

EARTHQUEST NEWS

The Andrew Collins and Questing Conference Newsletter, Vol. 6, No. 2, Autumn 2003

Greetings once again from the Collins camp in sunny Leigh-on-Sea, and as I write the upcoming Questing Conference, billed this year as QuestCon03, looms ever nearer. Everyone is looking forward to it immensely, and I am happy to announce that all the advertised speakers have confirmed their appearances, despite the sad news that Colin Wilson has been poorly recently. As usual, tickets are selling steadily, although we do expect a sell-out, so get yours soon, for only a limited amount will be available on the door.

QuestCon03 Latest

For those of you who have lost details of the event, it is on Saturday, 15th November (and Sunday, 16th November for those wanting to come along on Adrian Gilbert's London walkabout), and the venue is, once again, Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Road, London NW1, five minutes walk from Camden station (just around the corner from the Dublin Castle pub venue). Tickets are £28 in advance and £30 on the day (sorry, no concessions). Lecturers include Lynn Picknett, on the Magdalene; Greg Little, from Memphis, USA, on mtDNA research and the origins of civilisation; Robert Bauval, on the hermetic strain through history; Colin Wilson, on his life and times; Montague Keen on the SCOLES Experiment, and Crichton Miller, on the Celtic cross as a navigational device. Downstairs in the Storrow Hall Grant Stapleton delivers the very latest news on the controversial Starchild Skull, thought by some to be alien in origin; Jack Gale, will speak on Greenwich's occult history, and I will talk about some recent psychic questing exploits (see below). Consult the QuestCon03 flyer, with stunning artwork by SheerFaith, for full details on how to obtain tickets, or log on to www.questingconference.com for tickets and all the latest information. Alternatively, ring Atlantis Bookshop for credit card bookings on 0207.405.2120 (+44.207.405.2120), although don't bug them with questions. Otherwise send your money (cheques made out to 'Questing Conference' only) to Questing Conference, PO Box 189, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1NF. Please send an SAE with all orders. It helps us tremendously.

Questing in Rennes-le-Chateau

Some year and a half ago, as you will read in my upcoming book on the Grail from Virgin Books, our questing pursuits begun pulling us towards France, and Rennes-le-Chateau in particular. Here, on the northern edge of the Pyrenees some 110 years ago, a Catholic priest named Bérengier Saunière became unbelievably wealthy overnight, seemingly after discovering something of immense value or significance in his church. He is said to have spent lavishly redesigning the tiny hill-top structure, building a strange belvedere tower called Tour Magdala and constructing a guest house known as Villa Bethania. He is also reported to have started acting oddly, erasing inscriptions on tomb stones, carrying out nocturnal excavations in both the church and churchyard, and receiving visitors totally beyond his standing as a parish curé in a rural part of southern France.

No one knows what Saunière might have stumbled upon, but it was either a commodity, such as gold or treasure (many rumours existed in the area concerning lost treasure), or a great secret which he was handsomely paid to keep quiet about by an unknown paymaster. Another strong rumour preserved locally indicates that shortly after his discovery he spent time in Paris where he met with various individuals including priests of the seminary of Saint Sulpice, who directed him to obtain copies of paintings hanging in the Louvre art gallery. One of these was a masterpiece by seventeenth-century French artist Nicholas Poussin (1594-1665) entitled *Les Bergers d'Arcadie* ('The Shepherds of Arcadia'), which shows a group of shepherds and a shepherdess looking at a stone tomb perched on the edge of a rocky landscape. Their eyes gaze in bewilderment at a Latin inscription carved into its side which reads ET IN ARCADIA EGO, 'Also in Arcadia I', or 'And I too (am) in Arcadia', interpreted by art historians as meaning even in Arcadia, the earthly paradise in Greek mythology, where the great god Pan presides, death can be found.

