

LANTERN WINTER 1974-75



CONTENTS

The Haunting of Glasshouse Row.	I. Bunn	Page 2.
Local Curiosities		Page 5.
Haunted East Anglia: Book Review	W.J. Chambers	Page 6.
More Mysterious Stones	M.W. Burgess	Page 7.
Of Faery-Folk and Willo the Wisp.	R. Haxell	Page 8.
UFO Report.		Page 9.
News Round-up		Page 10.

INTRODUCTION

As most of our regular readers will no doubt have noticed, this edition of Lantern differs from previous ones on two counts. Firstly, as announced in the last issue, we have been reluctantly forced to increase the price to 12p to cover some of our ever-increasing production costs and secondly, this edition is printed on A4 instead of folschap paper. This is to make for a rather more compact magazine and also to keep up with the current trends in paper production. However, by slightly decreasing the size of the titles and also the illustrations, we have kept the written word to more or less the same as before. We hope that you will agree that the latter makes for a better mag layoutwise, and well, as for the former all we can say is "Please keep buying it, we need your support!"

This edition contains our usual 'pot-pourri' of the unusual in East Anglia. The main article features an account of an, to say the least, unusual haunting in Great Yarmouth, discovered in the Yarmouth Independent newspaper of 1894. Unfortunately we are unable to say where fact ends and fiction starts with this one; we leave that to the readers discretion. However it certainly seems worth recording. There is a continuation of the article on Mysterious Stones which appeared in Lantern 7 and we are also taken further along the trail of those elusive faery-folk in East Anglia. As well as this, all our usual features are here.

A fascinating magazine which has recently come our way, is THE NEWS, a bi-monthly publication which describes itself as 'a miscellany of Fortean curiosities' and certainly lives up to its name. For its 24 pages are crammed with accounts of un-explained phenomena from all over, all delivered in the true 'Fortean' manner and all of which makes for very interesting reading. THE NEWS is a well produced magazine affiliated to the International Fortean Organisation (INFO). Subscription rates are £2.10 per year (sample copy 35p plus postage) available from R.J.M. Rickard, 31 Kingswood Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 9AN.

Another interesting magazine also to come our way is THE LEY HUNTER, which is the only magazine in the country which deals with ley lines and other associated subjects. The articles in it are many and varied, ranging from simple straight-track alignments, through ancient stones and divination, to 'power centres' and geomancy. THE LEY HUNTER is a bi-monthly duplicated journal, with subscription rates at; 6 months 75p, 1 year £1.50. It is published by Paul Screeton, 5 Egton Drive, Seaton Carew, Hartlepool, Cleveland TS25 2AT.

If publishers of any other magazines would like to exchange with LANTERN, we would be very pleased to hear from them.

LANTERN is published by the BORDERLINE SCIENCE INVESTIGATION GROUP, a non-profit making organisation devoted to the investigation of un-explained phenomena in East Anglia. Subscription to LANTERN is 65p per year, single copies 16p each. Available from I. Bunn, 3 Dunwich Way, Oulton Broad, Lowestoft, Suffolk. + + + + +

THE HAUNTING OF GLASSHOUSE ROW

The old 'Yarmouth Independent' newspaper carried a two part article in its January 6 and 13, 1894, editions, entitled 'Tales and Traditions of Old Yarmouth - A House of Mystery.' This story concerned the haunting in an old house in Row 37, 'Glasshouse Row'

The 'rows' of Great Yarmouth, of which very few remain complete, were an almost unique gridwork of very narrow streets which covered almost all of the old town. They were very narrow, most only measuring a few feet in width, and to quote from the article

"most possessed the same quaint, gloomy and somewhat dingy characteristics in common." Unfortunately a great proportion of these rows were destroyed by bombing during the last war, subsequent rebuilding and planning has more or less obliterated the rest. However, during the period in which this story is set the rows were probably in their hey-day containing, no doubt, a complete cross-section of the Gt. Yarmouth population.

The row with which we are concerned, 'Glasshouse Row', was so named because a glass factory once stood in its precincts. It extended from George Street to North Quay in an east/west direction.

In 1797 there stood in the middle of this row an ancient house which for many years had the doubtful reputation of being haunted. Such was its reputation that it had remained more or less un-lived in for many years, what few tenants had been brave enough to rent the property invariably moved out again within a few weeks.

