

THE JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF THE UNEXPLAINED

PURSUIT

'SCIENCE IS THE PURSUIT OF THE UNEXPLAINED'

SPONTANEOUS
HUMAN
COMBUSTION



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SOCIETY FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF THE UNEXPLAINED

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'SCIENCE IS THE PURSUIT OF THE UNEXPLAINED'

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THE JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY
FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF THE UNEXPLAINED

FOUNDED BY IVAN T. SANDERSON

Devoted to the Investigation of "Things" that are Customarily Discounted

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EDITORIAL

There seems to be concern again about a problem confronting most or all of the major UFO study-groups in this country. To many observers, the problem appears that too much precious time is being wasted through competition, politicking and jealousy between groups at the sacrifice of objective UFO investigation and research.

UFO study-groups have appeared and disappeared by the score since the 'flying saucers' excitement began in 1947. Naturally, a lack of organization, poor exchange of data, and insufficient funding have contributed to the collapse of many groups. UFO-study groups (as opposed to the more easily accepted community or civic organizations) however, have always had other characteristics that tend to make them outsiders — the public ridicule involved in chasing things that cannot or perhaps do not want to be caught; the fantastic and incredible contactee stories in those early years often mockingly reported by the media; and the continued official cold shoulder on the subject of UFOs by our federal government.

According to many ufologists, who are often obsessed with the belief that at least one government agency is monitoring the activities of, or has infiltrated one or all of the major UFO-study groups, the federal government knows far more about UFOs than it admits. This suspicion may very well be correct — especially if our government feels it may become knowledgeable enough to be able to duplicate UFOs at a future date or even now may have that capability and therefore needs, for reasons of national security, to conceal the fact from the public. The leader of one UFO group recently confided to me that he suspects that if his group "gets too close to the truth about UFOs the government will step in and break it up." If taken seriously, this idea might be a reasonable excuse for organizational incompetence; nevertheless, any group trying to function with a fear (real or imaginary) of this proportion has one strike against it from the start.

Perhaps a less obvious threat to the existence of UFO-study groups is the possibility of capturing a UFO, or at least the discovery of the true nature of the beast. This means UFO groups have the dubious inherent potential of self-destructing upon reaching their goal. This possibility, to those whose sustenance depends upon leading a UFO group, may contribute (at least subconsciously) to the apprehension that another group will get 'there' first — and for either group it would be too soon.

Generally, it is not easy to pinpoint the single cause of a problem when so many variables are involved. No two UFO groups operate the same way. If the problem is as threatening as some critics insist, then we may assume that as long as the investigation of them is profitable to the concerned respective groups — each having different methods, motives and talents, then intra-group problems, varying proportionally in size and direction, will continue to exist.

By comparison, Fortean organizations, though far fewer in number than UFO-study groups, have similar and occasionally identical characteristics. SITU, for example, covers the wide scope of unexplained phenomena by specializing in dozens of subjects and collecting data for future use on hundreds more. It is our experience that experts on Fortean are much rarer to find than experts or enthusiasts on a single subject — such as ufology. SITU communicates with (and has as members) a majority of the known experts on Fortean in this country. This is an important factor of which we are not only continually cognizant but of which we are truly proud as well. We hope they share with us a mutual respect and will share our efforts, as expressed in this journal, toward mutual cooperation.

It has been suggested that we enlarge our audience and readership by making ourselves better known nationally and internationally. This suggestion, now being reviewed by our Governing Board, would be advantageous if we were thereby able to achieve significant funding for investigations. If in the process of doing so, however, the costs of expanding our facilities, etc., should become larger than the income derived therefrom, then SITU's existence would become threatened and we could perhaps find ourselves beset with problems similar to those now encountered by the UFO-study groups. In addition, there are other problems, less obvious but also important, to consider. Perhaps it is a symptom of our times, but success is too often measured by the amount of sales rather than the quality of the product.

We must also examine the value of SITU to our members and others. The contributors to our journal are vital in our consideration of our future plans. One purpose of *PURSUIT* is to help and encourage writers since it is they and other Fortean researchers who compose one of the more fundamental aspects of our organization. By viewing their feelings we can perhaps gain a better perspective of SITU as a whole.

Approaching this matter with introspection, we observe that Forteans are generally individualistic by nature. They are usually hypersensitive to anything referring to their work, since in their endeavors to search for the truth they have become accustomed to overlooking ridicule — a necessary attitude for those invaders of areas which are beyond the bounds set by orthodox science. They often exhaust themselves physically, emotionally and financially in their dogged pursuit of positive evidence. Forteans are often guardedly suspicious to the extremes of paranoia. Individualists, if they may be so described, they may often consider social norms, family life and environment as distractions. I would not attempt nor is it necessary to discuss here the reasons for this; but since this characteristic is often a dominant one in the make-up of a Fortean, we as an organization feel that we can be useful in helping them to express themselves through the pages of our journal.

Fortean investigation (like any other) demands a great deal of time and effort before success is to be achieved. Some researchers express discouragement and even depression at failing to see significant results after long hours of strenuous effort. For these people we feel a particular sense of responsibility. What is sometimes forgotten by them is that each effort is pointed toward a common goal. It is regrettable to learn of someone whose efforts have gone unappreciated, unrecognized, or been misunderstood. Ideally, we might help to reestablish them as best we could.

Through experience, we have found that there are also those who would re-construct SITU to their own — not SITU's — best interests. Generally, we find that such detractors either do not understand our established standards, or would intentionally use SITU for their own personal gain. Time could be better spent encouraging Fortean research for the *mutual* benefit of both the Fortean organization and the Fortean.

SITU has the potential to skyrocket in growth and membership. In considering a decisive step in this direction, however, we must cautiously review other organizations which have attempted the same thing without achieving the desired end results.

We are dedicated to our members — asking no more of them than we can justly return. Membership in SITU means more than just 'joining.' It is an offer to Forteans and others to express themselves about their research, and to be recognized for what they have to say concerning mutual interests. Our high rate of annual renewal is a continued vote of confidence. As we continue to improve *Pursuit* we feel our consistent rate of growth and improvement will continue to increase. We shall endeavor to offer a quality product in exchange for meaningful membership support. May we all try to ride above the many-faceted problems that will continue to arise in the Fortean's relationship with the world(s) around him.

Robert C. Warth

THE FLAMING FATE OF DR. JOHN IRVING BENTLEY

By Larry E. Arnold

"That was the oddest thing you ever seen!"
—Deputy Coroner John Dec, on the Bentley case (1).

* * *

In the bucolic community of Coudersport, county seat of Pennsylvania's northern tier county of Potter ("God's country", as bumper stickers proclaim), the tempo of life is measured. The pace unhurried, the routine of another walking work-day was beginning for Don E. Gosnell, a meter reader for the North Penn Gas Company. This day, December 5, 1966, he would begin his duties in the bone-chilling cold characteristic of early winter here — but more than low temperatures were soon to send chills through his body.

He opened the front door of 403 North Main Street at 9:05 a.m. and "yelled a greeting" to Dr. J. Irving Bentley, tenant on the building's first floor. "There was no answer," reminisced Gosnell (2), thinking this unusual. He nevertheless continued through the hall corridor and descended to the basement. There, on his way to the gas meter, he sensed more of what he smelled upon entering the structure: a "light-blue smoke of unusual odor. . . like that of starting up a new heating system (an oil film burning), somewhat sweet." (2) In a corner of the dirt-floored basement was a pile of ash, approximately 14" in diameter and peaking to 5" high; nonchalantly, whether out of curiosity or from habit by being a fireman, he kicked and scattered the mound.

He returned upstairs, to look in on the semi-invalid doctor; light-blue smoke issued from the apartment's living/bed room. Gosnell entered and peered into the adjoining bathroom (see Fig. 1). "A hole about two-and-a-half feet wide and no longer than four feet had burned through the bathroom floor," he found, "exposing pipes leading to the lavatory and running across the ceiling of the basement." (3,1) Tangent to this hole he saw a "browned leg from the knee down — like that of a mannequin; . . . I didn't look further!" he recalled (2). Horrified by his realization, Gosnell bolted from the death room, his leisurely pace altered as he "ran with a flash" down the street ("without looking either way for traffic," he remembers) and into the gas company's office. "Dr. Bentley burnt up!" he shouted to his co-workers (2). Coudersport had lost a physician, but would gain a mystery.

"I can still remember what I saw as plain as can be — and after I realized what I saw they couldn't pull me back in there with a D-8 (a bulldozer)!" exclaimed Gosnell nine years after his discovery. "They (his colleagues) said I was white as a ghost; what bothered me most was what I didn't find!" (2)

What wasn't found, in essence, was Dr. Bentley (at least in an easily recognizable form). John Dec, then Deputy Coroner for Potter County, described the

remains: "All I found was a knee joint, which was atop a post in the basement," the lower leg with its foot on the bathroom floor, and the now-scattered ashes six feet below (1). Carl M. McCloud was an involved witness: "I helped the undertaker pick up the remains and we put it in a rubber bag and carried it to the car. I would say there wasn't much of him remaining." (5) Two sources mentioned Bentley's skull being intact (4,75; 5), but this was denied by all others interviewed.

FIRE DEPARTMENT CALLED

The Fire Department was called, and Fire Chief John E. Pekarski's men responded. Fireman Fred Sallade, perhaps the first to arrive, recalled: "I was told not to go in." (9) There was no fire to fight. Paul C. Toombs, arriving soon after the initial discovery, stated seeing "just smoldering — no sparks that I recall." (6) And Gosnell himself saw "no fire whatsoever . . . embers only around the hole." (2) Said Mrs. John Dec: "It's funny how one can burn up so completely, and yet not burn the house down!" (7)

"Funny" indeed; and well worth investigating. Out went the usual mass of correspondence seeking assistance and information, which generated the accustomed lack of replies. A telephone call to John Dec revealed he refused to provide any written response; "But you can come and look and decide for yourself what you think happened," he proposed (10). And so we accepted his invitation — to piece together for ourself the details of the doctor's death.

