong sequence or to have crucial pages missing.

However, there is speculation that the book has been sabotaged by a "hit-squad" of the 700,000 masons in this country. The Duke of Kent and Prince Philip being among that list.

The Express said that in the past other books on masonry have been found mutilated in public libraries.

I can add to this by saying that books on the shadowy ecclesiastical underworld of "Episcopi Vagantes," such as Peter F. Anson's "Bishops at Large" (Faber and Faber 1964), have suffered similar fates. Anson's book, which sarcastically named names of many respectable citizens and Anglican clergy who were mixed up with this shady web of mystery, was almost immediately withdrawn from publication and became the subject of a great many law suits. A number of copies managed to find their way into the library system of the United Kingdom much to the embarrassment of those exposed. Nearly all have since been either stolen or destroyed, making them a valuable item in the second hand book trade. So, if you see a copy, hang onto it!

* * *

THE TRIBES OF ARMAGEDDON: A disturbing report in The News of the World (30/10/83) exposed the existence of a new and terrifying cult planning to sweep across Britain. They are a 500 strong gang of outlaws and thugs called, simply, "the Tribe" who roam the country in converted buses and land rovers, leaving a wake of terror in their tracks.

The Tribe, who are currently building in strength within woods on Salisbury Plain, live in lawlessness, drugs and violence and are dedicated to overthrowing law and order. They carry an armoury of weapons which include hand grenades, shotguns, axes, machetes and knives, and they are feared even by the most hardened Hell's Angels. The Tribe are themselves guarded by a bunch of vicious heavies known as the Thugs, who are instructed to kill anyone who tries to interfere with them. They revel in sordid sexual activities and group orgies using dozens of drug-crazed girls who have been lured into their midst by drug trafficking, from which they obtain their money and food. They also steal food and even collect dole money. The police won't go near them despite many complaints from residents near to where they are living.

Apparently, earlier this year they caused havoc at both the Glastonbury Green Gathering and the Stonehenge festival.

The NOTW reporters managed to penetrate the Tribe's camp by posing as drug dealers. Once inside the camp they were surrounded by a hostile crowd of dirty, ragged men with axes and knives. Their lifestyle was found to be very primitive, almost barbaric. They claim that by Christmas they will be 1000 strong and that soon they will start communes in other parts of the country.

You may wonder why I have included this item in Earthquest News. Well, I fear that the mere existence of the Tribe is a menacing and sad omen of the future. It is a product of societies decay and is therefore in some ways relevant to our understanding of new age consciousness. If an Armageddon ever did take place then it would be crazed barbarious cults like this who would thrive and fester, posing the ultimate threat to those of the enlightened groups who would form. The Tribe are, I'm afraid, typical examples of the opposing forces of Armageddon, should it ever take place. Just be aware of this.

* * *

EARTHLIGHTS THEORY - THE SCIENTIFIC APPROVAL: How good it was seeing a lengthy article on the Earthlights theory within one of the scientific community's most respected journals, NEW SCIENTIST (1/9/83 pp. 627 - 30). Well done Paul Devereux, Paul McCartney and Don Robins, you deserve every piece of recognition you get.

The Earthlights theory as an explanation for UFOs and strange lights is undoubtedly a major breakthrough in discovering the nature of such phenomena and it has taken people outside ufology to find this out. It is not the absolute answer, no one would deny this, it is, though, a giant leap forward, and this has hurt a lot of those who wanted to cling on to their own pet ideas and theories or were simply jealous. Paul must have spent months carefully answering the sometimes liblous slander thrown at him in the name of criticism. It has been a hard struggle, and one which is still continuing.

The NEW SCIENTIST article is a landmark. It means the hypothesis is now considered not only valid by the scientists but is worthy of further study in the future. This achievement by Devereux and company is far more than 99% of the ufological community will achieve in their lifetimes. Alas though, a warning must go out now. It will not be very long before others, more financially prepared, with more sophisticated equipment and knowhow, will jump on the bandwagon and take over the scene for their own purposes, most obviously fame and fortune. The quicker the arguments and bickering stops, the quicker those concerned can get on with the real research in the hope of getting just a little closer to the truth, before others beat them and claim the ultimate prizes.

