

# Folklore Frontiers

No 12



JOHN MICHELL: bogus  
social workers and  
demonic abductors

# Folkore Frontiers

FOLKORE FRONTIERS is an independent, non-profitmaking magazine devoted to folklore, in particular contemporary legends or urban belief tales.

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## THE DIARY

Great men supposedly require far less sleep than lesser mortals. Napoleon boasted four hours were sufficient; he usually dozed in the afternoon and fell asleep at the crucial time during the Battle of Waterloo. Rodney Dale (humour in the Whale, Universal, 1978) believes "the number of reports received about the sleeplessness of its key men may be a measure of the state of a nation." Kim Willsher's pen portrait of JOHN MAJOR (D Express, 24/11/90) reported: "He is an acknowledged workaholic who hates holidays and survives on five hours sleep a night." Ho, num.

As for MARGARET THATCHER, what can we say? At least ex-miner Mike Reary will be pleased she's gone -- he has been swamped for Maggie garden gnomes at his shop in Gateshead, Tyne & Wear (Sun, 28/11/90). Same day, same paper, report of four piglets born on a farm near Hemel Hempstead, Herts, have been named Margaret, Michael, Douglas and John after the leading figures in the Tory leadership battle. Earlier, a cow saved by firemen after plunging into a muddy river near Reading, Berks, was named after swimmer Sharron Davies.

Back to politics, and sitting MP for Hartlepool Ted Leadbitter has indicated he's retiring at the next General Election and the Labour hopeful is one PETER MANDELSON. The name of the prospective Parliamentary candidate may be best known for being the party's director of information and Red Rose image -- or from a scurrilous reference in Private Eye. According to a tale which which more than hints at the North/South divide, a group of the Hampstead party faithful visited Hartlepool to assess Mandelson's prospects of holding the seat. They decided to "go native" and sample the local gastronomic delights. Entering a seaside fish shop, one of them with a grasp of the local lingo ordered "cod and chips twice." Another, however, cracked under the



proletariat pressure and requested "some of that delicious-looking avocado mousse." Northerners will have guessed that the finger was pointed at a steaming tub of mushy peas (Northern Echo, Darlington, 2/3/90). We then missed a story in the Times' diary column, which apparently had Mandelson himself visiting a fish and chip shop, where he pointed and said: "And I will try some of that delicious-looking avocado mousse." The proprietor is said to have replied: "You mean the mushy peas?" Mandelson denied the claim: "I regularly eat fish and chips and occasionally mushy peas. Anybody in their right mind would not confuse mushy peas with avocado mousse (Mail, Hartlepool, 15/8/90). Mandy claims street cred! More than can be said of the Mail newsdesk unaware of the tale's origin.



The Press made a big event out of PRINCE CHARLES visiting Glastonbury and paying 40p for the privilege of drinking water from the historic Chalice Well, supposedly having curative powers (various 30/10/90). However, I can dismiss as legend the part of James Whittaker's background piece to the heir's apparent eccentricity regarding "sleeping in an old cottage in the Outer Hebrides to learn at first hand about the hard existence of a Scottish crofter (D Mirror, 30/10/90)." The "cottage" was a huge modern house (pictured below - P Screeton) and its builder, owner and Prince's host gave me a lift when I spent several days on Berneray staying opposite (Mail, Hartlepool, 9 to 11/11/87).



"She's out at the moment -- would you care to leave a rumour?"

Some mystery surrounds the "MAGGIE RUSSELL", who wrote the obituary on Anthony Roberts in the last issue. We understand she also sent the piece to Magonia and perhaps others. Anyway we sent a complimentary copy to the address from which she allegedly wrote, only for the Royal Mail to return it as no such address exists.



"She wanted to impress the neighbours, but we couldn't afford a satellite dish."

# Satanic curses

## Bogus social workers and demonic abductors

By John Michell



The tales and rumours that constitute modern folklore are mostly inconsequential and amusing, but laughter ceases when stories involve harm to children. Here is rumour at its most powerful and poisonous. Fears of kidnapping and child abuse stir deep emotions, and monstrous thought-forms swim up to the surface. These, in the spring and early summer of 1990, took on the guise of bogus social workers.

They were not entirely a new phenomenon. A serious outbreak of these creatures occurred in the West Country during 1989, spread along the south coast and infected other parts of Britain. It died away during the winter and was renewed early in the following year, beginning on January 30.

The first to encounter bogus social workers (BSWs) in 1990 was Elizabeth Coupland, a 24-year-old mother of two living in the Parkhill Flats area of Sheffield. She was visited by two women, claiming to be from the National Society for the Protection of Children, who demanded to examine her daughters, one two years old and the other five months. They partly undressed one of the girls and then left, but one of them returned a few days later accompanied by a man, claiming authority to take the children into care. Ms Coupland threatened to call the police, and the BSWs departed.

Between then and April 3, 12 further cases were reported, all of them in Yorkshire east of the Pennines, and the police set up an incident room at Sheffield, near the centre of the outbreak.

Publicity and police interest seemed to stimulate the BSWs, for the range and frequency of their activities was immediately multiplied. The police were unwilling at first to disclose details, but in the middle of May they claimed to be investigating 60 cases in all parts of the North Country, from St Annes on the west coast of Lancashire, through Blackburn, Oldham, Manchester, Halifax, Leeds, Wakefield, Sheffield, Barnsley, Rotherham and Doncaster to Scunthorpe in the east. Also affected were parts of Derby, Cheshire, Cleveland and other northern counties, but sightings and encounters with BSWs were also reported from many parts of southern England, including Devon, Somerset, Kent, Surrey, Essex and the London area. By the beginning of June the number of BSW incidents acknowledged by the Sheffield police centre had risen to 173. Many others, in outlying parts of the country, were reported briefly in local newspapers and received no national attention.

### REMARKABLY CONSISTENT

Reported characteristics of the BSWs were remarkably consistent. They were mostly women, aged about 30, well dressed, with smart make-up and educated, non-local accents, carrying briefcases and clipboards. The mole BSWs were of the same type. In contrast to the families they visited, many of whom were poor and harassed, the BSWs had an air of educated, middle-class superiority. Such visitors were easily accepted as what they claimed to be, officials from the local health centre or social services department. They produced official papers, were often informed on the names and personal details of the children they had come to see and even made prior appointments. This made it difficult to distinguish between the bogus social workers and the genuine variety. The advice given by the police, and echoed sensationally in the press, was to check the credentials of all such visitors and to report any who seemed suspicious. The result of these warnings was greatly to increase the number of such incidents.



The particular horror which the BSWs brought with them to every household they visited was the accusation, either direct or by implication, that the notorious Cleveland child abuse scandal had opened minds to the awful possibility that the molesting of young children by their parents and relatives was not just a rare aberration but almost commonplace throughout Britain. This notion was highly controversial, but passions were aroused; and in such situations, where emotions are widely disturbed, psychic phenomena are liable to follow. Following upon the Cleveland abuse scandal came the BSWs.

### NOT FOAFLORE RUMOURS

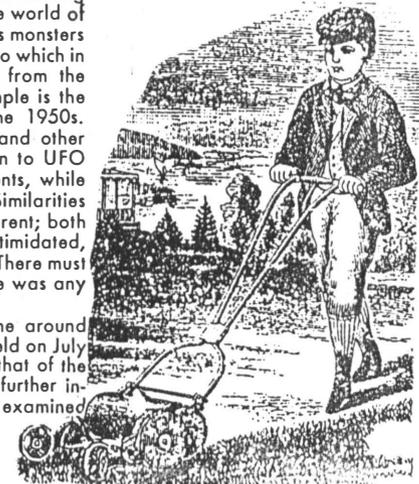
This was not a case of indirect, friend-of-a-friend (FOAFlore) rumours, for many BSW incidents were investigated in close detail and first-hand accounts were published, often with names, addresses and pictures of the victims. Shock and outrage were the natural reactions of those who had been visited, but in no case was anyone hurt, nor did the BSWs make away with any children. In only two of the 60 incidents reported up to May 15 did the BSWs go so far as to handle children. The first was the case of Ms Coupland, where one child was partly undressed. The second was two and a half months later, when a female BSW, having previously made an appointment by telephone, went to a house in Darwen, Lancs., and examined a five-month-old baby in its cot. The usual pattern of events was that the mother became suspicious when BSWs asked to inspect or remove her children. When challenged, the visitors left quickly and peacefully, sometimes driving away in official-looking cars.

In the early days of the 1990 BSW outbreak, the police and press were unanimous in believing that gangs of perverts were at work. There was talk of paedophile rings and of prowling kidnappers who pandered to their evil desires. An alternative view was that the BSWs were fanatical vigilantes, who had been persuaded by the Cleveland affair that child abuse was prevalent, and were visiting any family that they suspected of it. On closer inspection, however, both theories appeared obviously fantastic. On a practical level, for all their efforts, for all the money, skills, resources and accumulated knowledge which they must have invested in their operations, the paedophiles, vigilantes or whoever they were managed to achieve virtually nothing. They were also phenomenally lucky. Hunted urgently by the police, guarded against by every household with access to television or a newspaper, the BSWs not only maintained their activities but actually stepped them up. A reward of £10,000 for their capture, offered by the **News of the World (May 13)** merely seemed to encourage them.

### NIGHT SIDE OF NATURE

By that time, it should have been obvious to Fortean and other students of mass psychology that the BSWs were not altogether material creatures, but derived their existence to some extent from the *night side of nature*. Their appearance and behaviour, though closely imitating those of genuine bureaucrats and health visitors, were ultimately irrational, thus relating them to the world of phantoms and demonic thought-forms — the world of intermediate reality. Denizens of that realm include the ubiquitous monsters of lakes and mountains and other traditional phantasmagoria, to which in recent times have been added many new types and forms from the borderland between different levels of reality. One such example is the Men in Black. The sinister MIBs entered UFO literature in the 1950s. Dressed as their name implies, often with smart, black cars and other trappings of officialdom, they gave warnings or disinformation to UFO witnesses. Some ufologists thought they were government agents, while others took them for aliens; extra-terrestrial or demonic. Similarities between these MIBs and the more recent BSWs is readily apparent; both essentially being seen as alien officials. MIBs threatened and intimidated, and so did the BSWs, but neither group did any physical harm. There must have been well over 200 BSW incidents in 1990, but in no case was any child molested or abducted.

