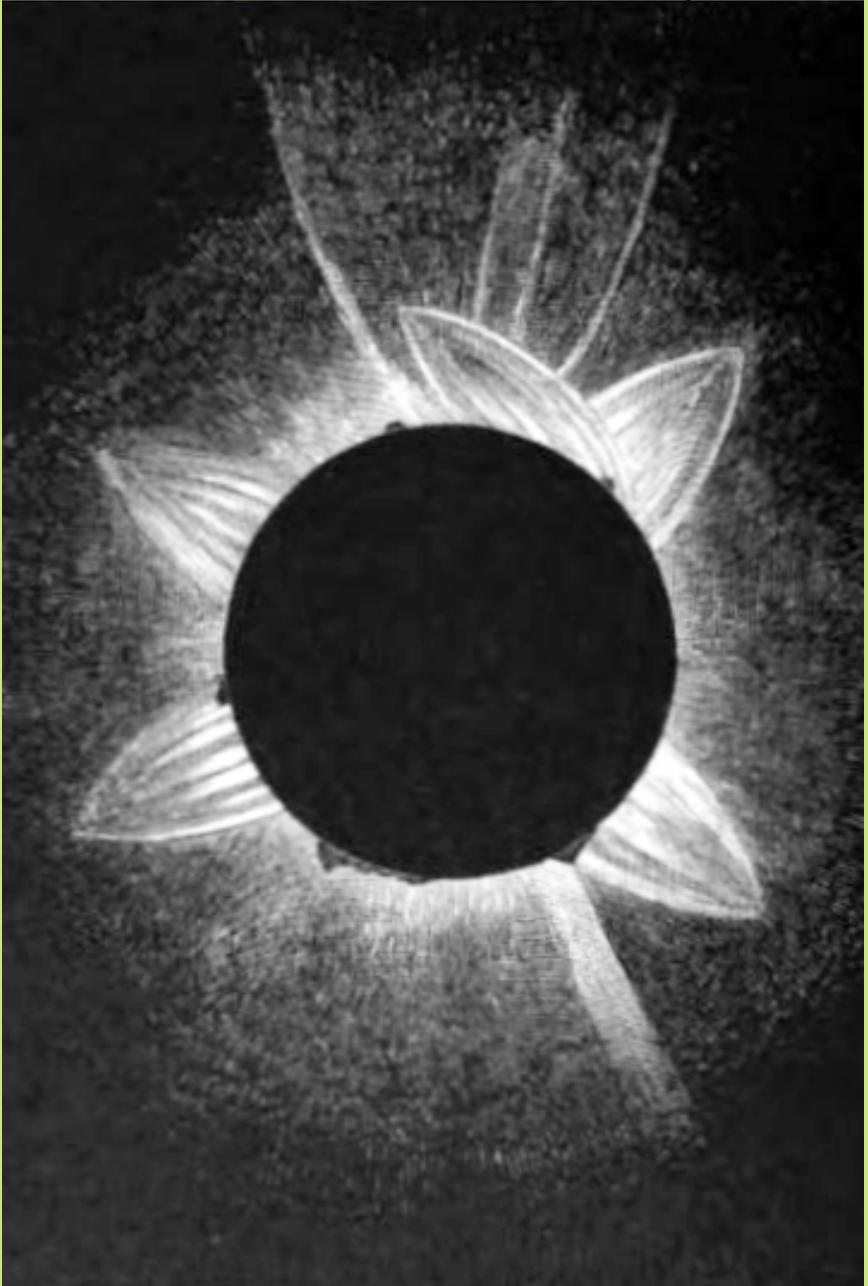


NORTHERN EARTH

Pan-Demiotic 1

May 2020



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LEAD-IN

As 2020 rolled on beyond the floods into a damp chilly pre-spring here in NE-land, it became increasingly apparent that the Year of the Rat had further challenges in store. Straight after the spring equinox, at the New Moon on March 24, the British government decreed its lockdown of citizens and businesses. Some people thought too late, some people thought unnecessary. Many went into shopping frenzies. Contrary discourses buzzed like flies around social media, and some people went out and abused both landline and 5G phone engineers and flamed masts on the grounds that they were trying to kill us all. It became clear that we were and are living in a time of variant discourses operating within a broadly compliant dominant discourse of slogan-led health scares - what are called *demiotic* discourses.

Within days of lockdowns in various countries, the people did marvel at how the air did smell better, the rivers and seas flowed clearer, the birds could make themselves heard without shouting, and how walking wasn't so bad after all as long as you kept away from other people. Nature was obviously appreciating the lockdown... Wouldn't it be nice, many said, if after it all we could maintain and even improve our relationship with Nature? Surely a *Pan-Demiotic* discourse....

It was against this backdrop that we realised it would be very hard to produce a hard-copy issue of *NE*, as our printers were closed, and so were the shops where we sell much of our print-run. Unwilling to break the continuity of articles in the magazine itself for those readers who still prefer not to have very much to do with the internet, we plumped for a special online offering in place of NE161, and thus came about this disembodied issue. Or issues, if this lockdown thing goes on.

This production has been compiled with a slightly different editorial approach. We invited readers to submit whatever they felt might be relevant to other readers, and we ended up with more than we could fit in! Apologies if your piece didn't make it this time, but as noted above, this situation might go on longer than we'd like.

Please note that some of the material herein, including letters and news, may also appear later in the magazine, updated if necessary.

Cover illustration: Solar corona of March 25 as drawn by Liais in 1857

Northern Earth

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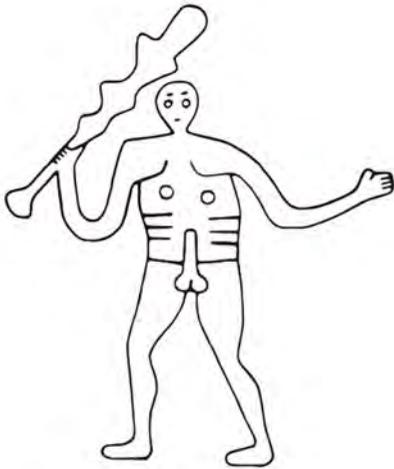
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Season's Gleanings



July 2020 marks the centenary of the gifting of the Cerne Abbas Giant 'to the nation' (in the form of the National Trust); the land was previously owned by the Pitt-Rivers family. A short excavation before March's lockdown aimed to gather more information about the Giant's actual age, which of course is still up for debate. Is it prehistoric? Tim Darvill thinks so, Ronald Hutton doesn't. Similar uncertainty surrounds other hill figures, of course, particularly the Uffington White Horse – which was tested by David Miles recently using optically stimulated luminescence (OSL, which relies on being able to determine when mineral grains in the soil were last exposed to light), and its origin estimated between 1400 and 500 BCE. By

contrast environmental sediment testing for The Long Man of Wilmington – the figure beloved of ley hunters since Alfred Watkins – suggested an earliest date of the 16th century CE. OSL was to be one of the methods used for the Giant. [FSA *Salon* 445, 25.3-20]

Major tomb find in Egypt

One of the most important archaeological discoveries in Egypt in recent decades is a cluster of 16 tombs containing artefacts from the 7th-6th centuries BCE, and 20 limestone and wood sarcophagi containing mummies in relatively good condition, along with around 10000 *ushabti* statuettes and over 700 amulets. The tombs – of high priests and officials some identifiable by inscriptions – are in a known archaeological area near the Nile, 200m S of Cairo around al-Ghoreifa in Minya Province. [Times 31-1-20]

World Tree undermined

Much has been written in e.m. and neo-antiquarian circles about the Chaco Canyon complex in New Mexico, USA, and the religious and geomantic practices of the Anasazi people a thousand years ago (see, e.g. Paul Devereux, *Sacred Geography*, gaia 2010, p74-75; B L Molyneux & P Vitebsky, *Sacred Earth, Sacred Stones*, Duncan Baird 2001, p68-69). A key feature of Chaco Canyon has been a majestic old ponderosa pine that once stood in the precincts of the largest building, the Pueblo Bonito, which was the Anasazi's sacred and ceremonial centre; the tree, it was thought, represented their 'world tree' or omphalos in an otherwise treeless landscape.

However, this interpretation has been called into question by further research including archival sources and dendroprovenance, using tree-ring

send in news and reports from your area

growth patterns to trace a tree's origin. This technique has revealed that the Plaza Tree – though certainly old enough to be coeval with the Chaco canyon heyday, did not grow where it was found in 1924 excavations. Its roots, still attached, led to the then reasonable conclusion that it was *in situ*. It was recently noted that the roots are stubs, not a whole system, and that 25000 trees were used in the construction of Pueblo Bonito, brought in from distant mountain ranges – and this led to the reconsideration of the evidence. The tree-ring and climatic indicators placed the tree's 250 years of life in the Chuska Mountains, 50 mls away to the W. It was brought to the Pueblo, but then whether it was used as a recumbent log or erected as a pole for some ceremonial purpose – maybe a world pole or gnomon? – is unknown.

[Christopher Baisan and Thomas Swetnam, 'Convergence of evidence supports a Chuska Mountains origin for the Plaza Tree of Pueblo Bonito, Chaco Canyon', *American Antiquity* 13-3-20. DOI <https://doi.org/10.1017/aaq.2020.6>]

Shamanic follow-up

Last year (NE159, p5), we reported on Alexander Gabyshek, a Siberian shaman who had attempted to walk to Moscow to carry out rituals to remove Pres. Putin from power; nearly 2000 mls into his journey he was forcibly returned to Yakutia on the pretext that his march or pilgrimage was fomenting anti-government protests. His initial solo walk attracted followers, there were (and still are) regular YouTube accounts of his progress, musicians sang about him, and his arrival in a town had indeed coincided with protest rallies. His trek derived from a 3-year shamanic retreat following the death of his wife, he said:

"The spirits of nature told me to drive out Putin. He is a demon". On his return to his home he was placed under psychiatric examination, but left free – only to start another walk on December 10. That went on for a few days before he was arrested, taken home and banned from leaving the region – but in January he announced that he would be setting out again in March. [*Times*, 6-1-20; several online updates]

Gabyshek's remarks remind us of Pussy Riot's invasion of the chancel at Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in February 2012; they sang 'A Punk Prayer', invoking the Virgin Mary to overthrow Putin. They spent a year or more in jail for that.



TravelingOuter / CC BY (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0)

Rapa Nui not a disaster

A recurrent debate concerning Easter Island concerns the demise of the *moai* statue culture, and indeed of the Rapa Nui generally. It has often been claimed that both society and statue construction ceased around 1600, fingering west-

ern contact as the culprit, or the islanders' exhaustion of their environmental resources. Further investigations led by Oregon University's Robert DiNapoli have refined the picture somewhat. The researchers found that construction of these statues began soon after the island's Melanesian occupation and increased rapidly, sometime between the early-14th and mid-15th centuries; construction was steady and continued beyond European contact in 1722. Despite destabilising issues such as murder, disease and slavery, the islanders maintained cultural resilience, which persists today in their language, arts and cultural practices. The societal collapse hypothesis, the researchers argue, cannot therefore be supported.

