

NEWS

ISSUE 132 AUTUMN 2010

Devereux on Earth Mysteries

INSIDE:

TRAINING AND EVENTS
LIONEL FANTHORPE COLUMN
COINCIDENCES
THE QUEEN'S CONJURER
DAVID CHRISTIE-MURRAY
GHOSTS AND THE MONMOUTH
REBELLION





The Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena was formed in 1981 to research and education about a wide range of paranormal phenomena as well as preserving heritage. These fall into the broad categories of psychic phenomena, earth mysteries, Ufology and Fortean phenomena. ASSAP holds no corporate views and the views expressed by individual authors are their own.

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ANGLIA PARANORMAL INVESTIGATION SOCIETY

(APIS) Operates in the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire area. Contact Paul Keech at apismail@ntlworld.com or phone 01234 771 351 or visit www.apisteamspirit.co.uk

CHESTERFIELD PSYCHIC STUDY GROUP (CPSG) Offers a programme of talks by invited speakers on the second Friday of each month at 7.15pm at the Community Centre, South Place, Chesterfield. Visit www.cpsg.co.uk or phone 01246 413217.

GHANON is a group covering Wirral, Cheshire and North Wales. Membership by invitation. Contact emailus@ghanon.org or visit www.ghanon.org

LEICESTERSHIRE PARANORMAL ASSOCIATION (LPA)

Contact Ian and Vanessa Walker on info@leicsparanormal.tk or visit www.leicsparanormal.tk

LEICESTERSHIRE PARANORMAL RESEARCH

ASSOCIATION (LPRA) Contact Caroline and Margaret Pick on lpmail@aol.co.uk or phone 07904 785 174

MELTON PARANORMAL RESEARCH SOCIETY (MPRS)

Based in Leicestershire. Contact Christine Hankey on 07745 398 569 or email meltonparacub@aol.com

MIDLAND PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS operates throughout the Midlands. Check out www.midlandparanormal.co.uk or email

mark@midlandparanormal.co.uk or phone 0121 603 7356

THE MIDLANDS GHOST RESEARCH SOCIETY (TMGRS)

Operates in the Coventry area. Visit www.tmgrs.co.uk or email Amanda and Martin at info@tmgrs.co.uk

OPEN MIND INVESTIGATIONS (OMI) Operates in the Kent and Hampshire areas. Contact Cara via the website on www.omi-uk.org

PARA.SCIENCE Meet on the first working Monday of each month at Bebbington Civic Centre on the Wirral. (8pm) Visit www.parascience.org.uk

PARANORMAL AWAKENING SCIENTIFIC STUDY

ASSOCIATION (PASSA) Operates in the Midlands area. Contact Stefan on 0121 353 7622 (admin@navigatortm.com) or Cherill on 01543 685 913 (susan.penton1@btinternet.com) or visit www.paranormalawakening.com

PARANORMAL SITE INVESTIGATORS (PSI) Operates in Wiltshire and surrounding area and produces e-newsletters and research journals. Contact Dave or Nicky through www.p-s-i.org.uk HauntedSwindon.com TheOrbZone.com or 0845 6521529.

PARASEARCH operates in Worcestershire, Shropshire, Warwickshire and the West Midlands. Visit www.parasearch.org.uk or phone: 0121 550 8874 / 07505 323443 or send an SAE to Parasearch, 15 Brier Mill Road, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 3HA.

PLYMOUTH ASSAP Operates in Plymouth, South Devon and South East Cornwall. Contact Lee at eustacetuttle@yahoo.co.uk

SPIRIT TEAM UK Operates in the Midlands, with meetings at Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Coventry. Contact Alan at enquiries@spiritteamuk.com or visit www.spiritteamuk.com

STAFFORDSHIRE PARANORMAL STUDY GROUP (SPSG)

Monthly meetings in Stoke on Trent. Contact Terri at thespsg@yahoo.co.uk or visit www.spsg.org.uk

SUPERNATURAL INVESTIGATIONS UK (SI) are based in Devon and Somerset and Cornwall but also operate further afield, mainly focusing on hauntings. Contact Stuart at stuart@supernaturalinvestigations.org.uk

Introduction to Scientific Paranormal Investigating: the ASSAP Training Weekend



Last Chance for Cheap Tickets!

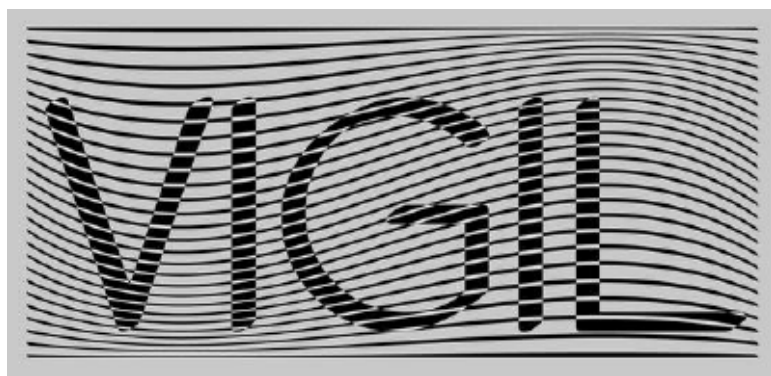
Date: 4-5 December 2010

Place: Oxenwood, Wiltshire

Event: A great refresher for experienced ASSAP AAIs, the perfect introduction for newer investigators and for those moving over to the scientific method.