The strange thing is that a stone tomb matching the description of the one seen in Poussin's painting was, until its destruction in the late 1980s, to be seen perched on a rocky outcrop overlooking a mountain valley outside

the town of Arques, close to Rennes-le-Chateau. Obviously, this has suggested to the inquisitive that Poussin might have visited the area on his travels and decided to paint the view, using the tomb as a central focus. Unfortunately, however, the tomb in question dated back only to the beginning of the twentieth century, and yet local tradition asserts that it replaced an earlier example on the same spot. Moreover, Poussin is not known to have visited the Aude region, where Rennes-le-Chateau is situated, thus any similarities between the painting and the Tomb of Arques, as it is known, should be purely coincidental.

Somehow, Bérengier Saunière would appear to have been aware of this conundrum, hence his purchase of a copy of the painting when in Paris. And if this is true, then he might also have known that the line of hills shown in the background of the painting seem to feature three prominent local landmarks as viewed from the tomb's elevated position - a peak called Pech Cardou, a promontory with a ruined tower named Blanchefort, and, on the right-hand edge of the picture, the hill on which Rennes-le-Chateau stands.

Was there some clue to the mystery of Rennes-le-Chateau being offered by Poussin's painting, and was Saunière aware of some hidden tradition which revealed an occult secret of immense importance? These have been the primary questions asked by historical writers since the 1960s, the most famous being the trio of British authors who put together the masterpiece of publishing we know as *THE HOLY BLOOD AND THE HOLY GRAIL*, which appeared originally in 1982. Written by television presenter Henry Lincoln, writer and historian Michael Baigent and historical researcher Richard Leigh, it became a worldwide bestseller and attempted to answer the riddle of Rennes-le-Chateau. It sought to unravel the mystery in terms of an underground stream of knowledge regarding a royal bloodline, the *sangreal*, the 'blood royal', created from the marriage of Jesus Christ to Mary Magdalene, who in medieval legend was said to have ended her days in France. From this royal line emerged the Frankish dynasty of kings known as the Merovingians, the most famous being Clovis I, who reigned c. AD 500. He was crowned ruler of the Frankish empire by the bishop, or 'pope', of the fledgling Catholic Church, which proclaimed the dynasty's royal blood as divine. However, when the Merovingians began losing their grip on the empire in the late seventh, early eighth centuries, they were ousted in favour of their mayors of the palace, a hereditary family who ruled as the Carolingians, the most famous of whom was Charles the Great, or Charlemagne, who reigned c. AD 800. He was crowned Holy Roman Emperor by the Pope, although unlike the blood of the Merovingians that of the Carolingian kings only became holy through anointment at the time of their coronation, a ritual act which Israelite kings underwent in order to bestow on them the power and protection of Yahweh.

According to peculiar documents produced by a French secret society founded in June 1956, the heirs of the Merovingian royal family made attempts to reclaim the Frankish throne and were supported in their cause by a clandestine organisation from which they themselves took their name. Known as the *Prieure du Sion* ('Priory of Sion'), its purpose has been to keep alive Merovingian aspirations and hopes through to the modern day, and in its time the organisation has involved some of the most illustrious names in history. It is a story involving the treasure of the Cathar heretics, the Knights Templar, the Rosicrucians, various secret orders down through the ages, and, inevitably, the mystery surrounding Rennes-le-Chateau, which in the age of the Merovingian kings was an important city called Rhedae. According to the *Prieure* documents, it was to here that Sigisbert, the son of Dagobert II, the last king of the Merovingian dynasty, was secretly carried to safety following his father's assassination on a hunting expedition, an event thought to be commemorated on a stone plaque found face downwards by Saunière when removing flagstones from the area in front of the altar in Rennes-le-Chateau's church. Known today as the Knight's Stone, some believe it to show the young child being carried by a knight on a horse, an opinion not shared by French historians.