The cultural resilience was shown this year when a pick-up van was driven into one of the statues and its platform, causing considerable damage to both. The Chilean driver was arrested and charged, over fears it may have been deliberate; it was later apparent that the van's brakes had failed, so cultural resilience obviously does not encompass mechanics. An outcome seems likely to be the introduction of traffic controls on the island (popn. 12000)

[Robert J. DiNapoli, Timothy M. Rieth, Carl P. Lipo, Terry L. Hunt. 'A model-based approach to the tempo of 'collapse': The case of Rapa Nui (Easter Island)', *Jnl of Archaeological Science*, 2020; <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/02/202006132329.htm>, 6-2-20; *Guardian*, 6-3-20]

Detectorists

Reports of illegal detectoring at historic sites in the UK last year were double that of 2017. The sites of Goodrich Castle, Herefordshire, Old Sarum in Wiltshire and the site of the Battle of Hastings were each subjected to at least 75 illicit excavations. As the editor of

Salon, Mike Pitts, remarked "The gains may typically be less than those achieved by stripping churches of their lead roofs, but the hope of hitting it lucky with a real treasure must have its own reward" – though in 2020 four detector villains and middlemen were rewarded with long jail terms instead. [*Times* 28-2-20. *Salon* 144, 10-3-20. See NE160 p6]

But not all detectorists are lamentable people. The British Museum has recognised the value to archaeology of legitimate seekers who report their finds even when those finds do not fall under the Treasure Act mandatory requirements. Half a million finds have been reported, such that there are now 1.48 million artefacts on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database, of which a third are Roman. These have led to the identification of around a thousand new Roman sites in England and Wales in places unlikely to be excavated otherwise, and to the understanding that there existed no Roman homogeneity but a mosaic of variations in sub-cultures within the overall Romano-British situation. [*Times*, 6-2-20]. One such discovery is this near-unique horse brooch dating from c200-410CE, found in Leasingham, Lincolnshire on a detectoring day. Made of copper alloy, it contains elements of both British (this was Corieltauvi territory) and Roman design, and will this year go on display at Lincoln's Collection Museum [*Times*, 5-3-20].



In NE 158, p2, we reported that a metal detectorist had found objects thought to be part of an Iron Age horse burial - but in Pembrokeshire, far from the usual locations of such sites. Further archaeological work has discovered more bronze items, along with the iron rims of the wheels and an iron sword. The objects are dated to 25-75 CE. A geophysical survey found the remains were buried in a pit encircled by a ditch, and also located the earthworks of a previously unknown hillfort about 100m from the grave. [*British Archaeology* 171, March/April 2020 p7]



News Out Of Philistine

We're talking about people who think it's great to deface things, from public trains to ancient monuments, or to insist on their own pleasures for the sake of their own shallow ego - yes, it's Grumpy Old Antiquarian time. The image shows aliens painted on the stones of Mulfra Quoit in Cornwall at the beginning of the year.

Meanwhile, this summer an 80-year-old Fife farmer will go on trial accused of damaging monoliths and the sites of two stone circles at Baldovie Wood, near Kirriemuir, by driving a track through them in 2019 for tree clearance. One stone was dragged from its place and another

completely removed. When told not to proceed any further, the charge goes, he then compounded the offence by back-filling the track and causing more damage. [*Dundee Courier*, 14-3-20]

Counter-cultural drummers have been raising spring temperatures on Glastonbury Tor. Rumbles of discontent have been aimed at 'selfish bongo players' disturbing the 'sacred silence' of the hill. Echoes of such rumbles reached NE and duly echoed back. [*Times*, 8-2-20]

Iron Age votive hoard

Back in 1877, a small collection of copper-alloy objects was extracted from a peat bog at Poolewe, in the Highlands of Scotland. On stylistic grounds, the hoard was dated to the Llyn Fawr metalworking phase of the earliest Iron Age (800-600 BCE). The metalwork was checked by National Museums of Scotland before it was returned to the local Gairloch Heritage centre for display. It was noticed that one axehead still retained a small fragment of wood from the original haft. Submitted for radiocarbon dating, it came back with a date of 801-571 BCE, in line with expectations. [Matthew G. Knight, 'A radiocarbon date for a Llyn Fawr phase hoard from Scotland'. *Past* 91, Spring 2019]

Well well

Apologies for the predictable subhead to a story about the world's oldest datable wooden structure having been discovered - an oaken well surround near Ostrov in the Czech Republic dating back 7300 years, beating another neolithic well in the Republic by 150 years. [*Times*, 4-2-20]

Lost histories

It can't be helped; sometimes cities get lost. Like one that is thought may have been Tarhuntassa in S Turkey, once the Hittite capital, and which existed c1400-600 BCE. Excavations were planned from this summer. [*Times* 25-2-20]

Send 'em back?

Opinion on repatriation of historical artefacts from the museums of colonising countries is mixed, and the issue itself is complex, nuanced and inappropriate for binary interpretations. We have no NE stance, though we incline to the restitution of body parts and artefacts that have a sacred and mythical agency in their home culture. The Horniman Museum in London is taking a thoughtful step, however, regarding its collection of 50 Benin bronze artefacts; they are asking Nigerian Londoners what they think should be done. [*Evening Standard*, 30-1-20. See letters section, this issue]

Good development news

Plans to build new housing immediately adjacent to and impacting on the setting of the hillfort known as Old Oswestry in Shropshire – reported on before in *NE* – may have been fought off. Galliers Homes withdrew their proposal in March. [*Shropshire Star*, 9-3-20; *Salon* 444, 10-3-20].

In addition, Bovis Homes have worked out a plan with archaeologists and residents of Cam in the Cotswolds by which remains of an 'exceptional' early Roman villa and bath-house are preserved. [*Times*, 7-2-20]



Temple Works. Tim Green/CC BY (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0>)

Exotic industrialists

Temple Works was built in 1836 as a flax mill with an extraordinary ancient Egyptian façade modelled on the Tem-

ple of Horus at Edfu. The architect, Joseph Bonomi the Younger, lived in Thebes for two years in the 1820s, where he obviously acquired the taste. Situated near Leeds Station, in Holbeck, it has not been commercially occupied for a while, but has now been scheduled for conversion into a third branch of the British Library. It isn't alone in its taste for the 19th-century exotic – nearby is a square redbrick chimney modelled on a Moroccan minaret.

Fight!

The Mildenhall Treasure, a priceless silver hoard from the 2-3rd century CE uncovered in Suffolk in 1940 is famous. However, residents of West Row (popn. 2000), 3mils away, would like it known that it was found there and have raised a petition demanding that the British Museum rename it the West Row Treasure. [*Times*, 21-2-20]

Appreciations

Our thanks go out to the Society of Ley Hunters, who in tribute to NE's 40 years of existence (see NE158), produced their 2020 calendar featuring covers from our earliest days to the present. It's nice to be appreciated! For more about SoL, including events, see <http://leyhunters.co.uk/>.

Keith Critchlow 1933-2020

Veteran readers will surely be aware of Summerhill School graduate Critchlow's work in sacred geometry and architecture, and particularly his work *Earth Mysteries: A study in patterns* (1978) and on Neolithic carved stone balls in *Time Stands Still* (1979). More recently, he co-founded and was president of London's Temenos Academy (www.temenosacademy.org).

Clippers

Judith Adams, Mark Greener, Jim Hales, Dave Raven, Verda Smedley

Mike Haigh's Archaeology Review

Underlying health issues

Like the music of Can, in archaeology there is no piece that is finished. In 2008, at Cosa in Tuscany, Italy, the remains of a young woman of around 20 were found. The quality of the grave goods suggested a rich and prosperous lifestyle. Despite her youth, there was no sign of illness. However, around ten years ago, her aDNA* was extracted and it was found that she carried genes which indicated a high risk of contracting coeliac disease, an auto-immune disorder which can cause pain and bone loss if a gluten-rich diet is consumed.

Since then, new techniques have been discovered. One showing a lot of promise is the examination of dental plaque, where minute particles of food can get trapped and preserved. A team led by Angelo Gismondi and Antonella Canini of the Tor Vergata University of Rome found particles of starch which did indicate a gluten-rich diet. They also found traces of mint and valerian; several surviving classical texts recommend these herbs for stomach aches and problems.

More surprising, however, were traces of ginseng and turmeric, plants native to south and east Asia. This was well outside the Roman Empire so they were probably traded along the Silk Road across Central Asia or by sea from India. The other interesting point about this was that in Chinese traditional medicine, these spices were used to treat problems of the digestive system. This seems to imply that information as well as products were traded between countries.

[*Ancient DNA. Colin Barras, 'How the

Romans treated coeliac'. *New Scientist* 3265, 18-1-20, p14]

Cruci-fiction

We may complain about developers and rogue detectorists, but archaeologists have their bad'uns

too, especially when fired with nationalism and the prospects of commissions. Eliseo Gil claimed in 2006 that his team had unearthed one of the earliest written depictions of Jesus' Crucifixion, and of written Basque, dating back to the 3rd century CE. But there were suspicions, over such things as J being used in the inscription for Jupiter rather than I, as standard in the 3rd century, and the size of the breasts on an image purporting to be Venus. A commission of enquiry concluded that they were fake, and charged him with falsifying 476 artefacts while excavating the Basque town of Iruña de Oca, near Vitoria. Colleagues were accused of fraud and faking documents to support the artefacts

[*El Pais*, 12-9-19. *Times*, 5-2-20]

Coastal erosion

It was a good idea at the time. Iron Age people overlooking Caernarvon Bay constructed a double-ramparted hillfort on a mound of glacial drift next to the sea. The earthworks probably reached an impressive 6m and an inner one was faced with large stones from the beach. It had a single entrance to the SE. There was also a mound, thought to be Bronze



Age, in the NE corner, which may have influenced the fort's location. Although there were good views over both the plain to the mountains of Snowdonia and the wide expanse of Caernarfon Bay, the site was always at risk from the sea; about 30% of the site has washed into the bay just since 1900, and it could all be gone in 500 years. Hence, EU funding was secured for excavations.

It was already known from *ad hoc* delving in the past that the site had been re-occupied in Roman times – pottery from the 2nd-4th centuries CE has been found, and this was confirmed by further pottery and coins. The most interesting find was the remains of a large Iron Age roundhouse some 15m across. [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-4939732. Francis Lynch, *A guide to Ancient and Historic Wales*. CADW 1995 p74-75]

Primate tropes

When making comparisons, it is important to set the baseline accurately. Two recent studies have forced scientists to rethink their ideas.

It is a well known fact that human brains are slightly asymmetric. Some parts are larger, smaller or protrude more than others, according to which side of the skull they are located on. This is thought to be unique to the human ape because our brains can specialise. For instance, it is well known that the left side of the brain is used for language, so the shape of the brain, and hence the skull, is formed accordingly. In the past, scientists compared human skulls with those of our closest relative, the chimpanzee. They found the inside of chimp skulls to be relatively smooth and concluded that brain specialisation was a trait unique to humans.

Recently, Simon Neubauer of the German Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology extended these

finds by comparing CT scans of 95 humans, 45 chimpanzees, 43 gorillas and 43 orangutans. The consequent digital maps of the four species were compared and all found to exhibit cranial asymmetry to some extent. It was the chimps who displayed it least. This suggests that brain specialisation is not unique to humans and developed long before we arrived on the scene. It was only a poor choice for a comparison that made us think otherwise.

[James Urquhart, 'Ape brains are more like ours'. *New Scientist* 3270, 22-2-20, p17.