All sorts of stories circulated as to the nature of the haunting. The general consensus of opinion was that, many years previously, someone had been murdered within its wall although opinions differed as to who exactly was responsible for the haunting. Some said that it was the guilty spirit of the murderer that wandered the house, whilst others maintained that it was the restless spirit of the victim, which could not rest because its body was buried in unhallowed ground. Yet another section of opinion said that the spirits of both the murderer and his victim haunted the place and that they periodically reenacted the whole grim tragedy. Whatever the true story was, was never known for certain, but the reputation of the place was enough to keep even the most stout-hearted away.

The lack of tenants and upkeep certainly seemed to have shown on the old building. The windows were broken, the roof partly gone with the rain pouring in through the gaping holes. The woodwork was rotten, and the whole place was completely devoid of paint. All in all it must have presented quite a sorry sight, with the only occupants for any length of time being colonies of rats.

The building continued in this derelict state for a number of years, until the owner died and it changed hands. The new owner, naturally enough, was anxious to be rid of his newly acquired 'white elephant', which because of its reputation was more of a liability than an asset to him, and so he put it up for sale. Needless to say, there was no mad rush to purchase it and for many months there was not one single applicant. However, one day the owner was approached by a middle-aged man of austere appearance and brusque manner, his name was David Browne. After a good deal of haggling, he managed to secure the property for a very low price and, although not ignorant of the building's reputation, Browne considered that he had a good bargain. With little ado he had the property repaired and furnished and within a short time he and his family had moved in. The family consisted of Browne, his wife, daughter of about 12, and ageing mother, a kindly old lady who was devoted to her son.

During the first few weeks of their occupation all went well, and Browne could not help but congratulate himself on what appeared to be a good bargain. However this period of tranquility was not to last for long, as subsequent events soon proved. After a residence of about two months the family began to be constantly annoyed by the sound of doors being slammed violently shut. Even if they were all closed, unseen hands would quietly open them



A TYPICAL YARMOUTH 'ROW'

and violently slam the doors. At first the slammings were attributed to draughts and great precautions were taken to ensure that the house was draught free. Instead of curtailing the occurrences however, these precautions had the opposite effect. Now, instead of the doors slamming occasionally as before, they slammed more frequently, often many times in quick succession. This was not all, sometimes the tramp of heavy feet was now heard ascending the stairs, followed by the heavy 'thud' of something hitting the floor overhead. On other occasions, light hesitant footsteps would be heard stealthily pattering about the house, accompanied by a soft 'rustling' noise, like that of a long silk dress. The door of the room in which the family were sitting would be thrown open and some invisible presence would enter, walk around the room, pause for a few seconds and then depart leaving behind an air of gloom and 'creepiness.'

Naturally all these disturbances left their mark on the family, especially on the female members, who were becoming more and more frightened and apprehensive. Browne himself, being a hard-headed man, would not openly admit that anything strange was happening, although deep inside he realised that there was more to the phenomena than could be explained by natural causes. This nagging realisation caused him much worry as to the best way to deal with whatever or whoever it was causing the disturbances. He went to the former owner, but received little sympathy and no help. Desperate now, he decided to visit one Nancy Green, an aged old woman who had the reputation locally as being something of a 'witch'. She concocted love-potions for women, could find lost articles, and cure those that considered that they had been 'bewitched', and was known far and wide for her powers over evil spirits. It was also rumoured that she would work evil against people if the price was right. In fact she was shunned by the majority of the populace, whose only respect for her stemmed from fear. Such then was the person that Browne, in his deperation, was forced to consult. Her house was situated in Crown Court.

Browne knocked loudly on her door, after some time it opened and Nancy asked him in. With no more to do, she startled Browne by telling him exactly the nature of his visit, finishing up by saying that she was unable to help as she had no control over evil spirits. Before Browne had the chance to gather his wits, she went on to say that she did have something else to tell him, and then said no more. Minutes ticked by and Nancy showed no interest in resuming the conversation. Impatiently, Browne demanded to know what it was that she had to tell him. Still receiving no answer, he became very angry and shouted and cursed at the old woman, calling her a charlatan and a cheat. Goaded by his anger and ridicule, Nancy told him that when he arrived home he would find that one of his family was dead. Browne laughed at her threats and called her a liar, and immediately departed for home, although on the way he could not help pondering on what the old woman had said. His wife was waiting for him by the front door in tears, and told him that earlier that day his mother had collapsed and died.....

