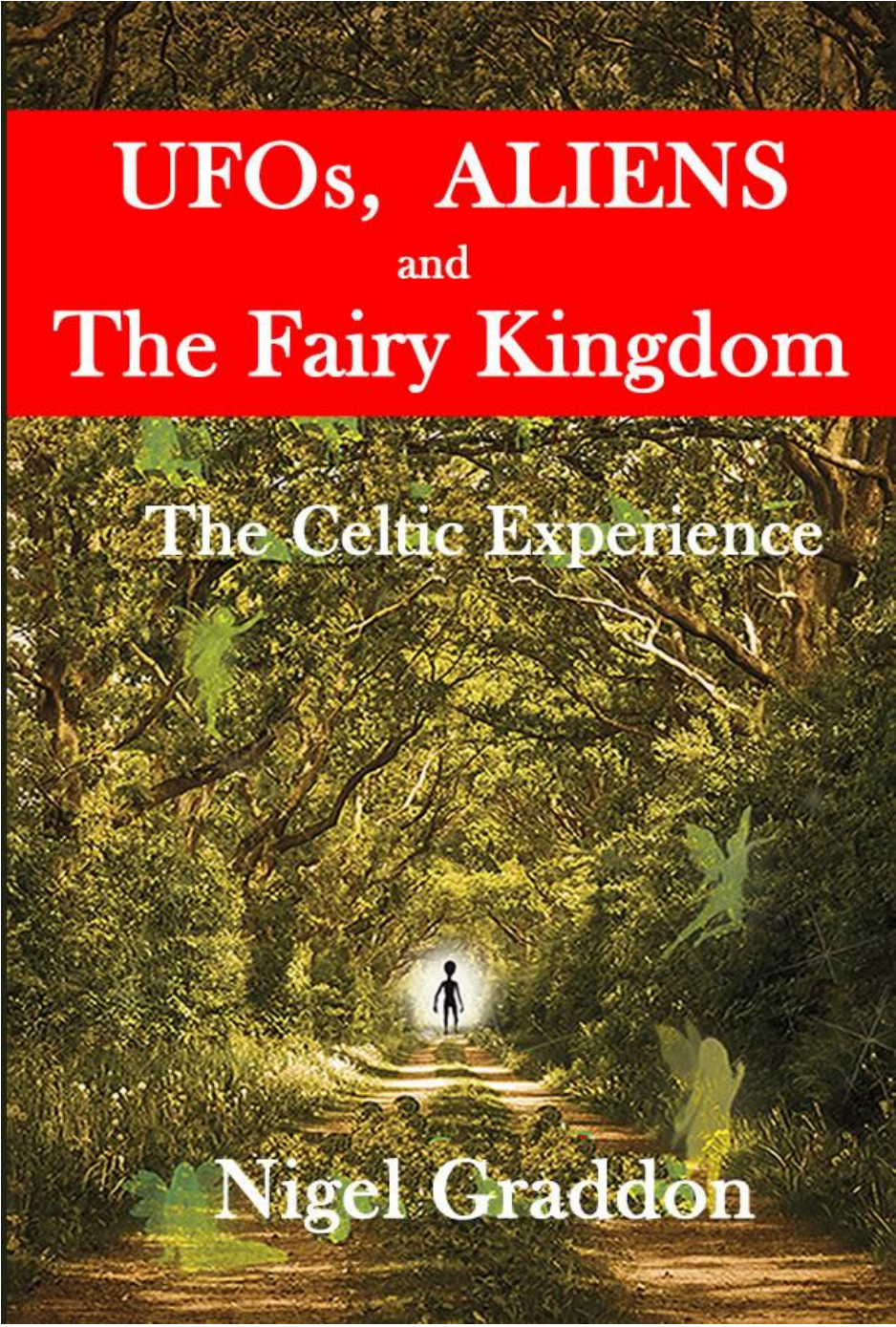


The background of the book cover is a lush, dense forest. A dirt path winds through the trees, leading towards a bright, glowing light at the far end. In the center of this light, a small, dark silhouette of a person stands. The trees are thick with green leaves, and the overall atmosphere is mysterious and ethereal. The title text is overlaid on a red banner at the top.