Well done, may there be a few more articles like this one.

* * *

HOT GOSSIP FROM LUCY FUR

If you felt like flashing the cash on the August bank holiday, you could have patronised the International Congress of the British UFO research Association. It was flled a day, held in an extremely posh venue in High Wycombe.

This had the unfortunate result of some very fine lectures being delivered to a half empty auditorium, most of the audience being the same old faces, and "Those in the Know" anyway.

Whether this was a deliberate or subconscious effort to keep out the low church Earth Mysteries gang, and the even more disruptive space craft witnesses, or just that the organisers think we're all jolly rich, I can't say. I've met a lot of people who have had encounters of the closest kind, and they want some answers, but none of these families could afford that kind of beano. So basically, it was preaching to the converted, and everyone clinging tightly to their own theories no matter what new research was thrown at them.

Far more amazing than the discussions on Aliens and Proto-entities; was that in the middle of slides of an actual UFO flap in Heselalton, Norway, the Chairman tried to stop the show because lunch was ready and

the sausages and beefburgers were getting cold! Fortunately we were allowed to see these important slides as most of the people present were more interested in seeing them than a hot dinner - and if you'd paid full a day, I bet you would be too.

ASSAP SKETCH

If you were liggering at the ASSAP books launch on September 6th you may have witnessed a terrible faux pas with a journalist from a certain NATIONAL DAILY. The books, "Visions of the Virgin" by Kevin McClure, and "The Evidence for UFOs" by Hilary Evans, (Aquarian paperbacks) were on display for journalists to take for review copies. The reporter in question took two "Virgins" and two "UFOs". He was approached by someone who should have known better and was told the police would be called if he didn't replace the books. The journalist explained that with a paper as big as the one he worked for it was necessary to have more than one copy to make sure the book got reviewed. I want to make it perfectly clear that no one from ASSAP was responsible for this fiasco, they worked very hard on a very enjoyable evening - but I know one paper that won't be reviewing their books.

* * *

STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS...
BLACK PANTHER SIGHTINGS IN SOUTH EAST ESSEX: Yes, another outbreak of phantom felines, this time two confirmed sightings of a black panther-like beast, of some size seen on farmland at Horndon-on-the-Hill, South East Essex.

On Friday, 4th November an extensive police search was undertaken following a clear sighting of the animal by a Mrs Anne Cheale and her aunt, Mrs Doris Barker, from the kitchen of their farmhouse at Great Malgraves, Horndon around 2pm. The animal was reported to be black, thick set, with a flattened face. It was first seen lying down, but then moved off as if slinking, towards a barn containing guinea fowl where it was lost from view. Both witnesses were convinced they had seen a large cat.

The police apparently found no trace of the animal, however, later that afternoon a farmhand saw a large black cat-like animal at some distance away, which was causing a herd of cattle to swirl round in circles. The beast was seen to run away from the herd with them in pursuit, until it was lost from view behind the stampeding cattle.

A newspaper report headlined TERROR OF THE BLACK PHANTOM appeared in the 7th November issue of the Evening Echo reporting on the two sightings. They linked the vicious death of a goat, found nearby with the black panther reports and claimed the police had confirmed this link. The killing has since been found to have had no connection at all with the sightings.

No further sightings have so far been reported and no animals are known to have escaped from local zoos or private collections. A full investigation has been initiated by your editor on behalf of EARTHQUEST and ASSAP and a full report will appear shortly. Initial findings tend

to support the presence of a black panther-like beast being seen by all three witnesses. The case also involves a token Fortean synchronicity and maybe even tentative geophysical links. Another interesting fact is that the sightings took place just a couple of miles away from Fobbing, the scene of two puma sightings during the summer of 1982 (see E.M. No.5 Winter '82). A full report will be included in the next issue of this journal.

And so, the "Horndon black panther" steps into existence...