Send off your booking form in the first week of October at the discounted rate of £25 (rising to £40 after that)

A number of keen investigators were unable to attend the 2009 Training Weekend. Because there is a lot of demand in the south, ASSAP has decided to run an additional event at this popular location.



VIGIL is a participatory investigation into alleged paranormal phenomena at the Royal Academy Schools. Audience members take an active role in a vigil within a haunted site.

Tours at 8pm, 8.35pm, 9.10pm and 9.45pm on 1 and 2 October; each tour last approximately 1 hour; £10/£7. Over 16s only; if you have special mobility requirements, please contact us on 020 7300 5732.

This event is organised by ASSAP members David Luke, Blue Firth and Mark Pilkington, following their attendance at the Training Weekend 2009. The event was a little close to the ASSAP News date of publication, but we hope it reaches you in time.

OFFICIAL CHARITY CALLING NOTICES

Elections:

Any members wishing to stand for election should contact the Chairman, Dave Wood, for details of how to stand by the end of October. Any current Executive Members who have served their current two-year term who do not wish to re-stand should contact the Chairman.

The Annual General Meeting:

The ASSAP AGM will be held at Oxenwood OEC nr Marlborough, SN8 3NQ at 10am on Sun 5 December.

AGM Motions:

All members have a postal vote on AGM motions. Any business for discussion at the AGM should be submitted to Dave Wood by the end of October.



**October 23-24:
UnConvention,
Central London**

Tickets cost £30 for the day or £50 for the weekend. Book at ForteanTimes.com
Speakers include David Clarke, Paul Devereux, Jon Downes, Richard Freeman, Andy Roberts and Alan Murdie. ASSAP will be running the Paranormal Olympics all weekend!

GH STFEST ^{s w i n d o n} **FREE** **25-31** **OCTOBER**

ALL EVENTS 100% FREE

Monday 25 - Could you be a Paranormal Investigator?

630pm Oxford Brookes Ferndale Campus (Swindon), no need to book.

Tuesday 26 - Wiltshire's Paranormal Folklore

Local speaker. 730pm Central Library, no need to book.

Wednesday 27 - Ghost Walks of Old Town

Including Lawn Chapel. Various times. Pre-booking essential.

Thursday 28 - Haunted Swindon

Local speaker. 730pm Central Library, no need to book.

Friday 29 - Ghost Walks of Highworth

Including Highworth Tunnels. Various times.
Pre-booking essential.

Saturday 30 - Seriously Strange (Main Event)

Arts Centre, 12-6pm. Hear about hauntings and cutting edge thinking and research by TV personalities, authors and researchers. Pre-booking essential
Also find out if you are 'psychic' in our experiment room.

Saturday 30 - Mini 'Ghost Hunts' at the Arts Centre

Can you experience the Arts Centre ghosts? Various times.
Pre-booking essential.

Sunday 31 - Halloween Afternoon Lydiard Park

Family fun. No need to pre-book. See website for details.

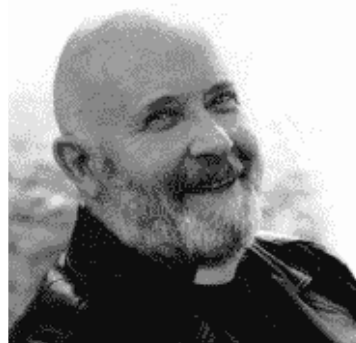
Sunday 31 - Mini 'Ghost Hunts' at Lydiard House

Can you experience Lydiard House's ghosts? Various times.
Pre-booking essential.

Free conference speakers include Peter Underwood, Chris French, ASSAP's Nicky Sewell and Hayley Stevens, and is hosted by ASSAP President Lionel Fanthorpe.

Free events include 'mini ghost hunts' which are research projects with Goldsmiths College, University of London and the

**ASSAP
Paranormal
Olympics.
GhostFest is
Lottery
funded and is
run by ASSAP
group PSI.**



Find out more or book tickets:

**HauntedSwindon.com
or call 0845 6521529**



Mysterious Witch's Cauldron

In Frensham Church, Surrey

By Lionel and Patricia Fanthorpe

Many historic churches contain ancient and unusual articles, but the Church of St Mary the Virgin in Frensham in Surrey is the only one that we have encountered in half a century's research that contains a witch's cauldron. There are three fascinating legends surrounding that cauldron and how it finished up in St Mary's. The first is that it was a magical vessel belonging to the fairies, who lived in hidden caves below Stony Jump Hill near the village. There was an aperture in one of the stones which was believed to lead down to their secret realm. When someone needed to borrow the cauldron for catering for guests at a village wedding, or to prepare magical herbal healing



medicines, they whispered to the fairies through the crevice and the cauldron duly appeared. Once it had been used by the grateful villagers, it had to be returned. One borrower forgot – according to this legend – and the

angry fairies put a spell on the cauldron so that it followed the forgetful borrower everywhere making loud metallic sounds as it travelled. Driven to the depths of despair by the noisy cauldron, the forgetful borrower finally ran to the church and prayed to St Mary for help. The cauldron settled down silently in the church and never moved again!