During the period after Mrs. Browne's death, the whole house was very quiet and free from any uncanny disturbances. Naturally Browne thought that they had heard the last of them, and he was determined not to leave the house without a struggle should they reoccur. The peace and tranquility lasted five months and then suddenly, all hell broke loose. One night the household was awakened by a piercing scream, followed immediately by a muffled thud from overhead. Startled by the noise, Browne and his wife simultaneously sat up in bed, when to their horror they saw, standing at the bedside, the tall, gaunt figure of a very old man, wearing a long white night shirt and red flannel night-cap. He gazed at the couple for some seconds and then turned slowly round and crossed the room to the door. Upon reaching it he gave a long sigh and disappeared. Immediately Browne leapt out of bed and searched the whole house, but nothing was to be found of the old man. By now all the noises in the house had once more ceased and for the rest of that night and many nights following peace once more reigned.

This period of quiet once more made Browne think that his unbidden guest had gone, and that the appearance of the old man had been the culmination of the whole haunting. With this idea in mind the family decided to stay in the house a while longer. Once again they were sadly wrong, for barely had they reached this decision, when the whole phenomena started all over again. Once more the fearful screams were heard, only this time accompanied by a succession of loud crashes as if someone was throwing furniture about. Twice Browne decided to discover the source of the noises without success. On the third occasion he was more successful. Very early one morning, after a sleepless night because of the noise overhead, he rose quietly from his bed and taking with him the lamp which he always kept alight beside the bed, he went to the room from which the noises were coming. When he opened the door the light from his lamp illuminated an incredible scene. Every article of furniture in the room, apart from the bed, had been piled up in one corner, whilst the bed had been moved from its usual position, into the middle of the room. Sitting at the head of the bed

was a little wizened old lady, dressed in a black silk dress. She was intently occupied with a pack of cards which were spread out on the bed in front of her. She appeared to be completely unaware of Browne's presence and continued altering and rearranging the cards, muttering to herself at the same time. At length she gave a low chuckle, gathered together the cards, gave a final look around the room, and then glided to the far end of it where she instantly disappeared. Browne was spell-bound and wondered if he had imagined it all, but the stacked-up furniture was enough to persuade him that it was all horribly real. With all haste he returned to his wife, who was still in bed, and told her what he had seen, assuring her at the same time that the very next day he would make arrangements for the family to move.

For the next few days the family were pre-occupied with packing and make preparations for their move. On evening, the daughter had occasion to go upstairs to find something for her mother. As she proceeded into the upper rooms she was astonished to hear the low bleat of a lamb. Looking around she saw, much to her amazement, a small pure-white lamb

standing in one of the rooms gazing intently at her. As the child approached it the creature slowly retreated from her. She followed it out of the room and along the corridor but it showed no signs of stopping, and so she followed it, until it reached the head of the stairs, where it abruptly stopped. Finding that the creature no longer feared her, she put out her hand to stroke it. Hardly had she touched it, when the animal uttered a low 'snarl' and the girl was lifted bodily and flung down the stairs.

Although laying unconscious for some hours, the girl was fortunately not seriously hurt, and in due course she was able to tell her parents exactly what had happened. At once a full search of the house was instigated, but no trace of the lamb could be found.

This final episode was the last straw for David Browne and he wasted no time in vacating the premises and once again the building was left empty. However, it did not remain that way for long, although the stories of the Browne family's misfortunes had spread throughout the neighbourhood, for the notorious Nancy Greene applied to Browne for permission to live in the house. At first he was reluctant to have anymore dealings with her, but finally Browne agreed, probably because he knew that it would be almost impossible to find another tenant. And so within a short while Nancy was living in the house.

Hardly one month after she moved in, Nancy was discovered by neighbours laying dead in the building, her aged features contorted with fear and terror!

What happened after this is unfortunately not recorded, although it was suggested in the original article that the building was successfully exorcised, for in the 25 years preceeding 1894, no further supernatural happenings were heard of from the building.

That then is the story of the haunting of Glasshouse Row. How much of it is true we will now never know, but perhaps the old maxim of no smoke without fire would be very applicable in this case.....