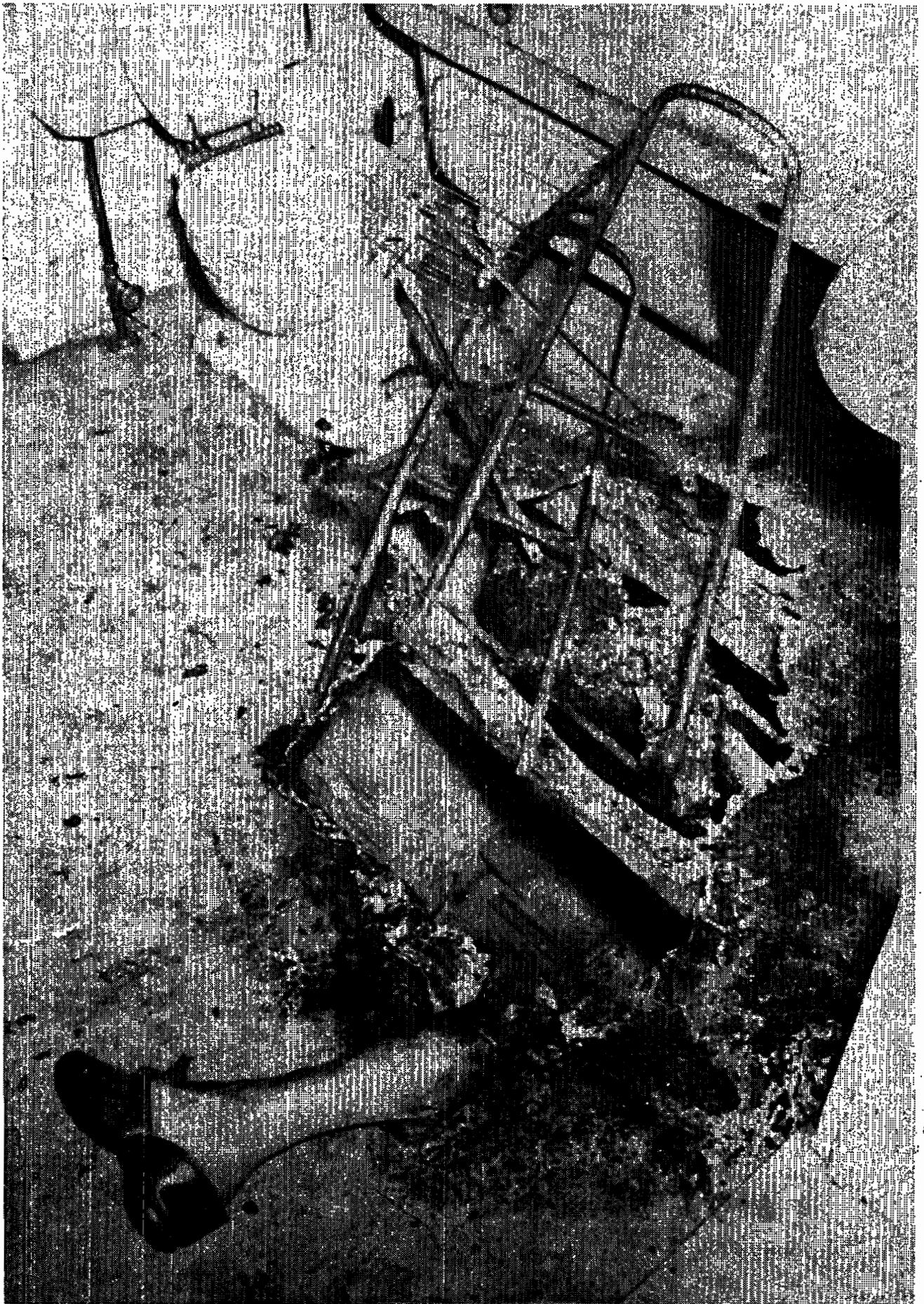
Mr. Dec and his wife graciously welcomed us and our research assistant, and generously donated their efforts toward our quest. Mr. Currin, curator of the Historical Society of Potter County, opened his archives specially for us to obtain the pertinent newspaper article, from which we learned that:

Dr. Bentley (had) suffered a broken hip six years ago, and his left leg was without feeling. He made his way about with the aid of a "walker" to which was attached a bicycle-type basket. (3)

Because of this state the doctor was attended by friends, as he had done for others during his decades of service to the town. Mr. and Mrs. Steven Nicholson had so visited Dr. Bentley on the 4th of December, departing around 9 p.m. that Sunday evening. They were the last people to see him alive.

Sometime during the winter's darkness, tragedy struck:

The aged physician had made a heroic effort to save his own life. Apparently a live ash from his pipe had fallen on his night clothes, or perhaps it was the spark from a barn-burner type of match he used. He may have dozed off in his bedroom chair. His pipe was carefully placed in a stand beside it.



Chances are when he awoke his clothing, a nightgown and housecoat were ablaze. Burned spots appear on the rug between his chair and the door of the bathroom adjoining his bedroom.

...His first thought must have been to reach water. His walker was found tipped over, the top rim against the bathtub and the basket against the toilet. In the toilet were the broken remains of what appeared to be a water pitcher. Before the physician collapsed, or fell, he had managed to remove his burning robe, found smoldering in the tub (3,1)

John Dec's memory followed this same pattern, with differences:

...and as he dozed off the pipe must have flipped over and lighted his clothes — because there are no traces of where he walked across the room (from the bedroom to the bathroom). And that's where he reached for the water, where he slumped — that's why there's a hole in the floor. (1)

At the age of 92, the physician lacked a steady hand; according to *The Potter Enterprise*, "Mr. Dec was told that Dr. Bentley had been quite a smoker and his clothes were dotted with burned spots from previous incidents." (3,1) So it is possible that, as Dec noted in 1966, "he was smoking pipe and its tobacco (sic) was emptied fell into his lap," igniting the robe and resulting in the doctor's unsuccessful 'dash' for life.

If one accepts the newspaper account of the "carefully placed" pipe, however, it seems unreasonable to credit the doctor (his robe beginning to blaze) with neatly resetting his tobacco holder. We asked Don Gosnell if he could clarify this contradiction. He replied: "I won't say there's a pipe — because I didn't see any. I'm telling you only what I saw, not what I *think* happened." (2) An admirable approach — for we don't care to what extent a writer speculates as long as he does it with the facts, for on any other basis all postulation is worthless — but one that did not resolve this dilemma.

If the pipe *was* in place; the "barn-burner type of match" may be to blame: the doctor striking it before reaching for his pipe, but dropping the miniature torch on his lap in a fatal error. Even a pipe's misplaced ember could have fallen unnoticed as the physician prepared to doze, smoldering on the garment until erupting. But if the doctor's clothing became thus inflamed, why did he not remove the robe in the living/bed room rather than hobble with his walker to a source of water to quench an intensifying fire? Surely his education made him aware that (1) the longer one is enveloped in flames the less chance there is for survival, and (2) movement through

air fans a fire's intensity. The reconstructed 'actions' of Dr. Bentley seem incompatible with his medical training.

Foul play was considered, but:

An extensive two-day investigation by Deputy Coroner John Dec was completed last night (Dec. 6). Mr. Dec said, "I'm satisfied it was accidental." Dr. Herman C. Mosch, Coroner, agreed: "There was no evidence of any outside influence. . . . No suicide. It was accidental." (8) The remote chance that the ashes found did not represent Bentley's body was ruled out by Dec: "Well, if he's living you produce the body! Where is he? Besides, he was an old man anyway." (1)

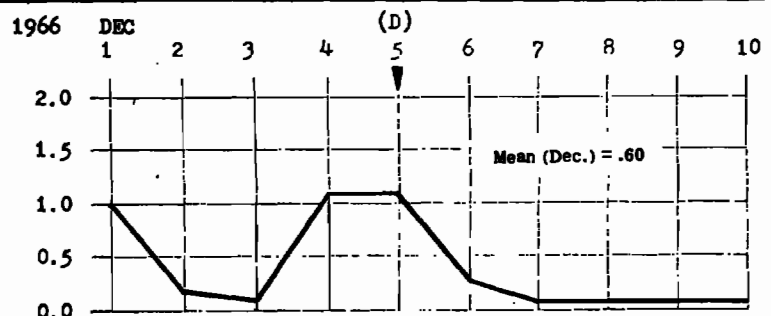
There's another possibility, one apparently not considered by any of the previous investigators: that Dr. Bentley became enveloped in flames, in situ, in his bathroom. If one accepts Dec's testimony that "no traces" of fire were found in the living/bedroom, and "there was no evidence of flame, or nothing, anywhere but on the bathroom's floor — just a light-blue smoke" (1), then it is reasonable to believe that the doctor, in responding to a 'call of nature', so to speak, journeyed the short distance to the toilet; there, while still supported by the walker, he or his clothes mysteriously and suddenly began to burn. Perhaps thinking the source to be his robe, he managed to shed it; yet his body continued to burn — burn with such violence that a crematorium could not duplicate the same degree of destruction (11). As his body collapsed, it could have tipped the walker against the pitcher sitting on the water tank, the vase breaking on impact inside the toilet bowl. Dr. Bentley continued to cremate, blackening but not blistering the paint on the bathtub only inches away, coating the window with a sooty film (still to be seen nine years later), and as Fireman Fred Sallade recollected, "making a hole through the floor; and that was all." (9)

Pastor Lewis, present owner of the Bentley house, agreed to show us the scene being discussed. Although remodeling had covered the hole, in the basement could still be seen the charred rafters. Only three beams, on 16" centers, were burned, with only the center beam evidencing a large degree of damage. The area confined by these beams through which the doctor physically fell was approximately six square feet. Said Sallade: "It was mystifying!" (9)

A Coroner's Certificate of Death, as filed in Pennsylvania or any other state, is to provide an accurate record and evaluation of a person's physical transition; to this document we turned for answers to the Bentley mystery. The certificate provided this information:

Fig. 1 (opposite): The scene of Dr. J. Irving Bentley's combustion, December 5, 1966, in Coudersport, Pennsylvania. His incineration, with no significant damage to surrounding objects, was "99%" complete and occurred within a maximum of 12 hours. Only one foot and lower leg remained, remainder burned hole through floor; no other damage. (Courtesy of William Fish).

Fig. 2 (right): The Earth's geomagnetic variations for the period involving Dr. Bentley's cremation.



Immediate cause of death: "asphyxiation and 90% burning of body."

Interval between onset and death: "½ hr."

Estimated time of death: 5 a.m. EST."

Mode of disposal: "Burial"

Was an autopsy performed? "Yes."

How asphyxiation could have been determined as the cause of death, we do not know; no one was present at the incident, and half a leg doesn't give much evidence to stand on (pardon the 'pun'). The "burning of the body" — more precisely, the *disintegration* of the body — contributed to death, but what caused the voracious flames (the ultimate cause of death)? And what of the "90%"? "A knee and one part of the leg was left," said Dec emphatically; "I wrote down 90% (missing) on the Coroner's report, but I believe it was more like 98%. ... As a matter of fact, I'd call it 99%" (1)

No one could offer a reason for this selection of a time of death; it had to occur between 9 p.m. on December 4 and 9:05 a.m. on December 5, but "5 AM" remained an 'educated' guess. The "½ hr." duration for destruction was glaringly conspicuous: lungs exposed to flame would not need thirty minutes to suffocate their owner. "It takes 3 to 6 hrs. for body to smolder in fire," wrote Dec in the report's notes (basing that time on the burning clothes theory); yet the certificate stated only one-half hour had elapsed — a time absolutely impossible (according to present medical knowledge) for combustion of any intensity to produce such complete physiological disintegration!

AUTOPSY "PERFORMED"

On seeing that an autopsy was allegedly performed, our first reaction (albeit quite optimistic) reflected hope that the findings may provide a clue for the true cause of death. According to the newspaper, "Coroner Herman C. Mosch determined in an autopsy yesterday afternoon (Dec. 6) that Dr. Bentley had not suffered a skull injury." (3,1) How this was deduced, when the skull supposedly was destroyed, must be a miracle of modern medicine. (Fig. 1 shows an ovoid mass upon a basement water pipe, beneath the walker's basket support; presumed to be the doctor's head. Its location may account for the claims of "no skull" — thus demonstrating how a photograph can clarify conflicting verbal testimony — but the degree of its destruction is immense.)

Dec expressed incredulity at our request for the autopsy report. On checking the death certificate with its mention of autopsy, though, Dec confided: "From a coroner's standpoint, that's \$150. ... *There's nothing to autopsy!* Ashes, yes! But how do you do that?" Whatever, Dr. Mosch assured us, there was "no chemical analysis of ashen tissue made." (8)

The physical remains of Dr. Bentley were buried, so said the death certificate. Dec commented sarcastically: "I don't know how they can bury anything like that — one leg!" (1) But buried his ashes were; a marker in the West Hill Cemetery, Galetton, Potter County, marks Bentley's interment. Interestingly, the box labeled "Cremation" on the death certificate was not checked — could not be

checked, because the 'body' was found in a more-reduced state than can be accomplished under controlled conditions (of a nature *certainly* not present in the Bentley household).