A second legend relates to a local witch, or wise-woman, known as Mother Ludlam. In this version, she was the owner of the cauldron and loaned it to deserving villagers for mass catering or healing purposes. Once again, someone forgot to return it. The normally friendly, helpful and neighbourly old wise-woman displayed the other side of her nature

and pursued the failed returner with terrifying malevolence and aggression. The borrower fled to the church for safety, and the cauldron has lain there ever since. The third legend concerns Satan himself. Resentful because the

wise-woman's cauldron had the gift of healing, and resentful of her generosity in lending it to the poor, Satan disguised himself as a villager and pretended he wanted to borrow it. Shrewd and observant Mother Ludlam recognised the cloven hooves below his long cloak and refused. He made a grab for it and ran. With great courage she pursued him! Her wrath must have been formidable as even Lucifer decided to flee from her. She finally overtook him and he dropped the cauldron so that he could run faster. Cauldrons were also referred to as 'kettles' in those days, and Kettlebury Hill is said to bear its name because that was where Satan dropped the cauldron. On recovering it, Mother Ludlam took it to the church for safe keeping as she knew that Satan would not be able to steal it from there.

The favoured, rational, historical explanation is that apparently some churches in the Middle Ages tended to brew ale for their parishioners, and the only magic in the Frensham cauldron was the magic in the alcohol in St Mary's home-brewed village ale! But the cauldron legends are a tribute to the power of the medieval imagination!



*The mysterious cauldron in the Church of St Mary the Virgin in Frensham. (left)
Church of St Mary the Virgin at Frensham (right)*



This is a series of articles examining the basic questions of paranormal research. Though primarily aimed at those new to the subject, some old hands may also find something of interest.

Coincidences and the Paranormal

is that an investigator examining the site later on may notice nothing because there is no washing around

Q: What have coincidences to do with the paranormal?

A: A lot more than most people imagine! Many paranormal reports are caused by coincidences. And in parapsychology experiments, the results have to be significantly different from coincidence, or random chance, to show any paranormal effect.

Q: How can a coincidence cause a paranormal report?

A: The best way to explain is by an example. Suppose someone is walking along a dark road at twilight when they see a shadow on a wall, cast by someone's washing nearby blowing in the wind, which resembles a moving person. Startled by the 'shadow ghost', the witness doesn't notice the washing, and reports the sighting as a ghost. Consider some of the chance factors involved:

- a) some washing hung up happened to resemble a human figure (a coat perhaps), if the shadow fell in a different direction it would not resemble a person
- b) the shadow happened to hit a wall (as opposed to the ground) making the 'figure' look vertical, as if standing or walking
- c) there happened to be low lighting, increasing the likelihood of misperception
- d) the observer happened to believe in ghosts

Only if ALL these factors come together, a rare coincidence, will anyone report the sighting as a ghost. Take away any one of them and there would be no report. Another interesting point

anymore.

Q: What about a real life example?

A: A witness noticed a woman in a red coat ahead of them while walking along a street. Moments later she had 'vanished', just like a ghost, though there was nowhere the woman could have gone! An apparently different woman was later noticed along a side street - she was carrying a red coat! The witness had not noticed when the woman took off her coat, making her look completely different. In effect, the 'woman in red' vanished from the witness's view! By pure coincidence, the woman had removed her coat during the few moments when the witness was looking elsewhere.

Q: How do you tell the difference between the paranormal and a coincidence?

A: To do that, you need to know the odds of something happening by chance. Unfortunately, for many things in life that is difficult to work out. The odds of throwing a six with a die are easy but how likely is it that your bus will turn up just as you arrive at the stop? It depends on many factors, most unknown to a witness. Most people tend to over-estimate the odds against any particular event happening making things appear surprising when, really, they are not.

Sometimes there are events that are so unlikely that most people would see some meaning in them.



Either they would regard themselves as incredibly lucky, unlucky or perhaps see it as paranormal. For instance, if you wish something highly unlikely would happen, and then it does, it would be easy to see that as paranormal or even magic.

But it is still most likely to be a coincidence. If the odds are stacked against an incident happening, it does not mean it will NEVER happen. Rather, it will simply only happen very infrequently. The higher the odds against something happening, the less frequently it occurs.

Some people argue that paranormal causes are more likely to explain a particular case because the alternative natural causes are so incredibly unlikely. However, as explained above, this is not really a valid argument. High odds against an event mean it will hardly ever happen, not that it won't ever occur. If something happens a lot, it's unlikely to be reported as paranormal.

Q: When does an unlikely event stop being a coincidence and become truly paranormal?

A: A single event, however unlikely it might seem, can never really be called paranormal simply because it is incredibly unlikely. However, a series of highly unlikely events happening at a particular place or over a short time or to the same person, suggest something paranormal may be happening.

There's a 1 in 6 chance that someone will successfully predict the score when they throw a die, which is not particularly unlikely. If, how-

ever, they continue to correctly predict which number will appear for dozens of throws, it starts to look like the paranormal may be at work. When highly unlikely events start to occur much more frequently than they should, we need to consider explanations other than chance, including the paranormal.

Q: What if someone has repeated unlikely events happen to them?

A: The odds of winning the UK National Lottery are about 14 million to one against. And yet most weeks one or two people win. That's because millions of people take part so there is a good chance that ONE of them will win most weeks. If the SAME person won the lottery repeatedly, that would be truly remarkable and possibly paranormal.

Given how long we live, it is likely that most people will experience a few highly unlikely coincidences during their lifetime. It is simply because the longer you live, the more unlikely events you will encounter. It does not mean there is anything paranormal going on.



Gulls: misidentified UFO

Q: What's in the photo?