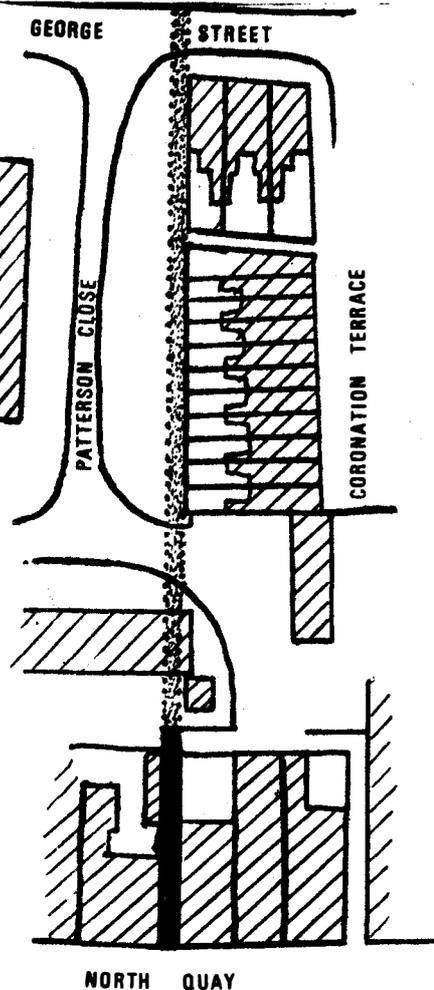


FIG.1 THE SITE OF ROW 37.



NOTE: Today, very little remains of Glasshouse Row, certainly not that portion in which the house stood. The original entrance on North Quay is still there, as is the first 50 feet or so of the Row, still probably more or less as it was when this story took place. The larger proportion, running westwards from George Street, has now completely gone, although the path of the Row followed exactly the line of the footpath at the rear of the houses in Coronation Terrace (built around the turn of this century). The rest of the Row has now gone altogether, in fact a block of modern flats extends across its original path at one point. It would be interesting perhaps to find out whether there have been any reports of psychical disturbances from these more recent buildings.



LOCAL CURIOSITIES

It is common knowledge that the actual birth of Christ was not December 25th. this was in fact the date when several pagan festivals were held to honour the sun's rebirth after the winter solstice and which were superimposed upon by the early Christians as a means of initially reconciling the two religions.

It would appear however that our country ancestors had a special method whereby they could determine the actual date of Christ's birth. They would listen to the bees in their hive, the bee was held in special regard for a variety of reasons, and when they heard, not the familiar 'hummm', but yuletide carols they knew that that day was the actual birthdate of Jesus.

It is interesting to reflect that it was beleived that bees were born of the tears that Christ shed when dying on the cross.

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It was considered in Norfolk, very unlucky to bring a Yew tree into the house during the Christmas period. To do so was a sure sign that there would be a death in the family before the end of the year.

It was also beleived that every particle of holly or other evergreens, with which the house had been decorated, had to be removed before Candlemass Eve (February 1st). Failure to do so would certainly result in some misfortune refalling the family concerned.

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Another beleif from Norfolk, was that you should never enter a cattle shed at Mid-night on Christmas Eve, For at that time the beasts are on their knees facing east, and to disturb them meant death within a year.

It was much safer, and probably far more enjoyable, to stay safely at home on Christmas Eve and partake of the traditional ale or mead, served with toast and nutmeg. Or, if you happened to live across the border in Suffolk, spiced elderberry wine.

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WANTED; YOUR OWN PERSONAL STRANGE EXPERIENCES....

HAVE YOU EVER HAD A STRANGE EXPERIENCE FOR WHICH YOU HAVE NO EXPLANATION? IF SO, WE THE BORDERLINE SCIENCE INVESTIGATION GROUP, WOULD LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT IT. PLEASE WRITE TO:-

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ THE EDITORS (LANTERN). ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
c/o 3 DUNWICH WAY, LOWESTOFT.

INTERESTED IN
BSIG.
 AND ITS ACTIVITIES
 THEN WRITE TO...
 MR. I. BUNN
 3 DUNWICH WAY
 LOWESTOFT
 for further details

BACK NUMBERS

THE FOLLOWING BACK NUMBERS OF LANTERN ARE STILL AVAILBLE

No.4 WINTER 1973; articles include, 'The Lowestoft Witches' and 'The New Hainford UFO.....'
 No.5 Spring 1974; including 'Old Shuck at Gt. Yarmouth' and 'A Ghost named George'.....
 No.6 SUMMER 1974, including, 'Haunted Churches of East Anglia' and 'The Search for the Straight Track'....
 No.7 AUTUMN 1974, including, 'Mysterious Stones in East Anglia' and 'The Good People' + + + + +
 AVAILABLE FROM; 3 Dunwich Way, Lowestoft. Single copies 14p each inc. postage or all 4 issues for 50p inc. postage.....