Perhaps one should treat cautiously pronouncements made by official documents —

Other claims to reality should be suspect; too — especially when inconsistencies to rationality arise. During our interview with Mr. Dec, he mentioned another case of incineration that he encountered: a Volkswagen crash with flaming gasoline spewed upon its three youthful male occupants. The heat of the ensuing inferno was so intense that no attempt could be made to extricate the engulfed lads. Incineration was so complete that no one, save the boys' mothers, could make identification — a situation which deeply perplexed Dec, and which could have led to discussion of genetic and cellular recognition. But the point here is this: each one's severely charred body was still easily recognizable as humanoid; rib cage, arms, neck, teeth and skull all quite distinguishable. Dr. Bentley, however, without the aid of gasoline or other suspected accelerant, managed a far more dramatic destruction. How?

Mr. Dec offered his solution:

...the clothing set afire — clothing *will* burn you up. It burnt like a candle; human being, the same way. It's hard to believe it! . . . The house was tight; didn't get no oxygen. so how in the world—? And that's what puzzled all of us: How could you burn with the house closed like that, no air inside? So it must have consumed whatever air was in there — just smotherin'. (1)

If so, then what caused such a massive reduction of Bentley's body — smoldering flames would not generate the necessary thermal level (for example, in the bathtub the robe, having a lower kindling point than a corpse, was found largely intact); why was not Gosnell acutely aware of the lack of oxygen when he entered the doctor's apartment; and why did Dec detect a "sweet odor, like perfume" (1) in the physician's rooms, rather than the noxious stench characteristic of smoldering human flesh?

As Gosnell deduced: "They've got their theory — and that's all they're promoting." (2) Theories are fine, even necessary for the advancement of knowledge; but theories, regardless of how speculative, must be reasonable. As Robert Lyman wrote about Dr. Bentley:

The town, including a reporter, . . . reasoned that the doctor's clothing had caught on fire and that had caused his death. They did not stop to think that any amount of cloth could not cremate a living person. Such a fire could kill a person but it could not reduce the body to ashes. (4, 75)

The evidence sifted, the accounts weighed; and one comes to the conclusion that Don Gosnell reached about the Bentley burning: "So bewildering!" (2) We see two alternatives; that

(1) Dr. Bentley experienced Preternatural Combustibility. ("Preternatural combustibility implies . . . that a spark or a minute flame is necessary to ignite the body which then undergoes incineration." [12, 793]) Why then did his body burn up this December night when many times before he dropped hot ashes (at

least) upon his clothing? The triggering mechanism for his physiology acquiring an increased inflammability would still have to be considered.

(2) Dr. Bentley suffered Spontaneous Human Combustion. ("Spontaneous Human Combustion is that phenomenon wherein the body takes fire without an outside source of heat and is rapidly reduced to a handful of greasy ashes. Paradoxically, inanimate objects nearby escape relatively unharmed." [12, 793])

The event being presented certainly fits the criteria for the latter alternative. But the initiating force must still be isolated. Possibly the cause of Dr. Bentley's internal appearing incineration was external to his body — in the Earth's upper atmosphere. Government agencies have maintained data designating geomagnetic disturbances indicating "the arithmetic mean of the subjective classification by all observatories of each day's magnetic activity on a scale of 0 (quiet) to storm (2)." (13) Livingston Gearhart found that "the onset of magnetic storms coincides with much human-related foretelling. . . . SHC lends itself particularly well (to) the hypothesis that geomagnetic disturbances trigger such events." (14, 39) This writer's own research has revealed an interesting coincidence between periods of severe magnetic flux and mysterious fires. The 1966 global geomagnetic pattern shows peaks of 1.1 on December 4 and 5 (see Fig. 2), the latter designated in the reference as a "disturbed day" (D). Although this is not approaching the severe storm level of 2.0, the mean for December, 1966 was 0.60, a low value; hence, a peaking to 1.1 could have been sufficient to cause imbalance and disruption within Bentley's physiology (which was adjusted to a lower energy level). It must also be stressed that these figures represent global averages — and a localized area (Coudersport, for example) could well have experienced a 2.0 reading.

This raises the fascinating prospect for an interrelationship between human, terrestrial and probably cosmic energy patterns — a relationship for which there is not a little evidence (when an exploration for such correlation is made). Medicine will (or should) be challenged to broaden its study of influences on human health — or death.

EPITAPH

The Potter Enterprise provided this epitaph for its long-serving physician, Dr. Bentley:

His tragic end was a contradiction of his life's greatest satisfaction — "to have helped more than 2000 babies into the world. And, when the time came, to have helped an old person out of it as painlessly as possible." (3,1)

His demise may not have been contradictory to his life's purpose; evaluation of similar cases of human combustion reveals the victims often expired in apparent peace, with minimal signs of anguish. Dr. Bentley may very well have likewise experienced a painless, if unexpected, transition.

Whatever his emotion, Dr. Bentley joined a select group of humans (15) who burn up and drop through the

floor in order to enter another realm of existence. And science was presented with an enigma it must one day explain.

(Excerpted from the chapter "I Thought I'd Just Drop In—" from the writer's forthcoming book *Ablaze! The Case for, and Cases of Spontaneous Human Combustions.*)

Footnotes

- (1) Dec, John, personal interchange; January 31, 1976.
- (2) Gosnell, Don E., personal interchange; January 31, 1976.
- (3) "Charred Remains of Aged Physician Found by Meter Reader — Doctor Burns To Death In Home," *The Potter Enterprise*, Coudersport, Penna., 92nd year, no. 34, Wednesday, December 7, 1966.
- (4) Lyman, Robert S., Sr., "Strange Events in the Black Forest," *The Potter Enterprise*, Coudersport, Penna., 1973, vol. 2, pp. 74-75.
- (5) McCloud, Carl D., personal communication; November, 1975.
- (6) Toombs, Paul C., personal interchange; January 31, 1976.
- (7) Dec, Mrs. John, personal interchange; January 31, 1976.
- (8) Mosch, Herman C., personal interchange; November 1, 1975.
- (9) Sallade, Fred, personal interchange; January 31, 1976.
- (10) Dec, John, personal interchange; January 24, 1976.
- (11) "I have been present. . . at crematoriums, where they have used gas and they have used oil. And I have been present for the full 12 hours, so that I know there was no substitution. I know what went in and I know what was there when it cooled! . . . There were no fragments I couldn't identify as human; some were very small — they had shattered in the heat — but, my god, I could tell them! They were calcined, but they weren't ashed — powdery-ashed, as you say." Dr. Wilton Marion Krogman (internationally recognized forensic anthropologist and expert on human cremation, on the reduction of the human body under ideal conditions), personal interchange; September 17, 1975.
- (12) Adelson, Lester, "Spontaneous Human Combustion and Preternatural Combustibility," *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science*, Northwestern University School of Law, Chicago, vol. 12, no. 6, March-April, 1952, pp. 793-809.
- (13) "Solar-Geophysical Data, CRPL-F Part B," World Data Center A for Solar-Terrestrial Physics, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Boulder, Colorado.
- (14) Gearhart, Livingston, "Geomagnetic Storms and Fortean Events," *Pursuit*, Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained, Columbia, N.J., vol. 8, no. 2, April, 1975, pp. 38-40.
- (15) Other cases include Hannah Bradshaw, Dec. 31, 1770; Mrs. Pococke, 1780; Mrs. Patrick Rooney, Dec. 25, 1885; Mr. A. M., Feb. 19, 1888; Mrs. Esther Dulin, May, 1953.

The following is a listing of further cases of Spontaneous Human Combustion as compiled by Ivan T. Sanderson and printed as Appendix A of his book *Investigating the Unexplained* (Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1972).

CASES OF SPONTANEOUS HUMAN COMBUSTION

DATE	PLACE	NAME AND CIRCUMSTANCES
17th century	Courland, Germany	Two noblemen, after a drinking bout, "died in consequence of suffocation by the flames which issued with great violence from their stomachs." ¹
17th century	Germany(?)....	"A soldier" drank "two glasses of spirits, [and] died after an eruption of flames from his mouth"; and another case "of the same kind after a drinking-match." ²
1692	Copenhagen....	"A woman of the lower class"; no details given. ^{*3}
20 Feb. 1725	France....	Mme Millet, no details given. ^{*4}
9 Apr. 1744	England(?)....	Grace Pitt, no details given. ^{*5}
7 Feb. 1749	France....	Mme de Boiseon, aged 80, no details given. ^{*6}
1763	Italy(?)....	Countess Cornelia Bandi, aged 62, no details given. ^{*7}
2 March 1773.....	Coventry, England....	Mary Clues, aged 50, found reduced to whitish ash except for a leg and thigh, between the bed and the fireplace; nothing else in the room damaged. ⁸
Feb. 1779	France....	Mary Jauffret, no details given. ^{*9}
1780	Limerick, Ireland....	An almshouse keeper named O'Neil was awakened by a lodger who showed him the body of Mrs. Peacock who roomed on the floor above, lying "flaming and red as copper" in his room. A hole burned through the ceiling and shaped like a woman's body, showed where she had fallen through. ¹⁰
3 June 1782	France....	Mlle. Thuars, no details given. ^{*11}
1788	England	"A young English chambermaid" was sweeping the kitchen floor when her back burst into flame, unnoticed by her until her master came in and shouted at her; he was unable to put out the fire. ¹²
16 March 1802.....	Massachusetts....	"The body of an elderly woman evaporated and disappeared from some internal and unknown cause, in the duration of about one hour and a half ... [on the floor near the hearth] there was a sort of greasy soot and ashes, with remains of a human body, and an unusual smell in the room. All the clothes were consumed; and the grandmother was missing. ..." ¹³
1813	England....	An elderly gentleman, while drunk [on tincture of valerian and tincture of gum guaiacum!], rolled out of his bed "which was approximate to a fire, the flames of which extended to his saturated body, and reduced it to a cinder, without materially injuring the bed furniture." ¹⁴
5 Jan. 1835.....	Nashville, Tenn....	Mr. H., Professor of Mathematics (see text, p. 241). ¹⁵
1836	Cesena, Italy....	Countess Cornelia Zangari, aged 62, was found on the floor of her room, reduced to a heap of ashes, except for her arms and legs and part of her head. The floor and furniture were undamaged, but there was fine soot throughout the room and a disagreeable odour. ¹⁶
25 Feb. 1851	Paris, France....	A house-painter, while drinking, bet that he could eat a lighted candle. "Scarcely had he placed it in his mouth, when he uttered a slight cry, and a bluish flame† was seen upon his lips. ... In half an hour the head and upper portion of the chest were entirely carbonized. The fire did not cease till bones, skin, and muscles were all consumed, and nothing remained but a small heap of ashes. ..." ¹⁷
27 Dec. 1885	Ottawa, Illinois....	The remains of Mrs. Patrick Rooney — a burned piece of skull, two charred vertebrae, a few foot bones, and a pile of ashes — were found on the ground beneath a 3 x 4 foot hole in the kitchen floor; there was soot throughout the house but no other damage. ¹⁸
31 March 1908.....	Blythe, England....	Mary Hart, an invalid, was found burning in a chair. Her sister smothered the flames, carried her up to her bed, and then ran for help. When they returned, they found Mary reduced to ashes except for the head and several fingers. The sheets were undamaged though there was soot on the walls. ¹⁹

* The article from which these were taken lists a large number of cases, but primarily by source rather than by name of victim or date. At the time of writing, work on tracing all of these has just begun, and the above table should not — in any case — be looked upon as an attempt at a complete listing of all such cases.