Grow like the Yamnaya

We have had quite a lot in recent issues of NE about the Yamnaya expansions from the Steppes through Europe during the Bronze Age. Their movement was preceded by a NW spread from Anatolia during the Neolithic. It has been the latter that has largely been credited with the agricultural farming revolution of prehistory, but analysis of vegetation changes in Europe may modify that assumption. It seems that the Yamnaya exerted faster and more extensive vegetation change, implying that for western Europe the agricultural revolution was a Bronze Age rather than Neolithic phenomenon.

Specifically, a decline in broad-leaf forest and an increase in pasture and natural grassland vegetation appears to be concurrent with a decline in hunter-gatherer ancestry, and may have been associated with the fast movement of the steppe peoples. Natural variations in climate patterns during this period are associated with these land cover changes.

[F Racino *et al.*, 'The spatiotemporal spread of human migrations during the European Holocene', *PNAS* 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1920051117>]

Meldine and the Prophecies of the Sea

*Remco van Straten and Angeline B. Adams
introduce a tradition of seers from the Lowlands*

God, the saying goes, *created the world, but the Dutch created the Netherlands*. The Dutch have been reclaiming land from the sea for centuries, and have fought as long to hang on to it. They have not always been successful, and the floods of 1717 and 1825 in particular left their scars on the landscape and the psyche of the northerners. As people, homes, crops and livestock were obliterated by a rushing wall of water, the Apocalypse was not just Biblical prophecy, but an intermittent yet ever present reality.

That's why the dike separating the north of Holland from the Wadden Sea is as high as the farmhouses it shields: those farms and the fertile clay lie below sea level, as does most of the province of Groningen. Many villages grew from prehistoric settlements built on *wierden*, artificial hills. Once, the most northern of them marked the coastline like beads on a string, while three miles of reclaimed land now separates them from the sea: Vierhuizen was a fisherman's village, Hornhuizen and Kloosterburen harboured pirates and wreckers, and

Roodeschool has an inn where a ship once washed over the dike. The locals can be characterised as a shrewd people who are, according to folklore, unflappable in the face of ghosts and able to cheat the devil of their souls.

The most fearless, perhaps, were the people of Zoutkamp. It lies a bit further inland than its sister villages, where the Reitdiep river meets what once was the bay called Lauwers Sea. The first people who settled there mined salt from the fields outside the dike. In the late 16th century, invading Spaniards built a fortification to guard the sole waterway from the sea to the city of Groningen. Fishermen soon settled between the barracks, and though the Spaniards left, and later the French and German armies, they remained, earning their living on the sea until they were cut off from it in 1969 when most of the Lauwers Sea was turned into land, the remainder closed off by a huge dam. "Zoutkamp is Zoutkamp no more", people lamented half a century ago, eyeing the decline of their poor but proud community.





Contemporary image of the flood of Christmas Day 1717

Like God, the sea gave but also took away, and the people of Zoutkamp were devout but very practical. As Sunday churchgoing went hand in hand with scavenging and wrecking, the *Soltcampers* always kept one eye on the Bible, the other on the sea. By the time Zoutkamp had grown enough to get its own church, nearby Ulrum found itself on the spearhead of a religious schism. Ulrum's Reverend Hendrik de Cock renounced the Enlightenment-influenced Protestant church in 1834, reverting to fire, brimstone and original sin. He got sacked by the synod, but began his own church, and the 'Koksianen' in the area soon numbered thousands. This first secession led to many others, plus a few mergers, the flow chart of which is not unlike the London Underground map.

Meanwhile, much older regional beliefs were resistant to church and preacher: witches, according to tales gathered a century ago, could be found in every village. On stormy nights, when God seemed far away, these were the women that were consulted by mothers and wives, anxious to know whether their loved ones would stay behind the

sea gate forever or return safely. They were bullied by children, and simple folk blamed them for souring the butter and causing sickness in cattle, but remorseful storytellers also acknowledged the hard lives these old women led at the edge of society. Whatever powers they may have gotten from the devil, or *Ol' Vent*, seem to have brought them neither fortune nor happiness.

At this crossroads of witchcraft, DIY religion and practicality we find Meldine, prophetess of Zoutkamp. She was born in 1813 as Ludgerdina Bol, but became known as Melle's Dina when she married the fisherman Melle Waalkes. Then, in the region's economic-al pronunciation, her name got further whittled down to Meldine. She was a small woman with dark hair and bright brown eyes, said to have been born with the caul - and therefore with the gift of prophecy. It can be assumed that the visions she attributed to the Holy Ghost came to the fore when her husband died in 1851, an accident at sea perhaps, making her a relatively young widow.

Several villagers came under her influence around the 1870s and '80s, and

they called themselves "The Holy Ghost". Like Rev. De Cock they believed that the true gospel had been abandoned, and like him they seceded, gathering in each other's living rooms for Bible study. Specifics are infuriatingly vague as no minutes were taken, but apparently they developed idiosyncratic beliefs regarding life and death. They started to show up at funerals to make pronouncements on the deceased's final destination, until eventually some of them realised they'd gone too far, and the sect fell apart. When she died in 1891, Meldine's grave went unmarked and no photographs of her are known. She remains an elusive figure, and it's not even clear whether she herself was part of the sect she inspired.

Most of the twelve pronouncements attributed to her are ambiguous even by prophecy standards. "Heavy times will come", "In great countries many great tribes will rise", and "a very large country will win" may sound like rather grand prophecies for a commoner, but for people of her time war was always going to come. In Zoutkamp's early years, not the Spaniards but the Dutch rebel armies went raping and pillaging through the countryside, followed by German brigands under the warlord-bishop of Münster, and then Napoleon's army. The Great War was of course just around the corner, and maybe Meldine's prediction, "Our country will stay out of it", was mostly wishful thinking.

Meldine was more specific when dealing with local subjects, but depending on when she made her predictions they are either impressive or stating the obvious. She saw ships coming to Zoutkamp that were made of iron or with machines in them, and predicted that people would ride on two wheels and drive in horseless carriages. However, the sluices that would so change Zoutkamp's fortunes and the canal between Zoutkamp

and Ulrum were no secret for anyone by the middle of the century, and as the first steam-powered ship came to Zoutkamp in 1854, this pronouncement may be apocryphal. It takes quite some imagination to credit the strange ships she thought would sail over land with full sail, while Vierhuizen and Zoutkamp definitely did not merge, nor will they.

It's revealing, though, that she was so convinced of the validity of her prophecies that she once urged the mayor to "act as minister" when all would go pear-shaped. And pear-shaped it definitely went, on the night of 30-31 January 1877, when the dikes of the Westpolder, completed just the year before, broke. The full moon brought a spring tide, and the NW storm winds had already blown the waves over the dike hours before it gave way. Whole families drowned when their cottages collapsed underneath the roofs on which they'd sought refuge. Before the dikes could be wholly mended in the following months, Easter brought a new flood, with perhaps even more disastrous effects, as the crops failed in subsequent years in those the salt-saturated fields.

In what was a patriarchal society, the gift of prophecy legitimised the opinions of a fisherman's wife, otherwise doomed by gender and class. Meldine wasn't the only person in the region whose prophecies gave them a foothold in their community. Groningen and German East Friesland are separated by the Dollard, a body of water that grew dramatically in consecutive floods, swallowing farms, fertile land and complete villages. This area in particular seems to have been crawling with prophets: commoners with prosaic names such as Yntje Jans, Jasper, Lammert Buksenmaker, Hertje, and Hinrich Peters all made predictions on the state of land and water.

In a vivid testimony, the farmer Hinrich Peters predicted the Christmas



"Ships will sail where now labourers work the fields"
Woodcut by Nico Bulder from ter Laan

flood of 1717 (see p11): he saw how the water rushed by and a ship sailed over the fields, past his own house, getting stuck in a dungheap before sailing on. One day when walking home from his field, he complained to his farm hand that he could hardly get ahead as he felt the water standing above his shoulders. Eight days later the dikes broke.

Fear of the storm floods is distilled best in the prophecies of Jaarfke. A pamphlet called *Prophecie ende voorseeginge van eenen geheten Jarfke* (*Prophecies and foretellings from one called Jarfke*) first turned up in the city of Groningen in 1597. It was probably printed at the behest of rich Protestant farmers as a jibe at city governors, but it contains authentic material from half a century earlier. The older material was said to have been written by one Jascoe, Jarcke or Aepko, and was a product of the Renaissance, when astrology, alchemy and experimental theology tried to bring some kind of certainty in a rapidly changing world.

The prophecies remained popular in the centuries afterward, and Jaarfke became a sort of folk hero to the people of the Groninger Land. They appeared in dozens of editions in Dutch, German and dialect, in prose and verse, in book form and as cheap illustrated prints sold by pedlars, and we may reasonably suppose Meldine knew of him: his visions too came from the Holy Ghost, and their contents overlap with Meldine's prophecies. They tell of fights between

different governing fractions, dikes being neglected or even destroyed on purpose, with Jaarfke as the archetypical son of the soil warning of the dire consequences.

They are part of the folk memory that sprang up around the terrible genesis of the Dollard, told from generation to generation, then attached to one visionary by the name of Jaarfke. People like him must have warned in vain against the floods of 1717 and 1825, and have probably been laughed at before. Nowadays they will find their voices drowned out by the denials of climate-change sceptics.

In the end, it doesn't matter whether Jaarfke really existed or not. As the historian and folklorist K. ter Laan puts it: "Don't look for when and where Jaarfke lived; he always existed, in the soul of the people".

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"A.D. 1883 left from this place 109 fishers with 22 ships to sea, and in heavy storm 83 men and 17 ships remained there "

Monument at Paerses-Moddergat

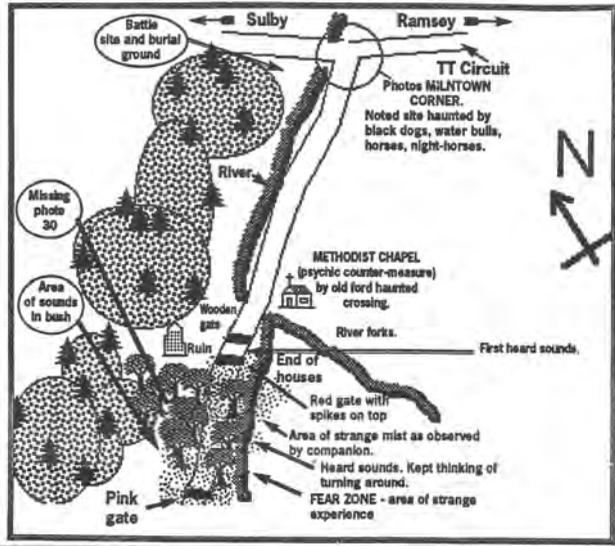


Man to Man

*John Hall teases
– or scares –
us with the
strange things
that may be
encountered
in the
Isle of Man*

This all started as a walk to find the Blue Tree, the legendary haunt of the Fenoderee in the Isle of Man. The whole area, from the main road junction up the Glen and to Snaefell mountain, has a rich heritage of folklore and phenomena so I'll start this memorate with a round-up of fenoderee witness events and sightings, and their location – so if anyone visits the Isle of Man and has some time to spend on a walk, this would be a good stretch of the legs with some extra potential!

You can get to the start by public transport – the bus from Ramsey to Douglas along the A3 main road (the TT motorcycle race route) will take you to the road junction at Milntown Corner. There stands Milntown House – once home to the Christian family, such as Fletcher Christian of the *Mutiny ofn the Bounty*. It is a large property open to visitors, with its fair share of claimed ghosts, including a White Lady, a clergyman, an unknown male, footsteps, a horse and carriage in the courtyard and various other apparitions in and around. One of these is the infamous Milntown Moddey-Dhoo, a huge black dog with enormous fiery red eyes and shaggy coat, said to be an omen of doom, witnessed around Glen Auldyn.