HAUNTED EAST ANGLIA BOOK REVIEW

The above is the title of a very good book by Joan Forman (Hale, £2.80). Some East Anglians will not agree with the author's definition of the region, as she includes counties not usually covered by the term, but that is a matter of opinion. Some of her stories are rather slight, but all are recent and many of them are new to me. She writes in a crisp and matter of fact manner, and does not embroider her narratives.

The chapter on Suffolk contains a number of stories of definite local interest. Perhaps the most outstanding tale is one of white, luminous figures, seen dancing in a field at Saxmundham. From Blythburgh, come accounts of a man leading a large black horse and accompanied by a young woman, both in 18th century dress. They were seen by a lorry-driver, who was convinced that he had run into them. From this village also comes the story of Black Toby, a negro soldier, who was executed for murdering a local girl in 1754, and whose spirit walks the common. Sutherland House in Southwold is haunted by the ghost of a little red-haired maid servant of 17th century date. Miss Forman gives a romantic story to account for her appearance, which one wishes one could believe. A rather bizarre spectre is that of a fisherman, who walks the beach carrying a tilley lamp and with a large fish slung over his shoulder. This is said to be seldom seen, which is a pity, as it is apparently a very modern instance.

Hickling Broad in Norfolk has the spectre of a young soldier in a uniform of the time of the Napoleonic wars, who is said to have been drowned while skating across to meet his girl-friend. Another apparition is that of a woman who punts herself across the Broad. Nothing is known of her history. An old friend, the ghostly coach and horses, turns up again. It was seen by a Mr. Walker as he was motoring home between Ditchingham and Bungay after meeting a business friend in the latter town. A full account is given of the disturbances in the Oxfam Shop at Norwich, which has been thoroughly investigated by the Borderline Science Investigation Group (see News-roundup in this edition: ed.). Oxfam seems rather unlucky in its choice of premises, as an almost identical story is told of their shop in Royston, Hertfordshire.

Many of the hauntings chronicled by Miss Forman are of the noises, footsteps, doors opening type. They are interesting and convincing, but their effect is cumulative, and they are difficult to condense for review purposes. An interesting tale is that of the appearance of three soldiers in armour and wearing round steel caps, at Binbrook in Lincolnshire. This is exactly paralleled by a story told by Sir Ernest Bennet in his book 'Apparitions and Haunted Houses,' of three men in old uniforms, seen in 1932 by a Mr. Tom Horner and a friend on the site of the battle of Marston Moor. Miss Forman is mistaken, however, in thinking that round helmets were worn only during the Civil War; they were used as far back as Roman times.

A few other slips need correction. Polstead, of Maria Marten fame, is in Suffolk, not Essex. Miss Forman suggests that 'Shuck', the phantom dog, may be an ancestral memory of the earliest horses, which she says were the size of giant dogs. Actually they were about as big as fox-terriers and they were on earth long before man appeared. It was suicides who were said to have been buried at cross-roads, not people that died normal deaths, as the author suggests. I have never, by the way, heard of an actual instance of this being discovered. Finally, I do not think that ghost stories are more prevalent in the country than they are in cities. Certainly I heard plenty when I was in London, and people there were just as interested. Perhaps, however, country people are more ready to talk about their experiences.

The Author does do one thing that is unusual in books of this type; she seeks to give an explanation of the tales she tells. Her theories are interesting and well argued, and she at least attempts to grapple with the question "why do ghosts do what they do and for what purpose?" On the other hand, all such explanations are of what POSSIBLY happened, and are not necessarily the only ones or the right ones.

W.J.C.

MORE

97

MYSTERIOUS STONES



This short piece is by way of a continuation of my article 'Mysterious Stones' which appeared in Lantern 7. I have found a few more since writing it and I would also like to mention one or two other points about the previous ones.

You may remember, if you read the article, that I spoke of the two boulders in the churchyard at Beccles; one of which was said to be embedded in the wall. Since then, I have been and looked for them, but could find no trace of either. They may have been removed or possibly covered over, so if anyone can tell me exactly what has happened to them, I would be very pleased to hear about it.

The three foot high stone that I found on the main Lowestoft/Beccles road I now know to be a milestone, but as it stands on a parish boundary and on the corner of a track leading down to the marshes, I wonder if it is not possibly an old way-mark that has become a boundary stone and now a milestone?

On my way to Cockley Cley in Norfolk, I noticed, in one of the main streets of Swaffham, a very large mass of brownish stone on the pavement. It was fairly round and several feet high, but I can't give any other details. Perhaps a Norfolk reader can help here?