† Note hereafter the persistent references to blue flames.

- 1933.....England.... The author Temple Thurston, recuperating from influenza, was found nearly consumed in his chair.²⁰
- 30 July 1938..... Norfolk Broads, England.... A young woman, paddling in a boat with her husband and children, suddenly burst into flame and was quickly reduced to a pile of ashes; her family were uninjured and the boat undamaged.²¹
- 20 Sept. 1938..... Chelmsford, England.... A young woman was in the middle of a dance floor when blue flames burst from her body; the flames could not be extinguished and "in minutes she was ashes, unrecognizable as a human being."²²
- 1942.....Bloomington, Illinois.... Aura Troyer, 59, was found in the basement of the bank where he worked as a janitor, almost all his clothing burned off. "It happened all of a sudden" was all he said before he died.²³
- 1942..... Orpington, Fulham, and Brighton, England.... Ellen K. Kelly, 83; Mrs. Annie Coleshill, 66; and Mrs. Mary Forge, 94, all died by spontaneous conflagration. No details available.²⁴
- 1942.....Pittsburgh, Pa.... Carl Brandt, 33, was found on the sidewalk, "most of his clothing burned from his body."²⁵
- 13 Jan. 1943..... Deer Isle, Maine.... Allen M. Small, 82, was found dead in his home. Fire "had burned the clothing from the upper part of the body." The carpet beneath the body was charred but, although the room was "in confusion," nothing else was burned.²⁶
- 1 Feb. 1943.....Lancaster, N.Y.... Arthur Baugard, 39, an invalid, was found burned beyond recognition in his home; there was no other fire damage.²⁷
- 17 Oct. 1947..... Liverpool, England.... A 10-year-old boy was found in flames. There were no signs of fire in the shop after the incident.²⁸
- 1 July 1951..... St. Petersburg, Fla.... Mrs. Mary Reeser, age 67 (see text, p. 235).²⁹
- Apr. 1953..... nr. Hanover, Md.... Bernard Hess died of a fractured skull and internal injuries in an auto accident; when examined he was found to have suffered second- and third-degree burns over two-thirds of his body. His clothes were undamaged and there was no trace of fire in the car.³⁰
- 1 March 1953.....Greenville, S.C.... Waymon Wood, aged 50, was found "crisped black" in the front seat of his closed car. "There was little left of Wood or the front seat. The heat had made the windshield bubble and sag inward, yet the half-tank of gas in the car was unaffected."³¹
- 1956..... Pleasantville, Ohio.... Mrs. Cecil Rogers was "burned to a cinder." The bed was somewhat charred on top but nearby furniture was merely scorched.³²
- 28 Apr. 1956..... Benecia, California.... Harold Hall, 59, was found on the kitchen floor, his chest, arms, and face charred; he was still alive but could not explain what had happened, and died shortly thereafter.³³
- Dec. 1956.....Honolulu.... Young Sik Kim, age 78, an invalid, was found "wrapped in blue flames too hot to approach. When firemen got there 15 minutes later, the victim and his overstuffed chair were ashes. All that remained were Kim's undamaged feet, still resting on his wheelchair where he'd propped them." There was no other damage to the room.³⁴
- 31 Jan. 1959..... San Francisco.... Jack Larber, an elderly patient, was given a glass of milk by an orderly who then left for 5 minutes and returned to find the man "wrapped in blue flames."³⁵
- Spring, 1959..... Rockford, Illinois.... Rickey Pruitt, aged 4 months, burst into flame and burned to death; the bedclothing and the crib were not even scorched.³⁶
- 13 Dec. 1959..... Pontiac, Michigan.... Billy Peterson, aged 30, committed suicide by carbon monoxide poisoning in his car. When examined he was found to have third degree burns of the back, arms, and legs; and internal burns. His clothing was not singed, and unsinged hairs stuck up through his charred flesh.³⁷
- 24 Nov. 1960..... Pikeville, Kentucky.... The charred bodies of five men were found in a car; there was no evidence of any attempt to escape from the car. Death was attributed to "fire fracture," or internal heat — metal pellets first thought to be shotgun pellets proved to be melted metal from the car.³⁸
- 3 Aug. 1962..... Lockland, Ohio.... Mrs. Mary Martin, aged 74, was heard to scream and was found seated in a kitchen chair, her clothing aflame; she died some hours later. The only sign of a fire was the burnt chair on which she was sitting.³⁹
- 4 Dec. 1963.....Glen Cove, Long Island.... Thomas Sweizerski, aged 66, was found dead, his clothes burned off his body. There was no other evidence of fire.⁴⁰
- 17 Dec. 1969..... Toronto, Canada.... John Komar, an elderly man, died from extensive untreated and badly infected burns of the arms and back. He was found unconscious in his room after the landlord became worried, not having seen him for several days. There was no sign of a fire in his room.⁴¹

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Lair, Pierre-Aimé, "On the Combustion of the Human Body, produced by the long and immoderate use of Spirituous Liquors," *Journal de Physique*, an. pluv. 8, reprinted in *The Emporium of Arts & Sciences*, vol. I (1812), pp. 161-178. (Lair's original source, hereafter given in brackets, was the German *Ephemerides*, Observation 77.)
- ² *Ibid.* (German *Ephemerides*).
- ³ *Ibid.* (Jacobaeus, *Transactions of Copenhagen*).
- ⁴ *Ibid.* (Le Cat, memoir on spontaneous burning).
- ⁵ *Ibid.* (Trans. Roy. Soc. London, 1744).
- ⁶ *Ibid.* (Le Cat).
- ⁷ *Ibid.* (Memoir of Bianchini, *Annual Register*, 1763[?]).
- ⁸ *Ibid.* (Account by Mr. Wilmer, surgeon, *Annual Register*, p. 78, 1774); also *Phil. Trans.*, Vol. LXIV, 1774; and Moffitt, Jack, "Ladies in Combustion," *Los Angeles Herald-Express*, 14 March 1956.
- ⁹ *Ibid.* (*Jour. de medicine*, vol. 59, p. 440).
- ¹⁰ Moffitt, Jack, op. cit. (ref. 178).
- ¹¹ Lair, Pierre-Aimé, op. cit. (ref. 171) (*Jour. de medicine*, vol. 59, p. 140).
- ¹² Eckert, Allan W., "The Baffling Burning Death," *True*, May 1964, p. 112.
- ¹³ *Philosophical Magazine*, vol. XIV (1802-03), p. 96.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. XLI (1813), pp. 462-463.
- ¹⁵ Overton, John, *Transactions Med. Soc. Tennessee*, 1835.
- ¹⁶ Moffitt, Jack, op. cit. (ref. 178); Johnson, Walter, *A Familiar Introduction to the Principles of Physical Science*, Philadelphia, 1836.
- ¹⁷ *Annals of Scientific Discovery*, 1851, p. 358 (from *Paris Gazette des Tribunaux*, 25 February 1851).
- ¹⁸ Eckert, Allan W., op. cit., p. 105.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 105.
- ²⁰ Unidentified newspaper clipping.
- ²¹ Eckert, Allan W., op. cit., p. 105.
- ²² *Ibid.*
- ²³ *Doubt*, vol. II, no. 29, p. 26 (1942).
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶ *Doubt*, June 1943, p. 5 (ex Ellesworth, Maine, *American*).
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, #20 (1948), p. 302.
- ²⁹ Eckert, Allan W., op. cit., p. 106-107.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 112.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*
- ³² Moffitt, Jack, op. cit. (ref. 178).
- ³³ Eckert, Allan W., op. cit., p. 112 (ref. 182).
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 112.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 112.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 104; and Lonergan, Tad, M.D., letters column, *True*, August 1964.
- ³⁸ Springfield, Mass., *Union*, 24 November 1960.
- ³⁹ Cincinnati *Enquirer*, 3 August 1962.
- ⁴⁰ Long Island Press, December 1963.
- ⁴¹ Toronto *Star*, 17 December 1969.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

SITU is grateful to Larry E. Arnold for allowing us to publish his extensively researched and well-written article *The Flaming Fate of Dr. John Irving Bentley* in this issue of *Pursuit*. Mr. Arnold and his colleagues are currently (and have been for over a year and a half) working on a book which discusses approximately two hundred cases of Spontaneous Human Combustion and traces the phenomenon from 1776 back into B.C. This work will rectify all the previous errors that have been committed by authors and researchers of SHC. In light of this, he has been kind enough to point out two errors made by Sanderson in *Investigating the Unexplained* (from which *Cases of Spontaneous Human Combustion* was taken). We print them here in order to avoid perpetuating further mistakes:

1. Sanderson mentions Countess Cornelia Bandi's death in 1763 and Countess Zangari's in 1836. These are actually the fracturing of one event — the former. Sanderson relies on references which made a mistake. Countess Bandi had two titles, and the medical literature gave her demise copious attention in 1763-and-after.

2. Triple case of Kelly/Coleshill/Forge in 1942: Sanderson himself got confused with the Fortean calendar when he tried to adjust their system. The correct date is 1950. (Cf. *Kentish Times*, Jan. 20, 1950, p. 5 for demise of Miss Kate Ellen Kelly — not: correct arrangement of her name). She claimed to have touched her dress on a candle, which makes her candidacy for SHC dubious — but there are questionable aspects which don't rule it out.

FOSSIL TRACKS AT GLEN ROSE

by John Green

Reports of fossil tracks resembling human footprints have been known in North America for a long time. Senator Thomas Hart Benton contributed an article on the subject to *The American Journal of Science* in 1822. An article in *Scientific American*, January, 1940, referred to such tracks in Virginia, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri and points west. Dr. Wilbur G. Burroughs, professor of geology at Berea College, Kentucky, studied a series of 12 prints like those of human feet with splayed toes in a Coal Age sandstone formation near Berea, and published concerning them in the *Berea College Bulletin*, October, 1938. These and other prints in sandstone intrigued Charles W. Gilmore, curator of palaeontology of the U.S. National Museum, according to an article in the October 29, 1938, issue of *Science News Letter*. The following May, writing in *Natural History* regarding the finding of the first sauropod tracks known to science in the limestone bed of the Paluxy River near Glen Rose, Texas, Roland T. Bird referred to stories told by local residents of "giant man tracks" in the same formation. He himself saw a print "about 15 inches long with a curious elongated heel", and he expressed a wish that he had seen more. More recently, the Spring, 1975 issue of *Oklahoma Today* published two pages of colored photographs of what appear to be humanlike prints in Dakotah sandstone in Cimmaron County, Oklahoma.

In spite of the expressions of interest by Gilmore and Bird, it does not appear that any ichnologist ever followed up any of these reports. The only people to do so, to my knowledge, have been Creationists who sought to disprove the evolutionary explanation of origins by proving that humans and dinosaurs lived at the same time. In 1969 the Films for Christ Association, headed by the late Stanley E. Taylor, centered its attention on the Glen Rose site. Local residents showed them depressions in the limestone considered to be human footprints at several locations within a short stretch of the Paluxy River, not far from the spot where Bird removed several tons of limestone containing dinosaur tracks for the American Museum of Natural History and the University of Texas. The following year Taylor returned prepared to try to find more prints by digging into the riverbank. In 1970 and 1971 his crew did considerable excavating, diking the river around their work site and pumping the area dry. They even went to the extent of cutting through and removing an unbroken layer of limestone about the layer bearing the tracks they were following. The film that they prepared, titled *Footprints in Stone*, showed all these operations and indicated that they had found under the riverbank two lines of footprints, one of human size, the other "giant", crossing a line of dinosaur tracks. Whatever made the smaller prints actually stepped in the toe of one of the dinosaur tracks.