W W Gill's *Manx Scrapbook 2* recalls a sighting from the winter of 1912 here. The witness was walking from Ramsey to Milntown in the evening, and as she neared the corner, suddenly a figure appeared in front of her – a little man 2ft high, wearing a red cap and a long blue coat with lots of shining buttons down the front! He had white hair and a bushy beard, bright blue eyes and carried a lantern with a brilliant spark of light in it, illuminating his smiling wrinkled face. They looked at each other for a few minutes before he vanished! The witness's aunt had had a similar experience years before. It was thought the light was to aid travellers at the corner on dark nights.

Across the road from Milntown House is Magher y Trodden, 'the field of contest', said to contain an ancient cemetery; it is also a fairy location and nearby below Skye Hill is the site of a battle between the Norse Vikings and the Manx. A meadow by the Sulby river was where other strange beings have been reported, such as the Tarroo-Ushtey or Water Bull that comes out of the river. The Moddey-Dhoo again, and

the Cabbyl -Ushtey or Cabbyl -Oie, the Water Horse or Night Horse all lurked around this tree-shadowed junction, making it a place to hurry past in the days before streetlights. This is where the walk up Glen Auldyn begins, with many more locations of supernatural sightings on the way.

Another encounter with a 'gnome-like' entity holding a light occurred further up Glen Auldyn, twelve years before the one above – this time the figure was sitting on the chest of a man who had fell asleep near the quarries. Similar figures were encountered again near the quarries by a tourist taking a walk up the Glen, who reported figures dancing in a circle – they were small and had a grey look of 'fungus' about them, and unsurprisingly made him feel strange, yet he still took that walk again and saw them again!

The Milntown Moddey-Dhoo is also well witnessed. In 1931 a doctor on a patient visit saw him at 2 am beside the road just beyond Milntown Corner – we don't know if the patient survived their illness, but h Dog was also seen in 1927, before the witness' father died. A friend of W W Gill met the Milntown beast in 1931, as he tells in his third *Manx Scrapbook*. This one was coming from the Sulby direction – enormous fiery eyes and a long shaggy coat, black and bigger than a normal dog, it turned aside, crossed the road and disappeared up Glen Auldyn. Two days later there was a great flood. Apparently one of the Christian family, a Ewan Christian, tried to exorcise the Milntown Moddey-Dhoo in the 1800s, but unsuccessfully.

Continuing up the Glen, we come to a bridge over the river, and another story. Folklore records many guardians at old bridges on old roads – and here it may come as a spectral white hand warning those in some danger, such as falling off the bridge! There was supposedly an

arm carved on the stonework representing a woman pushed back from the swollen river in the dark, but I couldn't find it. I had also been informed orally that another ghost haunts this bridge, a patient or nurse who walks here from the cottage hospital.

The Cabbyl-Ushtey appeared to another member of the Christian family, as he rounded a bend in the road by the river one evening. There before him stood "a fine horse of terrible beauty, saddled awaiting a rider". If he had mounted, though, this horse would have galloped to the nearest water and plunged in, as if to drown its rider. The supernatural presence around here may be something of a shapeshifter...

St Fingan's Chapel stands by the bridge. Somewhere along this road is also what is described as a 'sacred nook'. It should be noted that this road and track form part of the Millennium Way, based on an ancient royal highway across the island.

Continuing up the Glen again, on the other side of the river now, we go towards Snaefell mountain and the end of the B-road; the houses stop and we enter a woodland path with the forested slopes of Skye Hill to the right, and North Barrule mountain to the left.

We are in the territory of the Glen's most famous inhabitant, the Fenoderee...

Nearby is Tantaloo, an old and now dilapidated tack mill off the B16 road, where figures were reported last century. They were again gnome-like, cloaked in blue/grey. Moreover, some youths were chased by a woman wielding what looked like a frying pan! A more recent experience came to two English tourists who saw a small woman with a white bonnet or something on her head, which she took off and brandished as if to warn them off (they duly fled). Ghosthunter Andrew Green has won-

dered if, given the type of headdress, this apparition could have a Norse origin? But as I say the area's supernatural presence could be a shapeshifter able to adopt various guises – cloaked Gnome, white-bonneted woman... will it keep up with the times and become a Grey Alien?

On top of the nearby hill something described as a "Fairy City" had been seen – strange lights on the mountain looking like an illuminated palace. Today they would be interpreted as Spook-lights or a UFO! Local people were wary of fairy glamour, though – if attracted by strange singing and dancing or grand homes, the remedy was to refuse food and drink or to turn one's jacket inside out, lest one be lost to a world which runs to different rules and different time.

The little woman had been seen in the field between the mill and the track – I noticed that the last house on this track backed on to the field, and without exception all the rear windows were boarded over, which made me wonder as to the reason.

Walking on, the track goes through a glen of oak and pine, where I first went looking for the blue-leaved rowan tree that is mentioned in the fenoderee story. As we walked, my friend remarked on a mist hanging over the area. Myself, I could hear the stream tumbling over the rocks, making a kind of drumming noise and a certain musical sound I couldn't quite place; I found a 'fairy ring' of mushrooms by it as we walked. After half an hour or so we came to a dip in the path by a stone wall, filled completely by water from a recent rainstorm, and we had to skirt round. And then things began to get strange... and to give a perspective on what follows I should talk about the fenoderee story.

This recounts how a mortal woman, Kitty Keruish, and a fairy prince met

and had a love affair in the Glen, meeting at the blue-leaved rowan tree all in secret, as by tradition fairies and mortals should not mix, especially when the fairy (who called himself Udereek) is of royal blood. Udereek was supposed to attend a Manx harvest festival with other fairyfolk at Glen Rushen on the other side of the island, but missed it thanks to his liaison with Kitty, and as punishment by the Fairy Council he not only lost his royal status, but was also transformed into a satyr-like half-man half-goat creature and left to roam forever in this form – known now as the fenoderee. As for Kitty, to escape retribution from either fairyfolk or her own people, she fled the island. But the fenoderee was to be of help to humans – stories tell of him assisting farmers and fishermen in various parts of Man, but his romance with Kitty was right here in Glen Auldyn where he waits for his lost love to reappear...

I had with me a non-digital camera, a Canon 35mm with a good lens and a full 36-frame roll of colour film. I took a few pictures before trying to skirt the pool, noticing another much larger mushroom ring by the pool, and then we realised that the immediate area under the trees was unusually dark – we could not see the hillside just behind, and the place had an eeriness to it, as if we were being watched. There was no birdsong, the air was still, and then a wind arose – and we heard something moving around in the dark area, as twigs cracked. We both felt uneasy now, and still a good way from being outside this patch. We walked up to a long-deserted and overgrown house, wondering if we had disturbed something, and thinking maybe we should turn around and go back. I actually felt a bit strange, as if I was being told to go back. A sense of panic set in; I felt a bit sick and dizzy, my head was spinning and I felt faint. I stopped



In one of the photos John took of the unsettling area, he later noticed this odd 'stick figure' on a branch above the track (enhanced image in inset). A chance fall of light - or an encounter with one of the Glen's spectral presences?

to take some more pictures, then quite suddenly I felt a cold clammy wet feeling on my back – that icy-cold spinechiller of ghost stories! Trying not to show panic and alarm my friend too much, I suggested that we go back, now! I took some more photos looking back at the area by the pool as we left – as quickly as possible, but it seemed to take much longer. The path seemed to stretch out and lengthen, like the feeling when you run in a dream and the floor is like a reverse travelator, but finally we got back to the gate and through back on to the B16 road. Later I realised that what should have been a 5-10 minute walk back had taken about half an hour. We stopped for breath outside St Fingan's church on the other side of the bridge. I was still feeling cold and shaken. My friend asked if I'd noticed there was a mist around us the whole time – I hadn't, but I told her why I had felt the need to get out quick, though it seemed not to have affected her the same way. Further on, we stopped again to compare notes and write it down.

Before I finish, there's another story of Glen Auldyn – a 'cloud of darkness'

encountered by a woman going up the glen one evening. Above the bridge, everything became black, and though she stood for an hour the cloud did not go away. She turned back, as that way was still visible. Such a thing had also been seen on an evening some years earlier from a cottage near the road – perhaps the one we saw by the field?

So what was it that I experienced? The Fenoderee? Or – something you really don't want to meet – a buggane? As it turned out, whatever it was that turned us around from climbing Snaefell also saved us from a severe storm that moved in over the mountain – so maybe it was a friendly warning after all!

* *Abridged and edited by John Billingsley*

In memoriam During preparation of this issue, we were saddened to hear that John's friend and partner, Elaine, had passed away from the Corona virus. Our sympathy goes out to their families; and John asked us to remind people to take care, as the virus doesn't discriminate...

The Hole-iness of Megaliths

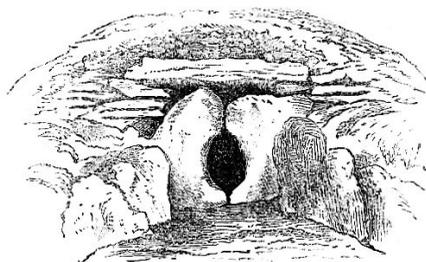
*Paul Bowers shares a few thoughts about holed stones
in prehistoric sites **

Holed or pierced stones are found all over the British Isles, especially in Ireland and Scotland. They take many forms: standing stones, slabs in chambered tombs, cist stones, as well as naturally occurring stones. Whether they are natural or worked, their contexts indicate that such holes were venerated or used in a ritualistic manner now lost to us. I have, to date, documented 68 holed stones in the British Isles, and about 20 elsewhere, mainly in Spain and France, but as far afield as India.

The earliest datable holed stones are found in Southern Spain's passage graves, where 'porthole' slabs form entrances and dividing slabs to chambers, with either round or rectangular holes, as at Antequera or Los Milares. Similar



*Portal stone at Viera passage grave, Antequera
(John Billingsley)*



Aveining burial chamber in 19th century

porthole slabs were built in the in the Neolithic *allées-couvertes* of Brittany and the Paris Basin, as well as in the Cotswolds nearly a millennium later. Porthole stones were a way of allowing users to open and close tombs as required, as they were used for long periods for collective burials. However, most prehistoric tombs in Britain and on the continent do not use portholes, so the question is why they exist where they do. Some tombs, such as Aveining and Rodmartin in Gloucester, and several in Brittany, use a method of adjacent stone slabs across the chamber entrance, which were then cut away on each side to produce an oval-shaped gap. Others placed a gap between stones which could be blocked by a loose stone, or used stone plugs. Such holes cost time and effort, and their purpose is unclear. Were they to allow only the dead to enter, or did they allow the dead to leave the tomb as a kind of rebirth through a vulva-like opening? It is worth noting that porthole tombs at Abkhazia in the Caucasus were not used for burial, but were repositories of valuable grave goods.



Men-an-Tol (Barry Teague)

Another theory may be that the creation of porthole stones may be related to the attempt to control or direct the sun's rays at auspicious times, such as solstices and equinoxes; thus, some portholes may be more than 'spirit holes', as by removing the blocking item, the ancestors' bones could be bathed by the sun's rays on prescribed days, according to the tomb's orientation.