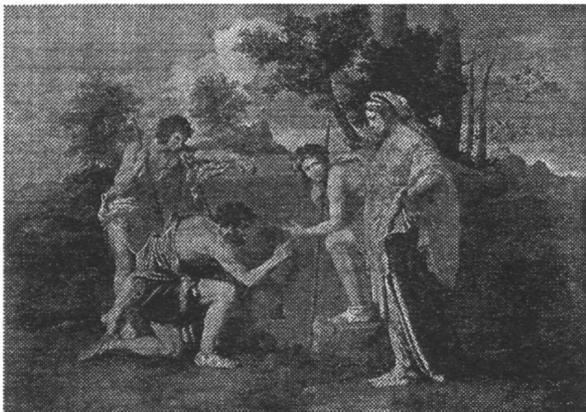
Although I retained an interest in the mystery of Rennes-le-Chateau after reading *THE HOLY BLOOD AND THE HOLY GRAIL*, I had not read anything on the subject for several years when the subject started to feature in our modern-day quest to find the Holy Grail. Yet its connection with the Pyrenees is by no means new. In the early twentieth century certain Cathar apologists came to believe that German minnesinger and poet Wolfram von Eschenbach, when referring to Munsalvaesche, the Grail castle, in his classic work *Parzival*, written c. 1210-1220, had been alluding to the mountain fortress of Montsegur, where 200 Cathars were massacred in 1244, an atrocity which brought to a close the so-called Albigensian Crusade against such heretics. The matter was taken up during the late 1920s by German historian and author Otto Rahn (1904-1938), who would go on to become a personal friend of Nazi SS leader Heinrich Himmler and join the SS himself in 1936. He arrived at Montsegur in search of the Grail, firmly believing it to have been carried to safety shortly before its fall. For him it was a simple cup fashioned from an emerald-green stone plucked by the archangel Michael from Lucifer's crown

at the time of the wars in heaven. Yet later claims that Rahn found the Grail and presented it to Himmler, who placed it on display at the castle of Wewelsburg, the Nazi Munsalvaesche, are unfounded.

So what then was Rennes-le-Chateau's own role in the Grail mystery? Although there might be sound historical foundations to the theories outlined in *THE HOLY BLOOD AND THE HOLY GRAIL*, which sees the Holy Grail as the *sangreal*, or 'blood royal', quite literally the bloodline of Christ, this is by no means the solution to the mystery which has continued to baffle researchers to this day. Some believe that the various references to the importance of the Magdalene in the village (i.e. the church's dedication to the Magdalene, Sauniere's Tour Magdala; his Villa Bethania, honouring Mary of Bethany, long considered to have been another name for the Magdalene, and a nearby Magdalene cave grotto), suggest that she is buried there. Yet there is no hard evidence that any legend surrounding her ending her days in France existed prior to 1050, and even less to support the view that her remains might have found their way to Rennes-le-Chateau.

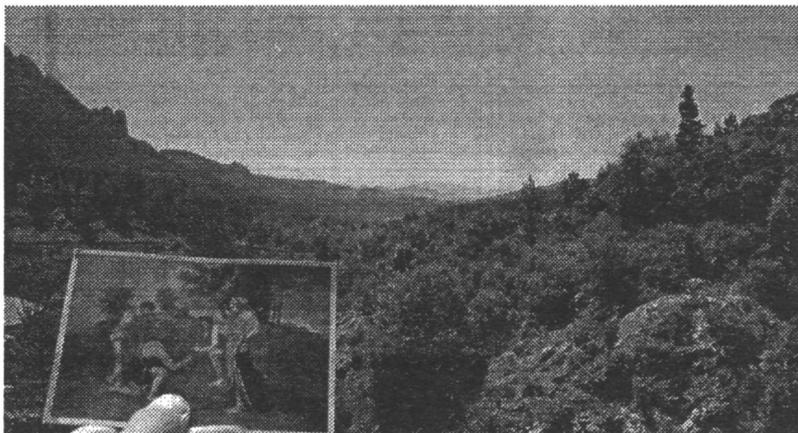
Henry Lincoln has proposed in his own books that the key to the mystery is knowledge of pentagonal geometry laid out across the landscape around Rennes-le-Chateau; the pentagram being the design that the planet Venus makes in the sky during its roughly eight-year cycle as viewed from the earth. Since Mary Magdalene might be equated with Venus in its personification as the goddess of love, fertility and sexual rapture, then perhaps this sacred ground-plan was the secret found by Sauniere. The problem with this theory is that Henry Lincoln's geometry is so vast and complicated that it is unlikely to have been known to a simple parish priest. More likely is that Sauniere came across two treasures – one material, perhaps gold coins from the Merovingian, Visigothic or Roman periods, and the other non-material, a secret which he kept quiet about during his life, telling only his house keeper and constant companion Marie Dénarnaud, and seemingly one or two of his priest friends.