I was told about this film in 1972, and early in 1974 I had an opportunity to rent a copy and study it for a day. It made a convincing case that there were indeed human

and giant humanlike prints in the same limestone as dinosaur prints. I then wrote to a number of scientific institutions, including the American Museum of Natural History, The Texas Memorial Museum at the University of Texas, the Hall of State Museum at Dallas, the U.S. National Museum, the Dinosaur State Park at Glen Rose, and the National Geographic Society. I also made inquiries through university contacts. The National Geographic Society referred me to an article by Roland Bird in their May, 1954 magazine about the Glen Rose dinosaur tracks, in which he neglected to make any mention of the "giant man tracks." The assistant curator of fossil reptiles and amphibians at the American Museum of Natural History informed me that the "human" prints at Glen Rose "appear to have been formed by local people initially as a joke . . . and the proximity of a bible camp insured their discovery. There is no way to prove that this is continued as a hoax, although this is obvious to me. The creationists want to believe in the human prints and logical arguments are usually pointless." A message arrived second-hand from someone in the palaeontology department of Southern Methodist University that "the 'footprints' are merely 'fluted' river products," and that "the religious groups are out of Chicago and are a bunch of 'nuts'." There were no other replies containing any information whatever.

The fact that carved representations of footprints were sold at Glen Rose during the Depression may indeed have had a lot to do with frightening off palaeontologists, although it was seeing just such a carving that led Bird to investigate the area in the first place. The Films for Christ crew did not ignore that aspect of the matter; they looked into it and found that very few such carvings were made, and none in stone still in the riverbed.

My own inquiries having produced no indication that any non-Creationist scientist had ever seen the prints which the film crew had uncovered, I determined to visit the site myself, and I was able to do so in March, 1976, and again in July. On the first visit I found that all the prints excavated for the film had been buried again by the river the same year, and were now under several inches of silt as well as under water. I did not find anyone who could tell me exactly where they were. Cecil Dougherty, a chiropractor who studies the Glen Rose prints as a hobby, kindly showed me several tracklike marks that were exposed, but none of them showed any clear detail. One set, right in the Dinosaur State Park, did show a sequence like a set of human tracks. I did not learn anything to suggest that the film contained any fakery, and I was assured that there had been near-perfect tracks exposed in the past, only to be eroded into their present condition or washed away entirely. The river is reported to be very violent in flood, and it breaks away large slabs from the layers of limestone over which it descends and moves them around. This process periodically uncovers fresh tracks, which then begin to deteriorate. Dr.



Above: A photograph of one of the tracks. The hammer alongside the track is 12¾ inches in length, which makes the track approximately 19 inches long. Patterned effect over hammer due to re-photo of original Polaroid.

Opposite page: Looking upstream (and into the sun) on the Paluxy River. Numbers in sand indicated by arrows show stride in inches for first two paces. The first track is indicated by a circle, and the others continue upstream.

Dougherty told me that some of the exposed tracks had been much clearer in former years, and that he had never seen the river make any such marks, only wear them away. On the same trip I went to the Films for Christ headquarters at Elmwood, Illinois. Stan Taylor was too ill to see me, but his son Paul showed me casts of many of the tracks shown in the film, some of which were human-sized and showed heel or toe impressions looking very human indeed.

In July I returned to Glen Rose to take part in a dig organized by Fred Beierle, of Commerce, Texas, and Dick Caster, of Seattle, Washington, attempting to expose new tracks by digging directly down in the bank several yards back from the river, next to the area exposed for the film. This effort failed, as with the time and equipment available they were able to uncover only a small area, but using a pump rented for their dig I was able to remove the silt from some of the tracks shown in the film. Later, with the assistance of Jack Walper, professor of geology at Texas Christian University, I was able to clean out, dike and pump dry perhaps half the area previously

excavated, including most of the dinosaur trail, three of five "giant" tracks and nine of two dozen "human" tracks. It then became clear that the human-sized tracks shown in the film were not from the area I had uncovered, since all these tracks were 18 or 19 inches long with a stride of more than four feet. The "giant" tracks were about seven inches wide. The others were only five inches wide, but of similar length. Some of the narrow tracks had very distinct ridges around them where the original mud had been pushed upward as the foot sank in. This completely eliminated any possibility of the tracks being either fakes or products of erosion, since in either case it would have been necessary to cut down the surrounding rock for a considerable area in order to leave a ridge around the tracks. Of the nine narrow tracks there were only six in an unbroken sequence, but it appeared likely that all did constitute a single trail, in which two prints had not sunk in the mud. No reason for this was apparent. The best prints lacked details of any sort, as if made in very sloppy material, and the bottoms of some were very irregular. This was also true of the dinosaur tracks, which were at least four times as deep. None of the elongated prints showed any suggestion of claws, which in the dinosaur tracks were usually quite distinct. There was no doubt that the narrow tracks were the trail of something walking bipedally. They did not toe in or out. Lateral distance between left and right prints was less than a foot. Where one end of a track was wider than the other it was always the north end, and about half the tracks also indicated that the inside of the foot was longer at the front than the outside. The south ends of all the tracks were rounded. All these characteristics were consistent with the tracks of a human walking north, although the tracks were much too large and the stride too long. Dr. Walper, who is not a Creationist, confirmed that the tracks were unquestionably made by a bipedal creature with elongated feet. He did not know of any dinosaur that could have left such a trail, and inquiries I have made since have produced no suggestion of one. As far as I can determine, no creature known to have existed in any era would leave a similar trail, other than man or his close relative. The date assigned to the dinosaur tracks, however, is 135 million years ago.

Having established that tracks of this type do exist in the Glen Rose limestone, I see no reason to doubt the statements of long-time residents that tracks seen early in this century but since washed away showed five clear toes with the same pattern as human toes. Tracks such as those now visible in which the toes can not be distinguished, they call "moccasin prints." There appears to be every indication that these are the tracks of some creature unknown to science, and it seems most probable that they indicate the evolution of a foot and a stride very similar to that of *Homo Sapiens* at a period 130 million years prior to his arrival on the scene. The only alternatives would seem to involve the simultaneous existence in Texas of dinosaurs of several varieties and higher primates, whether in recent years or in the Mesozoic. There does not appear to be any explanation that would not involve a considerable re-assessment of present theories to accommodate new information. At the very least I would hope that the importance of full investigation of the phenomenon at Glen Rose has been established sufficiently so that something will be done about it.



A THEORY OF LINES

by Bruce Jordon

INTRODUCTION

In any exercise of logic certain assumptions must be made, and so it is with this theory. As this is a theory of Geometry, I have assumed that all the assumptions of Classical Geometry are valid and must therefore apply in this theory at all times. I have further assumed that relativity has its application in Classical Geometry and therefore applies here.

Someone once said that there are things, names of things, and names of names. This is the most succinct expression of relativity I know. Things are not relative. Existence occurs without our awareness. A body in space is there whether we exist or not or whether we know it or not. It is our name or description of this thing which is relative.

Measurement is always relative. This theory is about measurement, since measurement is our most universal language of description.

As mentioned previously, we have names of things and names of names. Lines are our names of things and mathematics are our names of names. In all communication terms will mean one thing to one person and often quite a different thing to another person. In this theory I shall attempt to overcome such ambiguities.

There are two general purposes for lines; the establishment of Locus, or reference, and lines of quantity. Since lines of reference have no real existence and as such are merely a convenience, this theory will ignore them and deal entirely with lines of quantity.

Such a line always begins at value zero and proceeds to the maximum value. A line is not an extension into infinity of which we use a segment. A line is such that it expresses a certain magnitude and such magnitude is the whole of the line; thus a line proceeds from point zero to point maximum and the whole is equal to all the segments which is equal to the magnitude of whatever it is that we are measuring. (In this theory all points zero will be referred to as point A, and all points maximum will be referred to as point B.)

If we accept that a line proceeds from point A to point B, then we accept that a line is a progression and that this progression must be constant (I had thought a random line could exist but it cannot; a seemingly random line is a series of lines between random points).

This theory examines these constant progressions and will from time to time refer to a line as a constant progression, as well as the reverse.

Before going on to the first line, it should be noted that there is a relationship of the various lines, a sort of "evolution" if you will. I hope to be able to demonstrate this relationship.

In Plane Geometry a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. This is obvious enough, but it assumes we are referring to a flat plane. However, there is really nothing that says a plane must always be flat, and

on a spherical plane the shortest distance between two points is a curved line, which is a segment of the great circle of that plane. This is the relationship or evolution of lines to which I referred previously.

THE STRAIGHT LINE

If we assume a straight line progresses from A to B on the traditional flat plane we have the traditional straight line. But, there are possible differences in the constant progression from A to B. If the constant progression is such that equidistant points of that progression are of equal value, then we have the traditional straight line and this is the basis of our number system. The constant progression from point A to point B can, however, be in either constant acceleration or constant deceleration of value. (The possible progressions are infinite). Each constant progression has its own number system.

Accepting this, then we accept that the traditional straight line, whose equidistant points are at equal value, is only one straight line among infinite possibilities of straight lines between points A and B. This is not the only straight progression possible between the two points. We must now look at what I have termed the second state of lines.

Consider that as a line progresses from point A straight to point B, it also revolves progressively about an axis so that it arrives at point B with a 180 degrees reversed "surface". As this rotation is constant, all points are therefore predictable. This reversal of "surface" can be called *phase*.

We now have a straight line whose equidistant points may or may not be equal and at the same time may or may not be in the second state. The progression of the second state may proceed with its own acceleration or deceleration.

THE CURVED LINE

So far we have assumed that a line has constant progression from point A to point B. We have also assumed that if a point is reached where that constant progression ceases, a new line may begin. With the next lines we are dealing with a progression which proceeds in two directions. That is to say, whereas the previous lines progressed in what we might say 'distance', this line also progresses in what we might call 'altitude'. This produces even more possibilities. Consider the construction of a base reference line with point A indicated. As a curved line progresses to point B, it moves away from the reference line. This movement away from the reference line can be called a movement in altitude. When such a curved line reaches *maximum* altitude, it must have a change in its progression in order to proceed. As a closed curve reaches the zenith of its altitude, a change in progression of altitude occurs. Therefore, a full closed curve, which is called a circle, is, in reality, a four sided figure.

As with the straight line, a curved line in two directions does not need to have equal value for equal distant points. Since the line progresses in two directions there are two series of acceleration and deceleration possible, and combinations thereof. There can be acceleration of the linearity of the line and there can be acceleration of either or both its progression in direction and altitude.

Since this curved line is only occasionally a segment of a closed curve, and most often a segment of a spiral, I have termed this second line a *spiral* line. The *spiral* line has all the possibilities of progression in the second state.

THE HELIX LINE

In introducing this next line I would like to remind the readers of several things. The relationship or evolution of lines is becoming clearer as this theory progresses. A line at this point in the theory appears to be the shortest distance between two points on a corresponding plane. Also note that when a line progresses in two directions, the directions are at right angles to each other.

This third line, which I call a *helix* line, moves in three directions. The best way that I can think of to demonstrate this is by taking a spindle from a roll of toilet paper and cutting it along the seam, being careful not to unroll it. This cut will produce a *helix* plane. I have not termed this new direction of progression and must therefore refer to it as sideways. All things that apply to the straight line and the *spiral* line also apply to the *helix* line with the added possibilities of the progressions allowed by the sidewise progression. The second state of lines also applies here.