By the beginning of June the police appeared to have come around largely to the Fortean way of thinking. After a meeting at Sheffield on July 4 of officers from 23 regional police forces, it was announced that of the 173 reported BSW cases only 18 were considered worthy of further investigation. These were all cases where BSWs were said to have examined





children. According to Mr Martin Davies, the South Yorkshire police spokesman, many alleged BSWs were, in fact, genuine social services visitors. He attributed the recent spate of BSW reports to the influence of the press and television.

## The devil steps in and the revival of witch-hunting

During the summer of 1990, BSWs dwindled away and public attention was diverted to a related, but even more sinister type of bogeyman, the satanic child abuser. These monsters were never actually sighted, but their existence was strongly affirmed by fundamentalist Christian sects, first in America and later on in Britain. Strangely enough, the Christian devil-hunters found enthusiastic allies among the professional and genuine social workers who were so cruelly parodied by the BSWs.

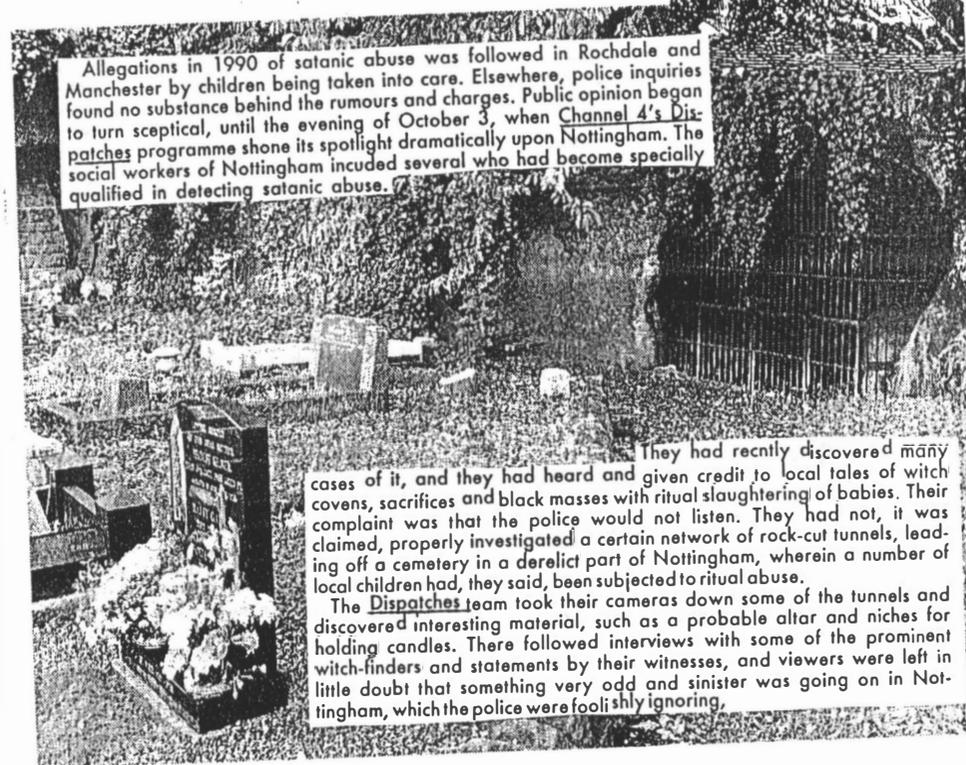
The new satanism, or hunt for satanists, rose to popularity in 1980 when a book by an alleged escaper from a devil-worshipping vice gang was enthusiastically promoted by Christian evangelicals and psychiatric groups in America. In response to the apparent demand, many other such accounts were published, and God-fearing Americans were confronted with a dread spectre, that of Satan in their midst. The story that arose was that an international organization of satanic perverts were dedicated to corrupting society through its children and thus bringing about the rule of their master, Anti-Christ. They exerted their influence through heavy-metal rock bands, fantasy games such as Dungeons & Dragons, drugs, eastern mysticism and New Age publications. More directly, they were enticing children and young people into brain-washing sessions and obscene, satanic rituals. They were also held responsible for such weird phenomena as cattle ripping and animal mutilations.

These rumours spread far beyond the Bible Belt and affected religious communities throughout the States. Missionaries arose to warn the churches, and a vast lecture circuit offered a career to anyone who claimed expert knowledge or first-hand experience of ritualistic child abuse. The lecturers were popular with women's clubs, welfare officers police departments and conservative groups of many kinds. The more lucid their stories the better they were received. In the wake of their warnings, events often came to pass as they predicted. Whole communities would find themselves in the grip of an ancient infection, the witchcraft mania. This new outbreak was even less rational than the anti-communist rampage of Joe McCarthy in the Fifties and resembled in many respects the witch fevers of 16th-century New England. Perverted satanists were said to be at large in the neighbourhood, molesting and kidnapping children, even sacrificing them and eating parts of their babies in blasphemous ceremonies. The police were called in; they investigated the rumours and allegations, and found nothing behind them. This, however, did not always quell the mania. It remains a persistent theory among psychiatrists and child welfare workers, especially those with religious beliefs and backgrounds, that ritualised, satanic abuse was rife in many parts of America. Scepticism pointed out that no such case had ever been proved and that no evidence existed of any network of devil-worshipping cultists. Undeterred by this negative view, psychiatrists and sociologists went on to develop a new branch of science — or, rather, to redevop an old branch — the science of witch-hunting.

An American social worker, Pamela Klein, became a leading expert on satanic child abuse. Having diagnosed it widely in her country, in 1988 she brought her science to Britain and soon detected a case in Kent, one of the first to be made known in this country. To her British colleagues she gave a list of "satanic indicators" by which a trained eye could tell whether a child had been subject to ritualistic abuse. Among the indicators were nightmares, bed-wetting, dread of monsters and the supernatural and an obsession with shit and smells. Given the nature of children, such indicators made the detection of satanic abuse a relatively simple matter, and official belief in its widespread existence soon became established in Britain.



An important boost to public awareness of what was going on came in March 1990 when the NSPCC held a press conference on satanic practices in Britain, involving harm to children. It was announced that social workers had evidence of ritualised child abuse by satanic cults, where children were forced to drink blood and urine and watch the sacrificing of animals. Interviewed later, the social workers added stories of babies being murdered in microwave ovens and deep freezers. The microwave story had been told earlier, by a police investigator, at a social workers' conference held in Reading in September 1989. Like all the other gruesome tales, it has never been substantiated.



Allegations in 1990 of satanic abuse was followed in Rochdale and Manchester by children being taken into care. Elsewhere, police inquiries found no substance behind the rumours and charges. Public opinion began to turn sceptical, until the evening of October 3, when Channel 4's *Dispatches* programme shone its spotlight dramatically upon Nottingham. The social workers of Nottingham included several who had become specially qualified in detecting satanic abuse.

They had recently discovered many cases of it, and they had heard and given credit to local tales of witch covens, sacrifices and black masses with ritual slaughtering of babies. Their complaint was that the police would not listen. They had not, it was claimed, properly investigated a certain network of rock-cut tunnels, leading off a cemetery in a derelict part of Nottingham, wherein a number of local children had, they said, been subjected to ritual abuse. The *Dispatches* team took their cameras down some of the tunnels and discovered interesting material, such as a probable altar and niches for holding candles. There followed interviews with some of the prominent witch-finders and statements by their witnesses, and viewers were left in little doubt that something very odd and sinister was going on in Nottingham, which the police were foolishly ignoring.

## INVENT STORIES

A sturdy response to the programme was given by the Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire, Mr Dan Crompton. He was angry with the social workers for persisting with claims and allegations which the police had thoroughly investigated and had prove to be baseless. The satanic abuse scare, he went on, was like "an epidemic of Asian flu". Social workers were widely infected by it, and the child-care profession was in danger of falling under an "orthodoxy of belief" about imaginary satanists who prey on children.

The danger in all this, said Mr Crompton, is the harm it can do to children. Taken from their homes and questioned strangely, over long periods, by their abductors, children who are suspected of being victims of ritual abuse are not only liable to invent the stories expected of them, but can become traumatised by the obscene and terrifying images they are being led to contemplate. He added another thought: that even though satanic abuse may not actually exist today, it may well become a reality in the future, when young minds, conditioned by suggestions and thoughts about the ritual abuse of children, may grow up to practise it.





Such is the power of thought-forms — as well recognised by Nottinghamshire's Chief Constable. We would like to "kill off once for all" the rumours of children suffering ritual abuse by satanists. Historical precedent suggests that he is right. The story of evil Jews kidnapping and ritually sacrificing Christian babies was endemic throughout medieval Christendom, and was the cause of many persecutions and pogroms. Gypsies and other minorities have been victims of similar irrational accusations. Killing off a psychic epidemic is not, however, a simple or straightforward matter. Irrational beliefs and thought forms are not affected by reason, and the common sense of a chief constable does not reach the deep levels on which such things exist. To those who firmly believe in organisations of satanic perverts, officials who deny their existence merely confirm these evil people have powerful protectors.

The chief promoters of the satanic abuse mania in Britain were named by Rosie Waterhouse, writing in the *Independent on Sunday*. They include the Association of Christian Psychiatrists, the Social Workers' Christian Fellowship, religious and moral revivalist, born-again evangelists and anti-occult, anti-New-Age campaigners. Some of these groups circulate hair-raising literature about conspiracies by Satan and his followers to take over the world, and how the works of the devil may be recognised and combatted in everyday life. An odd feature of the Christian crusaders who put out this material is that, the more enthusiastic they are, the less they think about Jesus and the more they talk about the devil. Their tendency, therefore, is to create a devil-centred universe.

## ORGANISED SATANISM

There is no doubting the sincerity and good faith of the honest Christians and social workers who believe that children are being corrupted on a wide scale by organised satanism. Their faith is largely based on the testimony of witnesses, who claim to remember incidents of satanic abuse from their own childhoods. Some of these people are also sincere and describe events in terms which they have come to believe in. It is quite plain that they have undergone some terrifying or out-of-the-ordinary experience with long-lasting effects on the psyche. In such cases, where the actual nature of the experience is not immediately comprehensible to the victim, the rationalised images of the event which form in the mind are conditioned by the contemporary culture. Comparable with the fantastic stories of those who claim to have been ritually violated in childhood are the equally incredible tales of the so-called UFO contactees. Many of them have described, with apparent conviction, how they were abducted and sexually molested (not always unpleasantly) by alien beings. Yet modern studies of contactees indicate that their adventures have taken place internally rather than on a physical, external plane of reality. They have been in trance or quasi-hypnotic experiences, involving no physical, outside agencies but occurring as though in a vivid dream. Those who have been conditioned by space-age imagery are inclined to describe their experience as abductions or violations by extra-terrestrials, while the same type of event, as reported from a background of fundamentalist religion, is rationalised as an encounter with perverted satanists.