* * *

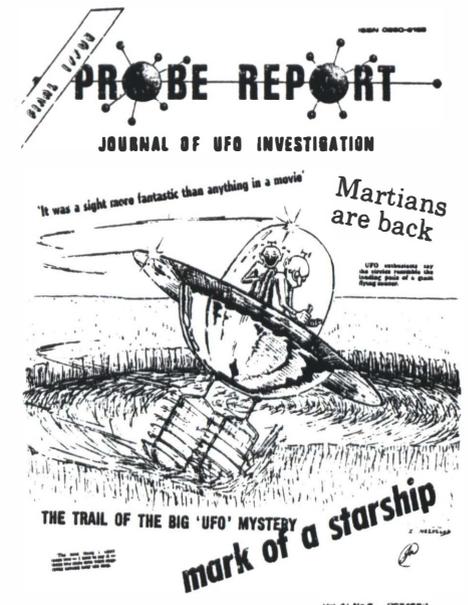
EXCHANGES ROUND-UP

In this new section we will take a look at the publication scene and review just some of the exchange items received and read by your editor shortly before the compilation of EARTHQUEST NEWS. It is hoped to continue this feature on a regular basis, space permitting, although it cannot be promised that all publications received will be included. This will not be due to their contents, merely that some will have been lent out to EARTHQUEST members or will have been temporarily mislaid (extremely likely if you knew my filing system!) The normal listing will continue, albeit in a more streamlined manner.

* * *

A sad departure from the magazine front recently is Ian Mrzyglod's excellent PROBE REPORT, which was by far the most controversial and objective UFO publication on the market. The final issue (Vol 4 No 2), I feel, showed Ian's disillusionment with the UFO community and the lack of appreciation he was receiving from various quarters of the subject. In the end PROBE REPORT became a battleground for the various conflicting viewpoints of the ufological circles, only some of which were healthy and constructive. For a while it seemed that the publication would continue under the auspice of the British UFO Research Association (BUFORA), but this has now apparently fallen through.

The final issue contains a remarkable article on the



mystery circles of depressed wheat found in four places in Wiltshire during the summer, complete with some startling findings and conclusions. It is well worth the read purely for this. Stuart Campbell once again attacks Paul Devereux and his Earthlights book and Martin Shipp details a fascinating UFO case from Frome, Somerset.

I do hope that Ian bounces back with another offering on the publication front soon. It would be a sad loss if he did not.

* * *

A welcome goes out to the latest publication from Nigel Pennick called, simply, THE SYMBOL. It purports to study signs, sigils and symbols of a mystical nature, although the actual contents are a lot more diversified than this.

Publication under the name of "Geomantic Research" the first issue includes an indepth study of the Rushton Triangular Lodge building, a fascinating structure of geomancy and sacred geometry, designed by the grandson of the Knights Hospitallers' last Lord Prior before the order's demize in the Dissolution.

As with all Nigel's work, this first issue is a worthy start (love the illustrations!) and I am sure we can expect some intriguing future issues.

* * *

In the SAMHAIN '83 issue of THE CAULDRON Guy Regland Phillips reviews Sheila-na-gigs as part of his "Behind the Church Door" series and "Lugh" attacks Francis King's previous article which suggested that Aleister Crowley heavily influenced the rites and rituals of Gardnerian witchcraft. I sensed a little mud throwing here, but the facts are very interesting, although I tend to support King's ideas. I must dig out the original article!

* * *

Issue No 40 of FORTEAN TIMES is now out, 72 pages in length, which means a good few weeks read. It would seem it actually contains 50,000 words of fascinating information, facts, curiosities, Fortean and mysteries. There is an excellent lengthy article on the Exmoor Beast and other phantom felines of the year. Strangely enough (as they say), I had just finished reading this piece when I heard of the new black panther sightings at nearby Horndon; what coincidence... There is also an article on the mystery circles in Wiltshire and an update on the "Living Wonders" book.