A: This strange UFO was photographed in Paris. It looks like a cross between a bird and a plane. It is, in fact, two gulls flying over the Seine. They just happen, by coincidence, to be in the same line of sight and close to each other, apparently making a single weird flying object. If this was only noticed after the event, once the gulls had departed, it could easily be interpreted as a UFO.

Further information:

<http://www.assap.org/newsite/articles/Coincidence.html>

Devereux on Earth Mysteries

My area of work has for decades been involved primarily with what are now called the anthropologies of consciousness and cognitive archaeology – their forerunner was the multi-disciplinary collection of interests formerly and collectively referred to as “earth mysteries”. There were important strands of insight and research in earth mysteries together with a lot of fantasy, misinformation, and New Age idealism. One key theme was the study of “leys”, or what became tautologically known as “leylines”. Although the old ideas of them being traders’ routes, and, more recently, “energy lines”, were erroneous, there was a germ of truth that has gradually been teased out – the results of that can be seen in my “Spirit Roads” book (2003, 2007): the common factor behind straight ways both physical and “virtual” in many traditions around the ancient and traditional world has emerged as being a deep-rooted idea that spirits (of various kinds) had special routes through the physical landscape. This idea persisted from the Neolithic era (and possibly before) right up to late Medieval and even Early Modern times in some places. Many old leyhunters still prefer the old, comfortable and familiar notions, though, and have resisted moving with the tide of fresh, accountable research, discovery and understanding.

What might be called “grown-up” earth mysteries is now enshrined in the journal Neil Mortimer (editor of the former *Third Stone* magazine) and I founded called *Time & Mind* – *The Journal of Archaeology, Consciousness and Culture* (www.bergpublishers.com/journals), a high-quality peer-reviewed publication. It deals with all kinds of well-researched material at the cutting edge of mainstream archaeology, including acoustics at ancient sites, the use of

altered mind states in traditional and prehistoric societies, rock art, quartz, oracle caves, new archaeological findings, and much more. Anyone who is seriously interested in the mysteries and anomalies of the past, and their implications for our current knowledge, rather than looking for phony sensationalism, would enjoy and benefit from reading it. It is now into its third year of publication.

The study of sound at archaeological sites (“archaeoacoustics”) is, indeed, one of my main personal research areas, and I urge ASSAP members to visit our Royal College of Art website – www.landscape-perception.com where we have started to chronicle our audio-visual study of the Carn Menyn ridge in the Preseli Hills in Wales, source area of the Stonehenge bluestones. You won’t believe your ears!

Look out for my latest book, “Sacred Geography” (Gaia Books) due out summer 2010. It is highly illustrated and contains a great deal of new and updated information.

Paul Devereux is a leading light in earth mysteries as well as being a founder member of ASSAP. He has written 25 books and is author of a range of peer-reviewed articles.



Focus On... is a series of educational articles covering the wide range of anomalous phenomena ASSAP has researched, mainly written by experts in their field.

If you would like to contribute a piece please contact us first - news@assap.org

David Christie-Murray

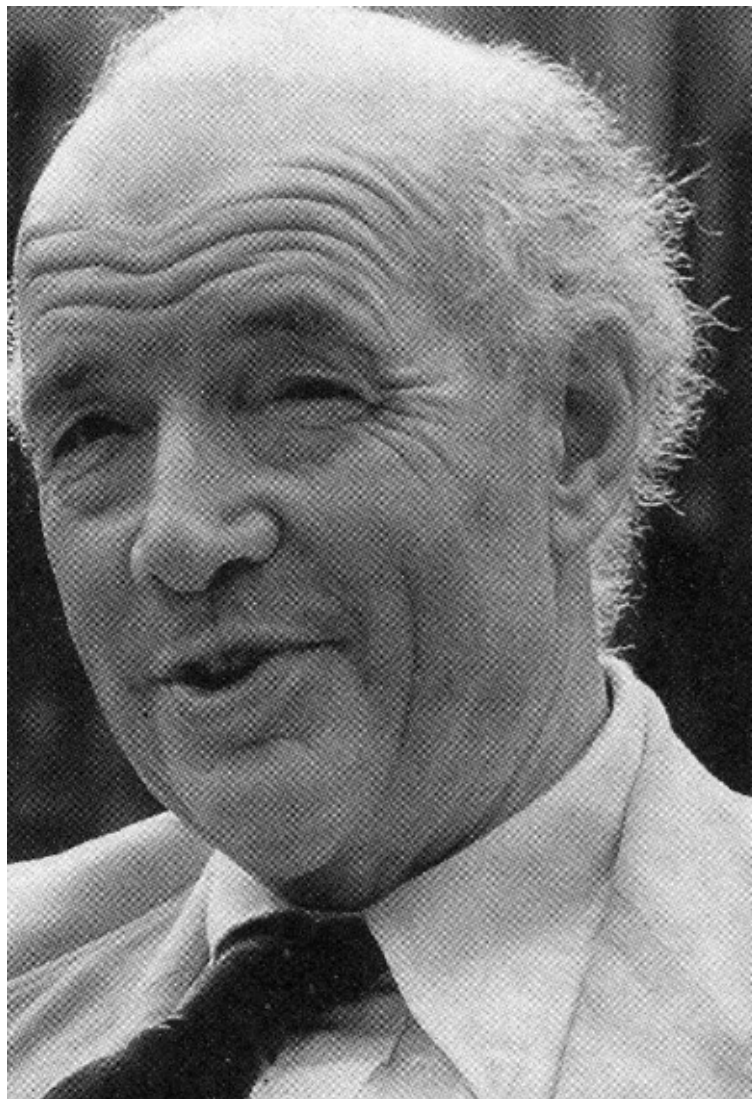
Dr Hugh Pincott looks back on the life and achievements of one of ASSAP's most distinguished founder members who died in March aged 96 years.