However, standing stones with holes are the most prolific, and some have become well known, such as Cornwall's Men-an-Tol. Less well known are those at Ballymeanoch (Argyll), the Stone of Odin at Stenness (Orkney) and the Ringstone at Avebury. Of these, only the first still exists, albeit broken in two, and dumped at the side of the field containing the two rows of Ballymeanoch Stones. The holed stone originally stood

outside the stone row complex and on a different axis: NE-SW – roughly mid-summer sunrise or midwinter sunset, depending on line of sight.

Holed standing stones are often associated with folklore, usually relating to agreements, such as betrothals, marriage, deals affirmed by shaking hands through the hole, or to aid healing, fertility or childbirth. They are found all over Britain. Some, such as the Stone of Odin, are said to have been used for healing, by passing a child or limb through the hole or to aid fertility and childbirth. Another healing stone is the Tolmen Stone at Oakhampton (Dartmoor), which was used to cure whooping cough and rheumatism, as well as being a 'purification' stone for faithless wives (no mention of faithless husbands) to clamber through the hole as act of purification. The Kelpie Stone at the River Dee (Aberdeenshire) was used for infertile women to crawl through in the same direction as the river's flow. The 'raven's bowl' or 'Balder Stone' at the Wrekin (Shropshire) was also known as the 'Needle's Eye'. According to legend, if a young maiden dips her foot in the water-filled basin (the 'raven's bowl'), then 'threads the needle', i.e. climb through the natural hole in the rock, she will be married within twelve months.



The Tolmen Stone, Dartmoor (John Billingsley)

Many holed stones, especially in Ireland, have been relocated to consecrated ground, to Christianise them or revoke their customary status. One example is a pillar stone at Inishmurray, 'the church of men', which has a cross carved on its face, and four holes, two on each side, on the corner edge. These holes are joined on each

Thompson's Rock, Northumberland, showing 'tube' and the mid-summer sun shining through it (Barry Teague)



side, allowing fingers and thumbs through as if handles. The custom was for expectant mothers wishing for an easy birth to grasp the stone on each side, while kneeling, then use the stones to pull themselves upright with ease – symbolising easy childbirth.

Some holed stones are connected with solar alignments, such as at Tiraghoil Mull, where close to a chambered tomb a standing stone has a pierced hole 3" in diameter. The hole looks towards a sharp pointed rock in line with a notch on the horizon at the NW. 'Thompson's Rock', a large boulder on Simonside (Northumberland), has a centrally placed hole also about 3" in diameter passing like a tube through around 5 ft of rock, which is aligned to the mid-summer sunset. Such stones could be used as viewing scopes to look at a point on the horizon where the sun would rise or set.

Holed-stone sites have their own fascination both in terms of folklore attached to them and as a source of intriguing speculation. I would advise anyone visiting the standing stones still extant to check with a compass whether the holes are aligned or oriented on ho-

zizon events. When visiting these places, remember to stick a hand, leg or head, body even, through these holes. You never know, it might just cure your ills.

** Abridged from a longer original by Ingrid Burney and John Billingsley*

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*Ed. John Billingsley,
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A Causewayed Enclosure in Datchet

Causewayed enclosures are idiosyncratic monuments that have been variously interpreted since they were first recognised as a monument type.

Archaeologists have had a rare opportunity to excavate an entire causewayed enclosure ahead of gravel extraction near Datchet, on the flood plain of the R Thames.

The earliest activity on the site dates from the Mesolithic period (c8500-4000 BCE); around 820 pieces of flint and a chunk of a beautifully worked flint axe have been found. Subsequently, farmers from the continent came in along the Thames, colonising the fertile land on either bank. The causewayed enclosure was seemingly built during the early Neolithic to satisfy the human need to get together.

The monument has some features unlike other such monuments. One is that a natural paleochannel was used along the N border. The rest of the enclosure consisted of 25 separate ditches, with causeways left for access. Between them, people and nature managed to form an enclosure 185m across, enclosing an area of about two football pitches. The trenches varied from between 5-25m long, and 0.5-1.1m deep. A wide gap along the S boundary suggests the entrance.

It is generally assumed that causewayed enclosures were used for large commensal gatherings, because of the large quantities of cooked and gnawed bone found in the ditches. A number of cultural items were also found here, which were probably of significance. In some cases, sections were used for a unique type of object – one had a nearly complete Neolithic pot, while another

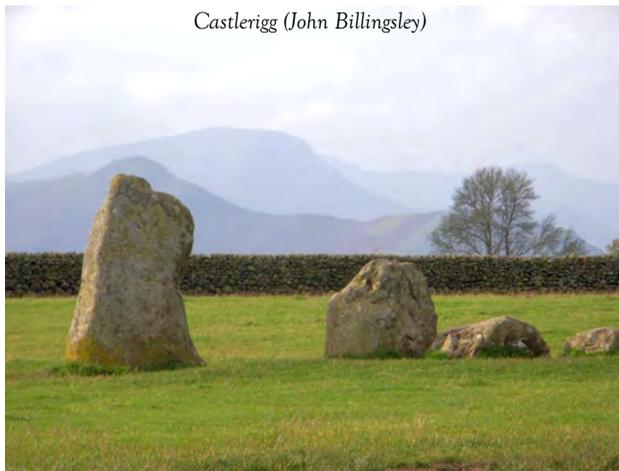
had fragments of polished stone and flint axes. Others were mixed. Human bones were found deposited in 4 ditches. In one case, an almost complete human skeleton was found at the bottom – after the flesh had decayed, the body was disturbed and the skull and left femur removed; similar treatment has been noted at other sites, including Hambledon Hill in Dorset. Along the S edge of the monument, a number of skull fragments were found. In the W, one section contained part of an arm.

Work is ongoing into the distribution of artefacts around the feature, but some patterns are already emerging. In the SW a number of large pottery sherds recovered from the ditches hint at long-range connections. The quartzite rocks used as temper in some imply an origin in the West Midlands, while the designs are similar to vessels from the SE. Among the polished stone axes are some from Sussex, Cornwall and Langdale in Cumbria.

At the heart of the monument lies another: an oval ditch some 15m across at its widest point, around 1m deep and containing various artefacts, from a well-preserved antler comb, worked flints and stone tools to rubbish like pottery sherds and animal bone.

Just to the E of this and sharing the same main axis of the large enclosure were the remains of a rectangular structure. This was probably an early Neolithic house, its corners formed by four large erect posts and its walls possibly of planks. Similar buildings have been

Castlerigg (John Billingsley)



barrow, and in NE157, p8, we noted a new theory based on geophysics that the remains of another house lay under the southernmost of the two circles inside Avebury henge. The rectangle of stones inside Castlerigg stone circle (pictured) may be another example.

As yet, no carbon dates are available so we can't be sure of the exact sequence. The

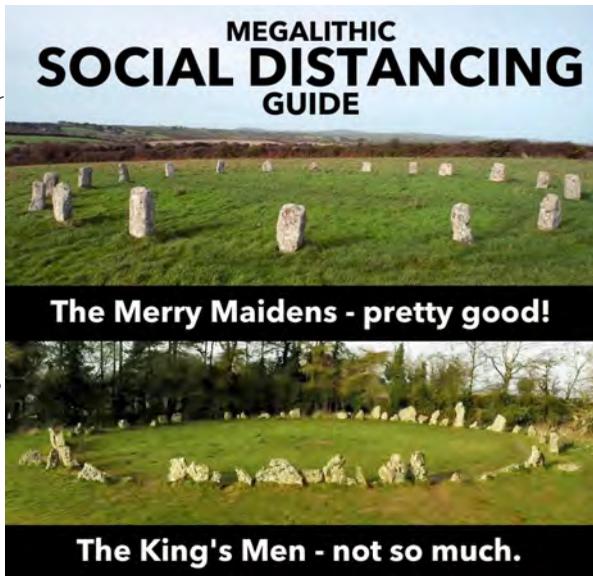
found nearby at Kingsmead Quarry near Horton; one was dated to 3710–3650 BCE. The fact that it shares orientation with the larger monument suggests that this could be another note in a developing theme in Neolithic studies – that later monuments honoured the existence of earlier culturally-significant dwellings. In NE152, p7, we reported a similar house under Cat's Brain long

excavation is almost finished, but there is much post-excavation work to do. By the time that's done this site will have been 'extracted' and used as ballast for some vanity project like Heathrow or (god forbid) Boris Island.

[John Powell and Gareth Chaffey, *The last piece of the puzzle. Current Archaeology* 351, June 2019. p26-32]

Readers on Facebook will surely have already seen this image that went viral - if we can say that - at the start of the Corona Virus furore. We tried to find out who the original creator was, without luck, so we regret we cannot credit it - but whoever it was, thank you, it gave us all a grand laugh...*

** but graphic style may suggest The Prehistory Guys on Facebook*



Having Your Say

Response to recent issues has been copious – thank you! We felt that if we left readers' messages till the hard-copy NE161 can appear, both continuity and further response would suffer. So we are publishing these now and also in NE161, along with any further responses that we may receive from this issue

Ringed horizons: Bully Hills

Paul Broadhurst, Launceston:

Richard Waters from Lincoln notices (Letters NE159) that a series of mounds known as Bully Hills near Louth are aligned to the summer solstice sunrise, and wonders if the name is a corruption of 'bury'. We came across these some years ago when researching the book *Axis of Heaven* and made the same observation, whilst also noting that the Greenwich Meridian runs right across them.

This doesn't surprise me, since we had already found that a great number of prehistoric sites, as well as those that had evolved into abbeys, royal palaces, priories and churches, from Yorkshire down to the south coast, were set at longitude 0° 00'. Extraordinary though it may sound at first, the evidence is overwhelming that the modern Zero Meridian was set (by Sir Christopher Wren, a Grand Master Freemason) to overlay an earlier version, much of it marked by the old Celtic/Roman/Saxon road known as Ermine Street (*Irmin* was the Saxon polar god of the World Tree).

Bully Hills are thus the equivalent of a Bronze Age or perhaps even Neolithic observatory purposely aligned on a prehistoric meridian, like many other such sites we came across. Louth itself was a noted centre of the old polar religion, with a great ash tree symbolizing the World Ash Yggdrasil growing at its highest spot (Ashwell Lane near St James's Church, longitude 0° 00'), with its roots growing from an especially sacred holy well. This magnificent tree was strikingly visible from many miles around where

the Danes held their *wapentake*, an early version of parliament, on the polar axis, or the symbolic centre of heaven. The very name Louth is thought to derive from the 'Ash of Lugh', the old sky-god. On the outskirts of the town was once a turf-cut maze – Julian's Bower – also set at 0° 00'.

But back to 'Bully Hills'. I suspect the name might come from the Bronze Age, during the precessional age of Taurus, the *Bull of Heaven*, when the Sun adopted the characteristics of the astrological sign of the spring equinox. One of the most interesting (and little-visited) sites to confirm this idea is Bulbarrow in Dorset, the highest point for many miles, surrounded by the impressive earthworks of an old British 'fort'. Bull worship was certainly fundamental in antiquity, with bronze bulls found at Maiden Castle and many other sites. Bulbarrow itself falls on another ancient 'lost' meridian which will feature in our forthcoming book *The Rose Lines*, exploring the forgotten significance of these N/S axes in ancient astronomy, from where so much mythology stems.