* * *

The OCTOBER '83 issue of NORTHERN EARTH MYSTERIES contains a brilliant piece on the history and conspiracy surrounding the Knights Templar, along with their influence and history in Yorkshire. The author, Pat McFadzean, is to be commended on his extensive work in this field. It is so refreshing to find new Templar data, not just the topical, in vogue, material currently being pushed by Henry Lincoln and company. Other articles include an outline of the (visually) breathtaking York ley, by Brian Larkman, a piece on the Vessel Cuppers, the shamanistic morris men of Holderness by Frank Earp and another phantom feline round-up by Paul Screeton. Here Paul includes his own recent sighting of a black panther-like cat. John Barnett returns fire upon Christian O'Brien and his "The Megalithic Odyssey" book and Jeremy Harte gives the reader a fascinating historical and mythological explanation of the cauldron tale at Nine Stane Rigg stone circle in Roxburghshire (I never knew they boiled people as a penalty for sorcery or poisoning before the 1500s; fascinating stuff).

To me this issue of N.E.M. takes the prize for the most interesting selection of articles, all of which had me reading intently for hours.

* * *

THE SHAMAN NO 3 has an attractive cover (!!) and a very intriguing picture of Doc Shiels and his family! I say no more. Inside is a good article on monster hunter extraordinaire, Doc Shiels' recent visit to Southern Ireland for his "Monstermind '83" the process of communicating with lake monsters and getting them to show themselves by magical invocation. Would you believe that Doc Shiels managed to raise not one beastie, but four of the blighters, each one in a different lough! And he got photos of them! I certainly believe that lake monsters are not as biological as most people think, but this really stretches the boundaries of normality! Still, if it IS true then I suggest we all go back to the drawing boards and have a re-think about these beasties. Ted Holiday told us they were not all flesh and blood and no one believed him. Anyway, I wonder what Roy Mackal would think about the good Doc's work!

* * *

ASSAP NEWS NO 9, edited by Alan Cleaver, is really a new exchange publication despite the fact that your editor has been heavily involved with ASSAP investigations and research for some time. In this issue the MERLIN programme is launched. This purports to be a study of the interaction between the human mind and the environment. Alan himself reports on some very interesting earth mysteries field and archive work he has been carrying out in the Chilterns at a place named Bledlow (an article by Alan will also appear in the next issue of EARTHQUEST NEWS on this topic). This piece, along with another in the same issue about One Tree Hill, South East London, shows, I feel, the beginnings of a new phase of research within the paranormal/earth mysteries community.

* * *

Jeff and Debbie Saward's CAERDROIA NO. 13 is certainly one of the best items of printed matter around at the moment. It contains articles on Jeff and Debbie's remarkable research on German turf mazes, including those thought to have been demolished in East Germany, following their recent visit to these lands. The unprecedented dedication of these two (three with their little daughter, Abigail) roving researchers needs to be applauded.

Nigel Pennick also takes a look at the continuity of turf and garden mazes in landscape gardening, while John Craft (the Swedish version of Jeff) deals with place names of European stone and turf mazes.

* * *

In PENDRAGON VOL. XVI NO. 2 they continue their theme per issue, with this one being Mount Badon and Riothamus. Articles study these aspects of the Arthurian tradition in detail.

* * *

THE LEY HUNTER NO. 95 Michael Wysocki follows up his work on dragon mounds in Britain with a fine article on the relationship between the human brain and megalithic monuments. The other main article is "Female Glastonbury" by Cara Trimarco, authoress of the children's earth mysteries novel entitled "The Boy From the Hills." Cara has lived in Glastonbury for a year and outlines her feelings that the energies and influences of the holy places and sites of the town are predominantly female in nature, a view that has been greeted with much controversy by the earth mysteries community. Most people feel the area balanced with both male and female energies, yet with some sites predominantly one or the other.

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EXCHANGE LISTING

All exchange details are true and correct as far as is possible. Any errors, alterations or editorial changes should be notified to the editor in writing. For all overseas charges to these publications, details should be sought from the respective editorial addresses of those listed.

ASSAP NEWS - ed. Alan Cleaver. 4pp, A4, paranormal and earth mysteries forum. Sub. to ASSAP (6 issues) £6, from The Membership Secretary, 56 Telemann Square, Kidbrooke, London SE3.