Not many people know that David, an ordained Anglican minister and noted peace-maker, once captained Oxford University at boxing (beating Cambridge!). Or that a published expert on both heraldry and heresy was also the author of a seminal volume on reincarnation.

Following school at St Lawrence, Ramsgate, David studied for a Diploma in Journalism at University College, London, working in that field from 1934 to 1937, including a period at *The Times*. He then applied for training for the priesthood in the Church of England, and graduated with his

Oxford theology MA in 1942. Later that year he was ordained at Rochester Cathedral, and was a youth organiser in that diocese until 1946.

Moving to Harrow School he became an assistant master and assistant chaplain, where he taught English, Divinity, Latin and several other subjects. He also taught in the USA, and lectured widely. After his retirement from Harrow, David wrote eight books, mainly on theology. His tome *The*



History of Heresy was one of the set books at the University of California. His love of language and literature made him an accomplished wordsmith.

David was one of the outstanding athletes of his generation, and excelled at race-walking - a popular sport in the 1930s and 1940s. He became very close to being selected for Britain in the 1948 Olympics. His wife Betty, whom he married in 1942 died in 1967, and four years later he married Sheila, who had been his literary agent for

many years.

Alison, one of David's three daughters, recalled that he hated dishonesty and cheating of any kind, and he disliked unkindness. "He was a faithful, good, kind and gentle man: he was courteous, tolerant, broad-minded and a peacemaker. He was disciplined, hardworking and consistent. He had that greatest of gifts: integrity.

He was an explorer all his life: an explorer of ideas, of his faith, of mystery and of the paranormal. It was a great disappointment to him that he never saw a ghost!"

Survival of bodily death - in all possible forms - intrigued David, who wrote one of the most authoritative books, *Reincarnation: Ancient Beliefs and Modern Evidence*. He became an active member of the Survival Joint Research Committee Trust, a group which undertakes experiments of communication between the living and dead, with a view to exploring survival. In a letter to the Committee telling of his death - he wrote several of these about 15 years ago, filing them carefully for the day they would be appropriate - he announced that "he was going on to investigate Survival on his own account."

One of the deep blackspots in David's life arose from his willingness to assist the Society for Psychical Research through a particularly difficult period in 1980, when inflation up to 25 % per annum was corroding finances with membership dwindling rapidly. He was appointed a Vice-President (as the Articles of Association required) to enable him to chair routine meetings of the Council. As also the chairman of the Publications Committee, David initiated the issue of a highly-successful series of books published by Heinemann to mark the Society's centenary in 1982.

But The Publications Committee also had the bright idea of producing a range of small booklets that - as part of a membership drive - could serve as an introduction to the field of study for people new to the subject, with references to literature for further study. This totally laudable venture went horribly wrong when the cost of printing four or five booklets at a printer chosen for high-quality work turned out to be some four times what Council had budgeted, though sales over a period might have recouped much of this. Great objection was raised even to the books' "garish" covers, though they looked plain enough and even attractive to many.

Frankly, this was no big deal in itself, but it afforded a convenient opportunity for many of

the "old guard" - plus academics with vested interests and fear of "popularising" - to halt the advance of the so-called "modernisers" whose achievements had made them uneasy for some time. A series of highly acrimonious Council meetings where innuendo of wrong-doing was rife, and accusations barely-disguised on occasion, caused David to resign from the Vice-Presidency and Council itself. That virulent witch-hunt and serial ingratitude cut very deep: "One of the worst experiences of my life", he recalled. Yet forgiveness and reconciliation flowed freely from him, whereas others bore grudges and recriminations for decades.

At that time I was the SPR's Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, and was considered to be a leader of the "modernisers". Since I knew of the booklets and paid the printers' bill, I was declared guilty by association, and my resignation demanded too. As I refused to resign, Council called an Extraordinary General Meeting to amend the Articles of Association so that I could be expelled!

David was a great influence in my life, persuading me to assess religious and philosophical dogma critically but sympathetically. Undeniably a very godly man, David shone by example. I was highly impressed by his renunciation of the priesthood, for as he said: "It is not for me to tell others what to believe". His personal quest to understand the meaning of life and probe possible survival of bodily death was an inspiration to many reseachers of life's mysteries.

David was generous in a material sense too, affording much support to the fledgling ASSAP. We all remember his and Sheila's joint kindness in looking after our archives for an extended period, and also opening their home in Surrey for numerous garden parties.

A towering intellect balanced with deep humility, David was - as Shakespeare put it - "one of Nature's Gentlemen".

* I am grateful to David Ellis, Production Editor of the SPR Journal for affording me information on David's earlier life and family details.