Our own initiation into the mystery of Rennes-le-Chateau began not in France but in the scenic gardens of Shugborough Hall in Staffordshire, where in the mid eighteenth century a strange monument, like a false temple façade, was built showing a carved stone relief of Poussin's *Les Bergers d'Arcadie*, which, strangely, is reversed, or back-to-front. What we were doing at Shugborough, and how all this fits into the bigger picture shall remain under wraps for the time being, although what we found led to me, my wife Sue and our colleague Richard Ward setting out for Rennes-le-Chateau in June 2003. All I shall say is that the village was not a let down, and the church and the surrounding countryside was as mysterious as we could have hoped. This air is helped dramatically by both the regional tourist association and the villagers themselves, who have actively embraced the whole enigma, seeing it as part of their local heritage (so unlike Glastonbury in Somerset where the local council are currently attempting to sweep away its connections with Joseph of Arimathea and Arthur's Avalon and restore it to a normal West Country market town). The French must be applauded for their efforts in this respect, and our stay in the vicinity of this hotbed of religious heresy was made all the better for it. What I can reveal is that we easily found the site of the Tomb of Arques, and can confirm that the rocky backdrop to the scene, which includes Pech Cardou, Blanchefort and Rennes-le-Chateau, does indeed resemble its counterpart in Poussin's *Les Bergers d'Arcadie*.



Nicholas Poussin's *Les Bergers d'Arcadie*. Does it show the landscape around Rennes-le-Chateau?

I know this because I held up a copy of the picture and compared it directly against the background features of the landscape, and they match very well indeed, although personally I think that, for some unknown reason, Poussin took liberties and painted Pech Cardou twice, once close and then again further away. The fruits of our labours in France are to appear in a separate questing book, which should be written and published within the next two years.



Me holding up a postcard of Poussin's *Les Bergers d'Arcadie* at the site (on right) of the now lost Tomb of Arques in June 2003

Andrew Collins Books

I was stunned a while back when I received an email from someone alerting me to the sale of one of my old booklets, a 1991 edition of *THE SWORD AND THE STONE*. It was being offered on Amazon.co.uk for a staggering £105.88, which was a world record for any of my books. I just could not understand how a booklet which sold originally for £4.95 could have rocketed in price to such an extortionate degree. There the matter rested (the copy is still up for sale as I write – see for yourself) until I began receiving emails from people saying that there was no way they could afford to buy my old books as they were now being sold for ridiculous prices. So with the help of my colleague Richard Ward, a keen bibliophile, we searched the net and were astounded by what we found. Here are the current prices for my old questing books as given by abebooks.com, an on-line agent for second-hand booksellers worldwide. *THE SWORD AND THE STONE*, The Supernaturalist Publications, booklet, 1982, \$156.72 (one copy); ABC Books, booklet, 1991, \$156.72 (one copy); *THE BLACK ALCHEMIST*, ABC Books, trade paperback, 1988, \$63.56 (one copy), \$156.72 (one copy); Arrow, paperback, 1993, \$78.36 (one copy); *THE BLACK ALCHEMIST SUPPLEMENT*, ABC Books, booklet, 1988, \$ 78.36; *THE SEVENTH SWORD*, Century, hardback, 1991, \$78.36 (one copy), \$117.54 (one copy), \$120 (one copy), \$125.38 (one copy), \$ 313.44 (one copy). This last example is quite staggering, and unquestionably becomes the most expensive of my books ever to go on sale. By the way, there were no copies of *THE RUNNING WELL MYSTERY*, *THE KNIGHTS OF DANBURY* or *THE SECOND COMING* on sale anywhere, although copies of *THE CIRCLEMAKERS* (ABC Books, 1992) can be picked up fairly inexpensively. All the rest of my books, viz. *ALIEN ENERGY*, *FROM THE ASHES OF ANGELS*, *GODS OF EDEN*, *GATEWAY TO ATLANTIS* and *TUTANKHAMUN: THE EXODUS CONSPIRACY* are still available at the cover price, or less.