Richard Waters, Lincoln:

Many thanks to Paul for taking the time to submit this reply. The link between the proximity of Bully Hills to the Greenwich Meridian is fascinating. By my reckoning the easterly barrow is about 75m W of the Meridian, and the centre of the main alignment of barrows is about 280m W of it. What this means in reality is another question. I'm not sure about the reference to the Ermine Street as a proto-Meridian, as the Roman road is about 35 km W of the me-

ridian at this site, and is therefore not relevant to the Louth area. Links between Ermine and the Irminsul could also be a bit tenuous compared to the more obvious link to ermine as the winter coat of the stoat, prized by emperors and kings (stoats may, or may not, have been introduced to Britain by the Romans).

The Julian's Bower site in Louth is approx 370m W of the Meridian, and the site of Ashwell Hole, the well spring described by Paul, is about 200m W of it. The spring still exists, though covered over with concrete and paving now. There is still one open stretch of watercourse in a garden, which marks its course before it merges with two other former well-springs and becomes Monk's Dyke. Aswell Street and Spring Gardens are markers of the former importance of the well; maybe there was a link between the ash in this place name and the Irminsul/Yggdrasil locally.

It has always been my understanding that Louth was named for Lud (the river through the town is still called the Lud), and that the 'd' sound was replaced with 'th' during the Danish settlement period.

The idea of Bully Hills being named after the bull as a sacred animal is interesting too. I have read Julian Cope's theory of the bull as a pan-European deity. Another possibility is that they were named after 'Bulla', a Norse settler whose name is thought to be part of the local place names Bullington and Bolingbroke (Old Bolingbroke Castle was the birthplace of Henry IV, and as it happens is just 1.1km E of the Greenwich Meridian). Perhaps the Dane was buried in a barrow in the area and these other much older local barrows became known as 'Bully Hills' by association? I still like the pos-

sible corruption of 'bury' or 'burial', but like so many of the things which intrigue folk like us today, we will never know.

Canonisation

Norman Darwen, Bolton:

I very much enjoyed the informative piece on St Robert of Knaresborough (NE160). The comment on 'popular' canonisation (as opposed to the 'official' variety) reminded me of comments I used to hear a few decades back, though the ubiquity of the society's charity shops has now probably killed this off. I do remember when people used to talk of Dr Barnardo's children's homes as 'St Barnardo's', though whether that was due to comparison with local schools, which are usually named after a saint or a reflection of the regard people had towards Dr. Barnardo himself, I do not know.

Also, with regard to 'ringed horizons', and perhaps linked – at least in my head – are the ways that the tops of stones in some stone circles mimic the shape of distant horizons. I recall reading this in the 80s, and often look for this effect when visiting such sites. However, the actual places where the two match perfectly for the viewer, although limited to only a foot or two (i.e. the top of the stone lines up with the horizon – I'm thinking particularly of Long Meg and

her Daughters and Castlerigg here) seem to have no significance whatsoever. Or is that just because modern humans are taller? And it just occurs to me – has anyone tried to look into whether there is a correlation between the flat lintels at Stonehenge with the horizon? [Ed's note: Approximations of horizon lines by megalithic sites have been mentioned a lot in NE, where we refer to them as 'terrain echoes'.

Terrain echo at Ingleborough



We feel them to be an important part of the phenomenology of a site, and to constitute a tribute to the landscape of some sort – but whether as a ritual tribute as in a deliberate incorporation of the surrounds into the monument itself, or as a relatively simple acknowledgment of the local landscape or, for that matter, a happy coincidence – is open to debate. See the accompanying image of a propped stone monument which 'echoes' the lineaments of Ingleborough]

What is normal?

Eileen Wright, Seaton:

Re the peacock feather mystery ['Normal or paranormal', NE160], I suspect that the feather unknowingly got attached to Mrs West, either to her slipper/shoe or her sleeve when putting the vase upright again. It stayed on her until she reached the cellar steps then became dislodged as she put on the light or started down the steps, and wasn't noticed until she found it lying at the bottom of the steps where it had fallen to.

Repatriation

Nigel Pennick, Cambridge:

An earlier repatriation was a Lakota Sioux Ghost Shirt worn by a Sioux warrior killed in the 1890 Wounded Knee massacre, presented to Kelvingrove Art Gallery, Glasgow, by Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show in 1891 and returned in 1999: see <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/409876.stm>

If a sacred artefact goes from a museum in the UK to a museum in a nation state that was formed after the artefact was removed, then it is still something of 'exhibition value' and not a numinous artefact used for the purpose its maker intended. Unless it is restored to ritual use. Similarly if it goes 'back' to the once-Pagan tribe which now has become evangelical Christians, it will not get revered there for its proper use, but be seen as a relic of a barbarous, evil, past to be shown to people to demonstrate how superior and modern they have become in the interim.

There are many artefacts from Britain that could be repatriated here. A Mark One Spitfire aircraft of Battle of Britain vintage in Chicago; the Gresley A4 class locomotives once called Golden Shuttle and Woodcock now in the US and Canada because they were re-named in wartime to Dwight D. Eisenhower and Dominion of Canada; many unique fine antique English firearms dating from the 17th century onwards in the museum of the National Rifle Association in the US; a Liverpool, Glasgow and London tram rotting un-restored in a shed at the Streetcar Museum in Maine; and if it be argued that these are not ancestral artefacts, the medieval Bury St Edmunds Cross in the Cloisters Museum in New York certainly is.

If museums are to become nationalized repositories, and anything not from the particular country will be sent 'back', then we can expect a plethora of British items to be returning here too. The UK has already got back the last Burton and Ashby tram from Detroit, and a Glasgow Standard tram for Paris. What else is out there awaiting our requests?

An intriguing photo

Richard Waters, Lincoln:

This newspaper photo (*The Lincolnite*, 3-1-20) was taken during recent floods in Lincolnshire, and shows Short Ferry. Most photos have shown this farm from ground level, surrounded by water, and even then it was evident from those pictures that the settlers here realised where was the right place to build!

What was not evident was that next to the farm is a large circular earthwork on an adjacent 'island'. It really doesn't show up anything like as clearly as this on Google, and no moat or similar feature is recorded on the 1905 OS map (GR 509413 372100). There is nothing on the historic record for this site that I have found.

The area is drained today by the Witham Third Internal Drainage Board, and hasn't flooded in living memory until this year, though historically the



area would have been subject to both tidal and upland run-off flooding.

The 'island' certainly looks like a circular earthwork, doesn't it! Does anyone know any more about this area?

Hydronymies

Jon Barker, Stenness:

I liked the piece in NE158 on the naming of rivers; another candidate might be the various River Esks. There is one in N Yorkshire that reaches the sea at Whitby, another in Dumfries & Galloway (formed from the Black Esk and the White Esk that merge below Castle O'er), two in Cumbria... there may be more, and variants may include Axe, Exe and Usk? And probably derived from *isca*, 'fish'.

Richard Stead, Leeds:

"What's his point?" was, I am informed, a widespread reaction to my piece in NE158 on river-names in N England and the Rhine catchment. I will attempt to draw one implication.

The piece reported the conjoint replication of a set of six names in these two regions and went on to note the absence of any other instance of this pattern. It is unique. Clearly one can view the names as unconnected items produced by various disparate or random processes, their repetition thus being simple coincidence. Starting from this basis, it is entirely legitimate to discuss their origin and /or meaning one by one. Prof. Ekwall in his *English River Names* adopts this approach. His general strat-

egy is to seek the roots of the names in the various layers of evolution of the languages of Europe from Proto-Indo-European through to modern times. For the six names in our group, he is able

– though with varying degrees of certainty – to claim roots in Old English, Gallic, Latin, Greek, Sanskrit, and Aryan. What is absent from this, is uniformity. While two explanations (for the Aire and the Ure) are the same, the others differ one from another.

My personal view is that this conjoint repetition of the group of six names – once in the Rhine catchment then again in the N of England – rather than being the random outcome of various disparate processes, is the result of a single process which was deployed twice – once for the Rhine catchment then again in the N of England (or the other way round of course). Whatever the process whereby rivers acquired names in the normal course of events, it did not run (fully) in the area under examination. Something different happened. Whatever did happen, furthermore, did not happen again anywhere else.

The logic of the situation – point, if you will – is that the discussion of the origin or meaning of these names should address the rivers and their names not one at a time but as a unit. It should accordingly aim for comparable results for all of the group. Thus Sanskrit, for example, should either work for them all or should be laid aside. The same goes for Old English, Celtic, Greek and the other proposed sources. From this standpoint, given the uneven findings of existing etymological endeavour, some at least may well repay re-examination.

Readers' reflections on the pandemic



A doom foretold

Gail-Nina Anderson, Jesmond:

From the French *Ars Bene Moriendi* manuscript, c1470-80 [Marseille, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 89, fol. 63r]...

King Death flourishes his final weapon - a roll of the toilet paper which, in our eagerness to acquire, will cause us to be trampled to death in the non-food aisle of our supermarket of choice.

Anon. (2020)

METAPHOR'S BEEN MET AFORE

Those diseases like Covid nineteen,
The press calls an "enemy unseen".

But something like Covid
When talked of by Ovid

Was a monster both fierce and unclean.



Ley-hunters and The Scillies

One thing Laurence Main, the convener of the Network of Ley Hunters, is especially good at is facilitating moots incorporating extended excursions to places of archaeological interest. Jo Gibson reported back from a trip in June 2019 to the Isles of Scilly, where the NOLH group was guided by Cheryl Straffon of *MeynMamvro*. Included was a trip to the uninhabited islet of Nor-Nour, only accessible at low tide from its neighbour Great Ganilly normally, but the group was transported by boat and rib dinghy to allow time to explore the remains.

Jo writes "We explored the island, then listened to Cheryl about the history, finds and context of the isle in relation to the rest of the Isles of Scilly (formerly all part of one island). The island was inhabited from the Bronze Age up to the Romano-British times; the remains, uncovered during a huge storm in 1962, consist of hut circles and a shrine to the goddess Sillina – dwellings had been repurposed as a shrine. Subsequently eleven Iron Age huts were found. Finds there included over 3000 brooches, jewellery such as bronze rings and bracelets, Gallic figurines and Roman coins, as well as a 'goddess' figure and a Dea Nutrix – many of which can be seen in the museum on St Marys. Some link the name of the goddess Sillina to Sulis of Bath, but she certainly seems to have informed the name of Scilly itself. The island really does have a special feel."



For info on Sillina, see <https://goddess-pages.co.uk/galive/issue-22-home/sillina>

The Stink of Spirit

Before we leave this issue, Mike Haigh shares one more recent journal article of note

The Apishapa river flows from mountains known as Spanish Peaks into the Arkansas River in the US state of Colorado. Before the advent of farming, the area was inhabited by hunters and gatherers who belonged to the Great Basin Desert Culture, which stretched westwards. The people under study spoke one of the Numic group of languages and used the Great Basin Abstract style of rock art on stones. Although this tradition was not homogeneous they seem to have shared a common approach to the supernatural, including shamanism. Following up their identification of a pilgrimage route up the canyon to the Spanish Peaks, Thomas Huffman and Frank Earley made a more detailed study.

Numic speakers believed in a form of supernatural power called *puha*, a life force that flowed like 'invisible water' throughout the universe but was concentrated in animals, plants, rocks, water and various topographical features such as where canyon walls restrict its passage. *Puha* was also associated with lava and volcanic outcrops, concentrated at the highest point – two Spanish Peaks at the source of the Apishapa river resemble volcanoes, so are thought to have been a source of *puha*, which then flowed down the river.