The Queen's Conjurer: Dr John Dee

Part I - The Introduction

By Michael John Gage, Mike@michaeljohngage.co.uk

This first article is a broad introduction of a two part paper that I will be writing taking an in-depth look into the life of Dr. John Dee, the famous English 14th century occultist and supernatural researcher. Dee was most noted in history for his ambiguous supernatural and hermetic research, the advisory position he acquired with Queen Elizabeth the 1st and, rather infamously, his professional partnership he shared with suspected conman, medium and alchemist Edward Kelly. The first part, the one you are currently reading, is an introduction into the study of Dee, an outline of the project, its intentions and my reasonings for writing such a paper. The second part, which will feature in next year's anomaly, will contain the bulk of my research, a host of Dee's drawn diagrams, a plethora of personally sourced photographs from the British Museum and, hopefully if the editor of Anomaly will allow, the entirety of the Enochian glyph language with which Dee was said to commune with angels, all within context of course. It is a study that I have been excited to begin since I started writing for ASSAP late last year and finally, moving some time aside, I am able to do so.

Let me begin by saying that Dr. John Dee is a person who has fascinated me ever since I began reading into the paranormal nearly ten years ago now and even though I've read nearly all there is to know on the man, he intrigues me even now. As you may have noticed from previous papers I have written in the past, I have a somewhat macabre and, some would say a very odd interest in dark tales concerning the paranormal, the quirky and the

down right hideous. Dr. John Dee in some respects would fit into all three of those worlds perfectly and that is why I imagine he peaks my interest and why I am compelled to write this two part article on him. There are few people that are able to peak my interest like John Dee within a historical context; Guy Fawkes our infamous rebel, Vlad the Impaler, said to be the original inspiration for Dracula,



Elizabeth Báthory, the woman who was accused of kidnapping and killing over six hundred young women to an end of bathing in their blood and, even bizarrely and particularly the murderous case of Jack The Ripper have all gained my interest at some point or another and I can genuinely say that I sit here looking at a bookshelf with a decent

amount of literature concerning each one of them.

Thankfully though, John Dee was far from mercilessly murdering bang tails on the wet cobbled streets of Whitechapel, or attempting to blow Parliament and King James sky high. No, Dr. John Dee was a far more refined gentleman, one that was bent on researching somewhat outlandish subjects within the supernatural confines of the Elizabethan age, rather than carrying out ominous deeds. His work primarily involved studying rather fallible and subjective aspects of the occult; such as astrology, scrying, alchemy and also the communication with angels, using the rather confusing and questionable Enochian language, a hieroglyphic language which Dee claimed they spoke to him with. Dee's paranormal research had him travelling across Europe, informing universities, organizations and, even royalty

about his spiritual communications with divine beings, though all these connections with notable individuals only came off of the back of his more well known partner, Edward Kelly who's simultaneous infamous and famous reputation got them both into sticky situations multiple times. It wasn't until he was given accolade decades later that Dee gained his own fame posthumously within the occult subject.

Rather less successfully, Dee also studied and invented devices for navigation throughout the 1550s becoming a chief advisor to Queen Elizabeth for England's voyages of discovery. He also studied astronomy religiously and even gave ideological backing to a "British Empire", a term that he was the first to use, but at the time failed to inspire. Dee also surprisingly managed, over the course of his life, to amass the finest collection of books within Europe at his stately home at Mortlake. His library was visited by scholars and learned individuals and it became a centre of learning outside the universities but unfortunately later in Dee's life became the victim of vandalism and theft, no doubt cutting our understanding of Dee dramatically in the process.

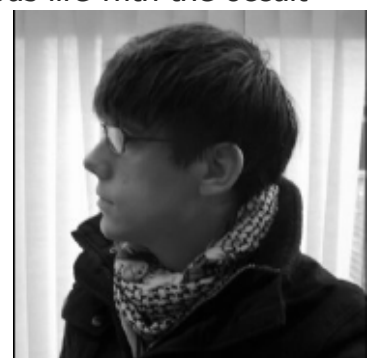
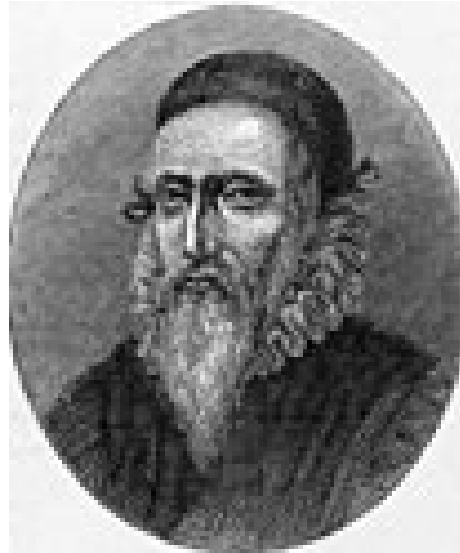
What interests me more than anything else about Dee though, besides his life and his career, is his similar relationship to modern day paranormal researchers. If you get down to the nitty-gritty of the subject not so much has changed over the last few centuries since John Dee's days of research. People still gaze over crystal balls, deal tarot cards and commune with angels. People still look for a connection to the other side of life and, still hunt for spirits. But more precisely we are still searching for the answer, that seemingly unattainable proof of the afterlife. Whether taking to the subject with the crazy notion that EMF meters can de-

tect ghosts, or the even more crazier notion that Ouija boards are devices for summoning spirits, we are all looking for that one answer, that one shred of tangible evidence that there is some kind of sentient activity after our own mortality has given up. Though Dee and his colleagues of the Elizabethan age studied the paranormal and the occult in a wholly different and, perhaps primitive way to contemporary study, we all still share a very interconnected global 'trans-time' goal and interest in attaining specific answers, answers that even Dee, five-hundred odd years ago, was searching for and, even now, we are no closer to answering.

