



LANTERN

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INTRODUCTION

Sorry for the late appearance of this edition of LANTERN but I forgot to take into account the Easter holiday and the fact that most small firms close for an extended weeks holiday over this period. This included our printers and I was too late getting the stuff to them before they closed down for the holidays.

Unfortunately, from this edition of LANTERN we have been forced to increase the yearly subscription rates. Not, I hasten to add, the price of the magazine but only the costs of postage which soared incredibly in the last 6 months (as you have no doubt noticed). As from the edition the cost of one years subscription (4 issues) will be £1.20. Sorry about that, but if things continue the way they are it will soon cost more to post LANTERN than it does to print it!

In this issue we have tried to introduce a 'breath of Spring' into the contents with articles on May Day customs and folklore. Unfortunately, due to personal reasons Mike Burgess has not been able to produce No.2 in his series of articles on 'Local Ley Lines'; with a bit of luck they will be appearing in the next issue of LANTERN.

During February and march members of the BSIG were involved in the making of a couple of TV programmes concerning the 'unexplained' in East Anglia. On Sunday, February 17 members of BSIG's UFO research section went to Harston near Cambridge to take part in the filming of a programme about the recent wave of UFO sightings there (See Page II of this LANTERN for a fuller report on the reports). And on March 16 your editor took part in the filming of a programme on witchcraft in East Anglia at Framlingham and other locations in Suffolk. Both of the programmes were done By BBC East and should be screened at the end of April/beginning of May.

Nigel Pennick of the Institute of Geomantic Research has asked me to disclaim authorship of the material on the 'Castle Acre Diamond' that appears under his name in Shirley Toulson's book 'EAST ANGLIA - Walking the Ley Lines and Ancient Tracks'. He has never claimed credit for this research of this feature which was original undertaken and published in LANTERN by Ron Hill of Thetford. Finally, Nigel tells me that the IGR will be holding their annual symposium at Cambridge on Saturday, May 17th. Further details of venue, time etc., can be obtained from Nigel at 142 Pheasant Rise, Bar Hill, Cambs.

Ivan Bunn
Editor.

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FROM: 'THE DAILY NEWS', April 12th 1890....

"At an inquest held at Fressingfield (Suffolk) on Thursday by Mr. C.W. Chaston on the body of a child named Hammond, aged 11 weeks, daughter of a labourer, the father and mother stated that they believed the death of the child was due to the witchcraft of the child's step-grandmother. This woman died a few hours before the child, and stated that the child would not live long after her. The child was taken out in a perambulator and the father stated that he saw smoke issue from the perambulator, and that the child died upon being taken home, the mother stating that it was hot and smelt of brimstone. The medical evidence went

cont on p16

'MJOLLNIR'available from, and published by Torsdag Publications, 2 Clifford House, Portland Street, Hereford. 35p per issue (inc. p & p)

I had intended, but failed, to produce a review of this new mag when it first came out, in the Spring of last year, so I'll try to make amends now if I can. 'MJOLLNIR' is unusual in many way; it appears irregularly, so no subscription is available; it has no consistent size, price or subject matter. But for all that, 'MJOLLNIR' is a damn good magazine of folklore and earth mysteries, under the able editorship of Clive Harper. Both Nos 1 and 2 concentrate on the Welsh marcher lands. No. 1 includes articles on Cheshire witch trials; Watkins' Hereford church ley; Nixon the Cheshire prophet and numerous notes and oddments. No.2 contains 'A New Doomsday Book' (a 1932 reprint), an old haunted house in Hereford; Herefordshire trackways; a 1907 paper on 'The Sacred Stones of Hay'; more on the Hereford church ley; reviews; and a notes and queries section. A delightfully-varied selection in each, that bodes well for future issues (whenever they appear!)

M.W.Burgess

MORE EXCHANGE MAGAZINES ARE LISTED ON PAGE 10 + + + + +

It is not wise to be pedantic in the relation of folklore and superstition to specific localities. For the most part (in Northern Europe anyway) folk beliefs of the same or similar nature are ubiquitous. Though it may well be that particular example is collected from a certain area and thereby finds itself enshrined in the dusty tomes of some pedagogues library. Henceforth becoming THE cited example of that piece of folklore.