BUFORA BULLETIN (1) & JOURNAL OF TRANSIENT AERIAL PHENOMENA (2) ed. John Barrett (1), Bob Digby (2). 24pp, A5, objective UFO News (1), 16 pp. A4, scientific UFO research. Sub. to BUFORA £12.50 p.a., 4 issues (1), 2 issues (2). From Membership Secretary, BUFORA, 30 Vermont Road, London SE19 3SR.

CAERDROIA - ed. Jeff & Debbie Saward, 40pp, A5, turf mazes and earth mysteries, £3.50 p.a., 4 issues, from Caerdroia Projects, 53 Thundersley

Grove, Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex SS7 3EB.

COMMON GROUND - ed. Kevin & Sue McClure, 40pp + A5, psychical research and paranormal forum. £3.75 from Kevin & Sue McClure, 14 Northfold Road, Knighton, Leicester.

EARTHLINES - ed. Jonathan Mullard. 40pp, A5, earth mysteries re. Welsh border counties. £4 p.a., 4 issues, from Jonathan Mullard, 7 Brookfield, Stirchley, Telford, Shropshire TF3 1EB.

EARTHGIANT - ed. Jeremy Harte. 30pp, A5, earth mysteries re. S.W. England. £2 p.a. 4 issues, from Jeremy Harte, 35A West St. Abbotsbury, nr. Weymouth, Dorset.

FORTEAN TIMES - ed. Bob Rickard. 70pp, quarto, Forteana, curiosities, paranormal, major forum. £5.00 for 4 issues, from Fortean Times, 96 Mansfield Road, London NW3 2HT.

LANTERN - ed. Ivan Bunn. 16pp, A5, Forteana, paranormal, earth mysteries in Suffolk. £1.50 p.a., 4 issues, from Ivan Bunn, 3 Dunwich Way, Oulton Broad, Lowestoft, Suffolk.

THE LEY HUNTER - ed. Paul Devereux, 40pp, A5, leading earth mysteries forum. £3.75 p.a., 4 issues from The Ley Hunter, P.O. Box 13, Welshpool, Powys.

NORTHERN EARTH MYSTERIES - ed. Philip Heselton. 30pp, A4. Northern England earth mysteries. £2 p.a., 6 issues, from Philip Heselton, 170 Victoria Ave., Hull HU5 3DY.

NORTHERN UFO NEWS - ed. Jenny Randles. 16pp, A5, Northern England UFO forum. £4.20 p.a., 6 issues from Jenny Randles, 9 Crosfield Road, Somerville, Wallasey, Wirral L44 9SH.

PENDRAGON - ed. Chris Lovegrove. 34pp, A5, Arthurian tradition, British mythology, earth mysteries. £3 p.a. 4 issues, from Kate Pollard, 27 Roslyn Road, Redland, Bristol.

QUICKSILVER MESSENGER - ed. Chris Ashton. 28pp, A4, gloss. Earth mysteries, emphasis Southern England. £4 p.a., 4 issues, from Chris Ashton, Garden Flat, 46 Vere Road, Brighton, Sussex.

RILKO NEWSLETTER - ed. Bob Cowley. 20pp +, A4, advanced earth mysteries, astro-archaeology. £5 p.a., 3 issues, from Bob Cowley, 8 The Drive, New Southgate, London N11 2DY.

THE SHAMAN - ed. Paul Screeton, 12pp, A4, duplicated, incorporating ASWR. Earth mysteries, Forteana reviews and forum. £2 p.a., 2 issues from Paul Screeton, 5 Egton Drive, Seaton Carew, Hartlepool, Cleveland TS25 2AT.

THE SYMBOL - ed. Nigel Pennick, 30pp, A4, duplicated. Symbolology, earth mysteries, sacred geometry. £3.50 p.a., 4 issues, from Geomantic Research, 142 Pheasant Rise, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8SD.

TOUCHSTONE - ed. Jimmy Goodard. 12pp, A4, photostat. Earth mysteries in the Surrey area. £1 p.a., 4 issues, from Jimmy Goodard, 25 Albert Road, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey.

UFO RESEARCH REVIEW - ed. Bob Morrell. 20pp +, A4, duplicated. Critical UFO matter. Sample 25p, from NUFOIS, 443 Meadow Lane, Nottingham.