However it is described, the effect of such incidents is commonly the same. Contactees in general, whether they have encountered extra-terrestrials or satanic sexualists, undergo a mental change. They become aware of spirits and demons, develop mediumistic powers and may go on to be preachers or cult leaders. Some acquire philosophy while others go mentally unbalanced.

Deeper studies of cases where satanic sexual abuse has been claimed, using the psychological techniques which have been applied to alleged UFO contactees, might well shed light on the true nature of the shattering experiences which many people have described, in the conventional, rationalised form suggested to them by the modern witch-hunters, as weird sexual encounters with the devil or his acolytes.

Rumours of children sacrificed, roasted in microwave ovens and so on are clearly identifiable as modern folklore, echoing an unpleasant but historically-familiar theme. The only real evidence of satanic abuse comes from the supposed victims themselves. Much of it consists of statements by children, who have been removed from their families and subjected to a

course of leading questions. These are totally and notoriously unreliable. All who are involved in this matter should read Richard Hughes' novel *High Wind in Jamaica*, about a group of children who are captured by pirates on the high seas. They are treated kindly and enjoy a memorable adventure. When the pirates are finally caught, the children speak of them as friends and make no mention of abuse or mistreatment. This is not at all what the authorities want to hear. The children are repeatedly questioned about the ways in which they must have suffered, and gradually they begin to repeat the suggestions of their inquisitors. When their stories have become sufficiently atrocious, they are brought as evidence against the pirates, who are thereupon hanged.

The truth behind Hughes' fiction is that children love to engage the attention of their elders and will invent and elaborate the most shocking tales in order to do so. They are easily led on by the responses of their hearers, and thus they reflect back phobias projected upon them by adults. Since many children are now from an early age exposed to video images of sex, violence, monsters and witchcraft, it is not surprising that corresponding fantasies can be drawn from them by those who are looking for such things.

The irony in this whole affair is that, in a way, the child-carers and fundamentalists are right. Something weird or stanic is indeed going on. BSWs and ritual abuse gangs may be mere thought-forms, but such things can be highly and dangerously powerful. They also have a certain meaning. In this case, the meaning is probably much the same as everyone supposes it to be. These phenomena are drawing attention to child abuse and cruelty. Social workers know only too well how much suffering, mental and physical, is inflicted on modern children in their homes. Some of it is caused wilfully, but by far the greater part arises through ignorance and misunderstanding. Children are always the same and are born with the same needs and natures today as in Stone Age times. In adapting to the arbitrary and artificial conventions of modern society, they are vulnerable to inner traumas, unrecognised by their parents. They are particularly at risk in deprived, deculturized, unstable families and among stupid or degraded people who sexually abuse them. Reports of cruelty, neglect and physical abuse of children in certain areas are hardly exaggerated. Indeed they are probably much understated. These evils exist, in ordinary, modern families, irrespective of any hypothetical satanists.

The sufferings of children and adolescents can produce strong psychic effects, as displayed in many cases of poltergeist hauntings. Thought-forms are created, taking shape in accordance with current phobias and obsessions. Contributing to the satanic abuser thought-form is, in the first place, the anguished spirit invoked by the sufferings of children. To this are added the currently resurging spirit of witch-hunting, devil-seeking, fundamentalist religion and the video images of occult and sexual horrors in the minds of modern children. The result is a thought-form which can indeed be called satanic, for it is capable of giving rise to much evil and destruction.

The thought-form of satanic abuse enters into traumatized minds and furnishes them with images which seem to illustrate a previously indescribable psychic, psychological and actual experience. Witnesses arise, telling of the obscene torments they have undergone at the hands of devil-worshipping cult ritualists. These fantasies accord with those of religious crusaders; children also respond to them, and they even manage to infiltrate the minds of professional social workers. Archaic terrors rise to the surface, terrors of alien creatures, phantom kidnapers, demons in human form. The satanic thought-form is thus empowered and proceeds to the next stage of its growth, the production of visible illusions. These have now appeared in the menacing but so far harmless guise of bogus social workers.

Other, more emphatic and possibly more lethal phantasmagoria are likely to emerge from this modern witch mania, from this dangerously effective invocation of satanic powers. Already from America have come reports of infant-teachers and youth-leaders becoming victims of vile accusations which, wherever investigated, have proved unfounded. Worse tragedies could well follow. Unfortunately, it is no simple matter to dissolve a well established thought-form. Appeals to common sense and reason are not good enough, for behind the hysteria and superstition lies the ugly reality which has given birth to the satanic abuse thought-forms — the reality of suffering children. It is thus apparent that illusory satanists and phantom social workers are signs and portents which demand attention. If ignored or misinterpreted, they will recur in ever more ferocious forms until their meaning is made catastrophically unmistakable.



# Suffer the little children

What's the difference between a social worker and a rottweiler?  
A rottweiler gives your kids back!

By Paul  
Screeton

The hybrid scare about social workers grew from the central fundamentalist involvement with hyping the Satanic child abuse scare. During early 1990, Satanists posing as social workers were calling at homes to kidnap children, it was alleged. Within a week more than 173 cases of Satanic bogus social workers were reported to police. Alarmed, police set up a special incident room to correlate activity on a nationwide scale. There was all manner of nonsense from fundamentalists and child welfare organisations, including the claim that Satanists used miniature spy-cameras to photograph children whilst they were examining them.

Within a month the police disbanded the unit -- sensibly they concluded the bogus Satanic social workers did not exist. Out of 173 cases, police believed only three were possibly genuine. Of "real" Satanic abuse cases, only half a dozen had been "discovered" and there was little evidence to support them. As one commentator put it: "The whole of the UK was indulging in a form of interactive fantasy which played on people's tears, prejudices and emotions." (1)

After the Cleveland affair, one would have thought that supposedly responsible people such as the social services and police would have learned a lesson. The stupidity of both sets of people has gravely dented their credibility and unless there is seen to be a complete reversal, there will be serious repercussions for the future of justice and trust in the UK. What hope, however, for people with shit for brains?

But to return to the bogus social workers. If they were not bona fide Satanists, what were they? It seems the police "thought (they were) door-to-door salesmen, religious canvassers and market researchers." (1)

But why not phantom thought-forms, as John Michell proposes in his persuasive analysis? Michell's piece is thoughtful and derives from a lifetime's study of phenomena, prophecy, lost innocence and the dangers of propaganda and officialdom. His concern for children's welfare and rights is exemplified by this observation: "Interfering people always snatch wild children away from their animal families, but they can never really be taught civilized behaviour, and the first thing they always say, if they learn to speak a few words, is how much happier they were in the wilds." (2)

Whatever the bogus social workers were, they have spawned some excellent, commonsensical publications to counteract the fundamentalists -- SAFF, Orcro (reviewed elsewhere) and Bad News; the latter's issue 15 being not only a splendid demolition job of Reachout, but investigative journalism to put top professionals to shame.

Pity that can't be said of the notorious Northern Echo, Darlington, which has maintained and unswerving support for Drs Higgs and Wyatt of



Cleveland infamy. A puke-brewing piece of sychopnantism from a Priestsgatess hack had her bent backwards to show social workers as overworked, sincere and misunderstood; bewildered at threats of physical violence, under emotional stress and in low public esteem. (3)

What do they expect in a land where they have powers the envy of police forces; where the innocent can be snatched and parents forbidden to see the children. Social workers have created the ultimate fascist secret society.

When Mike Bishop left Cleveland for the top job in Manchester, all campaigner Stuart Bell, MP, could do was gasp in disbelief: "Heaven help Manchester."

Bell probably wrung his hands in horror; did Bishop have a special handshake ... ?

Natasha Dennis, a 10-year-old goalkeeper in a Lewisville girls' league, has been doing so well that some fathers of rival players suggested that she must be a boy. They went so far as to request that she be subjected to a visual sex test. To which Natasha replied: "I think they should go somewhere and check and see if they have anything between their ears." *The Guardian 10/11/90*



September 19, 1990 THE SUN

## Babes killed in organs for sale racket

CROOKED doctors are butchering babies and selling their organs for transplants, it was revealed yesterday. Hearts, livers and kidneys fetch up to £40,000 a time in Europe after they are taken from babies sold to third-world clinics. The racket was exposed by two Italian judges probing claims that a former mission had sold 3,000 Brazilian babies. Most were allegedly taken to Naples and distributed for adoption. But others were sold to clinics in Mexico and Thailand and killed for their organs, the judges said.



FIRST BOY: "Wot's waterproof gloves for?"  
SECOND BOY: "Why, they're for folk as wants to look up your arse without getting dirt on their hands."



- (1) Anon, "Rochdale Explodes Satanic Abuse Myth", Sorcerer's Apprentice Fighting Fund, no date.
- (2) Michell, John, "Consul: His column", the Fanatic, No. 3, 1977.
- (3) Hunter, Adrienne, "Anti-social pressure has workers wilting", Northern Echo, 20/9/90.

## BOOKS FOR SALE

Further to the announcement last issue, I wish to let readers know that I have a wide range of books for sale. Although some are unwanted review copies sent to FF, the majority are ones I receive as a local newspaper journalist who also regularly reviews books. I am happy to sell as

many as possible at a little over one-third published price to subsidise FF -- in other words despite rising printing and postage costs, I hope to peg FF subscriptions if readers respond. Main categories of books are biography, travellers' tales, novels (some best-sellers), earth mysteries, old churches, astrology, New Age, modern female shamanism, Cayce, tarot, green issues and much more. Send for lists, specifying particular interests.

# More lost innocence?

A story which challenges one's belief system became the splash in the Sun (1/12/90). Did a man in a wetsuit sexually assault a dolphin... Bannerheadline POLICE PROBE DOLPHIN SEX ATTACK (actually my first reaction was that the mammal was the guilty party).

The Sun then stated: "Flipper Freddie is said to have been groped in the sea. He's Britain's tamest dolphin and lives in the harbour at Ambie, Northumberland."

By paragraph five we had Page 3 girl Maria Whittaker (22), introduced as a character witness, having spent two hours with him. All the ingredients for a spicy tale.

Fucked inside on Page 2 we have the expert, a Dr Horace Dobbs, of International Dolphin Watch, who said:

"Freddie is possibly the most friendly dolphin in the world. He is especially attracted to women."