FOLKLORE OF THE HAWTHORN

R. A. HAXELL

All this is rather a lengthy preamble to this peice about the Hawthorn. Many of the examples quoted here I did not glean from local sources, though it is mu opinion they would have been known, either wholly or partly, at a local level, even if now they have been forgotten.

The HAWTHORN, often known as MAY (Crataegus oxyacantha), has been venerated in folklore as a symbol of the conquest of dark winter and 'old night' by the return of the green and Spring. Thus it was used as a wreath for the May King or 'Jack in the Green' in bucolic celebrations. The origins of this practise must be very ancient indeed as the May King is in fact the stylised representation of the well-known pagan horned god known by a variety of names, Cernunnos being but one. In fact the maypole itself was ideally made of Hawthorn. A certain variety of the tree flowers in mid-winter and this of course became endowed with religious overtones, particularly so in the case of the famous tree at Glastonbury. It was said that if such a tree was ever cut down blood would flow from it and the wood would cry out. There are, it would seem, records of this actually happening. Even if removal of the ordinary kind was necessitated it was considered wise to offer up prayer first.

So, the Hawthorn blossomed and the people were glad. Particularly so the servant who brought in a flowering branch into the house to be rewarded with fresh cream for breakfast. Particularly so the young Lincolnshire lasses who partially broke the first bunch of blossoms they asw and then left them, still hanging on the tree, to sleep and dream of their husband to be (It wasn't meant to rhyme!). All would then be well for them provided they remembered to gather that May the next morning. A similar idea about the predictive powers of Hawthorn comes down to us in the beleif that if a spray of the blossom was left on a signpost on May-eve; in the morning, which ever way it was pointing would indicate the area of locality from which the hopeful girls future husband would come. If by some mis-chance the spray was blown down



onto the ground the unfortunate girl would forever remain single.

In Norfolk they chanted a rhyme, a piece of weather lore, the truth of which I shall one day put to the test:

"Many haws, many sloes,
Many cold toes."

Indeed, it seems that the Hawthorn had many invaluable properties; it was said that it would protect one from lightning. If a piece was

hung on a co-shed on May day the cows would increase their milk yield. A bunch gathered on Ascension day or Palm Sunday and then laid or tucked-away either in the roof or loft of the house would protect the household against supernatural entities. However, I have also heard tell that it was most unlucky to sleep with Hawthorn in the house:

"Beware of an Oak
It draws the stroke,
Avoid the Ash
it courts the flash,
Creep under the thorn
it will save you from harm."

So runs an old rhyme; yet to sit under a Hawthorn tree in May was a most unwise form of relaxation to take, as you would be wide-open to an attack from malignant fairies (not very nice). Perhaps good fairies cast spells over the Hawthorn as well, because the dew gathered from this most singular of trees was said to enhance the beauty of any young maiden.

In the ceremony known as the 'Beating of the Bounds', as the gathering reached each particular markstone on the parish boundary, a sprig of Hawthorn was placed on the stone; the reason for this? I can only guess. Presumably the supernatural powers of the tree, it was thought, would protect the parish from any ill-luck or pestilence in the ensuing year.

When the calendar was altered in 1752 it would seem to have unfortunately spelled the beginning of the end for Hawthorn beliefs; so many of which were based on the blossoms and their appearance on May-day. For after this memorable date the Hawthorn flowers around May 12th and that's not much use for any aspiring young maiden!

+ + + + + NOTES and QUERIES + + + + +

- No. 58 :** CROMWELL AND HIS CANNON: The motif of Cromwell placing his guns on a hill or mound to bombard a nearby religious house is a common one in folklore, and in 'Blythburgh' (1935) by M. Janet Becker p.36, is recorded another instance: "Men took bales of wool and piled them up against the north side of (Blythburgh) church to save it from Cromwell's cannon on Bulcamp Hill".
- No. 59 :** TUNNEL: Emma Thornhill, in her 'Historical Rambles in East Anglia' (1924), p.59, speaks of the lost manor of Wyndale, in the parish of Gillingham just north of Beccles: "The church of Wyndale stood in the angle of two roads, one leading to Aldeby and the other to Yarmouth; the pit there is still known as Church Hole and there are numerous footpaths leading to the spot. The sold unromantic-looking farmhouse opposite is called Wyndale, and is supposed to have a secret passage to the river which can be traced by the