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EARTHQUEST NEWS BACK COPIES.

NO.5 Winter 82. Fobbing Puma. Mahoney and Arthur's Cross. Stone Tape Reality. Astrology of Jinxs. Earthlights Review. Price 75p + 15pp.

(CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE)

Your local paper saves mark stone

A LEIGH HISTORIC monument was saved from a disastrous fate this week by the LEIGH TIMES.

An ancient mark stone, possibly thousands of years old, was almost removed from its present position at the foot of the ramp to the disused railway station in the Old Town.

Since February the old stone has been a nuisance to the heavy vehicles involved with the raising of the sea defences along the length of the High Street.

Nobody was aware of its great antiquity and historic interest. So it was felt that no one would mind if it was yanked out and taken away! It was only when LEIGH TIMES representative Andy Collins was seen studying the stone that council workers realised its significance. Mr Collins explained its historic value and was assured that it would not be removed.

"We never considered it might have any interest to anyone," a spokesman for the Southend Borough Council project said. "Now we know what it is the stone will certainly be left alone. I think it supports the post to the old railway ramp, so permission to disturb it would have been difficult anyway." Mark stones such as the one in



Andy Collins and the mark stone outside the old railway station.

Leigh are found all over Essex. They are thought to have once marked both religious and secular boundaries and are often seen in market squares, churchyards and village greens. Some are believed to date back before Roman times.

Mr Collins's actions have brought praise from Leigh Society President Sheila Pitt-Stanley who offered her thanks to him for his efforts.

Museum Curator Arthur Wright said that he knew nothing of the stone but was "glad that it hadn't been destroyed."

Stones stop damage

FROM: Mr S. A. Rooke, Southbourne Grove, Westcliff-on-Sea.

SIR, I read with interest the item in your issue 6 regarding "the stone of antique and historic interest" situated by the old station wall in the Old Town.

I very much doubt whether the stone is of any real historic interest. Such stones were often provided to protect brick structures at a point where damage could occur from carts and wagons, having heavy iron tyres on the wheels, turning at a corner.

The position of the stone in Leigh is on the corner of the station wall at a point where carts would turn at a right angle to go over the level crossing to go up Leigh Hill. At this point the corner of the wall would have been vulnerable to damage caused by the wheels of horse drawn vehicles carrying building material and timber from Bell Wharf and also from the old goods yard east of the station.

The provision of such protection was commonplace in the past where brick gate piers to factory entrances and similar access roads were open to damage. Often the protection was of stone as the Leigh one, or of cast iron bollards.

Success to your paper.

(2) 1977/83
 S M I T I G - M T



Controversy over Leigh stone

From: S. A. Rooke, 102 Southbourne Grove, Westcliff-on-Sea.

SIR, Regarding the letter in your issue No. 8 from Andy Collins about my previous letter casting doubt on the stone of "historic" importance.

Mr Collins suggests that I might have checked historical sources. I have a copy of Bundocks' admirable "Old Leigh" which gives the same picture which you have printed. I have a library of well over 100 books on Essex subjects, so I am not without information on most things historical in Essex.

Regarding the stone in the picture at the corner of the Kings Head. It was in all probability a timber-framed building surrounding brick chimney pieces, a common form of

construction in Essex. The building, being on a corner site at a point where traffic from the wharf would take the bend to ascend Leigh Hill, would need protection for the corner which would be vulnerable, hence the protective stone as shown in the picture.

Now has Mr Collins any proof that the stone in the picture can be identified with the stone by the old station?

It is known that when the railway station was being built the company was working on a "shoestring budget" and the builders may well have decided on using a stone on the site to protect the wall but this is purely supposition and history requires proof not supposition.

If the stone had been a mark stone as suggested and of which

there is no record I consider that the place for it would have been at a point where the market was situated as shown on old maps and not protecting the corner of an inn.