So what has made my early questing books such expensive collectors' items? Is it that on-line booksellers tend to price books extremely high in the hope of capturing the lucrative American market, which often buys second-hand books at inflated prices? This is unquestionably part of the problem, however, I only noticed that the price of my books had begun to soar after *THE SEVENTH SWORD*, the Green Stone story and psychic questing in general was given a warm reception in Kenneth Grant's most recent book *THE NINTH ARCH* (Starfire, 2003). For the last 30 years his books have expounded the influences behind the 'Thelemite' magical current utilised by that most famous of occultists Aleister Crowley, and since Grant's work is respected by so many followers of this genre those works cited by him as expanding our knowledge of this magical tradition become highly sought after.

It is my reckoning that readers of Kenneth Grant books have been buying up copies of my questing books, and this has led to a huge demand.

What do you do then if you want a copy of one or more of my early books and don't wish to pay the inflated prices given above? Well, the answer is wait. For next year it is my intention to bring out a deluxe, hardback edition of THE BLACK ALCHEMIST, complete with THE BLACK ALCHEMIST SUPPLEMENT, a new introduction, afterward and cover. It will be limited to a small, high quality print run with each copy signed and numbered, and already we have a list of names of people who want us to reserve them an advanced copy. If you are interested, then just send an email now to blackalchemist@andrewcollins.com. Do not see this as a firm commitment to buy, simply a nod to show that you are interested. For all others, keep checking abebooks.com, or scout round the second-hand bookshops as my books do crop up occasionally.

Andrewcollins.com

As you can see, I have finally obtained the domain name andrewcollins.com, which was in the hands of domain-name squatters until recently. Updating the website from andrewcollins.net to andrewcollins.com has caused an awful lot of work for my wife, who operates the website as edenelder, occasionally turning her into a fiery monster! Everything has now been updated, and all future publicity will feature the .com name. However, old Internet pages which utilise the .net name will continue to work, so that webmasters will not have to change the hyperlink and Internet users can still use andrewcollins.net.

Strange Creatures of Time and Space

As many of you will know, I started my career in the mysteries as a UFO investigator back in the mid 1970s, and ended up travelling the country interviewing witnesses to some of Britain's most significant high strangeness cases. I even investigated the country's first ever reported UFO abduction, which involved a three-hour time lapse experienced by a family of five as they drove through the quiet country lanes of West Essex, close to their home town of Aveley. Over the years I have written various articles on the subject of UFOs, suggesting that genuine close encounters are bound up with a witness's psychic background, a subject I explored in two books - THE CIRCLEMAKERS (1992) and ALIEN ENERGY (1994). Since then I have wiped my hands of the subject and concentrated on other areas of personal interest, such as the Watchers and Nephilim, ancient Egypt and Atlantis. However, I recently watched a documentary on the Discovery Channel which has helped redefine for me the physical reality of truly alien creatures in our midst.

The documentary in question was simply entitled ALIEN ENCOUNTERS, although it was screened originally in the UK under the title THE BRAZILIAN ROSWELL. It reported on the mysterious appearance and subsequent capture in Brazil during 1996 of small anthropomorphic creatures of blatant non-terrestrial origin. According to the evidence, which comes from dozens of reliable witnesses in all walks of life from policemen to firemen, from members of the military to workers at local and regional hospitals, at 1 am on Saturday, 20th January a mysterious grey object shaped like a submarine, said to have been 'the size of a small bus' and emitting what looked like white smoke, was sighted in the state of Minas Gerais, near the city of Varginha, which lies some 330 kilometres north-east of Rio de Janeiro. Later reports suggested that it crashed, although this claim needs to be treated with some suspicion.