(continued on p.9)

DIARY OF A HAUNTING

part one

EDITOR'S NOTE: In the Autumn of 1971 an incredible series of events occurred in a small north-Norfolk village. The events centred round a family living in a house in the village, and much of the para-normal activity that took place in the

house was noted down in a diary kept by the lady of the house. A copy of this diary (or notes, as the writer preferred to call it) has been in the hands of the BSIG for a number of years, and in keeping with the wishes of the family involved the BSIG held-held publication of the same. However, after a period of almost 10 years and with the family having moved out of the house involved your editor felt that it was now possible to publish the contents of this diary without anyway affecting the family involved but, in keeping with the request for anonymity by the family involved, the location of the house will not be divulged and the names of those involved have been changed, apart from these changes what follows is an exact transcript.

In the letter which accompanied the 'diary', the lady of the house explained:

"...where noises are referred to it means that a sound of activity as if a box was being made or an empty one moved...You may be interested to know that the medium who exorcised the house told us that an elderly couple who had caused the tragic death of a child were responsible for our hauntings....He (the medium, Ed) has also been successful with the clearing of the house, although a whole week went by before it finally cleared..."

Regarding the 'diary' itself, the witness went on to say:

"...I only kept notes from the first really bad night and only recorded enough to enable me to be exact as to times and dates of different occurrences, which I should have used a dozen books if (they had) been recorded fully.. "

THE WITNESSES:

the following is a list of the principal witnesses (names changed) with their ages and relationships one to another.

| | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|
| Mrs. Eileen A. | aged 46. | - Writer of the 'diary'. |
| Mr. Gerald A. | aged 46 | - Husband of above. |
| David A. | aged 14 | - son |
| Dorothy A. | aged 23 | - daughter |
| Julie A. | aged 22 | - .. |
| Craig A. | aged 12 | - son |
| Anne A. | aged 4 | - daughter - referred to as "baby". |
| Roy M. | aged 21 | - fiance of Julie A |
| James C. | aged 44 | - friend of family |
| Mrs. B. | ?? | - a neighbour |
| Steven P. | aged 14 | - .. |
| Mr. C. | ?? | - friend of family |
| Brian H. | aged 10 | - |
| Dave B. | aged 25 | - |
| Mr. & Mrs Miller | .. ?? | - |

THE 'DIARY'

NOTE: Names in brackets after date represent witnesses present.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18th: (Julie, Roy and myself)

Conversing at first in low tones. At ten (minutes) to eleven a knock on store-room door, footsteps immediately after in spare room. During the night we heard music like a guitar; a bay screaming in terror as if shut in or smothered by bedcovers; conversing between a man and a woman; a movement which sounded like a cot (side?) being lowered or highered; a crooning as if a mother was doing it to sooth a child. All this was continuous and repeated several times.

At five and twenty (minutes) to eight we heard bare footsteps coming down stairs and stop at kitchen door.

House was freezing cold but we had two fires. On the Sunday morning found cot side had been highered in spare room. Roy during the daylight went to satisfy himself it wasn't bay crying - It wasn't.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19th:

During the daytime we heard (a) baby cry once and footsteps several times and conversings continued. Roy and Julie went to consult the vicar for advice after the side of cot had been lowered, although unheard by us.

During night footsteps and conversing (heard) again several times; bed disturbed as if (it had been) laid on but room not used. Cold upstairs.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20th:

Slept well both Gerald and I but presumed we were over-tired. Bed in spare-room disturbed as if slept on. Room not used. Cold upstairs.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21st:

Gerald never slept well as he was kept awake by footsteps and mandolin music. Cold upstairs.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22nd:(Gerald and I)

Lay awake, Gerald and I, hearing footsteps in spare-room and music. Don't know what time we fell asleep, began to have uneasy feeling about the house. When (I) woke up at 3.5am felt as if someone was there.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23rd:

Disturbed night. Footsteps and music started about 10 o'clock at night, went to bed to try to get some sleep before anything started. Uneasy feeling about house and cold as if a refrigerator being opened. David and Gerald at different times told the same story of furniture being moved.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th:

Woke up and all remarked how cold the house was. Felt uneasy about house. Gas men arrived and continued to work and do so 'til about 12.30. During cooking dinner (I) was aware of banging and hammering from spare room. Started to dish dinner up and noise got worse. Went outside to find if it was there; returned to house and it started immediately again; went to street door and waited for it to stop. Went inside and collected coat for baby and banging and furniture being moved started. Went outside again and questioned my sanity but went back again and it started with more force. Left house and went to Mrs. L and asked for her advice. She went to ask the lady I know as M.P. if she could offer advice. She then took dog in but house felt different on entry. Satisfied that nothing was there but felt uneasy and shaken. Decided to go for a walk. Met Mrs. B who offered to come home with me while we had dinner. Been in house about 15 minutes when hammering started in spare room, which was also heard by Mrs. B who called and asked who they were and (that) whoever they were looking for had moved for good.

Evening: We all decided to take the advice of 'So as we had banged the devil out we would hammer it in'. Went upstairs and worked while conversing and footsteps sounded in spare room, but nothing was seen. During the evening, while in kitchen talking to Gerald, Craig and Baby were there, I became aware of a clicking noise that sounded above (the) kitchen door and I had the impression of a great bird in flight or fright which appeared to hit the chimney breast; although I ducked, I knew directly I looked for the bird that it hadn't been real. Various other noises during night as if furniture was being moved, heard by Gerald and David, including myself. House freezing again.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25th:

All awake to the house being cold and uncomfortable as if someone was watching all the time. House freezing cold although big fires were going all day. We all heard several lots of footsteps and felt gushes of cold air. During the afternoon while polishing the floor (I) noticed (that) the bed leg was raised about one inch. Meaning to ask Gerald to rectify it when it dropped down; petrified, I called and asked Craig who was on (the) landing, what he had heard and he said I had moved the bed with a bang. Footsteps and banging continued through-



May Day, that remnant of the old Celtic festival of fertility and rejoicing, is celebrated with gusto in some part of Britain, whilst in others it is all but forgotten.

Unfortunately, Lowestoft falls into this latter category, although this has not always been the case, for before the last world war May Day was celebrated - at least by the children - with great enthusiasm. It was in fact, a day that looked forward to with great anticipation for many weeks.

If May 1st fell on a day when the local schools were closed then the celebrations would commence immediately after breakfast when all the children in each particular locale would congregate in their gardens;

or more correctly 'back yards'. The girls would dress-up in their mothers' cast-off frocks and would adorn themselves with old lace curtains over their heads and shoulders held in place with ribbons or beads.

The 'dressing-up' took place with much noise and jollification and eventually, when everybody was ready, they set off in loosely-knit groups to perambulate the immediate neighbourhood banging together old saucepans, pots and pans and singing the following refrain:

"Climbing up the wall,
Knocking down the spiders;
Cabbages and turnips too.
Put then in your aluminium saucepan,
then we'll have a right owd stew."

The words of this little song varied slightly from place to place; some would sing "alleluia saucepan" instead of "aluminium", and in some cases either word would be omitted entirely.

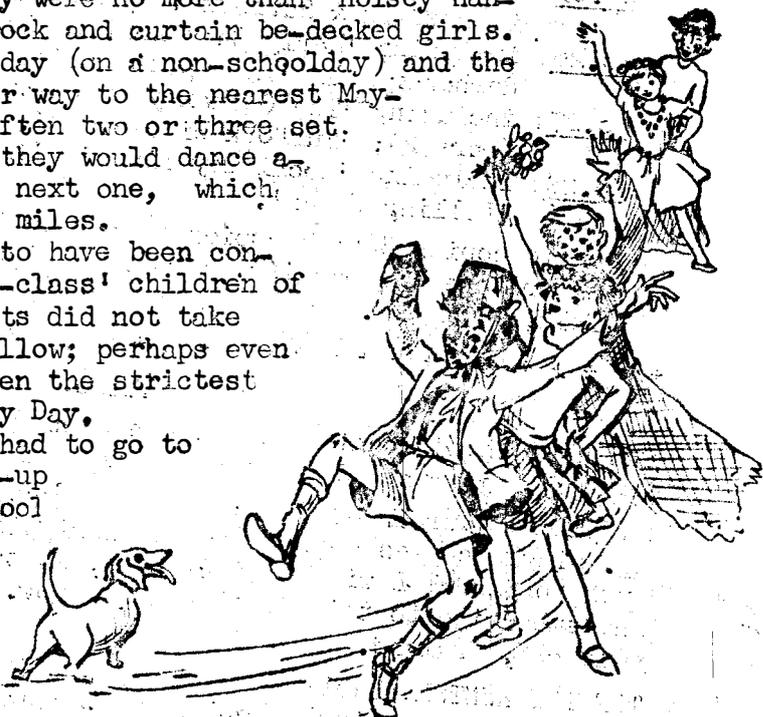
The 'ceremony' also varied in different parts of the town. In some places the boys would blacken their faces with boot polish and carry a collecting can for personal gain; whilst elsewhere, particularly in the south part of the town, they were no more than noisy hangers on to the main party of frock and curtain be-decked girls.