A major obligation laid on local shamans was to conduct at least two pilgrimages to these sources of power. Known as *Puha Po*, one journey was their initiation as a neophyte, while at least one other was to conduct another neophyte in their entry into the mysteries. The pilgrimage was thought to start in the lower canyon, where there are

rock art panels depicting shamans engorged with *puha* and various spirit guides. There were also complex lines, thought to represent journeys of the soul, and straight lines, believed to represent the pilgrimage routes. From here, the pilgrims would travel upvalley towards the source of supernatural power.

The trek passed through a landscape oozing with magical power. Many landforms conforming to the above notions release *puha* and are often found marked with inscribed rocks and other features. At Snake Blakeslee there is a rock with a so-called 'fringe' motif – among other Numic speakers, this is an instruction for pilgrims to stop and contact local spirits, informing them of their mission and gaining permission to carry on. Other inscriptions are found at confluences, S riverbends and rock outcrops. At one 'hogsback' igneous outcrop are a cairn and several small platforms made by scraping grass and soil away to form a level scoop – perhaps for prayers or sleeping nests for dream quests. Despite the hogsback being a *puha* source, there were few petroglyphs there, although some rocks had peck marks. Aware of archaeo-acoustics at ancient sites, the authors tried hitting similar but unmarked rocks to see if they had any unusual sound properties – they didn't, but they did give out an unmistakably sulphurous odour such as is found at hot springs, which the Basin people used for healing and purification. Could striking the rocks have been a way of releasing *puha*?¹

From there the path continues to the peaks. The whole journey would be about 60 miles, with important sites

every 4-6 miles, taking maybe about two weeks to complete, a trek maybe not made by every pilgrim save the shaman.

Note

1. This is an interesting finding. Today we go to great lengths to eliminate or mask bad smells, and only farmers will recognise the stench of the midden as

the smell of fertility. We ponder why an old worn-out boot was concealed to ward off evil, when possibly it was the smell that was apotropaic.

[Thomas N. Huffman and Frank Lee Earley, 'The smell of power: the Apis-hapa pilgrimage trail'. *Time and Mind* 12/4, Dec 2019 pp267-286]

All Things Considered: Reviews

THE LOST BOOK OF THE GRAIL The Sevenfold Path of the Grail and Restoration of the Faery Accord

Caitlin & John Matthews

Inner Traditions, 2019. Pbk, 342pp.
978 1 62055 829 4

Arthurian narratives can typically be taken either as fabulised accounts of a historical warrior society or as a quasi-myth cycle of W Europe whose interspersed tales of wonder and magic hint at a once-and-future mystical world on intimate terms with another reality. The authors have long engaged themselves with the corpus, and here bring an investigative eye to an oft-disregarded mediaeval story, *The Elucidation of the Grail*.

It's a short tale, at just 484 lines, but offers in the authors' eyes an encapsulation of the Grail myth; many potential narrative threads, some unknown from other literature, lead into the Grail's association – and that of those fated to fall within its ambience – with Faerie, and the authors seek to establish how the Wasteland narratives speak of a sundering of this world from faerie, a severance of what they call the Faerie Accord. The loss and finding of the Grail, and the motif of wounded kings, are an integral part of this grand mediaeval narrative that likely stretches back in inspiration to the Iron Age at least. The material as they follow these lines of reasoning is dense and complex – it's a challenge for the reader to keep in mind the many unfamiliar names, and their interrelationships through a series of interlocking tales.

Many episodes they reveal in the

process strike home as insights. A faerie weapon, they suggest, both kills and resurrects (albeit in a different immortal world) – so the wound becomes an insignia of faerie adoption, and by extension underlines the legends that Arthur still lives in these western lands and may just deign to return, healed, when in great need (which puts plagues and world wars in their place, rather, doesn't it?).

A key motif in the *Elucidation*, and implicit in much of Arthuriana, is how the link between faerie and humanity was broken (and the waste Land created) because of the brutal and rapacious acts of men, and the Grail quest becomes a path to restitution and atonement – but should that be through revenge and punishment of the perpetrators, or through adhering to ethical behaviour? Two knights are key – Gawain to restoration, and Perceval to ethical restitution.

There is a constant tension in the mediaeval tales between the archaic tone of the mystical 'faerie' symbolism, and the grafting in of social and Christian values. This relationship can be expressed dialectically through a set of duads – individual (human) *vs.* collective (Faerie), Unseelie Court *vs.* Seelie, men (knights) *vs.* women, acquisitive *vs.* hospitable, transcendent *vs.* immanent, linear/terminal *vs.* cyclical/renewal – in which it is apparent that the Grail was recast in mediaeval Christianity as to preclude the renewal which is implicit in the faerie allusions.

The Matthews' investigation – and this is one of their best – may seem like a journey through mediaeval elite fan-

tasy, but they show that, like any myth told well, there are lessons for today. In this latest viral onslaught, we are faced once more with a waste land to be healed, and questions of values. [JB]

GREENING THE PARANORMAL

The ecology of extraordinary experience

Ed. Jack Hunter

August Night Press, 2019. Pbk, 332pp.
£12.99. 978 1 78677 1094

This book is dedicated to the memory of a regular contributor to *NE*, Brian Taylor. Brian also contributed to this book, which addresses the way our beliefs and values structure the way we experience the world and our place within it.

The emergence of science in the 15th and 16th centuries led to a change in our view of the world. The scientific method, of logic and experiment as the only validation of knowledge, discounted the intuitive and connective approach of indigenous cultures around the world. In particular, the objectification of nature and the other-than-human has led to exploitation for profit, resulting in an escalating ecological crisis. Some of us might remember the TV broadcasts and book about Kogi elders of the S American Sierra, who warned of impending ecological crisis from the evidence of their local eco-system.

Hunter's collection of essays deals with connections, from the community of plants and trees with fungal networks, to human connections with the wider environment and non-human life. It puts human life back into context as part of the ecosystem, rather than as controllers and exploiters seeking mastery. Among the variety of the 17 chapter titles are 'The Anarchist and the Unicorn: On Science, Spirit, and Civilization', 'Liminal Spaces and Liminal Minds', and 'Cryptozoology in a Changing World'.

One section is on liminal spaces, where our awareness is opened beyond the limitations of our senses – a result of such places being treated as sacred for

thousands of years, and/or the piezoelectric effect of tectonic strain on the plates of the earth's crust or smaller faults, as suggested by Paul Devereux in the Foreword.

Brian Taylor, in 'Taking Soul Birds Seriously', writes of his affinity with kingfishers and how his encounters with those birds found a context in widespread mythology around the world and throughout history, associating kingfishers as harbingers of death and the flight of the soul. Brian was also an advocate of animism and connecting with place and non-human life.

This is not a book of 'New Age' fantasies. Most of the contributors have academic qualifications from various disciplines; they also have an openness to unorthodox ways of thinking. [Jo Pacsoo]

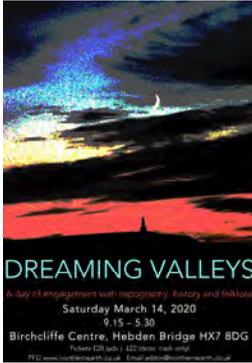
SPELLBOUND

Sophie Page, Marina Wallace, Owen Davies, Malcolm Gaskill and Ceri Houlbrook.

Ashmolean Museum 2018. Pbk, 176pp.
978 1 910807 24 8

In 2018-19 the Ashmolean Museum of Oxford curated an exhibition dedicated to various forms of magic, ritual and witchcraft dating from the Middle Ages until modern times. The book is basically a catalogue of introductory essays about exhibits, some of which were specially loaned for the show and afterwards returned to continue their normal apotropaic function. Most historical, but additional essays discuss modern magical thinking and contemporary artistic engagements with such practices.

The essays are clear, concise, academically reliable but clearly written for the interested public, following the exhibition themes – love magic, protection of dwellings, and witchcraft. A souvenir for those who went to the exhibition or a good indirect experience of it for those who couldn't make it, it stands on its own as an introduction to apotropaics. [Mike Haigh]



Dreaming Valleys

*Engagements with history,
topography and folklore*

*An alt-antiquarian,
psychogeographical,
weird and successful
sort of day...*

DREAMING VALLEYS

A day of engagement with topography, history and folklore

Saturday March 14, 2020

9.15 - 5.30

Birchcliffe Centre, Hebden Bridge HX7 8DG

Tickets £20 (adv.) £22 (door, cash only)

FFD www.northernearth.co.uk Email editor@northernearth.co.uk



With the Corona Virus pandemic sweeping the pandemic as spring came on, each of the events listed in last issue's Events page was cancelled one by one, with of course no idea of when postponed events might be able to take place. So there really seemed little point in having any events listings for the time being – not even a traditional event, as it's quite likely that many this year will have a hiatus in their continuity. Perhaps there will be something to relate when we are able to produce a hard-copy magazine again..

So let us tell you a bit about the event that NE managed to squeeze in just before the pandemic caution took hold – *Dreaming Valleys*, held in Hebden Bridge on March 14. We had, when planning last year, aimed to hold the event on March 21 – in the event, it was fortunate that that date was unavailable; as March 14 approached, and restrictions across the world picked up pace, it was apparent that this would be the last feasible weekend on which such an event could be held, and so it proved.

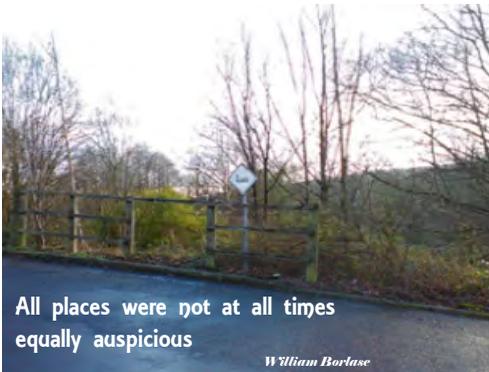
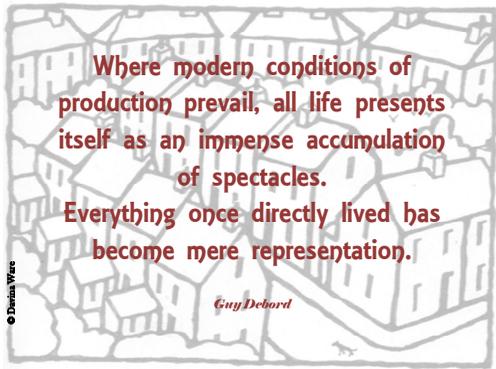
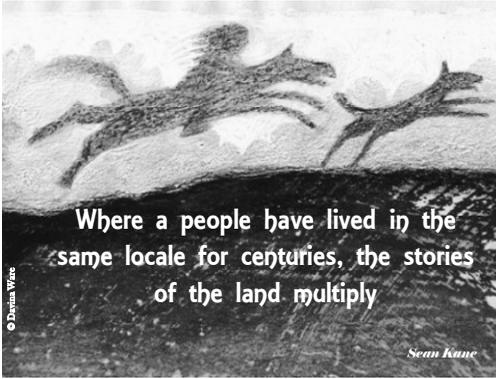
Some ticket-holders were unable to make it, of course, in the circumstances, and while we were unable to offer refunds we were able to offer them complimentary subscriptions – so to some of those new readers, we extend a welcome and hope you will enjoy us when the magazine materialises.