I would point out to Mr Collins that for some time I have been contributing notes on Essex History to a publication of which my son is editor and have always obeyed the teaching of my old headmaster who was also a barrister "that when writing one has to consider what one wrote, make sure that the facts are right and that they cannot be questioned." Mr Collins could

benefit from this precept. Regarding the age of the stone, if it is a natural stone geologist could identify its origins, be it Portland Yorkshire limestone or Kentish Rag. This could satisfy Mr Collins as to the real age of the stone. If the stone is Kentish Rag perhaps it was purloined from Hadeleigh Castle and if such was the case and it had come from the foundations this may have been a contributory cause of the castle's collapse. Perhaps Mr Collins seeking the history of the stone may find this an unrewarding and frustrating line of enquiry.

(4) LEIGH TIMES 16/8/83

① LEIGH TIMES 4/7/83 by n.c.

P2 (3) LEIGH TIMES 21/8/83

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Evidence shows stone's long life

From: Andy Collins, 19 St. Davids Way, Wickford.

SIR, I would like to reply to the letter in your last issue from Mr S. A. Rooke concerning the Leigh Stone, positioned by the old station wall in the Old Town. Mr Rooke suggested that this ancient mark stone was no more than an insignificant lump of rock used to protect the seemingly more important wall it supports.

This idea, which may account for the mark stone's usage once the station had been constructed is but a minor facet of the story. If Mr Rooke had bothered to check available historical sources he would have uncovered evidence of the stone's life before this time.

For, in a very old photograph

showing the Old Town the Leigh Stone can clearly be seen standing against the south-west corner of the Kings Head public house which was demolished in the late 1800s to make way for the station. There it faced onto the now vanished market place, where on the second Tuesday in May each year the Leigh Fair took place. It was here, too, that the town crier made his announcements, one of the last of which, Mr Lungley, who lived just feet away from the stone.

Adding to the significance of this spot is the fact that the Kings Head was the meeting place for the Fisherman's Provident Society, a guild for the all important local fishing trade. Here they would plan their future tactics, make their oaths and conduct their ceremonial activities.

The Kings Head itself is thought to have been many hundreds of years old when it was destroyed, showing that for centuries the Leigh Stone

had silently watched the town's communal activities.

Mark stones are known to have "marked" the centres of communal activity in villages and towns, like the market place, the village green or the churchyard. They are found throughout Essex, and I see no reason to doubt that the Leigh Stone is a typical example of a mark stone.

Let us do all we can to preserve its presence.



The Kings Head and Market Place in the late 1800s. The Leigh Stone is arrowed.

YOUR LETTERS

Bad luck to move mark stones

FROM: Andy Collins, 19 St Davids Way, Wickford, Essex SSI 8EX.

SIR, I really did not imagine how my liberation of Old Leigh's mark stone would cause such a controversy. So I feel I must set the matter straight by replying to the letter in your last issue from Mr S.A. Rooke who believes that the Leigh Stone is of no historic interest.

Firstly, I must point out that for some time I have been studying the old stones of Essex for an intended book on the subject. I am also an accepted authority on such matters and for this reason I consider my identification of mark stones quite reliable. The Leigh Stone fits perfectly into this category due to its shape, size, position and known history.

Mr Rooke's claim that there is no reason to link the Leigh Stone with the stone to be seen in the picture of the old Kings Head public house is absurd. The 'two' stones are in exactly the same position! Obviously, when the Kings Head was demolished the stone was left alone and later incorporated into the design of the railway station when it was

constructed. Mark stones, you see, were usually considered special to a community. To remove or destroy them was believed to bring 'bad luck', and for this reason they were often left alone.

The suggestion by Mr Rooke that the Leigh Stone was probably a fragment of building material taken from a nearby ruin, such as Hadeleigh Castle, had to be considered. To verify this idea he predicted that it was probably made of a type of

limestone frequently used for building stone edifices from the Roman period onwards.

Indeed, if the Leigh Stone did prove to be made of limestone, then my case for it being a mark stone would be sadly diminished, as nearly all Essex variants are made of sandstone; virtually the only rock to be found naturally in the county. These great boulders were deposited across the landscape during the Ice Age and because of their peculiarity

they were often set up and used in ancient times to mark sites of a religious or communal importance.