Between 8 and 9.30am that same morning a group of young boys encountered a strange creature in woodland, some 2 kilometres from Varginha's centre. It was cowering beneath a tree, and so they started throwing stones at it in order to elicit a reaction. A woman passer by told them to stop, and went immediately to ring the fire department. On arrival they were surprised to find members of a special army unit from the *Escola de Sargentos das Armas* (ESA), the 'Army Sergeant's School' based at Tres Coracoes, some 25 kilometres away (some reports say that the Fire Department asked for their assistance). The two teams then worked together to capture the creature, which offered up no resistance and was trapped using a net and placed inside a wooden crate before being loaded on board an army truck. It was then taken to a local army barracks, where it was kept under round-the-clock surveillance. What became of it is unclear, although it would seem later to have died.

Around 3.30pm, three girls - two sisters, Liliane and Valquiria de Silva, and their friend Katia Xavier - were returning from their jobs as housemaids when they encountered a strange creature crouching down by a wall on wasteland which they used as a shortcut home. It seemed to be frightened, or injured, and was described as around one metre tall, with a large bulbous head on which were three raised ridges and heavy veins. It had large red pupil-less eyes, two holes for a nose, a thin line for a mouth, brown oily-looking skin and long arms folded over its

stomach. So ugly was it that the sisters rushed home and told their mother that they had just seen the devil! Along with their mother, they returned to the spot some 40 minutes later but found nothing save for a pungent smell that continued to permeate the air.

Nothing more happened until 6pm when a violent hailstorm engulfed Varginha, something which was considered extremely unusual for that time of year. Shortly afterwards another creature, perhaps the one witnessed earlier by the girls, was seen squatting under a tree by the side of a road. Once again, an army truck carrying a special army unit from ESA was dispatched to retrieve it. Like its partner, the creature offered no resistance, and was taken in a sack to Varginha's Regional General Hospital, although it died before reaching its destination. As can be imagined, the hospital was extremely busy at this time on a Saturday evening, something which enabled several people to witness what was going on. Realising that the creature could not be kept there, it was moved to the better-equipped Humanitas Hospital at Campinas, some 320 kilometres from Sao Paulo. Here it was examined over the next two days by a series of pathologists, as soldiers stood by and the whole thing was captured on video-recorder. At one point a doctor opened its slit-like mouth and pulled out its thin tongue, some 10-15 centimetres long which, when released, sprang back inside the thin opening. Hospital staff are said to have noticed vehicles from the University of Sao Paulo, along with two Americans carrying 'strange devices' visit the buildings containing the creature during this time.

On the evening of Monday, 22nd January the creature's body, by now beginning to decompose, was placed inside a small wooden casket and loaded on board an army truck which took it to the University of Campinas, where some of the country's top pathologists and forensic experts work. Among them is Dr Badan Palhares, an acclaimed professional in the field of autopsies, noted for his examination of Josef Mengele, the Nazi war criminal, when his body was exhumed and autopsied in 1985. Palhares is said to have led a team of pathologists who autopsied the creature's body, even though he has subsequently denied any 'official' involvement in the examination of the 'Varginha creatures'.

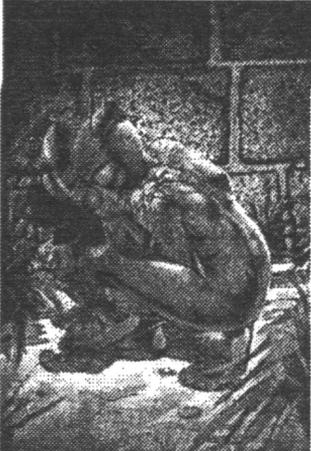
The fate of the bodies of the two creatures has become a national concern in Brazil with journalists and TV presenters joining forces with UFO spokespersons in order to force the government and the military to reveal exactly what happened in Varginha during January 1996. Piling even more pressure on the government to admit what has gone on is the fact that one of the military police involved in capturing the creature by the roadside died two weeks later under somewhat mysterious circumstances. The army gave his family no explanation as to the cause of death, and ordered that the body be interred immediately, without autopsy or formal burial. However, it has since emerged that a blood test taken shortly before the victim's death showed that his blood included 8 percent unknown toxins. No wonder the military wanted to get rid of the evidence!