As mentioned above, my research on Dee will contain a very detailed study on his activities of the paranormal and of the occult specifically. A recent article found in an ASSAP Newsletter written by Wendy Cousins no less, featured Dee and gave a broad understanding of his entire life, which was very informative, but in my research and my subsequent paper within the second part to this article, I wish to delve head long into the occult that Dee studied and within the subjects he researched as a whole. His profound and perhaps misguided interests in the language of angels, the 'Enochian language' interests me specifically, something we will be touching on rather heavily in part two, as well and his working relationship with Elizabeth the 1st as her advisor in astrology and science. I hope you will join me in the next, more detailed, half of this article next year where I'll be going far more in-depth and far less broadly into Dee and his rather mysterious life with the occult circles.

Images of Dr John Dee courtesy of Mary Evans picture library.

Author Michael Gage pictured right





Ghosts of the Monmouth Rebellion

There are many hauntings relating to the English Civil War but I thought I would introduce you to a few relating to another conflict, The Monmouth Rebellion.

Like many of the ancient battlefields of Britain, Sedgemoor - the site of the final defeat of the Duke of Monmouth's ill armed rebel army - has gathered many folklore traditions and legends. The battle of Sedgemoor, 1685, was the last stand for the 'pitchfork' rebel army of the Duke of Monmouth. His army of supporters, which numbered around five thousand strong, were mainly armed with nothing more than farming implements. They were slaughtered mercilessly by the accurate gunfire of James II troops, as they attempted a night attack across the Sedgemoor marshland. The revolt started in June of that year, when the Duke tried to claim the throne, landing first at Lyme Regis in Dorset. The Duke managed to muster a fair amount of support from the Somerset people, who suffered terribly in the aftermath of the battle, during the trials known as the 'Bloody Assizes'. The trials were presided over by the notorious Hanging Judge, George Jeffreys, 1st Baron Jeffreys of Wem, who sentenced hundreds of people to death.

There are many stories of ghosts and other traditions attached to the area, and there is little wonder as the events of the battle and the bloody aftermath, left a deep mark upon the local people.

One traditional tale tells of a local lad fighting with Monmouth's army, who was captured after the battle. He was famed throughout Somerset as an exceptional runner, and to amuse themselves his captors told him that his life would be spared if he could keep pace with a horse. He rose to the task and managed to stay beside their finest horse at full gallop. This remarkable feat of athleticism was not to save his life however, for after the race he was put to the sword just the same, his captors reigning on their promise to spare his life. His

sweetheart was so devastated by the news of her lover's death that she drowned herself in the shallow waters of the levels, her ghost remaining to haunt the levels accompanied by the sound of a man and a horse running at full pelt.

In her book Somerset Folklore Ruth L Tongue records a local tradition recorded in 1890, of how a researcher in the 18th century was told by a farmer that he had heard the sound of someone shouting "come over and fight" one foggy night in the vicinity of the battlefield. This was said to have been the battle cry of the Duke's men, desperately shouting at James's army to join them in battle as they were mown down by musket balls. Although the farmer believed that the source of the voice must have been a drunkard, the tale has now become the tradition that the battle site is haunted by the sound of ghostly cries.

The ghost of Monmouth is also said to appear on the battlefield either on the third or sixth of July, on the anniversary of the battle (the battle was on the night of the sixth of July). Monmouth actually managed to escape the battle with his life but was captured a few days later hiding in a ditch. He was executed for treason at the Tower of London on July the fifteenth. The Duke had calmly paid the axe man - Jack Ketch - to do a swift and clean job, but the axe man lost his nerve and took five bloody strikes to relieve the Duke of his life, much to the outrage of the amassed crowd. Even after those five strikes the Duke's head was still attached to his twitching body, finally separated from his shoulders with a knife, on the order of the Sheriff.

As mentioned above the 'Bloody Assizes' followed Monmouth's defeat and they have been the reputed source of many reported hauntings. One such haunting surrounds the case of Lady Alice Lisle of Moyles Court.

Mentioned in the Domesday Book (1086) as being held by Cola the Huntsman, Moyles Court is now a private school on the edge of the New Forest in Hampshire. It was once the home of Lady Alice Lisle who was executed for sheltering traitors following the Monmouth Rebellion which has been described as judicial murder. According to 'Haunted England: A Survey of English Ghost Lore' (1941) by Christina Hole, *'Tradition says the sound of her silk dress and tapping of her heels were long afterwards heard in the corridors of Moyles Court, and that sometimes she was seen passing down Ellingham Lane in a driverless coach drawn by headless horses.'*

Lady Alice Lisle (born September 1617 – died 2 September 1685) was the daughter of Sir White Beconshaw of Moyles Court. In 1630 she became the second wife of the Regicide Sir John Lisle (1610-1664) who was a Judge in the trial and execution of King Charles I. According to The Complete Peerage (Vol IV, Appx G, p.622) *'He was a violent anti-royalist, and active promoter of the King's trial, and drafted the sentence. He was present in Westminster Hall, 27 Jan 1648/9, when the sentence was pronounced, though he did not sign the death-warrant.* He was assassinated by Thomas Macdonnell (also known as O'Croli) and Semus mac Eoinn Mhic Choitir (or James Fitz Edmond Cotter / James Cotter) in Lausanne, Switzerland where he had fled following the Restoration of the Monarchy. At the time of King Charles I's execution, Alice Lisle was reported to have stated *'her heart leaped within her to see the tyrant fall'* but much later, probably during her trial claimed *'shed more tears than any woman then living did'* for the dead King. A quote from Burnett in the Salisbury Journal states, *'She was not easily reconciled to her husband on account of his association with the regicides.'*