The event was held in the spacious auditorium of The Birchcliffe Centre, a converted Baptist chapel, so there was plenty of opportunity to observe appropriate 'social distancing'.

The day was a riff on the theme of 'deep topography', a more rural offshoot of psychogeography that in our interpretation encompasses alternative ways of engaging with landscape, including history, folklore and topology. Our starting point was that in contemporary society, place and landscape often seem to be treated as a passive backdrop – at best a canvas or resource for self-assertion such as tourism or 'active leisure', while its role in our personal lives often only becomes apparent retroactively, as human-centred nostalgia or biography. Yet we hold that place is the foundation of culture from prehistory to the present, continually affecting our lives both socially and individually. Our presenters aimed to convey place and land as an active presence through different perspectives and media.

For a time it was touch and go whether we could go ahead with the event, but in the end, around 70 people attended. Had it not been for the pandemic it might have been many more – what a pity that so many had to miss it.

It went well, but not entirely smoothly – the hall's digital projector refused to work, and an emergency run



weeks of dull weather, it shone in through side windows and made the room a bit too bright for the screen! We understand these issues are being addressed by The Birchcliffe Centre, which is otherwise an excellent and spacious venue.

Non-technically, we had a blow when we learned that Dr Jennie Bailey was unable to join us because she had been sentenced to social isolation – she rose to the occasion and we enjoyed her disembodied presence with a lively audio Powerpoint presentation – it takes a lot to keep a psychogeographer down!

To deal with viral risks as far as possible, we took steps to ensure the vegan lunches – sourced mostly from Saker, a local independent bakery – were served individually packed, and urged attendees to 'keep their distance' (at that time the recommended distance was 1 metre) as they moved around the hall.

It's uncertain whether the distancing message had really settled into awareness by then, because one of the pleasures of any event like this is to talk with other attendees, and by the lunch break discussions were breaking out all over the hall. What I found particularly satisfying was that I knew several of the faces in the audience and could see that they were drawn from a variety of in-

terest constituencies – local historians, alt-antiquarians, folklorists, geographers, geologists, psychogeographers and a variety of creatives; to see those different constituencies talking and mingling through the day was like the realisation of a dream I'd pursued throughout my years as a folklorist and alt-antiquarian!

terest constituencies – local historians, alt-antiquarians, folklorists, geographers, geologists, psychogeographers and a variety of creatives; to see those different constituencies talking and mingling through the day was like the realisation of a dream I'd pursued throughout my years as a folklorist and alt-antiquarian!

Will we do another? Maybe... if there's someone out there who'd like to take the reins of organisation off me, though! Applications invited...



Andy Roberts

Dreaming Valleys: The schedule

FOOTFALL

Commemorating Hardcastle Crag's survival

This short film by the National Trust and 509 Arts (shown with their kind permission) commemorates an event held in 2019 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the final victory of public protest against the submersion of the valley for a reservoir. A brief introduction by John Billingsley with the assistance of Alan Fowler set the scene of how three attempts in 1934, 1948 and 1969 were defeated by a public campaign strongly mobilised by industrial workers from neighbouring textile towns.

John Billingsley

STOODLEY PIKE

The underlying narrative

John Billingsley is a local historian and folklorist whose home looks out towards Stoodley Pike. The history and traditions of the monument and the land it stands on are never far from his mind, and here he suggested that the implication of local folklore is that

there's more to the headland that meets the eye – hollow hills, an omphalos?

Alison Cooper

GEOGRAPHY OF GRIEF

Pilgrimage through the Pennines

The ritual of travelling carved-out roads to her grandparents' house was intensely engrained over a 34-year period; the yearning to embrace the route without the speed and confinement of a vehicle grew stronger, and after the death of her Grandma, Alison (also known as the musician Magpahi) took this ritual for on a four-day walking pilgrimage, recalled in photography, song, flora and fauna.

Magpahi: <https://youtu.be/qELtHvMMZ9I>

Jennie Bailey

AN ARTERY TO A HEART

Mapping the Rochdale Canal

This paper addressed the cultural geographies of the Rochdale Canal from Sowerby Bridge to Manchester, exploring the canal's histories, flora and fauna, and how it is intertwined in many different past, present, and possible futures.

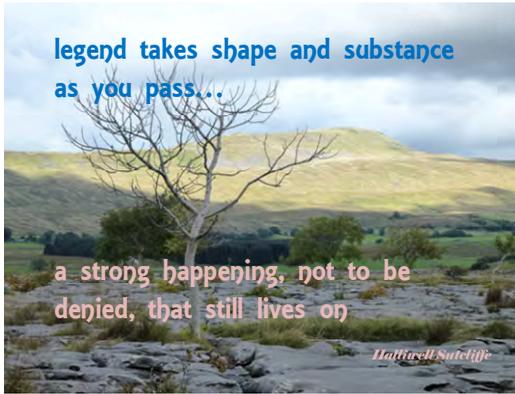
Dr Jen is a specialist in Lancashire folklore with a particular focus on the folklore, literary geographies, and weird histories of Rochdale.

Mark Valentine

NORTHERN SOUL

Lost Weird Writers of the North

There is a rich source of strange literature from writers with strong Northern links, and it's often been ignored. This talk offers brief introductions to several 20th-century Yorkshire writers who worked in the field of the weird but are largely forgotten today. Away from the clichés of Northern grit and taciturnity, the talk uncovers a richly fantastical realm of high imagination and wonderful, strange beauty, the lost hauntology of the North.



legend takes shape and substance
as you pass...

a strong happening, not to be
denied, that still lives on

Mattarrell Sutcliffe

Andy Roberts

THE DEMON IN THE VALLEY?

Alan Garner, Thursbitch

& the fiction of fact

The valley of Thursbitch in the Cheshire Pennines has, over the centuries, become the focus of a wide range of folklore connected to its social history, topography and ancient monuments. Latterly, author Alan Garner has drawn these elements together with his own experiences and spun them into an astonishing work of fiction – *Thursbitch* – which has developed the folklore and psychogeography of the valley.

Kelly Starling

DANCING WITH GHOSTS

Journeys to Robinwood Mill

Robinwood Mill sits at a narrow *bottleneck* on the A646 between Todmorden and Burnley. There's a sense of compression as you enter this passageway and encounter the scale of 19th-century industrial architecture set against the looming sides of a ravine.

This is a thin place where things get snagged, caught-up, accumulate and sometimes pass through. *Bottleneck* is a term for slowdown in systems and process flows. Time seems to be the thing that gets snagged here. This presentation drew on family history, industrial music and the practice of walking to

celebrate slowdown and the value of pausing – *bottleneck* as pause, a waiting for something to happen.

Mark Williamson,

aka Spaceship

OUTCROPS

Focussing on a series of sandstone outcrops above the West Yorkshire town of Todmorden, *Outcrops* is an audio exploration of the geological history of the valley. Each track was created to invoke a particular phase of that history – the interbedded sandstones and siltstones, the Yorkshire coal measures and finally glaciation. The accompanying film aimed to connect this history with some of the more modern landscape features and the general experience of becoming immersed in deep time. The performance was prefaced by an introduction summarising the day.

www.forged-river.com

<https://wiaiwy.bandcamp.com/album/outcrops>

Steve Goldman

The Society for the Preservation of Boring Grid Squares

Throughout the day, attendees could speak to Steve as representative of the SPBGS. Launched at the 4th World Congress of Psychogeography (4WCOP) in Huddersfield in 2019, the Society speaks up for the disregarded squares of the Ordnance Survey – those bereft of features that cry for attention. Increasing levels of mapping detail threaten the existence of these extraordinarily humble landscapes – can we stand by idly while this occurs around us?

Davina Ware & volunteers

Finally, a big shout-out to our illustrator Davina, who did the posters, and to our team of volunteers who coped with lunches and everything else. ♥♥♥

NE LISTINGS

Magazines, websites & groups of interest

APOTROPAIOS Folk magic house protection. www.apotropaios.co.uk

BRITISH SOCIETY OF DOWSERS

www.britishdowers.org

CAERDROIA 53 Thundersley Grove, Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex SS7 3EB. Labyrinths, mazes, etc. [annual £8 UK, £12 EU /\$20 US/elsewhere]

CENTRE FOR FORTEAN ZOOLOGY

www.cfz.org.uk

DORSET EARTH MYSTERIES GROUP Dave Shead. 07977 144147. <http://dorsetmysteries.org/>

ENVIRONMENTAL & ARCHITECTURAL PHENOMENOLOGY NEWSLETTER

D. Seamon, Architecture Dept, 211 Seaton Hall, Kansas State Univ., Manhattan, KS 66506, USA [\$12 (3) outside USA (\$ only):

\$c=David Seamon/EAP]

FOLKLORE FRONTIERS: 5 Egton Drive, Seaton Carew, Hartlepool, Cleveland TS25 2AT. [£7.50(3) or £5(2) etc: £c=P.Screeton]

FOLKLORE SOCIETY Warburg Institute, Warburg Sq, London WC1H 0AB. www.folklore-society.com

FORTEAN TIMES: Subs from Dovetail Services, 800 Guillat Ave, Kent Science Park, Sittingbourne ME9 8GU. FFD 0844 844 0049. See www.forteantimes.com for offers

GATEKEEPER TRUST Non-denominational pilgrimage. <http://gatekeeper.org.uk>

JOHN MICHELL NETWORK www.john-michell-network.org

THE MEGALITHIC PORTAL Website and database for megalithic sites worldwide. www.megalithic.co.uk

MEYN MAMVRO Whitewaves, Boscaswell Village, Pendeen, Penzance TR19 7EP. 01736-787186. editor@meynmamvro.co.uk. www.meynmamvro.co.uk [£11.00 (3)/£3.70*].

THE MODERN ANTIQUARIAN <http://www.themodernantiquarian.com>

MUSEUM OF WITCHCRAFT Boscastle, Cornwall. www.museumofwitchcraft.com

MYTHO GEOGRAPHY

www.triarchypress.net/mythogeography.html

NETWORK OF LEY HUNTERS (NOLH) L

Main, 9 Mawddwy Cottages, Minllyn, Dinas Mawddwy, Machynlleth SY20 9LW Newsletter. [£15(4); £25 overseas]

THE NORTHERN ANTIQUARIAN <https://megalithix.wordpress.com/>

RIDINGS DOWSERS

www.ridingsdowers.co.uk.

RILKO JOURNAL: Research Into Lost Knowledge Org. www.rilko.net. info@rilko.net [£19/£24 overseas (2)]

SACRED SITES INTERNATIONAL 1442A Walnut St. #330, Berkeley, California 94709, USA. Int'l site protection. www.sacred-sites.org. sacredsitel@gmail.com.

SOCIETY OF LEY HUNTERS (SOL) Adrian Hyde, 7 Mildmay Rd, Romford, Essex RM7 7DA. + Newsletter, Meetings.

www.leyhunter.co.uk. leyhunter@leyhunters.co.uk. [£15(4)/£4 inc p&p]

TEMENOS ACADEMY Events (London) related to sacred traditions of East & West. www.temenosacademy.org

TIME & MIND. Journal of Archaeology, Consciousness & Culture. <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rtam20/current>

TOUCHSTONE: 1 St Paul's Tce., Easton, Wells, Somerset BA5 1DX. Surrey Earth Mysteries [£2(4)/-]

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