"When a dolphin doesn't feel threatened his penis may come out."

"I've swum with Freddie and he's towed me along with his penis loads of times. He either hooks it into your arm or your legs."

"If he wants to give people a tow with it, they should let him do this. It's about 12in."

He added: "We do ask people not to get hold of it, then nobody should get upset."

Steady on, so if he had hold of its penis... what's the fuss? Just 'cos he's a boffin!?! An Inspector Jim Harvey of the marine police... (whom they said: "We are investigating complaints of indecent acts towards him. We are considering public order offences.")

Back to Maria Whittaker: "He has a reputation for being over-romantic - especially when young girls come into view. But he was the perfect gentleman when he was with me."

So is this a proto-legend. Bestiality can be used for political (KHS, p23) purposes or revenge perhaps. (see below). One suspects the Sun for various reasons... I checked such regional papers as Journal (Newcastle) and Northern Echo (Darlington), which both covered a Flamingoland dolphin story at exactly the same time. Also the Sun by-line of Brandon Malinsky was new to me.

But to balance this, when I passed the lit. in 1956, I went to Grammar and my best pal Geoff Haywood went to the Tech. Naturally we kept in touch and one day he told me he was kept off sports and some fellow pupils grabbed a stray dog and to relieve their boredom they gave the dog hand relief! I never doubted this story and found it hilarious at the time. I now wonder if it was a fabricated legend.

As for the real world, Geoffrey Stevens was cleared at Nottingham Crown Court of having sex with a Rhode Island Red. (Sun, 25/10/90)

Space is getting tight, but I'd suggest readers check out "The Coloretal House" (Brunvand, "The Mexican Pet")... This story is gathering momentum at the moment (see New York Post, 10/6/90) and in his last letter to me Jan says the latest star to be tainted by the tale is



By Paul  
Screeton



Inland Revenue  
PAYE—Notice of coding

Issued by  
HM Inspector of Taxes  
Highland House  
Victoria Bridge  
Manchester  
M3 2UH

Our Ref: RJC/423

Your Ref:

Date: 7th April 1988

Dear Paul Screeton

Looking back through our records it has come to our notice that the only thing the Inland Revenue has not taxed is your willy. This is due to the fact that 40% of the time it is hanging around unemployed, 30% of the time it is pissed off, 20% of the time it is hard up and 10% of the time it is employed but operates in total darkness. Furthermore, it has two dependants and they are both nuts.

Accordingly, after April 30th 1988, your Willy will be taxed based on its size. You can determine the amount of tax due by using the "Willy Checker Scale" below:

#### Willy Checker Scale

10 - 12 inches	Luxury Tax	£50.00 per annum
8 - 9 inches	Pole Tax	£25.00 per annum
6 - 7 inches	Privilege Tax	£15.00 per annum
4 - 5 inches	Nuisance Tax	£ 5.00 per annum

NOTE: Anyone under four (4) inches is eligible for a refund. Do not apply for an extension. Males with willies in excess of twelve (12) inches should file under "Capital Gains".

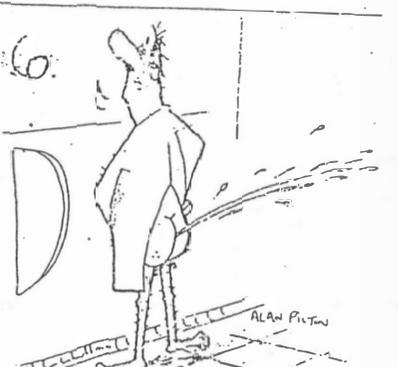
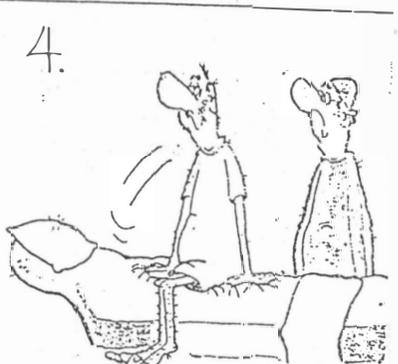
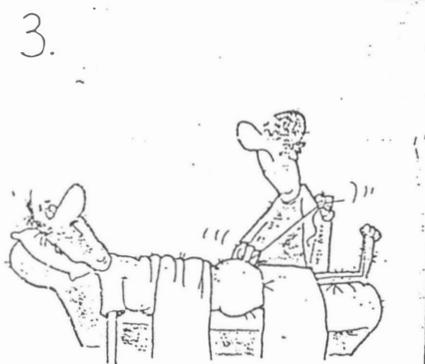
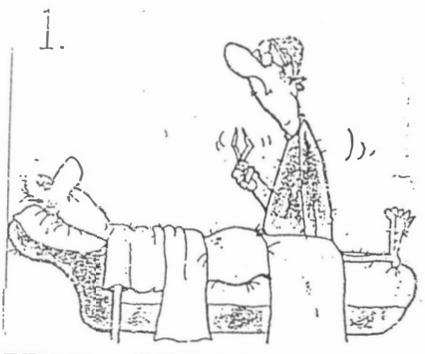
After you have determined you category insert the additional tax under 'other Taxes', part V, Line 61 of form P1S25.

Yours sincerely,

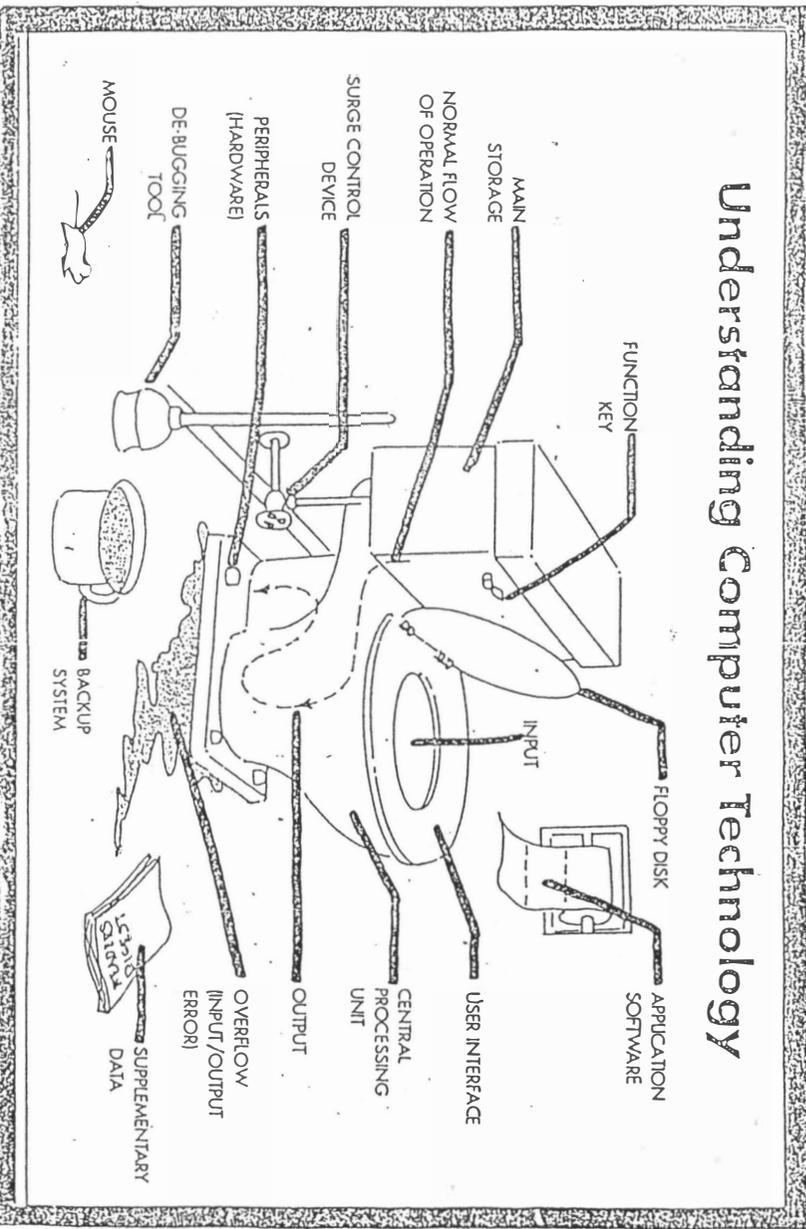
Four  
pages of  
photocopy lore

R.J. Wichepeckes

# THE VASECTOMY



# Understanding Computer Technology





ON HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE

NOTIFICATION OF COMPULSORY ENLISTMENT

WAR OFFICE

OCT/LLK 4RR

Dear

On behalf of Her Majesty and her Government, you are hereby notified, under the Emergency Powers Act 1939 (amended by Defence Act, 1978) you are required to place yourself on standby for possible compulsory military service in the Gulf conflict. You may shortly receive orders to embark for Saudi Arabia to join the First Battalion, Queens Own Suicidal Regiment.

Due to cutbacks in Government expenditure in recent years, it will be necessary for you to provide for yourself the following equipment as soon as possible:

Combat jacket  
Trousers (preferably Khaki)  
Helmet  
Boots (or sturdy trainers)  
Gas Mask  
Map of combat zone. (Ordnance survey outdoor leisure map of Iraq will do)

Rifle/Ammunition  
Sun Tan Lotion (High Factor)  
One way ticket to Riyadh

If you can afford it, we would also like you to buy a tank - Vickers Defence at Barnbow are currently offering conscripts a 0% finance deal - while stocks last - on new H reg. Chieftains.

We would reassure you that in the event things go wrong, a free burial will be provided in the graveyard of your choice and your widow will be entitled to the War Widows Pension of One Pound, seventy five pence per calendar month (subject to means testing.)

There will be little time for formal military training before embarkation, so you are advised to watch the following war videos and try to pick up a few ideas. The Guns Of Navarone, Kellys heroes, A Bridge Too Far, The longest Day and The Sound Of Music. Alternatively if these are not available, any old John Wayne movie will do.

Yours Sincerely,

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

A Bush/Thatcher Production.  
Sponsored by Mars - The official snack food of World War Three.