If the Leigh Stone was a mark stone then it would need to be made of sandstone. So, last week I once again visited the stone, armed with a hammer and chisel, and took from it a small chipping. It proved to be sandstone, not limestone. Sorry Mr Rooke I think it is you who wants to get the facts right, not me. I only write what I know to be correct.

(5) LEIGH TIMES 31/8/83

Life to a Markstone!

Here is some recent correspondence between your editor and a resident of Leigh-on-Sea concerning the old markstone to be found within the High Street of Old Leigh, an ancient fishing village which has long been vacated for the new town complex, also known as Leigh, upon a nearby hill top. The village is almost entirely under preservation orders and is conserved by an influential historic body known as the Leigh Society.

When I first began working for the Leigh Times, a local community newspaper, I discovered the old markstone which had apparently gone totally unnoticed by any historic body and is not referenced in any book. Then, during June this year, whilst surveying this stone, I was approached by a member of Southend Borough Council and asked if I had some interest in it. I said I did and promptly explained to him its nature. Mystified he then admitted that as it had been getting in the way of the Council's heavy machinery involved with raising of the sea defences in Old Leigh, he was going to yank it out and get rid of it. After I had picked myself up of the ground I suggested he considered not doing so. Overwhelmed by my apparent knowledge of the stone he said they would leave it alone, obvious fearing they may be disturbing an historic monument. As you can see I used the story in the newspaper and you can see the result. I leave you to decide what was right relating to the matter of the stone's antiquity.

NO. 6. Spring '83. Consciousness, Stones and Energies. More Mahoney and Arthur's Cross. Markstone Group Strike. Runwell Update. Green Stone Review. 95p + 15p pp.

NO. 7. Summer '83. The Old Stones of Essex. The Wandering Bishops. The BHigh Bond Correspondence. The Reality of Psychic Rescues. Price 95p + 15p pp.

THE LONDON EARTH MYSTERIES MOOT '84

ORGANISED BY EARTHQUEST / ASSAP FOR
THE WEEKEND OF 26TH / 27TH MAY.

PEN THESE DATES INTO YOUR DIARY NOW AS WE HOPE THIS EVENT WILL BE ONE OF THE MAJOR CALENDAR DATES IN THE EARTH MYSTERIES FOR 1984.

PLANS AND PREPARATIONS ARE STILL IN PROGRESS. SOME MAJOR NAMES AND SPECIAL GUESTS ARE BEING LINED UP FOR THE SATURDAY ALL DAY CONFERENCE TO BE HELD BETWEEN 10AM AND 10PM AT: -THE TUFFNELL PARK HALL, HUDDLESTONE ROAD, LONDON N.7.

THIS VENUE HAS BEEN USED SUCCESSFULLY ON MANY OCCASIONS FOR ASSAP FUNCTIONS. IT INCLUDES A BAR OPEN NORMAL LICENSING HOURS AND IDEAL FACILITIES FOR FOOD AND DRINK.

ALL EXCHANGE MAGAZINES AND THEIR EDITORS WILL BE INVITED TO ATTEND TO DISPLAY THEIR WARES AND EXCHANGE VIEWS AND IDEAS.

IN THE TRADITIONAL WAY, THE '84 LONDON MOOT WILL VENTURE OUT INTO THE OPEN ON THE SUNDAY. THE FAMOUS ST PAUL'S LEY, TAKING IN THE TEMPLE CHURCH, WILL BE WALKED, AND VARIOUS OTHER EARTH MYSTERIES SITES VISITED. THIS WILL CONTINUE ON INTO THE AFTERNOON WHERE SOME SUBJECTIVE MEANS OF RESEARCH WILL BE EXPLAINED AND ATTEMPTED, INCLUDING DOWSING, PSYCHOMETRY AND MEDITATION.

IT SHOULD BE A GOOD WEEKEND. COST WILL BE £4.50 PER TICKET. FURTHER DETAILS WILL BE GIVEN IN THE NEAR FUTURE. ENQUIRES TO ANDY (PRICE INCLUDES DETAILED PROGRAMME) COLLINS.