UFOs, ALIENS and The Fairy Kingdom

The Celtic Experience

Nigel Graddon

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UFOs, Aliens and the Fairy Kingdom

By

Nigel Graddon

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*Up the airy mountains,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather.*

*Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide foam;
Some in the reeds,
Of the black mountain lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
All night awake.*

—*The Fairies*, William Allingham

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Introduction

“We (that indivisible divinity that operates in us) have dreamed the world. We have dreamed it as an enduring, mysterious, visible, omnipresent in space and stable in time; but we have consented to tenuous and eternal intervals of illogicalness in its architecture that we might know it is false.”¹

In the last 120 years Wales has hosted a surprising number of “extraterrestrial” phenomena. Most of these have been labelled as “UFOs,” certainly described as such since 1947 after American pilot Kenneth Arnold claimed he saw nine, shiny unidentified objects flying past Mount Rainier in Washington State, thereafter the term quickly becoming part of the global lexicon.

UFOs, Aliens and the Fairy Kingdom—the Celtic Experience examines equally significant inexplicable events in Wales and interprets them in the light of current scientific and cultural research, which proposes that the phenomenon of strange things seen in the skies has a parapsychological cause. This new thinking is based on certain key assumptions, namely:

- Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) are neither extraterrestrial nor the result of hoaxes or delusions, but rather are a control system, which is intended to stabilise the relationship between man’s conscious needs and the rapidly evolving complexities of living in the physical world;
- UFOs have both a visible reality (with mass, volume, inertia and so on) and a window to other planes of reality;
- UFOs’ occupants, more usually referred to as Non-Human Entities (NHEs), are creations from the dreamscape, a

¹ Borges, J.L., *Other Inquisitions, 1937-1952*, University of Texas Press, 1964.

dimensional reality that intersects ours at right angles where we encounter UFOs in the psychic planes of perception. Writer H.P. Lovecraft described NHEs as “ultraterrestrials,” which are co-terminous with all space and coexistent with all time;

- UFOs neither fly nor are they objects; they materialise and dematerialise, violating in the process all known laws of motion;
- UFOs are not necessarily an aspect of some form of an unknowable higher order of life; they are products of a well defined and regulated technology, seemingly utterly bizarre by human standards;
- The same power imputed to flying saucer people of influencing human events was once the exclusive property of fairies, known in Welsh folklore as the Tylwyth Teg.

UFOs, Aliens and the Fairy Kingdom examines key events through the lens of these startling ideas, drawing upon historical, cultural, mythological and scientific data.

In their classic work about high strangeness in Wales, the fabled land of Merlin and dragons, Pugh and Holiday² cite the late Gordon Creighton who, writing for *The Flying Saucer Review*, observed that:

...beings from flying saucers are much more probably creatures who share this earth with us; regarding whom science has not a single word to say; but about whom our own written and oral traditions, in all our civilisations, speak volumes.

“Creatures who share this earth with us...”—this statement requires some thought. According to folklore the world over, humankind has been sharing the earth with supernatural beings since time immemorial. Up to the pre-industrial period our traditions referred to these beings collectively as fairy folk, recondite life forms intimately connected with the natural world.

Men and women used to live their lives much closer to nature than has been the practice over the past two hundred and fifty years, a blink of an eye compared to the length of time that humankind has been living on this planet. Consequently, unusual life forms if glimpsed or experienced in former times were readily associated with the natural

² Pugh, R.J., and Holiday F.W., *The Dyfed Enigma*, Faber and Faber, London and Boston, 1979.

world, and invariably described and stories told of them in terms of the earth's basic elemental makeup.

Countless tales were told about the fairy folk and their supposed origins because it is in the nature of men to seek to explain and rationalise the unexplainable. Then came the Industrial Revolution, the age of the machine. Those among the strata of society that for millennia had traditionally toiled on the land moved to towns and cities to find work in the new age "dark Satanic Mills." The minds of men and women were then inculcated with new mental archetypes: the spinning jenny replacing that of the plough, and the farm worker discarding his harvest scythe for the navvy's spade to dig canals and railways.