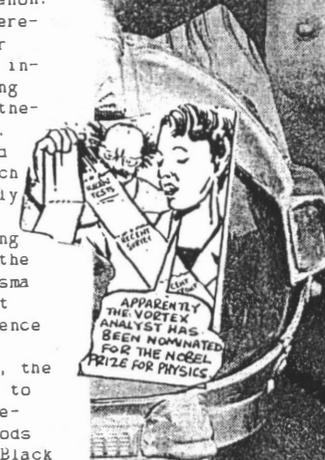
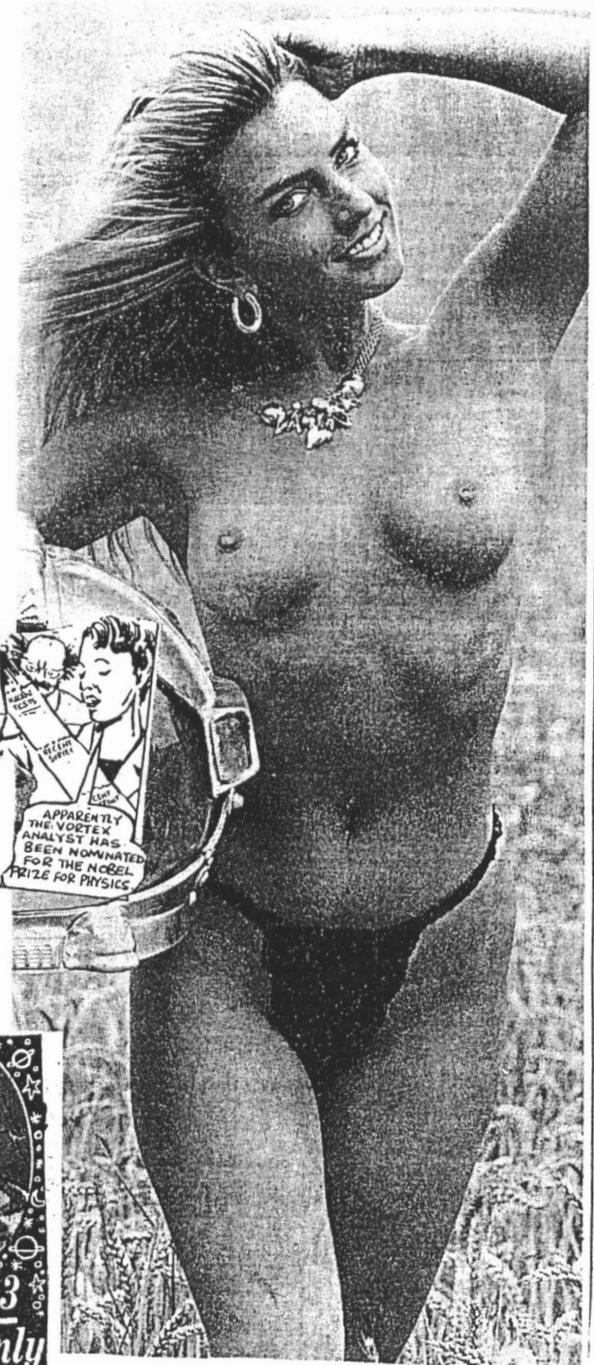
# Squaring the circles

By Paul  
Screeton

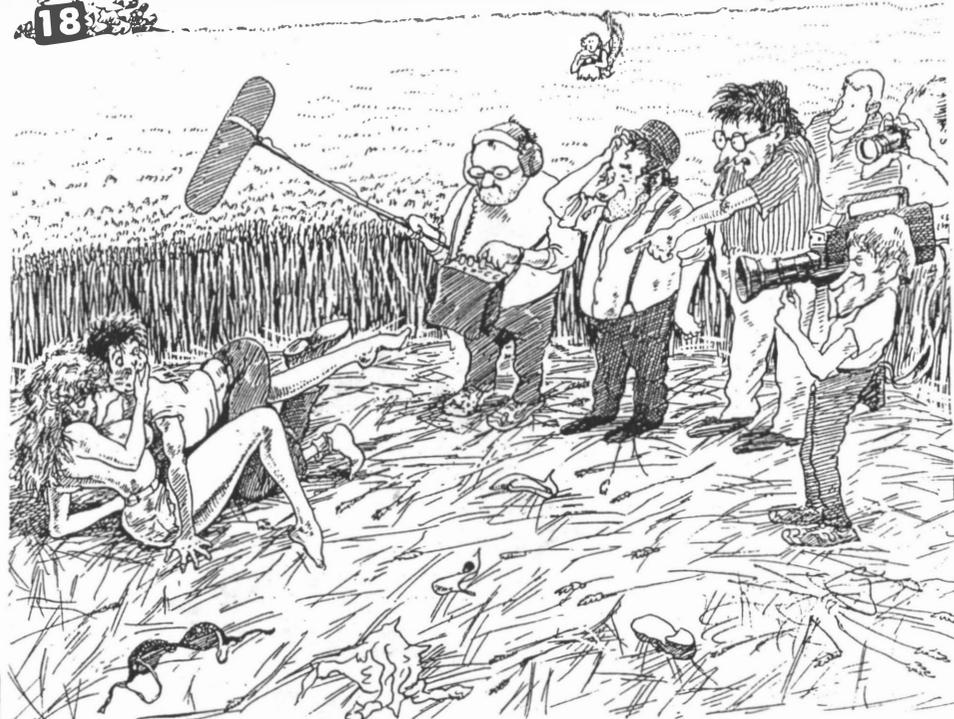
We will leave to the crop of new corn circles journals any analysis of the phenomenon. We recommend the Cereologist as a major source and have no intention of repeating here the contents therein already aired.

This summer I had one sortie in search of examples and only found one dubious possible. Also being a cynic, I accept the possibility of plasma vortices but do not accept their influence on corn circles.

As for influence, the newsworthiness led to excellent advertisements for Littlewoods Pools and Carling Black Label.



\*\*\* Where we lead  
The Sun follows.  
Folklore Frontiers  
"doctored" a News  
of the World cartoon  
strip for the very  
same Page 3 girl  
and corn circles  
theme back in  
FF 8, p7. \*\*\*



"So this is the eight-legged space alien you saw forming corn circles?"

Wherever there is rumour, pop music gets involved. In this case we had remix star Chad Jackson (dancefloor smash Hear the Drummer) who swears he never drinks alcohol saw bright lights in a Wiltshire wood and the next morning found "three huge circles of flattened corn which hadn't been there the day before" (D Star, 12/6/90). Then there was a spoof (?) picture and story about The Charlatans and circle spotting (Melody Maker, 4/8/90). Someone from The Time Lords (remember Doctorin' The Tardis) was also involved and there was talk of a pending legal action.

### For circle buffs who may have missed these North-East region cases, here are the main 1990 ones:

1. First Cleveland one (only one??) Adam Casson (16), while walking near Nunthorpe School spotted the circle near Crow Wood, not far from the roundabout where Ormsby Bank meets the A171 Guisborough road. Between 10 and 15 metres wide, a photograph (Evening Gazette, Middlebrough, 27/6/90) looked impressive.
2. Colour picture on the front page no less! Perfectly round and almost 70 feet across was a corn circle outside Sunderland, Tyne & Wear, close to the Seaburn fairground. A magnetic field near its centre was claimed by its discoverer (Echo, Sunderland, 26/7/90).
3. A pair of circles appeared in a field at Malton, N Yorks, and were reasonably impressive (aerial photo Northern Echo, Darlington, 26/6/90).
4. The West Cornforth, County Durham, examples look crude and appeared on July 24 (Northern Echo, 26/6/90).
5. Another impressive example was at Shadforth (see cutting, Northern Echo, 30/7/90).

Do vortices cause alleged strange animal behaviour, cause magnetic effects, attract members of the rock 'n' roll fraternity, and so on? Isn't it time to ditch tedious Terry Meaden and realise we are looking at something very different from meteorological phenomena.



The mysterious West Cornforth rings

Elizabeth and Vic Moore with Patsy in the mysterious corn circle at Shadforth

Picture: IAN WEIR

## Circle scares Patsy silly

By JONATHAN CARR-BROWN

PATSY the King Charles spaniel has his own theory about corn circles - they scare him silly!

The perfectly formed circle behind the Plough Inn, Shadforth, near Durham City, is 16 yards across and has the village baffled.

A rumour that it appeared shortly after closing time on Saturday night has been discounted by the pub's new landlord Vic Moore.

He said it wasn't there at 1am when he took Patsy for a walk, but was by 7.30am when he took the animal out again.

Vic said: "We didn't hear anything and there was definitely no

flashing lights but at about 3am the dog did start bawling.

"Then when I went to let him out he darted past me and jumped into bed with my wife and I. Normally if he wakes up in the night he wants letting out and he disappears."

Closer inspection shows that the corn has been perfectly laid down to form a neat mat and Durham police say they can find no signs of pole marks or anything to suggest a hoax.

An impromptu meeting of the local farming community, chaired by the

field's owner Gordon Johnston, of Hill House Farm, the phenomena was discussed heatedly between pints.

Theories ranged from vortices, to a clever man on stilts with a heavy rope and steel peg.

Mr Johnston's wife Elizabeth saw the circle from her bedroom window in the evening and confesses a preference to the UFO theory but concedes two people could have equally walked up the tractor paths and flattened it with a heavy rope.

Delving a bit deeper into the possibility of strange noises, one woman replied: "No dear, the only strange noise I heard last night was my husband snoring."

Season for  
chit-chat  
UK Press Gazette 6 August 1990  
18...

It was what you might call a corny joke, but it allowed all those parts of the media that hadn't taken seriously the mysterious circles appearing overnight in farmers' fields of corn to have a laugh at all those parts of the media that had. Hoaxers, as *The Independent's* headline-writers put it, had run rings around a circle of experts.

Even the BBC's 'Breakfast Time' presenter, Nicholas Witchell, had

announced the story to excited viewers - while Reuters broke the news to the world's Press. "Excited scientists said they recorded evidence that could solve the centuries-old mystery of circles in English cornfields which have aroused speculation of visitors from outer space," said the agency's report.

What both the Beeb and Reuters were getting carried away by was the news that a group of scientists in Wiltshire had taken film of a field in which a series of circles and lines of flattened corn had appeared. The film apparently showed a glowing triangle of bright orange lights

hovering above the spot where the mysterious patterns had been formed. Within a few hours of the discovery, the word had flown around the globe: UFOs filmed in Wiltshire field.

The story had begun to evaporate, of course, even before the ouija boards and wooden crosses were found in the middle of the circles. And those journalists who'd always insisted that the whole corn circles affair was nothing more than a modern-day version of the old silly season favourites such as frying eggs on pavements were quick to poke fun at their more credulous (or open-minded, depending on your point of

view) rivals.