SUMMARY

All lines are constant progressions. All lines have the possibility of second state progression. Equidistant

points along any line need not be of equal value. All lines of measurement begin at point zero and progress constantly to magnitude. All lines terminate at the point of maximum value.

CONCLUSION & REFLECTIONS

If this theory is valid it opens up some fascinating possibilities of geometrical construction. For example: consider a sphere. The size is unimportant. If point B is antipode to point A, then the spiral line from A to B will be segments (two lines actually) of the great circle of that sphere. Now consider that this progression is also in the second state so that as the line reaches point B it has progressed 90 degrees from point A. Continuing the progression to point A, upon reaching that point the progression will be 180 degrees out of phase with its beginning. The curve, therefore, is not closed and to close it you must proceed around the entire great circle. You then have "two" circles with identical Loci in respect to space, but removed in phase at all points. Now consider this to be true of the entire sphere. You end up with a sort of double sphere in which any value of any part of it is a part of the whole, and the whole, being the sum of the parts, has a value *double* that of a 'normal' sphere.

I once read of a sub-atomic particle which seemed to have variation in normal time. Is this really something that manifests the second state of lines such as the sphere does? The sphere would be observable only at those points which have positive phases relative to the observer.

If this theory is valid it is important that others have the opportunity to evaluate it. I will leave you to your own speculations.

PRESCRIPTIONS FOR THE NEW SCIENCE

by Neil M. Lorber

Little more than one-hundred years ago, man had no knowledge of electromagnetic waves, yet he used the radiant heat of fire and recognized the sun's life-giving radiance. He did not know of sound waves per se, though sound was ever so much a part of his everyday world. By the same token, manifestations of unknown forms of energy ("forces") today must be very close to our everyday lives; we see the "reflections" of these forms of energy but have likely failed to recognize them as such, no less to explain them (perhaps our current explanations of them are not correct or complete).

All prior unknowns declared their existence to man in some quite obvious way, i.e., in some simple form. For example, man's awareness of radiant heat, light, and the spectrum of colors presaged his knowledge of electromagnetic waves, and his awareness of the bird in flight presaged technological development of heavier-than-air flight. If the past is any predictor of the future, the keys to

present unknowns are very common and close to us in our everyday lives. Perhaps even the answer to the relationship between the material and the "spiritual" is strongly intimated by some basic, simple common phenomenon of an analogous nature with which we are all very well-acquainted in our day-to-day living.

INDIRECT ASSESSMENT

The question arises, however, as to whether understanding of such new principles will involve (or require) the measurement-mathematical means of detection that the discovery of all earlier secrets of life and nature has required. Will the new discoveries evidence a unique departure from scientific tradition in this sense? The answer is, quite clearly, "No!" Even if the new discoveries sometimes involve certain theoretical or "philosophical" breakthroughs (newly conceived, or resulting from resurrected concepts and doctrines), the necessary

empirical (i.e. "scientific" validation of these breakthroughs will likely take at least the form of "indirect verification" to establish their tenability. This research will center on attempts to empirically establish measurable manifestations associated with the new concepts and theories (e.g., their reflections upon human life and experience). Contrary to the character of traditional research, this research will likely be "indirect" in that it will, most probably, not study (or, better said, will not be able to study) the "phenomena" per se; it will probably only be able to study influences and effects of the phenomena, one step removed. An example of this type of validation would be the verification of the personality, character, behavior, life styles, etc., of individuals born under different zodiacal signs, etc. Were observed differences, if any, found to be consistent with astrological theory, then the tenability of the basic tenets of such theory would thereby be supported. Indeed, the nature of astrological claims and concepts can hardly be "scientifically" investigated in any truer sense, excluding the possibility of the development of scientific instrumentation able to detect and measure the flux and presence of the alleged astrological forces which influence men (but even the initial, however vain, attempts to do so would first wait upon indirect confirmation of the existence of these forces).

NEED FOR OBJECTIVE MEASUREMENT

In light of the preceding, Fortean should make every effort to transcend the restrictive notions, prejudices, and presumptions of established science. Overcoming these limitations is, indeed, a noble pursuit and should never be abandoned by us; discarding the institutionalized blinders of the scientific establishment is a Fortean duty. However, overcoming the narrow perspectives of established science and transcending certain of its peculiar, limited and idiosyncratic specific techniques of accumulating knowledge is one thing; ignoring the basic principle of the objective observation of nature is another. The latter we cannot do; we cannot flaunt the most essential and crucial element of scientific method: objectivity. We, too, are scientists, and we too are obliged to repulse the slightest possibilities of subjective interference in our investigatory pursuits.

The objective observation of natural phenomena that we must practice requires, almost by definition, instrumentation. Technical apparatus alone can avert and supplant human subjectivity, and where there is human perception (no less human judgment), the possibility, if not actuality, of subjective determinations exists. Accordingly, Fortean must, increasingly, turn to technological instrumentation in the coming years. The ultimate era of Fortean science is now approaching; we have come of age. Our accomplishments in the development of Fortean knowledge have been great, and we can take much pride in them. Through extensive "informal" observation and reasoning, and through enlightened questioning, we have learned both "where to look" and "what to look for" in our confrontation of challenging riddles. Measurement in the areas that we have gotten "a fix on" as a developing science must now be carried out if we are to be able to transcend our present level of accom-

plishment and attain the level of a more advanced science. In order to be objective, this measurement must be carried out by non-human means (i.e., by technical apparatus) as only in this way can objectivity be assured. By however crude a means and in whatever crude a form, when a phenomenon can be objectively measured in such a fashion (i.e., "technologically perceived"), it becomes both quantifiable and technologically recordable and, accordingly, incontrovertibly real (and not *until* such time does it become so). In short, its existence is thereby, and not otherwise (or before such time), proven and established. The manner of its initial record of existence may be nothing more impressive than a series of intermittent "bleeps" or "blinks" on some electronic receiving device that has been humanly directed to seek it out. However crude and humble such means of "perception" may be, the implications of such detection are profound: the reality of the force, energy form, phenomenon, etc., is established and, perhaps, a long-standing Fortean riddle is, at long last, thereby solved.

In sum, such objective detection is, at least potentially, replicable. Moreover, it cannot be easily disputed or dismissed. The record of existence that it provides therefore constitutes a level of evidence that subjective human observations and reports cannot match, however worthy of respect those who render them may be.

Thus, the intelligence, originality, and creativity of thought that has long characterized the Fortean mind and approach, must now be turned to objective measurement. This will, perhaps, have to await, in part, a new generation of Fortean who, from the start of their Fortean work, will devote themselves to developing and utilizing measurement apparatus and to the physics and technology on which such instrumentation is inescapably based. This is, undoubtedly, the direction that Fortean science must take, and brings to mind Sanderson's belief that it is time we "got the technicians to work" at defining phenomenal mysteries. He expressed this belief in, for example, his October 1972 editorial on the existence of a fifth field force in physics (*Pursuit*, Volume 5, No. 4, p. 75) and in his very last editorial for *Pursuit* in April, 1973 (Volume 6, No. 2, p. 27).

OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS AND COMMITMENTS

The age of that American hero, the homespun inventor working in the woodshed, has, with the nineteenth century, gone forever. Edison, with his lack of formal schooling, would have little or no chance of achieving success today; contemporary electronic and other technological problems are just far too advanced, sophisticated, and specialized. The leading edge of scientific and technological inquiry has evolved beyond the scope of any "one-man show", however great may be his "raw genius". The technological and scientific divisions of institutional and corporate organizations have taken full command, and no individual (especially one without advanced formal training) can viably compete with them with any true hope of success.

Yet experiment we Fortean must, even with lack of

(Continued on page 93)

BIGFOOT AND WATER

by Milton LaSalle

As I have been going through my files, I've realized that a very large proportion of Bigfoot sightings have some connection with water. There are reports of Bigfoot wading, swimming, fishing, digging clams on beaches, etc.

The question automatically comes to mind: Is this more than just a coincidence? A land animal, such as man, is around and in the water at times. Are there reasons to believe that Bigfoot does have an exceptional affinity for water?

The number of incidents involving water actually speaks for itself. In John Green's book, he gives figures that indicate that approximately 65% of sightings are either in or near large bodies of water. My own files reveal an even larger 78%. These ratios are far too great to be accidental.

Concluding that lakes and rivers have some special link with Bigfoot doesn't really get us anywhere; the next question is: what is that link? This is quite a little harder to decide. So first we'll look at a small sample of the water-related reports I have in my files.

One of the first reports concerns an Indian in California who watched a Bigfoot for over an hour as it taught two smaller ones to swim and to spear fish with sharp sticks. This shows that the Bigfoot uses fish for a food supply, an important fact. In trying to locate an animal, one of the most important things to know is what it eats. There are many reports linking Bigfoot with fish, frogs, water plants, and clams.

In December, 1969, Rene Dahinden and Ivan Marx found a series of Bigfoot tracks in the snow. These led from the Columbia River bank across several fields and then back to the river. Later, more tracks were found on the opposite bank of the river, apparently made on the same day. This would seem to indicate that the Bigfoot was using the river bank as a road. Waterways are usually the first routes into a new land for most animals, including man; the pioneers who explored our country did most of their travelling along the rivers. Even an animal the size of a Bigfoot could travel through many populated sections of our land along the riverbanks at night and never be seen.

Then there is the report of several Bigfoot being seen near Albany, Oregon. The creatures and their huge footprints were seen quite regularly for several months, and the sightings were primarily in the area of a small lake. In one instance, a Bigfoot that was being followed was seen to disappear into the lake. This brings to mind another use for water; it makes an excellent concealment. When man follows his quarry to the edge of a river or lake, that's where he must stop. Unless he has a boat at hand, he can only go back and forth along the edge looking for the place the animal left the water. Of course, if the Bigfoot crosses a river, going a short distance up or down stream before emerging, he may lose his pursuer indefinitely.

In 1965, two prospectors in British Columbia had a very interesting experience, including the opportunity to observe at close range the second largest Bigfoot that I have ever heard of. Of course the size is only an estimate based on their observations, but the footprints they saw support their estimate very nicely. They believed this Bigfoot to be approximately twelve feet tall. The footprints they reported were twenty-four inches long, twelve inches wide, and very clear. Twenty-four inch tracks would indicate an animal one hundred and forty-two inches tall, or two inches short of twelve feet.

The set of twenty-four inch tracks were followed onto a small lake that was frozen over. In the ice they found a large hole to which the tracks led. The tracks then led away again, now with something being dragged along behind. The next day, on another nearby lake, they found a set of smaller prints about eighteen inches in length. These also led onto a frozen lake to a hole in the ice. This hole was over five feet in diameter. This is an intriguing set of circumstances. Why in the world did the Bigfoot break huge holes in the ice? And especially, what could he have found in this small lake to drag away behind him? One can immediately rule out the idea that he was just trying to obtain some drinking water; a much smaller hole would suffice for that. The next thought would be for food. Is there any source of food he could reach in this manner? As a matter of fact there is: there have been some observations of a Bigfoot feeding on water plants. If he was in a place where the water was fairly shallow, he could be reaching down and pulling up plants. The size of the hole would then depend on how hungry he was and how thick the plant growth was. But that still leaves the question of what was being dragged away. The marks described would not seem to fit a bundle of water plants. It is well to keep in mind the fact that the hole was large enough to permit the animal to have entered the water and returned through it. Nonetheless, I have no idea what might be found in a southern British Columbia lake for a bigfoot to retrieve from the water and drag away. A seal might possibly fit the marks described, but are not to be found in the area. So we have another mystery. If the reader has any suggestions I would appreciate knowing them.