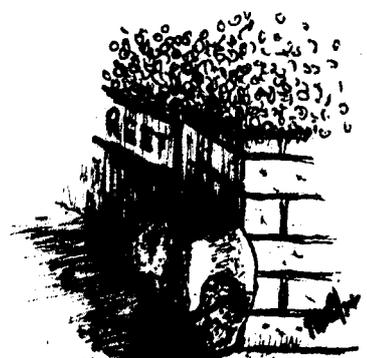
The stones I mentioned as being on the way to the Lowestoft parish church are, in fact, against a wall where Church Road and Wesley Street meet and are roughly in line with St. Margarets church and the stone by the Crown Hotel.

A smallish stone, now painted black, has been found close to a wall in Clapham Road, Lowestoft, and I have found three more in Beccles. One is in Tannery Score and the other two are at the bottom of Hungate Lane. However, we must be very wary of types like these last four and indeed some of those mentioned in my last article. For these could often have been placed there, in years long gone, to protect the corners of buildings and walls from carriage wheels, but then again, they could have been mark-stones that have been shifted for this purpose

Another mysterious boulder stands in a 'classic' position in Suffolk; amidst a solitary clump of pine trees crowning a tumulus, which itself stands on a hill called 'The Hill of Health,' a few miles north of Bury St. Edmunds.

A bit closer to home, there is a large egg-shaped boulder resting by the side of a footpath in Gisleham, Suffolk. This is about 4' 6" long and 3' broad, grey in colour and pock-marked with fossil impressions. There is a possibility however, that it could be a hunk of carboniferous limestone dug up from the nearby brick-works quarry.

The 'Cowell Stone' near Swaffham, which I spoke of before, I have now found to be a 'Puddingstone', one of those many boulders that form the 'conglomerate track'. This track, possibly thousands of years old, stretches 200 miles from Heacham near the Wash in Norfolk, to Thatcham in Berkshire. Other notable stones on this track are at Grimes Graves, Thetford, Kersey, Nayland, Epping and Chesham.



MARK STONE AT THE CORNER OF WESLEY ST, LOWESTOFT

From time to time, if I find anymore mysterious stones in East Anglia, details will appear in the pages of lantern. But in the meantime, if anyone can help me with my researches, please drop me a line care of the editors of LANTERN.

COMMENT.....

The Blaxhall Stone, which is said to be growing, could be a unique relic of an old belief, associated particularly with Suffolk. It was believed that stones actually grew in the ground, and it is not hard to understand why; a farmer might rake and hoe to clear the ground of stones, yet they were always there again within a few days. Another belief was that the stones, although once living and growing things, became dead and lifeless things when Christ died on the cross.

I remember reading somewhere that an old person from south Suffolk, up until relatively recently, kept a stone which she called a 'mother stone', believing that it somehow reproduced, making other smaller stones.

Richard Haxell.



of FAIRY FOLK



Having written last time a word or two about the Faery Folk in East Anglia, I would like now to pass on some subsequent information gleaned mostly from the pages of 'The Folk-lore of East Anglia' by Enid Porter, to whom I am indebted.

In West Norfolk, Irish 'refugees' from the potato famine settled and brought with them some of their extensive folk beliefs. Minor calamities, formerly attributed to witch-craft, were now blamed upon 'the good people.' Enid Porter gives a few examples as to how this, in a minor sort of way, changed some of the habits of the locals. The shepherds learned to scatter on the ground the first milk of an Ewe as an act of generosity to the faeries, who otherwise might cause lambs to be still-born. Wives learned to leave the door open when making bread before the fire, in order to allow any passing faery to enter and watch over the dough. In return for this service the faery would expect some food to be left out especially for him.

Stowmarket it seems was well populated by the faerie folk; glistening creatures who disappeared when approached and caused sparks to appear under the feet of the person who had seen them! A woman in the same town to find a gang of faeries undressing her baby, but they ran away when she disturbed them. Another woman had her baby stolen and a changling left in its place, which she treated as her own and was rewarded by always finding some money in her pocket. A ploughman was rewarded for mending a faery's bread peel with a magical cake which appeared from nowhere.

Horses that were found in their stable in the morning, flecked with foam and exhausted, were believed to have been ridden during the night by either faeries or witches, and one was to ensure that the creatures would not do so again was to hang a 'hag-stone' (a flint with a natural hole in it) above the animal. This would brush the faeries off! One instance where this occurred, although with a calf and not a horse, was recorded in Woodbridge in 1832.