Even then the sightings of the creatures did not abate. A creature, closely resembling the description of the ones seen and captured in January 1996, was witnessed by a woman visiting Varginha's zoo in April that year. She stepped out on to a veranda attached to the restaurant for a cigarette and found herself looking straight at it. The creature simply stared back at her from behind railings just metres away. Eventually, she became anxious for her safety and went to go back inside, at which the creature moved out of sight. Staff at the zoo linked the sighting with the mysterious death of several animals during this same period; deaths which abated after this time.

The documentary in question then switched to the continued sightings of the so-called Chupacabra, the extraordinary creature which has terrorized rural communities in the Caribbean island of Puerto Rico over the past ten years. Like the creatures of Varginha, it moves on two feet, has a big head and large red pupil-less eyes, although its body is covered with grey hair. It has claws for hands and feet, as well as a series of sharp spike-like needles that run from its head down to the base of its spine, similar perhaps to certain lizards. More curiously, these long spikes are said to change colour, while the creature itself is reportedly able to float and even to fly after it produces a strange vibrational hum. Occasionally, the creatures' appearances are linked with what might be termed UFO sightings, lights in the sky. More sinister is the fact that the Chupacabra is associated with a high number of animal deaths in which the blood has been completely drained from the carcasses in three out of every four cases examined. Indeed, eyewitnesses state that the creature protrudes a long sharp tongue-like device which pierces the neck of the animal and penetrates through to its main artery.

The documentary carried interviews with a number of farmers who had encountered the Chupacabra after going outside to investigate a disturbance of some sort. One spoke of hearing his car alarm going off, and after picking up his revolver went outside and was confronted by the sight of one of the creatures attacking his dog. He shot it twice, but, like some nightmarish Pokemon character, it simply became a ball and rolled away, before

unfurling and taking off at an incredible speed. Another farmer spoke of hitting a creature with a machete, but to little effect, after it went for his animals, while a woman recalled the horrific night that she entered a room only to find a Chupacabra by a window grabbing hold of her child with its talon-like fingers. Sounds like something out of the film SIGNS, I know, but what came across in all these stories, both from Varginha and Puerto Rico, is that the witnesses in every case were unquestionably recalling very vivid encounters with something quite extraordinary. By the way, after watching the documentary I began investigating the stories myself, and found no fault in the evidence it used to support its case. Indeed, I am now so intrigued by what I have read and seen that I feel compelled to research the matter further.



Artist's Impression of the Varginha Creature.



... And of Puerto Rico's Chupacabra.

So what the hell is going on in Brazil and Puerto Rico, and presumably elsewhere in the world? My own UFO investigations over nearly 20 years led me to conclude that UFOs were *not* good evidence of extra-terrestrial visitations. They are more likely to be highly-exotic energy manifestations which interact with the human brain to cause hallucinatory experiences or shifts in space-time, leading to what we know today as time distortions and abduction experiences. Such encounters with conscious energy forms have been occurring for thousands of years, and are recalled in western folklore as fairy abductions, for example. This is what I wrote in *ALIEN ENERGY*. I still stick by these conclusions, but now find it very hard to deny that strange creatures of clear non-terrestrial origin are intruding into this world menagerie we call earth. Where exactly they come from is a much more difficult question to answer, and I shouldn't just look to the most obvious conclusion that they are from outer space. More likely is that they are emerging from dimensional gateways - gateways which link this space-time continuum with other existences, parallel worlds perhaps, or even physical universes which exist in a separate continuum altogether. It would be better to call these creatures, not ETs - extra-terrestrials, but TDBEs, trans-dimensional biological entities. And what of their connection with UFOs? I feel there is a great need among UFO believers to use evidence like that which has come out of Brazil or Puerto Rico to confirm that UFOs exist. Thus we see that the creatures of Varginha, which are themselves never linked directly with UFOs, are assumed to have come from a crashed spacecraft, leading even to stories of a 'Brazilian Roswell'. However, there is no hardcore evidence of this assumption whatsoever, and no reliable witness has come forward to support the UFO crash claims which circulated the area only after the creatures were seen and captured. Moreover, to compare the Varginha incident to the events of Roswell would be doing the former an injustice. The Roswell case is surrounded by too much deceit, gullibility, misinformation and downright lies. It can never be used as good evidence of anything other than the manner in which a simple incident can escalate out of control and become worthless to investigators looking into the matter decades later. At Varginha there are literally dozens of reliable witnesses to all the various events reported, each adding to an overall, cohesive picture, while in Puerto Rico it is generally farmers who report encounters with Chupacabra after going to protect their livestock from attack.