Of what use is the foregoing information? It is only useful as it can be applied in the actual search for a Bigfoot. First of all, when we hear of a Bigfoot being seen in a particular area, we should try to get there as soon as possible. The witnesses should be interviewed, of course, and people who know the area and its wildlife well should be questioned. Photographs, plaster casts of tracks, and any other evidence available should be gathered. Next, get out a map of the area and note any lakes, ponds, and rivers nearby. These areas should be examined for footprints or other evidence of a Bigfoot's presence. If there is a river that also flows through a state park or other

wilderness area, it should be checked first. Remember that Bigfoot may repeatedly return to the water after being seen or followed, so if one is seen momentarily, he may be headed for the water. Of course, this doesn't mean that one should neglect other areas, forests, caves, etc. where an animal could be concealed.

I have also been doing a special study on Bigfoot footprints. In this study, I need some help. If any of you have

photographs, plaster casts or any other records of Bigfoot prints, I would appreciate it if you could send me some information. I need to know the general shape of the track, the length, greatest width, and width at heel. If you could help me with this, I would really be grateful. Please send the information to:

Milton LaSalle

511 Jefferson Street, Watertown, N.Y. 13601

NESSIE JR. IN TANZANIA: MYSTERY NO MORE

by R. M. Wolf

In the last issue of *Pursuit* (Volume 9, Number 3, page 62) an article entitled "And in Africa — Nessie Junior?" discusses a "freakish creature" caught by a fisherman in Tanzania. The creature is described (by *The Daily News*, Tanzania, Africa) as having "two legs, with toes, two arms with five fingers on each and two eyes, one of which glows at night. It also has a small horn, an ear, a hump and a toothless mouth with a large tongue."

Well, Nessie Junior has turned out to be instead *Antennarius commersoni*. SPOOF (the Society for the Protection Of Old Fishes, Inc.) has informed SITU of the true identity of the creature. The identification was made by Ian Bryceson, who has his bachelor's degree in marine biology from the University of Washington and who is currently working on his doctorate at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania.

SPOOF informs us that the fish, fairly common near reefs and rocky areas, is not really considered to be rare at all, and although the description of the animal as printed makes it sound like a monster, it actually weighs only about two kilos.

Professor A. S. Msangi, head of the Zoology Department at the University of Dar es Salaam, further describes the "monster"—now identified as *Antennarius commersoni* (for the *Dar es Salaam Daily News*, June 1, 1975, which we quote in part) as having very strange features for a fish:

It has no scales like most fish. Instead (it) has very small bristles which give its body a very rough feel. Its colour is grey and (this) makes it difficult to be identified as it looks like a stone at the bottom of the sea.

One of the strangest features are its fins. Normally most fish have a pair of fins at the front of the body and a pair at the back, just as we humans have arms and legs. These fins, which are different in shape but look like fans, are used in swimming.

However, in *Antennarius* strange things have happened to the fins. The back fins have moved forward onto the chest while the front (fins have moved) backwards. These fins look a bit like arms and legs.

The fins which are moved to the front are quite small with five stumpy rays which can be mistaken for fingers. Those at the back are big and look like legs. They have thirteen rays — contrary to a foot which has five toes.

The fish does not swim like ordinary fish. It uses its leg-like fins for crawling at the bottom of the sea or on

coral reefs where it stays partly hidden and when a small fish comes near it jumps out and catches it.

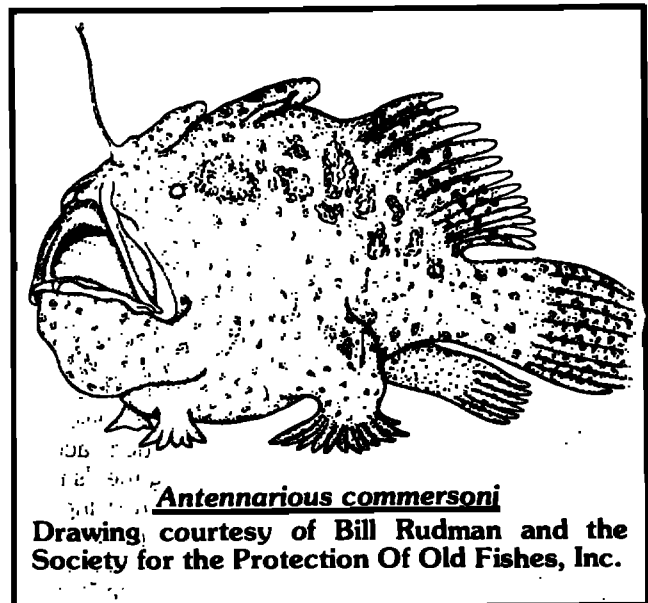
The one "glowing eye," Professor Msangi explains, could possibly be a patch of luminous bacteria, since the fish has normally two regular, non-glowing eyes. The *Antennarius*, the article goes on to say,

... have many small sharp teeth on both jaws of its large mouth. The face makes it look as though it has a chin but it has no beard.

On its head there is a long rod which is used to attract small fish and jumps on to them for its food (?). Unlike most fish which have a long fin right at the back, the fish has two fleshy spikes. These were described as a horn and a hump like that of a cow and an ear.

The specimen is found in tropical parts of the Indian and Pacific Oceans and have been caught now and again along the coast of East Africa. Two specimens — a pink and red one — were found at Dar es Salaam last year.

Thanks to SPOOF, Ian Bryceson, and Professor Msangi we have another mystery solved. And from all of us, our sympathies go out to you, Nessie. But look at it this way: you haven't lost a son — you've possibly gained a very strange meal.



Antennarius commersoni

Drawing, courtesy of Bill Rudman and the Society for the Protection Of Old Fishes, Inc.

MUTILATIONS: WHO—OR WHAT—REALLY IS KILLING THE CATTLE?

by Curt Sutherly

EDITOR'S NOTE

Following is Part I of a two-part article by Curt Sutherly. The topic introduced in the article concerns a phenomenon that has been occurring in an increasing number of areas of the United States. When SITU made inquiries into the subject, it was learned that there is much more to it than seems to be meeting the eyes of the media coverage received so far. As a result, two members of the Governing Board have just returned from a two-month investigation in various locations within the states of Montana, Colorado, Idaho, and Wyoming. What was discovered on this in-depth study will be reported in the January issue of *Pursuit* along with Part II of this article.

PART I

Cattle mutilations: not a very pretty phrase, is it? To the farmers and ranchers affected by these two words, the term is even less attractive.

In recent months the Midwest States, scene of the most frequent (and continuing) accounts of mutilations, have found resident ranchers taking up arms in an effort to secure themselves and their families from the mysterious killers. Regional law enforcement agencies as well as cattle raising firms and the Federal Bureau of Investigation have likewise thrown in their lot in an effort to halt the senseless slaughter. All to no avail.

Students of the mutilations have generally gone two routes to explain the butchery: One school of thought maintains that aliens in spaceships are killing the animals and subsequently carrying off the blood and frequently missing vital organs (such as udders, eyes, ears, not to mention sections of skin). The other school of thought believes that devil cultists are at work, and an elaborate theory has been devised to uphold this belief.

However, a close examination of this latter concept shows a pattern of weaknesses that make a shambles of trying to cite all mutilations as the work of cultists. Similarly, the spaceship theory has its faults.

* * *

Many articles have been written describing the movements of the alleged devil (killer) cult said to be slicing up the Midwest's livestock herds. One such account appeared in a Nov. 1975 issue of a leading men's magazine under the title: *The Killer Cult Terrorizing Mid-America*, written by one Keith Randolph (a pseudonym). The intent of Randolph's presentation was to outline the general history of latter-year mutilations (circa 1970-74), and their connection with the presumed devil cultists.

The article was well written, founded on what appears to be rather sound reference material, and tends to pretty well wrap up the question of who's killing the cattle. Why all the fuss then? Because the answers given are superficial; they only probe so deep.

One of the many faults of the cult theory is the general lack of footprints or clues as to how the mutilators operate at the site of a slaughtered cow or animal. The proponents of the theory explain this by citing various ploys used by the cultists to bedevil the minds of law enforcement agents and other investigators. Randolph believes all of this to be largely the work of a madman referred to as "Howard," who, over the years, has gathered together a faithful band of maniacal followers bent on creating a kind of hell on Earth. He outlines their method of slaughtering the cattle as follows:

First, the intended victim is shot with a tranquilizer gun, thus rendering the cow (or bull, or whatever) senseless. Then the killers approach the animal, using cardboard mats placed onto the ground before them to cover their tracks. Upon reaching the animal, "a capsule of amyl nitrate [a stimulant]" is broken under the creature's nose to speed up the heartbeat. Finally, a large mat is placed under the animal to absorb blood (Randolph says the mat is cloth on one side, plastic on the other), and using surgical blades and veterinarian syringes, the butchery is completed without a solitary trace or clue as to whodunit.

Sometimes, however, clues are found, Randolph notes. Or are they?

THE WEIGHT OF EVIDENCE

On the respective dates of Nov. 30, 1973 and January 8, 1974, two cows were found dead; slaughtered, in McPherson County, Kansas. In both instances (as documented by news wire services) tracks from a four-wheel drive vehicle were discovered in the snow near the kill sites, as were human prints. The prints found on Nov. 30 (a single set) ended rather abruptly, going nowhere near the dead cow. Two sets of snowshoe tracks discovered near the Jan. 8 kill apparently bypassed the dead cow by a considerable margin.

Randolph explains this by noting that the cultists "sometimes would delight in playing tricks. Occasionally they would *partially* [emphasis Randolph's] cover their tracks, thus accounting for the mysterious footprints leading nowhere that were discovered in McPherson County . . ."

Ok, but ... if the cultists used cardboard mats to only partially cover their trail in the two McPherson County cases, *why then didn't the mats leave any impression in the snow?* We might suggest, for the sake of argument,

that heavy winds prior to the discovery of the dead cows blew away any trace of the mat imprints. Sounds logical — except that the same winds would also have obliterated the snowshoe tracks and other human prints, not to mention the vehicle tracks.

It would also be interesting to determine how the cultists managed to shift the full weight of the drugged cow onto their hypothetical mat without leaving visible indications of doing so. In fact, it would seem that the cultists managed some most magical trick indeed while performing their clueless butchery.

In an Aug. 1974 *Fate* article, veteran researcher/writer Jerome Clark points out that Kansas law officials were noticing similar inconsistencies in the cult theory.

On one occasion a Cloud County, Kansas lawman reportedly said that a butchered cow was found in a virtual mudhole. "We were gungho, thought sure we'd find footprints." However, no prints were found. And again, it's obvious that the mat theory holds no validity under such circumstances.

As for the tranquilizer gun believed used to bring down the animal prior to butchery: Clark also notes in his *Fate* article that Yellow Medicine County, Minnesota Deputy Sheriff Dennis Kamstra (formerly a game warden*) said, during an incident in Nov. 1973 in that county, that he ruled out the theory "that the killer had used a tranquilizer gun, for these are rare and extremely difficult to use." Of course, we might suppose that the maniacal "Howard" and his gang of cutthroats do indeed have a number of people especially trained in the use of such weapons—

Just as we might suppose that this same crew also employs any number of helicopters and pilots to assist in mutilating the cattle. This suggestion stems from the nearly endless numbers of mystery helicopters seen in the same areas as the mutilations, and from a belief that "Howard" had recruited former (unlicensed) Vietnam vets to crew and fly said choppers.