The *Sunday Mirror*, which had offered a £10,000 reward for a solution to the corn rings mystery, even found itself under a direct challenge on the subject from its Mirror Group stablemate *The People*. After devoting a double-page spread to an explanation of how "crafty countryman" Fred Day had known the technique of making these circles for 47 years (take a pair of stils, a ball of string, a pole and a four-foot long handroller and you too can make a corn ring, says Fred), *The People* asked the *Sunday Mirror* on Fred's behalf: "Now can I claim £10,000 reward?"

*Sunday Mirror* editor Eve Pollard was on holiday when Dog tried to contact her, but it's not thought likely that she'll be letting her rival MGN editor Richard Stott get his hands on the £10 grand. About as likely as the corn circles being made by UFOs, you could say.

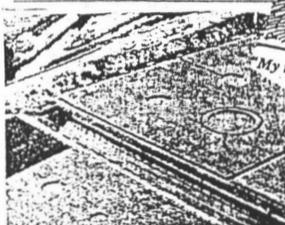
### ... at straws

While the nationals were wondering about what was causing these strange occurrences to corn on the ground, the *Sutton Coldfield News* was watching out for even stranger occurrences involving corn in the air.

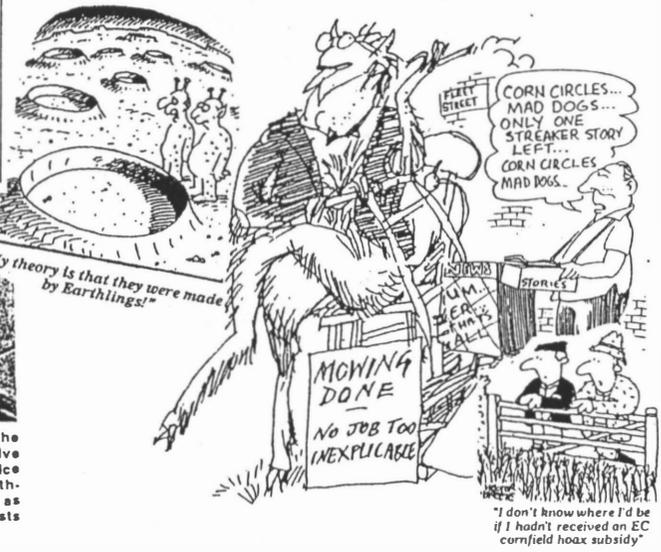
"Straw in the wind!" announced its front-page splash the other week, above an article beginning: "A mysterious UFO was seen floating above Sutton Coldfield town centre yesterday - a bale of straw... Several people claimed to see a bale of straw moving across the cloudless sky at a height of about 500ft. Witnesses said the rectangular bale was falling slowly through the air and may have landed a mile away."

Police reckoned the bale must have fallen from a lorry, while the Birmingham Met Office said it had received several reports of straw falling from the sky that week. "The hot weather could be to blame," said a spokesman. "High pressure can create a dust dervish, or vortex of air, which can pick up bits of grass or rubbish."

But a bale of straw? It sounds like journalistic hot air to me.



Circles spread: After the corn circles... rice circles. Five mystery rings appeared in rice fields in Yoshinogari, south-western Japan, recently. Just as in Britain, Japanese scientists are baffled about their origin.



# NEWSLINES

**EMPLOYEE'S REVENGE (OR JOKE).** I'm surprised more attention has not been paid to such stories by folklorists. This is a round-up from the files or items which fall outside the range of vicious vindictiveness or attempted blackmail. They form a vein of folklore where mischief is the motive (as with hoax official letters). For breakfast, Kurt McInnes, of Clydebank, Dunbartonshire, found a Jifii-brand flavoured condom in his Kellogg's Coco-Pops. The two-year-old's mum believed "someone in the factory must have put it in for a joke" (Sun, 10/4/89). Then mum Margaret Emery, of Barking, Essex, spotted an unrolled sheath as she tucked into Walker's cheese and onion crisps. "I noticed something pink and rubbery," the 38-year-old said. "I screamed and rushed to the toilet to throw up. Now I'm just praying the thing hadn't been used" (News of the World; 6/8/89). Neither company was amused. Neither was the printing house whose children's textbooks included a 32-page supplement of articles on sex and prostitution. Following pupils in China's Shanxi province being nonplussed, the firm apologised and speculated whether the error resulted from poor management or if "persons dissatisfied with their leaders intentionally made trouble" (Independent, 11/4/89). Then the W H Smith regime found a cheeky Frenchman had hacked rude speech bubbles into a computer game called Skweek (D Star; Sun, 2/8/89). But, innocent that I was, I never realised as a child the Pugwash on TV I enjoyed was sexually subversive. See cutting above (Sun, 13/6/90). Lastly, Sky TV newsmen Bob Friend was sent up with a vengeance when he found himself being beamed out live as a transvestite. He was shown on screen wearing a blue dress with a gold necklace instead of his usual sober suit. His bosses were stunned when a prankster slotted in the electronic mock-up at the end of the 11am news in revenge for being on the receiving end of Friend's acid wit (D Mirror, 22/7/89).

**TV pirate Captain Pugwash is to set sail WITHOUT his shocking shipmates Master Bates and Seaman Stains. Nine kiddies' videos are to hit the shops without the pair after the BBC realised the names have lewd double meanings. An insider said: "The BBC were so slow catch-**

**ing on in the first place they are determined not to be fooled again. An eight-year-old may have fallen for it 10 years ago but now they are on the ball." BBC Enterprises claimed: "We just pick the best episodes." Pug Wash, in Aussie slang, is also X-certificate.**

**CREMATION.** Another familiar theme we've not covered before. This could all be above board but the ashes of a dead sailor were blown up in a bizarre Royal Navy mix-up. Four named sailors were killed in an off-duty car crash, but a cask containing the remains of an unidentified rating was mistaken for a bomb and detonated at the submarine base of Faslane. "The ashes were not expected by the person they were addressed to, therefore they were treated as a suspect package," said spokeswoman Zoe Harris (Sun, 3/8/90). Less understanding were grieving mourners left fuming after a Stourbridge funeral went wrong. Relatives at the cremation of retired farmer Eddie Oakley, 78, had asked for a tape of Ella Fitzgerald's classic Every Time We Say Goodbye to be played. Instead they got Smoke Gets in Your Eyes. It seems the two tracks were adjacent and the tape had not been correctly set (D Star, 31/10/89).

**FOUNDATION SACRIFICE.** Docky (Sun; D Mirror), Dockey (D Express) or Docker (D Star, all 25/4/90), the porpoise, who died after release from seven weeks in Hull's King Dock (D Star) or King George Dock (D Express), where she was fed tuna sandwiches, was "buried" under the central arch of the Humber Bridge.

**RAMBO REVISITED.** A war myth is that fought in Vietnam. The belief that US soldiers missing there in action are still alive has given rise to a flood of Rambo-style fantasy stories in print and a film. An excellent summary of the situation has been given by Richard West (Independent Magazine, 14/10/89), who fears they also illustrate a wish for revenge among those Americans who still cannot come to terms with their country's role in the war. Worth checking out if you're a war myths buff.

**MARINE BOY.** A regular rumour among the teenage subculture is how a group will play a special date (often under an assumed name). Three years ago around 20 girls sneaked out of Hartlepool's Dyke House School when it was rumoured American star Tiffany would play an impromptu open-air gig in the town's Middleton grange shopping centre. She didn't. Then when neighbouring Seaton Carew's Marine Hotel was reopening, a rumour swept Hartlepool that Jordan, of New Kids on the Block, was to officially open the plush pub. He didn't.

**STRANGWAYS.** There was a treat of fact and fiction in the reporting of April's riot at Strangeways jail. Body counts never added up, nor did the scale of injuries. Rumour fed upon rumour as reporters compared accounts, anonymous stories became facts and death tolls were talked up. Mike Unger, editor of the Manchester Evening News, who was invited into the jail to meet the prisoners, believed that a kind of "mass hysteria" set in among reporters, prisoners and even prison officials. The Sun claimed 30 sexual offenders had died. It followed with an "exclusive" from a hospital attributing to an unnamed nurse one prisoner admitted had been castrated and two days later the Daily Star was still running this angle. Today had a tale of a kangaroo court sitting all night in some parody of the judiciary with a "stark choice of either makeshift nooses strung from 30ft balconies or be knifed and bleed to death" attributed to a police officer inside who could never have been there. Later the Sun had bodies "cut up and dumped in a sewer" (insightful analysis in the media section, Guardian, 9/4/90). In his first interview after the £80million cost, 25-day siege ended, governor Brendan O'Friel said no bodies were found though some sex offenders were "badly beaten" (Today, 28/4/90). Staunch Roman Catholic O'Friel was then slammed for claiming the riot was "a battle between good and evil." He reckoned the violence erupted because 200 prisoners had recently been converted to Christianity -- and Satan was hitting back. He claimed he only averted a Satan-inspired "holocaust" on Good Friday by organising a mass pray-in (D Star, 7/5/90).



**TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES.** As columnist Richard Littlejohn pointed out (Sun, 8/11/90), there are "those in Britain whose Turtle Power as the biggest threat to our children since ritual Satanic abuse. No doubt they are the same self-appointed guardians of morality who assume every parent is a potential, if not practising, paedophile." They've got "Ninja" changed to "Hero" already. Crackpot vicar, the Rev George Campbell, 58, of Holy Trinity Church, West Bromwich, W Midlands, wants the Christian message plugged more as the Turtles are more popular than Jesus (D Star; Sun, 10/11/90). Headmaster David Pott, of Brockley, S London, likened the sewer-per race to the Nazis (D Mirror, 9/10/90). As with earlier cartoon characters, Turtles have appeared on LSD tabs, along with topless skateboarding nuns and Saddam Hussein (News of the World, 11/11/90). In response, turtles have appeared offshore and in a Midlands canal, while in New York (where else!) monsters weighing 50lb each have been found in the sewers. Conservationist John Reidy commented "maybe this is a throwback to the Three Mile Island nuclear disaster ten years ago" and Ed Norton, the sewage worker who found them reckoned they had be tough to live in that environment (Sun, 6/4/90).