The creatures on the loose in both Brazil and Puerto Rico should change the whole manner in which we perceive the boundaries of space-time, something which UFO writer John Keel advised us to do back in the 1970s with books such as *STRANGE CREATURES OF TIME AND SPACE* (1970) and *THE MOTHMAN PROPHECIES* (1975). However, the sheer fact that there is always an official denial to such events shows that this is not going to be the case, since governments fear that mass panic will result as people become frightened even to venture into their own back gardens at night. Everything, which you are told does not exist when you were a child, suddenly becomes real, from bogey-men to demons, and from devils to hostile aliens. Thus it is unlikely that in our lifetimes worldviews will change regarding the existence of trans-dimensional entities, and even if it did then how are we to revamp our ideas concerning the existence of other similar such strange creatures including Mothman, Sasquatch, out of place big cats, the Loch Ness Monster and even the Cornish Owlman. Are we to see them all as biological entities walking in and out of dimensional gateways, or wormholes, like holes in cheese, which link one existence with another? In many ways, I would like to think so.

Nefertiti Found?

Many of you will have seen the absolutely stunning Discovery documentary on the life of Nefertiti, which follows the work of Egyptologist Joanne Fletcher. She believes she has identified Nefertiti as one of three mummies originally uncovered in 1898 in a side chamber of tomb KV35 in Egypt's Valley of the Kings, and thereafter left in situ behind a sealed entrance. One is male, thought to be the Pharaoh Akhenaten's older brother Tutmosis, who died in his teens, and the other two are both female. One has been dubbed the 'Older Woman', and is thought to be Queen Tiya, Akhenaten's mother, while the other is known as the 'Younger Woman', and it is this that Joanne believes is Nefertiti. Using the latest digital X-ray techniques to examine the remains, which were mutilated at the time of death, it has been determined that the age of the person when she died was around 25 years of age, with an absolute limit of 30 years of age. If Nefertiti was only fourteen when she became queen on Akhenaten's accession to the throne, then she would need to have been at least 28 at the age of death, since she disappears from the records in Year Fourteen of his reign. This might fit the profile of the 'Younger Woman' in KV35. However, Joanne goes along with the flawed theory that Nefertiti ruled on her own for a year after Akhenaten's death in Year Seventeen of his reign under the name Smenkhkare, meaning that if this was the case then Nefertiti would have to have been a minimum of 32 when she died.

Smenkhkare can be shown to have been a separate person, a king in his own right, who is identified as the body found in 1905 in nearby tomb KV55. What is more, he took as his consort Akhenaten's eldest daughter Meritaten, with whom he is shown together with in carved relief, whilst her name appears in connection with that of Smenkhkare on various items found in KV55. Joanne Fletcher has shot herself in the foot but claiming that Nefertiti ruled alone as Smenkhkare, for this theory does not fit the profile of the remains of the 'Younger Woman'. Had she stuck to the accepted view that Nefertiti was merely Akhenaten's co-ruler and died in Year Fourteen of his reign, then her case might well have stood the test of time. Whatever the true identity of the 'Younger Woman', the documentary is breathtaking and Miss Fletcher should be applauded for so radically advancing our knowledge of this little understood mummy from the Amarna period.

Separated at Birth? Anybody noticed that the evil wrath-like Twins, minions of the character known as 'the Merovingian' in the recent *MATRIX RELOADED* film, bear an uncanny resemblance to the classic Billie Walker John picture of a Watcher, which features in my books *FROM THE ASHES OF ANGELS* (1996) and *GODS OF EDEN* (1998)? With all the obvious biblical and quite mystical references in the *MATRIX* films, should this similarity be dismissed as mere coincidence? Separated at birth? You decide ... Twins, left. Watcher, right...