Another interesting tale from Stowmarket, concerns a local midwife who was asked by a faery to visit his wife, who presumably was pregnant. The midwife went into faery-land with the 'man', who for some reason rubbed an ointment onto one of the midwife's eyes. She returned to the mortal world, her job completed, and was out shopping when she saw the faery man in a butchers shop, apparently stealing some meat, being invisible to everyone else. She went over to have a few words with him and was asked by the faery out of which could she see him. Needless to say it was the eye on which he had rubbed the ointment, so he blew on to it, and the midwife was never able to see the good people again.

Suffolk people referred to the faeries as 'Pharisees' or 'Frairies'. Possibly from the Irish, as was suggested to me, 'Fer sidhe', meaning 'man of the hill' as 'Bean sidhe' is 'woman of the hill'. This seems to suggest further that East Anglian Faery Lore maybe predominately of an imported nature.....



. . . . and



WILDS o' the WISPs



Lights flickering over marshland gave rise to a common belief in a spirit or denizen of faery-land called 'Jack o'Lantern', who would treacherously guide travellers into the most dangerous parts of the bog. Marsh gases burn with a 'spectral' light, a purely natural phenomena, but to our ancestors, they were the lights of this most dangerous of faeries. Throughout the land he was known under different names. 'Ignis fatuus' (foolish flame), 'Pin-ket', 'Will o' the Wisp', 'Joan o' the Wad', and 'Spunkie'. The lantern which this sprite carried through the marsh suggested visions of home and comfort to weary travellers, and they would follow the light, usually to their great distress.

Jack would sometimes disguise himself as a beautiful girl or a horde of treasure to lure the traveller on. I've heard that in certain cases it was believed that 'Jack o' Lantern' was none other than 'Puck' or 'Robin Goodfellow', half human, half faery, with the ability to change shape at will and of a most mischeveous disposition. Now, it seems that 'Jack o' Lantern' and 'Joan the Wad' of Cornwall, are good luck bringers, but to our ancestors of not so very long ago, they were dangerous and not to be meddled with. To wear their image in any form of a lucky charm would be an affront that no-one in their right mind would risk.

Tales of 'Jack o' Lanterns' and their doings are not uncommon in our region, particularly in the fenland region, at least up until the time it was drained at the beginning of this century. Although in general, any marshland or low lying region was thought to be inhabited by this particular faery. They were referred to locally as 'Lantern Men', 'Hob o' Lanterns', or very poliyely as 'Jenny Burnt Arses.'

It was beleived that the 'Lantern Men' were attracted by whistling and so this was an unwise distraction to occupy oneself with when alone at night in a marshy region. It would seem that the only effective way to escape from this ghoulish dancing light was to lay flat on ones face and hold ones breath. No doubt many preferred to run and so ensnared themselves in the bog. Folk explanations for this phenomena vary. In common with many beleifs about the faery, the lights were said to be the spectres of drowned people, or the spirits of un-bab-tised children. It is also interesting to consider the way in which used to regard such areas as marshland, to reach a better understanding of their beleifs about it. For the most part marshes were mysterious and dangerous places. Few visited them, and those that did were confronted by columns of mist and strange silences, and a general sort of eeriness which makers of horror-films have exploited to the full. It was not surprising therefore that such regions should be regarded as the homes of supernatural occupants from giants to mermaids. It was generally beleived in East Anglia that mermaids haunted land-locked pools, awaiting to pull in and drown unsuspecting passers-by. It was also common knowledge that children born in the vicinity of marsh, bog, and fen had webbed feet and were half mermaid half faery in origin.

Now that the marshes are mostly drained and our enlightenment, if that be the right word, has driven away these 'Willo the Wisps' and 'Jack o' Lanterns' it is now, for the most part, safe to wander about at night near marsh, pond, or whatever if you feel inclined todo so. Somehow, perhaps in a somewhat perverse way, it seems a pity!!

DON'T MISS THE SPRING EDITION OF LANTERN

ON SALE
IN MARCH

Although not strictly a local UFO report in the strict sense of the term, the following is well worth recording.

On May 30th last, a trawler was six days out from the port of Lowestoft in the middle of the North Sea. At around midnight on this clear, moonless night, the 3rd hand on watch in the wheelhouse, saw a bright, flashing, star-like object rise over the south-east horizon. The object climbed rapidly until it was high in the sky, whereupon it suddenly stopped and commenced a series of erratic and complicated manouvres. The 3rd hand was so amazed by the spectacle, that he called the 2nd engineer and two deck-hands into the wheelhouse to watch the light cavorting about the sky.