**TATTOO HOAX.** All three free weeklies in Grays Thurrock, Essex, acted to defuse an official-looking letter circulating and warning that children were in peril from drug-laced stick-on tattoos. The circular was a photocopy of a typed sheet headed "Issued by Essex County Constabulary" (the force has been officially named Essex Police for 15 years). The police believed it was based on a USA poster and was going into schools and then snowballing as more photocopies were passed on. The tattoo transfers allegedly had a coating of the hallucinogenic drug LSD, which when stuck to the skin allows the drug to be absorbed into the bloodstream through the pores. One report even suggested some of the products have added strychnine and a divergence has either cartoon characters depicted or coloured shapes on the squares. One account suggests the originator seemed to be well-intentioned in warning of the tattoo dangers (Thurrock Gazette; Thurrock Recorder; Yellow Advertiser; 23/11/90). Earlier, headmistress June Faylor had written to all 465 sets of parents of Sherbourne School for Girls, in Dorset, warning about the tattoos and that "the aim is ultimate dependency and therefore, new customers". Hasty Miss Faylor conceded to columnist Ross Benson that alarm had spread and she'd now "heard that it is a rumour spread from Ottawa (D Express, 9/11/90)." (credit: Michael Goss). Note how, as with satanic abuse and backmasking, its "our kids" at risk rumour-mongering climate material.

**EMPLOYEE'S REVENGE REVISITED.** Dale Tinstman, a bakery worker, exacted revenge on colleagues who upset him. He sneaked to the coffee machine every day for four months and relieved himself in the 75-cup water tank. Bosses said their drinks tasted bitter and kept going sick. A cop staked out the machine by hiding in a filing cabinet. Tinstman said he was getting revenge because colleagues upset him at a firm's party (Sun, 26/11/90). ... More serious is an allegation regarding Brian Jones, of the Rolling Stones, whose death a coroner said was misadventure, that he drowned while under the influence of drink and drugs. In "Blown Away: The Rolling Stones and the Death of the Sixties", A E Hotchner (Simon & Schuster) offers the anonymous evidence of a man called Marty, who claims that, while he was working on renovating Brian's home, he saw other workmen treating Jones roughly, pushing him under the water, and eventually killing him. Was he the victim of jealous employees or an asthmatic who indulged in excessive drink and drugs and was the author of his own destruction. I met him once and he was a nasty piece of work -- I'd have my doubts (Journal, Newcastle, 22/11/90). And briefly, inquiries followed the finding of a live bullet in a loaf of bread at Cefn Fforest, Gwent (Sun, 28/11/90), while in East Grinstead, Sussex, while watching the Bruce Willis video "Die Hard", a man chomped into an inch-long nail (D Mirror, 14.10.89).

**COCA-COLA.** We've collected a wide selection of Coca-Cola tales but here's two modern versions. Dr Jack Schofield, of Liverpool Polytechnic, claims his wonder chemical Keekote reacts with Coke to cut petrol used by 6%. In Hungary it's being used in 3,000 Ladas and Skodas. Petrol substitute patents have a long and dodgy history (D Mirror, 23/8/89). Meanwhile the secret Coke formula has ben around ages and now a protest by Jews has led to Coca-Cola being banned by dozens of smart New York restaurants. orthodox Jews say they cannot be sure it is kosher because the ingredients are secret (Sun, 26/10/90).

# MAGAZINE REVIEWS

**UFO BRIGANTIA.** Journal of the Independent UFO Network. B. Six for £7; single issue £1.25. Mark cheques to M Dagless, C/o 84 Elland Road, Brighouse, West Yorkshire. No. 42. A Swede's interview with and estimation of "Communion" author Whitley Striber; John Lennon, UFOs, alien contact and psychological functioning; Celtic comparison with abductions; US update; abduction as modern form of possession. No. 43. The Barclays conclude their arrogant hypothesis while Ian Blake's thoughts on poltergeists are positively sensible, broad and deep; excellent analysis of a TV debate on UFOs; South African crash retrieval hoax; Warwickshire psychic quest and mystery light; Clive Potter on psychic questing and UFOs.

**TERRESTRIAL ZODIACS JOURNAL.** Single issues £1.25 inc p&p. Cheques to P Heselton, 170 Victoria Avenue, Hull, HU5 3DY. No. 3. Final issue. Chris Jenkins proposes new zodiacs he names Crowcombe and Cerne Abbas (though they must be doubtful as he believes in the Arachne myth; this 13th zodiacal spider sign was made up as an anti-astrology spoof). Jenkins also gives his views on what forms zodiacs. Jill Smith describes personal zodiac journeying and Alby Stone his doubts about zodiacs.

**SKOOB OCCULT REVIEW.** Skoob is a shop and publisher. Mag is Q. Four issue £8 inc p&p. Payment to Skoob Books Publishing Ltd., Skoob Two, 19 Bury Place, London WC1A 2JH. Issue 2. interview with artist Chesca potter; anonymous (N Pennick?) diatribe on Albion's situation; sarcophagus retrieval project; ancient Basque-Witch language in popular nursely rhymes; dictionary of alchemy; Michael Harrison's recollections (but why in this mag's context?). Book reviews.

**THE LEY HUNTER.** Senior EM mag. 4 issues £6; US \$15. P.O. Box 92, Penzance, Cornwall, TR18 2LX. No. 111. Australian Aboriginal lore from Lorraine Mati-Williams in conversation with editor Paul Devereux; obituaries of Anthony Roberts from Paul Screeton, Paul Devereux and Christine Rhone; theorists for a Cornish location for Atlantis; Welsh midsummer sunset site; Nigel Pennick puts New Age Fundamentalism in its place. Large selection of book reviews.

**PENDRAGON.** Journal of the pendragon Society. Annual sub £4.50 inc journal. From Chinook, Paxhill Lane, Twynning, Glos. GL20 6DU. Vol XX/2. Rings, Rites and Round Tables theme. Articles on Round Table as wheel of fortune; Troyes; Badbury sites; chivalric contests; Cornish customs (cont XX/3); corn circles; sites and rituals. XX/3. Fred Stedman-Jones first part of article on Perpetual Choirs (featured by Michell in "City of Revelation"); Arthurian food; Celtic metalwork; excellent letters. XX/4. Kate Pollard selects quotes of Arthur from past issues; what Arthur means to various correspondents; Ivor Snook argues the possibility of a race of tall people possibly responsible for megalith erection; Fred's miscellany.

**AMSKAYA.** Newsletter of STAR Fellowship (same price, same address as Touchstone). No. 19. The late Tony Wedd founded the Fellowship and a 1962 lecture by him on orthoteny is reproduced as notes by Goddard, plus Wedd letters outlining the original Fellowship; contactee George van Tassel; hypnotic regression.



Excalibur

**TOUCHSTONE.** Mag of Surry EM Group. £2 for 4. Cheques to J Goddard, 25 Albert Road, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey, KT15 2PX. No. 25. Extracts from John Aubrey; Cxted pine clumps. No. 26. Two field trips described; update on Chertsey's St Anne's Hill; hypnotic regression; usual fechtva.

**MAGONIA.** Independent UFO mag. Q. No. 4. for 4. Cheques payable to J. Rimmer, John Dee Cottage, 5 James Terrace, Mortlake Churchyard, London, SW14. 3HR. No. 36. John Rimmer examines state of play with abductees, including the notion of abductees paying therapists (and ufologists) fears of professionals "siphoning" off cases/patients; Manfred Cassirer argues for delusions; Roger Sandell sees New Age consciousness different in the US and UK; there's an 1826 view of spontaneous combustion; plus book reviews, letters and Peter Rogerson's quirky Northern Notes. No. 37. American folklorist Thomas E. Bullard defends an earlier article and points to professional folklorists using a correction process which drains the cultural life out of collections by purging the unique or topical at the expense of emphasising universal but faceless elements (has conformity been imposed on abduction texts?), and concludes that abduction reports mismatch folklore in significant respects; Dennis Stillings also adds to this debate; Peter Rogerson reviews a Sheffield ufology conference and its multi-faceted viewpoints; excellent book reviews.

**FORTEAN TIMES.** The Journal of Strange Phenomena. 4 issues for £8; US \$16; single issue £2. Cheques to Fortean Times, 20 Paul Street, Frome, Somerset. BA11 1DX. No. 54. Essential reading as always, including debate on interpreting myth; the last days of Charles Fort; is the moon inhabited?; a re-examination of the classic disappearance of Benjamin Bathurst in 1809; plus usual Fortean oddities and features.

**THE CEREOLOGIST.** The Journal for Crop Circle Studies. Thrice yearly. Single copy £2.50; annual sub "7.50, inc p&p. Cheques payable to The Cereologist, 11 Powis Gardens, London W11 1JG. No. 1. Front cover gives overview and state of the art at summer 1990. In his introduction to the journal, editor John Michell announces it "stands aloof from the quarrels of the certainty-mongers," creating a forum for the courteous expression of debate and criticism, and inviting news and bulletins from the burgeoning crop circle research groups. Briefly, excellent articles cover dowsing; predictions; Oxford conference; folklore; the explainers; and particularly valuable Patrick Harpur's evocative evocation of the Mercurius spirit, which should be required reading for all who profess to have an opinion on the subject of cereology; announcements and book reviews.

**ORCRO.** Scourge of the fundamentalists. Off-putting cover but collection of high-quality articles with particular interest not only for worship freedom but the truth behind lurid "confessions" and social anxieties. Editorial address: BCM GEVURAH, London WC1N 3XX. £2 per issue and £17 for 12 issues. No. 5. Of particular interest to folklorists is a US crime analyst's skepticism of tales from cult survivors and alleged child abuse cases, which shows police response to myth and hysteria and why macabre claims are rarely what they seem. Fine investigative journalism into how gory events in the book "Satan's Underground" were falsified by a deeply-disturbed author. Sensible critique of tape by "Maureen Davies" of Reachout and her attack on Dungeons & Dragons and heavy metal music. plus the odd 1986 Derry Mainwaring Knight con trick court case.

**NORTHERN UFO NEWS.** £3 for 3 from Jenny Randles, 37 Heathbank Road, Cheadle Heath, Stockport, Cheshire, SK3 0UP. No. 141. Editorial on one newspaper's stupidity. No. 142. Is ufology solved and dead? No. 143. Cereology editorial plus in news northern examples. No. 144. Randles still editorially convinced by the ionized vortex corn circles model. Each issue also includes current

investigations, brief cases, case histories, news round-up, major articles elsewhere and UFO group contact addresses.