Lady Lisle was in London during on 6th July 1685 when the Monmouth Rebellion was crushed at the Battle of Sedgemoor. On 20th July 1685 she received a message from John Hickes requesting shelter. Hickes was a known Nonconformist minister and she suspected he was in trouble for illegal preaching. He was also a member of Monmouth's army who had been on the run since Sedgemoor, though Alice claimed she knew nothing of this. Hickes arrived

several days later with another rebel named Richard Nelthorpe. The following day Hickes, Nelthorpe and Lisle were arrested by Colonel Penruddock, the men for being traitors and the seventy year old Alice for harbouring them. Colonel Penruddock would have had little sympathy for Lady Lisle as her husband had been part of a Cromwellian court that had sentenced his father, a well-known royalist who had fought at Salisbury to death. He was decapitated in Exeter.

Dame Lisle's was the first notable trial of the Bloody Assizes which followed the Monmouth Rebellion and led by Lord Chief Justice George Jeffreys, 1st Baron Jeffreys of Wem (born 15 May 1645 – died 18 April 1689). Her trial took place on 27 August 1685 at Winchester Castle and the jury was reluctant to find her guilty and the proceedings went over to 28 August. Judge Jeffreys over ruled the jury's scruples and she was found guilty. It was pointed out that she was charged with harboring a traitor, namely Hickes, yet Hickes himself had not been found guilty of treason at that point. The plea was again over ruled.

Lady Lisle was condemned to death. Judge Jeffreys sentenced her to be burnt at the stake that very afternoon, 28th August 1685. Burning would save her from the indecency of a hanging and possible drawing and quartering, but it was still a terrible sentence to be passed down on an elderly lady.

Pressure on Judge Jeffreys gained Dame Lisle a reprieve on her execution date to 2nd September 1685. On 31 August Lady Lisle petitioned King James II requesting a further four days stay of execution and to change the method from burning to beheading. The King refused to give Alice the extra few days but did commute her sentence to beheading.

She was beheaded on 2nd September 1685 in Winchester Market Place and stepped onto the scaffold from a window of the Eclipse Inn. The Eclipse Inn dates from 1540 and over the past centuries the building has had many uses including a rectory, private residence, ale house (around 1750) and from the nineteenth century an Inn.

The Grey Lady that has reputedly been seen several times in one of the corridors upstairs is also said to be Dame Alice Lisle. Alice spent her last night in an upper story room of the building which is now The Eclipse Inn and stepped through a window of the building onto a specially made scaffold.

She was beheaded on 2nd September 1685 in Winchester Market Place and a plaque marks where she died.

The last words of Lady Lisle:

*Gentlemen, Friends and Neighbours,
It may be expected that I should say something at my Death, my Birth and Education being near this Place ; my Parents instructed me in the Fear of God ; and I now die of the reformed Religion ; always being instructed in that Belief that if Popery should return into this Nation, it would be a great Judgement. I die in Expectation of Pardon of my Sins, and Acceptation with the Father, by the imputed Righteousness of Jesus Christ : He being the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth. I thank God, thro' Christ Jesus, I depart under the Blood of Sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel ; God having made this Chastisement an Ordinance to my Soul. I did as little expect to come to this Place on this occasion, as any person in this Nation ; therefore let all learn not to be high-minded, but fear. The Lord is a Sovereign, and will take what Way he seeth best to glorify himself by his poor Creatures ; I there for humbly desire to submit to his Will, praying of him, that in Patience I may possess my Soul.*

The crime was, my entertaining a Non-conformist Minister, who is since sworn to have been in the Duke of Monmouth's army. I am told, if I had not denied them, it would not have affected me : I have no Excuse but Surprise and Fear ; which I believe my Jury must make use of to excuse their Verdict to the World. I have been told, That the Court ought to be Council for the Prisoner : Instead of Advice, there was Evidence given from thence, which (tho' it was but Hearsay) might possibly affect my Jury. My Defence was such as might be expected from a weak Woman ; but such as it was, I never heard it repeated again to the Jury.

But I forgive all persons that have wrong'd me ; and I desire that God will do so likewise. I forgive Colonel Penruddock, altho' he told me, He could

have taken those Men, before they came to my House.

As to what I expected for my Conviction, that I gave it under my Hand that I discours'd with Nelthrop ; that could be no Evidence to the Court or Jury, it being after my Conviction and Sentence.

I acknowledge his Majesty's Favour in revoking my Sentence ; and I pray God he may long reign in Peace, and that the true Religion may flourish under him.

Two things I have omitted to say, which is, That I forgive him that desir'd to be taken from the Grand Jury, and put upon the Petty Jury, that he might be the more nearly concern'd in my Death ; and return humble Thanks to God, and the reverend Clergy, that assisted me in my Imprisonment.

Following the execution her body and head were returned to her family and she is buried at St Mary's Church in Ellingham.

The stories of Dame Alice's ghost serve a purpose, they remind us of the events surrounding her death and the public outrage associated with her legal murder. She is said to haunt Moyles Court, the Eclipse Inn and the lane in Ellingham, however, the number of hauntings attributed to Judge Jeffreys is far more including The Town of Ramsgate public house in Wapping, a haunted coach in Enfield and numerous buildings which held his trials.

By Ian Topham

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