One of the deckies, 25 year old David Mortimer from Essex, watched the object through powerful binoculars but, as he later told us, he could discern no other shape to it, other than the exceptionally bright light. Altogether the object was under observation for some 5 minutes or so, until it disappeared over the north eastern horizon.

David, who told us of this sighting, has spent many hours watching on trawlers, as indeed had his colleagues, all of whom said that they had never seen anything like it before, despite their being familiar with the night sky. David was adamant that this was not an artificial earth satellite; "It behaved like no other satellite that I have ever seen", was his comment when asked, and from his description of the object's erratic movements, we are inclined to agree with him.....

U.F.O. REPORT



NEWS ROUND-UP

OXFAM SHOP INVESTIGATION.

As mentioned in this column in the last issue, the Psychical Research Section of BSIG conducted another ghost-watch at The Regional H.Q. of Oxfam in Norwich. This was the fourth such all-night vigil here and marked the culmination of 18 months investigation and research into the alleged psychical activity here.

ANOTHER MYSTERIOUS 'VOICE'.

This last watch was pretty un-eventful, except for the fact that a unexplained male



OXFAM REGIONAL H.Q., NORWICH.

voice was recorded during one of the random tape-recordings which were made at intervals during the night. At present no definite explanation for this voice has been found, although it is possible that it is part of a police radio message picked up by the tape-recorder under freak conditions. Unfortunately the Psychical Research Section is having some difficulty in finding someone to analyse the tape for them. So if any reader feels that they might be able to help in this direction, the editors of LANTERN would be very pleased to hear from them.

SOMETHING THERE.

Although at the present time analysis of all the findings is still taking place and it will probably a month or so before the final report is complete, it seems pretty safe to say that there definitely was some form of genuine psychical manifestation here, although it is now certainly much weaker than it was when the investigation was first started. LANTERN will carry a full report of the haunting and the findings of the investigation as soon as all the details are to hand.

NEWS...NEWS...NEWS...NEWS...

GHOST OF WOMAN SEEN RECENTLY IN LOWESTOFT.

On Thursday, November 26 last the ghost of a woman was seen by two independent witnesses in an old house in Lowestoft High Street. This house, which has stood empty for some years is now in the process of restoration. At about midday on the day in question, a workman was standing on a ladder in the hall, when he looked up the stairs and to his amazement saw a female figure, wearing a long dress and what appeared to be a shawl, ascending the staircase on the 2nd floor. As he stared in astonishment, the figure disappeared. The workmen immediately called the owner of the house, who was in a back room, but by that time there was no sign of the figure. The workman was so shaken by the experience that he refused to stay in the building.

FRIGHTENED DOG.

Later that same day, around 5pm, the owner was working in a front downstairs room, when he heard his dog, a Great Dane puppy, barking in the hall he went out to see what was wrong and found the dog crouched at the foot of the stairs, fur bristling, growling and snarling. Looking up the

stairs in the direction which the dog was pointing, he saw a similar apparition to that seen by the workman, coming down the stairs on the first floor. She was wearing a mob-cap and a long ankle length dress. The witness, understandably, did not wait to see where the ghost went or what she did, but removed himself post-haste to another part of the building, followed closely by the dog. It was some 15 minutes or so before he could steal himself to come out. When he did so, there was no sign of the ghost.

DIFFERENCES.

Although both witnesses saw what was probably the same apparition, their descriptions of it differed greatly on one point: The workman described her as being very solid looking and of a flesh and blood appearance, whereas the owner said that she was definitely not solid, but rather transparent and seemed to be a hazy grey colour. The owner of the building also said that from time to time he had heard footsteps upstairs and that in one of the bedrooms on the second floor, an electric fire was often found to have been switched on. He also told of a strange 'atmosphere' that seemed to pervade the room at times.

BSIG INVESTIGATION.

Fortunately, the Psychical Research Section were told of the happenings here the day after and were quickly able to organise an all-night vigil in the building. Various detectors were set up in the building, but nothing worthy of note happened, although a strange chilly atmosphere was remarked upon in the second floor bedroom, which by the morning had almost disappeared. At the moment research is still going on into this case, but it seems safe to say that this is probably one of the most genuine hauntings investigated by BSIG to date.