The 'parades' went on all day (on a non-school day) and the children would slowly make their way to the nearest May-pole (at that time their were often two or three set up in the neighbourhood) where they would dance around it before moving onto the next one, which sometimes meant a tramp of some miles.

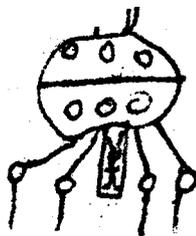
These celebrations appear to have been confined to the so-called 'working-class' children of the town and, although the adults did not take part in them at all, they did allow; perhaps even encouraged, the children and even the strictest mums bent the rules a bit on May Day.

On days when the children had to go to school the parades and dressing-up would take place as soon as school was over.

Alas, like everything else in Lowestoft that was spontaneous, these May day rituals have completely died out, the last instance of



IN THE AIR



C A M B R I D G E S H I R E

U. F. O. N O T E S

by

Nigel Pennick

On November 29th, 1979, patrons of the 'Old English Gentleman' pub at Harston in Cambridgeshire were summoned outside to witness a remarkable sight. Above the public house was a cigar-shaped object with lights along the side "like a railway carriage" and about the same size. Police were summoned, but after twelve minutes or so, the object disappeared. The village was inundated with various lights in the sky that night but no orthodox explanation could be had for them. The number of witnesses was reported in the local press as fifty. The landlord of the Old English Gentleman, Michael Bradford, was in the news again on January 22nd when a second wave of sightings took place at Harston.

Various people contacted the Cambridge Evening News about the sightings on January 22nd 1980, and later it was claimed that the USAF from Mildenhall, Suffolk, were flying aircraft in the vicinity that night. The landlord of the pub is reported as having said that he had seen lights behaving in such a way he would not describe them as belonging to conventional aircraft. Perhaps they were UFOs, or perhaps the A - IOs reported in the last issue of LANTERN.

In the Cambridge Evening News for January 25th, 1980 there was an article, complete with photograph, about how a 'bus crew saw a giant, glowing UFO shaped like a semi-circle hovering low over Marshall's Airport in Cambridge at 11.45pm, Wednesday 23rd January. The witnesses, Elaine Granger and her driver Ron Andrews, were travelling back from the 'bus depot in a car when, "...just as we turned into the road to Teversham I saw a big orange shape, like a half-moon, over the airfield. Ron Andrews stopped the car, and they got out and watched the UFO hover over the airfield for about three minutes. "...It was then glowing red and started to move slowly, this time over towards Cherry Hinton. We got in the car and went to Coldham's Lane to see if we could see it better..." They stopped near the railway bridge in Coldham's Lane, but could not see it, "...Then it appeared right in front of us. It was so low that you could only see half of it above the rooftops of the house it was passing behind. It could not have been an aircraft. It was bigger than a house. There was a very low whirring noise and no traffic about at that time.

Marshall's Airport had closed down at 6pm and a spokesman said no reports had been received of anything over the airport. In the Cambridge Evening News for January 28th, a Histon couple were reported to have verified the sighting. James and Lynda Howarth of Station Road, Histon, were reported as having watched the object in the sky for ten minutes. Mrs Howarth said they watched "...a very long, glowing half-moon shaped object..." for at least ten minutes as they drove along the A45 road from Newmarket towards the Histon turn-off. "...it seemed to be circling and then after quite a time it flew away. We thought we had lost it, but a few moments later it came back - much closer than before. It was very large, much bigger than any aeroplane I have ever seen. We saw it very clearly..."