**NORTHERN EARTH MYSTERIES.** Journal of the Northern Barta Mysteries Group. From 40B Welby Place, Meersbrook Park, Sheffield, S18 9DE. Single copy £1.15; 3 issues £2.95, inc p&p. No. 42. High point is Megina Cullen's virtuosic rant at Paul Devereux -- a response which drags up all the UFO myths as truths and lowers her credibility no end. Articles on North York Moors site at Temple Beeld; pilgrimage site of Ladywell, Ferryhalgh, near Preston; and continuation of old article on ancient sites of halls and churches (concludes 43). No. 43. Articles covering dowsing at Yockenthwaite stone circle; advice to ley hunters on seeking a non-material view of landscape. Issues also include meeting reports, book reviews and letters.

**MERCIAN MYSTERIES.** Mag for EM in the Midlands. 25 for 4; £1.50 for 1. Cheques to P A Nix, 12 Cromer Road, St Ann's, Nottingham, NG3 3LF. No. 4. Bob Trubshaw follows the late Guy Magland Phillips into encouraging a new look at what is inside old parish churches and suggests tongue-poking faces could be make counterparts of shieia-na-gigs; Croit Hill; Robin Hood sites in Notts; priory gnost; Lionfield Cathedral; Wynchbury Hill; letters and reviews (thanks Bob for QH reference).

**THE WILD PLACES.** New journal of the paranormal, UFOs, religious experience and fringe subjects. Q. 4 issue sub £0; single issue £1.75. Payments to Kevin McClure. From 20 Trembear Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 5NY. No. 1. Hilary Evans looks at encounter experiences as "the ultimate myth"; McClure concludes he finds no evidence for demons or external source of possession; Mike Goss fails to find the seance circle enchanting; Satanic child abuse well handled; the Kapture. Like FF carries summaries of other mags with sub details; plus research contact facility.

UPDATE ... UPDATE ... UPDATE ...

**UFO ERIGANTIA.** Nos 44/45 double issue. Best yet! David Langford looks at how his "hoax" is still taken at face value in some quarters and background to Jenny Randles' troubles. Peter Hough asks why the electromagnetic drive for UFOs still keeps popping up. Andy Roberts acknowledges my seminal article "Cosmic Rock" (Mail, Hartlepool, 25/1/85; The Shaman, No. 10) as he too overviews rock music and UFOs; additionally he demystifies the air raid case which launched the World War II cover-up idea. Plus other articles on mystery lights in India; ghosts; UFOs and human psyche; MJ-12. Corn circles in editorial and Notts "hoax?" case. Book reviews. No. 46. Review issue with round-up of ufological gossip. Also plenty on corn circles, including Ken Phillips' opinion that it is part of an "education process" scenario. Articles on French ufology history and Guai breeze. §§§§ **THE LEY HUNTER.** No. 112. Conversation with Christian Ratsch, including his work with rainforest Indians and hallucinogens; Ashton-on-Trent cursus as ley; artwork of Blair Wilkins; huge book review section. §§§§ **MORTEAN TIMES.** No. 55. Crop circles update; articles on Hampshire alien big cats; Tonga; alchemy and Our Lady of the Dinner Plates. Usual features. §§§§ **TOUCHSTONE.** No. 27. Ley hunting; book reviews; letters. §§§§ **AMSKAYA.** No. 20. Tony Wedd on ETH. Article on UFOs and cultural tracking. §§§§ **NORTHERN EARTH MYSTERIES.** No. 44. Articles on dowsing at Cumbrian stone circles and Goathland customs and stone.



A LOOFAH sponge had to be removed by surgeons when a man slipped in the bath at Swindon, Wiltshire, and sat on it.

New in the World 7/5/83

### SHELL SHOCK

A lost turtle called Amy has turned up at Paignton Zoo, Devon, after hiding at the bottom of a muddy pond for THIRTEEN years. Sun 9/5/83

A new cathedral in Washington DC has modern-day stone gargoyles including: a hippie, a golfer and Darth Vader from Star Wars.

SUN 25/10/50

## BOOK REVIEWS

**MIND MONSTERS** by JENNY RANDES (Aquarian, £0.99)

Beginning on a topical theme of martial arts students encountering outdoors ninja dwarfs, Randles attempts to make sense of the goblin universe by applying modern psychiatry, physics and other scientific ideas to a phenomenon which appears to lie in the area where human mind and specific places and situations occur.

Here are monsters of land, sea and air; from the yeti to Loch Ness to UFOs. It is yet another attempt to find an all-embracing paradigm to bring together diverse elements of our experiences with creatures and forms on the outer edge of our consensus reality. Randles, as always, provides a good read and a leavening of tantalising case histories mixed with up to date theorising. Much thinking is sound, such as not treating elements or events as separate and special but seeking to learn from the many overlaps and consistencies. She believes we appear to be dealing with variations on a single theme; their physical reality is open to question and above all the monsters represent a reflective phenomenon. Also "monsters may be an intermediary reality between solid, objective, physical matter, and dreamy, subjective, symbol-laden -- reality that is both real and unreal, physical and subjective, and solid and symbolic at the very same time."

Monster reality, she says, has three components: place, person and state of consciousness. Yes, but what of cases where ordinary, "normally-functioning" people in ordinary surroundings have extraordinary experiences? In other words, what about randomness or chaos -- but I still think she's on the right lines, generally.

On a more personal level, I would like to make a few points. Firstly I equally heartily endorse Ian Watson's book "Miracle Visitors", for I experienced the cyclist episode in chapter one in propnetic context BEFORE the book was published (my experience is discussed at length in "The Wizard of Stanley, Part 2", pp077, The Shaman, No. 9, January, 1985). However, the Yorkshire pterodactyl had, I believed, to everyone's satisfaction been identified as a heron! Secondly, I would challenge the assertion that on a clear day you can see from the Isle of Man every county in the UK; about as likely as Montgomeryshire being named after the hero of Alamein. Also the brontosaurus, as the US Mail discovered, was found early this century to be identical to another species whose name it absorbed, though the philatelic blunder would have been too costly to abort. There are also a couple of inaccuracies in the Hexham Heads episode: Dr Ross "later told mystery researcher Paul Screeton...." is wrong as she refused any contact with me (she's anti-Press, I understand); also the Wulver did not crash noisily or tnod, Ross told the BBC's Luke Casey (friend of mine from a long way back and the journalist who blew the whistle loud on Marietta Higgs) it landed with "a kind of plop." But let's not nit-pick.

In conclusion, Randles rightly considers urban legends in this whole context and sees the importance of "where once a story turns into a set of rumours bordering on the legendary, a kind of cultural predisposition to make the legend come true begins to take over."

Nothing's ever simple, but a lot of sensible questions are posed here and good choices of direction given.

**SITES OF MYSTERY AND IMAGINATION** by CHARLES WALKER (Hamlyn, £14.95)

THIS book is a welcome adjunct to the plethora of books taking an occult viewpoint over the more mysterious places, for rather than deal exclusively with Britain, it looks at the whole of Europe.

A Eurocentric overview allows for greater comparison and cross-referencing, also revealing however how British research into prehistoric monuments has always led the way. It also shows up the curious develop-

ments of landscape alignments on the continent and excesses of astrological thought.

The esoteric journey takes in Carnac, Chartres and the castles and churches of the Knights Templar. On the latter, the author is unfairly harsh on the Rennes-le-Chateau debacle and mistaken on Templar tombstones.

One can overlook minor errors of scholarship within so exemplary an overall study of the arcane, with many splendid original photographs and illustrations from early books and documents.

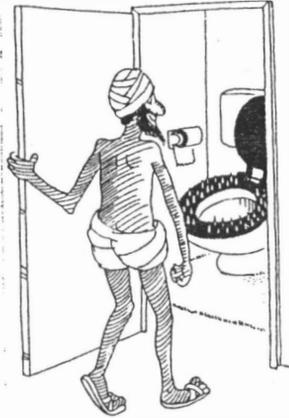
**THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF THE PARANORMAL** by LYNN  
PICKNETT (Macmillan, £17.99)

A veritable cornucopia which even the seasoned supernaturalist will find stimulating. For instance, this reviewer was not previously aware that there are now scientific terms for prayer. New prigon for apparent cases of its functioning are "psi-mediated instrumental response" and "eleventh-hour syndrome."

Religion enters into this book but it generally shies away from the occult; the compiler feeling the paranormal is a very different area of experience. Sceptics would doubtless argue, but the case is put that the paranormal happens all the time — like radio waves, with or without our permission — and the occult is something we may choose to dabble in.

A mass of subjects are put forward as genuinely mysterious, from UFOs to werewolves, Men in Black to visions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, crop circles to the Loch Ness Monster, thoughtography to levitation.

Generally encyclopaedias are heavy going; this one is not, being concise, pertinent, thought-provoking and eminently readable.



## READERS' LETTERS

From Nigel Pennick, Cambridge.

Thanks for the latest FF, with usual good stuff as usual. The buried train story exists in Cambridge, where the lake once a gravel pit on Coldham's Common is said to contain a locomotive. This story amalgamates lost lands legends with buried locos. The loco was said to have been used on a narrow-gauge line used to haul gravel in the pit (unlikely). During a tea break, the workers noticed a nearby stream flooding over the side of the deep pit, and fled a la Gradlon from it. Water filled the pit, and the loco as they say, "remains there to this day". Highly apocryphal. Pneumatic rail vehicles were left buried in the mail tube of London when it was abandoned, but this is a bit different.

From Lucy Fisher, of London.

Further to the sacred king status of the royal family, what about Prince Edward and the accusations of gayness? Prince Charles, of course, had to prove himself by having constant affairs ... Another rumour I've heard about Edward VIII is that he was injected with a fertility drug, which explained his bizarre passion for Wallis. This was from the contemporary diary of an uppercrust lady (I heard it on Radio 4).

## CONTRIBUTORS

JOHN MICHELL, born in 1933, brought traditions of other races, dragons and UFOs together in "The Flying Saucer Vision" (1967). Its successor, "The View Over Atlantis" (1969), coming at the end of hippiedom and the psychedelic Sixties helped change the attitudes of a whole generation to past cultures, ancient skills and wisdom. A keen observer of human nature and behaviour, he brings keen insights to bear upon the not quite so new or unique phenomenon of the bogus social worker.

PAUL SCREETON, born 1945, was "turned on" to earth mysteries by an article by Michell in "IT" and subsequently went on to edit magazines continuously since 1969. Merlin Michell's apprentice, he published a study of leys, "Quicksilver Heritage" (1974). A book on the Hartlepool monkey-nanging legend will be published in 1991. Here he adds to Michell's child sacrifice study and harvests together a pot-pourri from corn porn to people clutching at straws.