Interestingly enough, many of these reported helicopters *make no sound*, something nearly impossible for that noisy variety of aircraft (although there are unconfirmed stories that the FBI is currently using a nearly noiseless chopper during drug and narcotic operations). I recently asked an Aerial Phenomena Research Organization (APRO: Tucson, Arizona) field investigator about this (Kevin Randle, a proponent of the cult theory), and he cited that perhaps in cases where the choppers are not heard, the wind is carrying the sound away from the witnesses.

Also, an obviously vast amount of money is necessary to maintain and operate even one helicopter (let alone a fleet, if such is the case). Where is this cash coming from? It's become rather apparent to investigators that if the cultists are using choppers, such use is spread over at least a dozen states (not to mention other parts of the world, but we'll come back to this). It would require an organization with the wealth of an entire nation to support fully a fleet of 'copters plus the unbelievable amount of supplies and repair parts necessary. Then too such an

operation needs many good pilots and a small army of mechanics skilled in the countless technological areas to be found on modern aircraft (even relatively simple ones).

Now, if we suppose that the money for all of this is available, and that all of the above goodies and personnel are similarly to be had, one must conclude that a base of operations is located somewhere. Yet even the FBI (so we are told) is baffled by all of this. One might say: "Well, they had a hell of a time locating Patty Hearst, so why not the cattle killers?" Unfortunately there's a vast difference between locating a single individual deliberately remaining out-of-sight and an organization which constantly makes its presence known.

Returning to the state of Kansas, in 1974, an unidentified farmer discovered one of his cows dead, mutilated, while checking his cattle pens after a noon meal. According to Jerome Clark, the farmer had fed the cows between the hours of 8:30 and 9 a.m., and "knew they were all there because he had counted them."

In a period of roughly three to three and one-half hours someone — or thing — had managed to get onto the farm unseen and totally butcher the cow, removing vital organs and blood. Did the killer(s) fly in by helicopter, as some would suggest? In full daylight? Without causing a commotion among the other farm animals? Or, if they came on foot or by auto, why — again — was no one seen?

According to a Texas press story (dated Feb. 11, 1975), a real estate investor named Sam V. Snell discovered the corpse of a dog "strung by its hind legs to a barbed wire fence, its blood drained and genitals removed." The report also cites that the animal was completely skinned, and Snell — reportedly a proficient hunter and skinner himself — noted that the dog slayers could "skin an animal better than I can and I've skinned animals all my life."

No blood was found around the carcass. To explain this, Snell said that perhaps the animal "was killed and skinned elsewhere, and then dropped [emphasis author's] into the area.

If so, who tied the carcass to the fence?

An account reported in the *Colorado Gazette Telegraph* (Oct. 23, 1975) and written by staff writer Dorothy Aldridge, noted the mutilation death of a buffalo — of all things — within a fenced-off area of the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo. Authorities were said to be baffled by how the mutilator(s) managed to get past the zoo's tight security (stepped up as a direct result of recurring mutilations on nearby ranches). According to zoo director Dan Davis, the carcass was completely skinned by veterinarians in a search for marks, bruises, or punctures possibly made by a tranquilizer gun. *None were found.* Another odd factor was that the blood (not drained in this case) was of a sero-sanguinous (watery) quality rather than coagulated as it should have been. Also, human tracks were again lacking although the carcass was found in a dusty area of the pen laden with other bison and elk hoof prints (the two species of animal were kept together).

All of which brings us to the other side of the coin, i.e., the idea of killers from another planet. . . .

*The author has been told by several would-be investigators that one shouldn't believe local law officers inasmuch as they are generally unschooled bumbler wearing badges.

VAMPIRE CATS

by X

One of the most interesting stories I have read about Forteana in Canada was the "Flying Felines" in John Keel's *Strange Creatures From Time and Space*. Apparently from what little is said of the subject and from what he told me at Fortfest 1974, his only reference to the case was from a newspaper clipping and had not involved any personal investigation.

Fortunately as the area of the incident was not far from my regular trips to Ottawa, it was readily possible for me to make direct inquiries into the matter.

Under the title "Shades of Batman" on page two of the *Kingston Whig-Standard*, June 25, 1966, the Canadian Press story describes the incident as follows:

An animal described as a flying cat was shot to earth Friday night (June 24th).

Constable Terence Argall of the provincial police said it was 'generally an ordinary looking black cat' except for a small hump on its back and 'two wing-like growths about six inches long sticking out of the hump.

Residents told him the cat had terrorized other small animals and startled humans. He said it attacked dogs and cats by taking a long run, jumping and gliding for distances of 30 feet or more.

It was killed by several bullets from a .22-calibre rifle after Maurice Bellefeuille and Arthur Lavoie had chased it for more than a mile.

Alfred is on Highway 17 about 40 miles east of Ottawa.

Though the Ontario Provincial Police office in Hawkesbury was unable to locate any information on the case, they were able to inform me that Constable Argall was still attached to their office and was on patrol at the time. Shortly thereafter, I met with Const. Argall and made several inquiries into the case which had occurred eight years before.

According to him, no official report had been made of the incident as it did not impress him as being of any significance at the time. He did remember taking notes at the time and produced an old notebook into which he had entered notes on that date. He had come across Jean Jacque Revers, Arthur Lavoie, and Maurice Bellefeuille next to the road during one of his patrols and learned from them that they had shot an unusual-looking cat. He measured the cat as weighing 9¼ pounds, ¾-inch long teeth, 7-inch flaps of skin extending from the cat's back on both sides, and shot in the head five times. He denied ever having claimed seeing the cat while it was alive or having seen it fly. To the contrary he commented that it

was a terribly scrawny cat that appeared nearly starved to death. Jean Revers had shot the cat after having chased it down with Arthur Lavoie and Maurice Bellefeuille after it had attacked and bitten Lavoie's own cat. Revers buried the cat after photographs had been taken for the local newspaper, *Le Carilon*, June 30, 1966, pp. 1 & 31.

'Le volant chat' then became a local cause celebre until the officials at the Veterinary Services Laboratory at Kemptville stepped in, exhumed the 'flying cat', and took Arthur Lavoie's cat into their care for observation. An autopsy was performed on the flying cat on June 30th by Dr. E. B. Meas, then director of the Division of Laboratories. The findings of the autopsy were as follows:

Mass of matted hair about ¾" thick and 7"x7" in size affixed over lumbar vertebral column and ragged and loose around its edges. Animal shot through head — cranial cavity open — contents putrid and fluid — unfit for further examination.

The main concern of the laboratory staff was to determine if the offending creature was rabid, and as the animal was already beginning to decay its remains were soon disposed of. No report of the findings of the autopsy were given to the Ontario Provincial Police or those who had hunted it down. The only copy given out was to the news editor of *Le Carilon* on August 8th in response to an inquiry into what tests were made on the 'flying cat.' Arthur Lavoie's cat was kept under observation from June 28th until it was euthanized on the 30th to make a rabies examination, which confirmed that it had rabies probably as a result of the attack by the flying cat. Jean Revers later was offered some money for the cat, which had been well publicized in the press, but he was unable to regain the cat from the Kemptville laboratories. For obvious reasons, it had been disposed of already.

All that remains of the terrible 'volant chat' is a rather poor photograph taken by Bernard Denis in *Le Carilon* and possibly any extra copies held by Dr. Meads that were not later destroyed with other old records. The 'flying cat' had probably been affected by rabies and went mad in the wilds. Without sufficient food and not grooming itself, its fur became matted over a long period of time before it began attacking the squirrels, cats, and dogs of Alfred. It is truly doubtful the creature could even run for any distance in its weakened state and surely impossible to fly or glide for any distance as had been reported. Unlike many contemporary reports of monsters not properly investigated, this one was shot down.

Prescriptions - (Continued from page 88)

technological and scientific expertise that we may sometimes have. However, Forteans can begin to use their unique, creative, and innovative minds in this endeavor by skillfully "piggy-backing" on the present accomplishments of modern technology: we should use existing

technological equipment as our instruments of observation and experimentation (e.g., radio and television transmitters and receivers, EEG and other "biofeedback" equipment, Kirlian photographic equipment). The full realm of modern scientific apparatus is at our disposal; we do not have to start from scratch "in the backyard" as our "counterparts" of a century ago had need to do. It is

our role, however, to use such apparatus in the unique ways (and for the novel purposes) that Forteans are most able and best qualified (and therefore most responsible). More than being our role, this is our obligation. In fact, without Fortean effort, this necessary task will probably go undone.

It should be further emphasized that this call for Fortean involvement in research and experimentation is not a call for the abandonment or compromise of Fortean interests, perspectives, expertise and dedication. On the contrary, it is a call for the application of these very strengths on a new tactical front to maximize the productivity of Fortean efforts. Properly approached, these new methodological ways for us to expand our

scientific contributions will continue to bear the distinctive and unique mark of the Fortean mind and perspective. This call is directed to the extension of these very investigatory qualities to the research arenas traditionally monopolized by establishment science. It is not a call for abdication; rather, it is a call for the expansion of our scientific repertoire (e.g., to investigatory approaches presently exclusively held fast by institutional "landlords"). It is a call for fertilization of the narrow, blinded, and constrained thinking that often characterizes contemporary scientific research (which, in these respects, has long lay fallow) with the distinctly unique, creative, and innovative contributions that Forteans (perhaps alone) can make.

SYMPOSIUM

Comments and Opinions

SITU would like to express a deep and lasting gratitude to Claudia Englert for the tremendous help that she has given freely to the Society. Until her recent move to another state she has unselfishly come into headquarters every week to assist in numerous necessary tasks; without the help that she freely offered, SITU would not have been able to carry out a number of projects and accomplishments that her voluntary help has enabled us to do. All attempts short of kidnapping threats failed to persuade her to stay, and now we are left with the feeling that we have lost a very close friend. On behalf of our entire membership — thank you Claudia. . . .

* * *

Please take notice of the added information appearing on the inside of the front cover of this issue. Under *Membership* has been added the statement that henceforth SITU may add a researching fee for requests that are mailed in to headquarters. We have hesitated to do this in the past, but we are now faced with a serious problem; because of an increase in membership there is naturally an increase in research requests coming in daily. This in turn increases the demands on our staff's time. We are unable, therefore, to continue providing this service free to our members. Rather than raise our membership dues in order to allow us the ability to hire additional part-time help, we are instead asking the members who avail themselves of this service to help us continue to provide it. Requests which require researching time will be charged accordingly, and members sending in a self addressed stamped envelope will be notified of the charge (reasonable inquiries will still be answered without charge whenever possible) in advance.

* * *

Member #659 is doing research on regression hypnosis as applied on a mass scale. Anyone actively interested in this subject who wishes to write and/or exchange information, contact: Member #659, c/o SITU.

* * *

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE! Let us know immediately if you change your address. A number of *Pursuit* journals are returned to our office every mailing because members forget to inform us of address changes. Third class mail is not forwarded by your Post Office. We cannot afford to send out a large number of duplicate journals to members who have neglected to inform us of a move on their part. The time to inform us is before the journal is mailed out.

* * *



Claudia Englert

T-SHIRTS

These are a tremendous help to members who *really* want to get their Forteanism out of the closet and into the streets. Four dollars (plus \$1.00 to cover postage and handling) will buy some very interesting comments. They are 100% cotton (white) with blue lettering only. Please specify size (S,M,L,XL) when ordering and allow six weeks for delivery.

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