Samantha Benstead and her friend Linda Pilsworth, both 12 years old, were reported to have seen two UFOs on Sunday, 27th January 1980 at about 5.45pm. The UFOs, one after the other and similar to those sighted at Teversham, appeared over Hale Street, Cambridge. The first "...was like a half-moon, glowing orange, and every now and then it flashed green. Then about 5 minutes later we saw another one rising from behind the houses in the direction of the airport..." said Samantha.

Spurred by various sightings, the Cambridge Evening News carried out a small survey in the What YOU Think series. Fourteen people, complete with

their photographs, were quoted. Most of them thought it was "all rubbish" or aircraft. A Liberal councillor, Lavena Hawes said, "I don't believe in them, but I think it would be fun to be whisked off in a flying saucer." Unfortunately, this sneering and frivolous approach, whilst only to be expected, is scarcely conducive to dispassionate research.

FROM the Eastern Daily Press, December 1st, 1979

A visit to a relative in Old Buckenham (Norfolk) turned into a frightening experience for a Wymongham couple last night after they saw a bright object in the sky and heard a strange noise.

Mr. Maurice Seaman and his wife Glennis of 1, Park Close, were on their way to Old Buckenham at about 5.20pm when they saw a strange object quite low in the sky. Mr. Seaman, convinced it was not an aircraft, said it was big and round, like a ball of fire but with a pale light. But that wasn't the end of their experiences.

On the way home they had reached Burwell when the object came near to them again. They heard a loud whipping noise, so loud that at first they thought there was something wrong with the car.

It lasted for several minutes.

Last night, Mr. Peter Johnson, local reporter for the British UFO Research Association, who lives in Sheringham, said there had been all sorts of sightings in the area over the last few days, especially in Lowestoft.

ADVERTISMENT: Flying Saucers, meetings, skywatches, newsletter, photos. For details send a SAE to the British UFO Society, 47 Belsize Square, London NW3.

WARMINSTER UFO and ley centre. Weekend and holiday accomodation available to UFO researchers, sky watchers, ley hunters and any other folk interested in new age subjects or ancient mysteries. SAE for details to UFO Services, 47 Belsize Square, London NW3.

MYSTERY DEATH OF A RARE BIRD.

A rare bird of prey which died yesterday after falling on to a Suffolk farm in mysterious circumstances the previous day is to be stuffed and will become an exhibit at Ipswich Museum.

The bird, a rough-legged buzzard, is usually seen in moorland areas, such as Cumberland and north-umberland. Even there it is not a common sight and it is hardly ever seen in Suffolk...The bird which fell on Tarston Farm, Darmsden near Needham Market, has a wing span of 54 inches. The bird is brown and white, and is speckled in places.

Two farm workers saw the bird hovering at a height of 1500 feet. One of them, Mr. Russell Banyard, said; "It was being mocked by two seagulls and then it suddenly turned on its back and dived to the ground. The bird had no sign of injury and it is a complete mystery why it dived like that." E.D.P. March 9, 1974.

Since the publication of the last issue of LANTERN, we have had information from the U.S. Airforce concerning flying times of their aircraft over the Lowestoft/Gt. Yarmouth area on November 13th, 1979. Capt. David Schmidt, Information Officer of the 81st Tactical Fighter Wing, which flies AIOs from Woodbridge, Suffolk, has confirmed that the 81st did have aircraft over flying the area in question on November 13th. He didn't say whether the aircraft involved were AIOs, but it is logical to suppose that they were, seeing as most of the aircraft flown from Woodbridge are Republic AIOs.

THE NEXT ISSUE OF LANTERN WILL BE AVAILABLE IN JULY - WITH A BIT OF LUCK! - TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT US AND GET THE TO TAKE OUT A SUBSCRIPTION. WE STILL NEED AND VALUE YOUR SUPPORT. IF YOU FEEL YOU HAVE A CONTRIBUTION - SEND IT TO US!!!