The rapid switch from farm to factory inevitably generated a sense of doubt and fear and a feeling of deep loss for a bucolic past. This emotional upheaval elicited a whole host of social and political challenges. Later, C.J. Jung reflected deeply on this phenomenon. He readily understood that the fear factor caused by rapid and fundamental social change had led humankind to look to the skies for help because it could no longer be found on the green and pleasant earth with which it was innately familiar, hence the appearance of signs in the heavens. What once had been routinely described as fairy visitations took on a technological connotation and revealed themselves to percipients as flying disks or other like-symbols.

The sixteenth century villagers of Merionethshire were terrified of entering Coed-y-Dugod Mawr (the Great Dark Wood) for fear of encountering the Red Fairies who lived in dens in the ground, had fiery red hair and long strong arms, and stole sheep and cattle by night. Such was their fear that locals kept scythes in their chimneys to repel these terrible beings.

There are countless tales in myth and folklore of fairies and little green men. Growing evidence posits the theory that there is little or no difference between them and that the intrinsic nature of these accounts and the entities described is one and the same. By removing the cultural, social and temporal factors that separate these narratives we see them for what they are: encounters with non-human entities (NHEs), although *not* necessarily non-human like.

It is the memes and tropes of successive epochs that seek to label these phenomena, which, in essence, are simply brushes with energy forms that exist in what Jung described as "a yet unknown substrate

possessing material and at the same time psychic qualities.”³ In *UFOs, Aliens and the Fairy Kingdom* we will examine in depth the possible nature of Jung’s substrate and, in so doing, reach for insights into the vexed question. Whence they come?

The following pages will seek to demonstrate that humans label little green men in accordance with their time, truth, tradition, beliefs and societal mores. One man’s goblin is another’s grey. No matter how we have described them in human history, one tantalising question remains. Do NHEs really originate in a distant galaxy? Based on current thinking, is it not more likely that they have always been among us, are among us now, and in the corner of one’s eye may be glimpsed by the flickering light of a candlestick, if Jack be nimble, Jack be quick?

What lies behind the cracks in our world remains a mystery but for those that have a hunger to know, all is not lost. Myth, legend, fairy tales, sci-fi stories and, for example, the fertile minds of Mark Frost and David Lynch, each tell us something about the “Man from Another Place”; while cutting edge thinkers in quantum physics are beginning to reveal how the existence of *Twin Peaks*’ parallel universe might even be possible.

In the field of traditional folklore our journey in *UFOs, Aliens and the Fairy Kingdom* will be guided by the work and insights of outstanding cultural figures, such as Robert Kirk and Walter Evans-Wentz, in our quest to understand the nature and origins of NHEs. Regarding modern-day UFO studies, a review of the pioneering work of researchers of the calibre of Linda Moulton Howe, John Keel, Jacques Vallée, Anthony Roberts, Geoff Gilbertson, John Michell, Carl Jung and the like will further help one arrive at a deeper understanding of a great and enduring mystery.

This work will also draw inspiration from an in-depth examination of the latest ideas from the science community on the nature of physical existence and the case for the existence of multiple dimensions. This analysis will be greatly enhanced by incorporating the key principles identified by the late Professor David Bohm in his mindblowing reflections on what precisely is reality. Can it truly be the case that man’s collective conscious is the engine of creation that makes and maintains the physical universe, moment by moment?

³ Jung, C.J., *Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Skies*, ARK edition, London, 1977

Do NHEs constitute a threat to humankind? Do they perceive our military and environmentally destructive actions as an existential threat to the structural integrity of the earth and to its invisible, but no less real, interconnecting and complementary worlds and their inhabitants? Do the worst among them regard the overall chaotic outpourings of our emotional selves as a vampiric Smörgåsbord of delights, food for the Dark Gods who relish a gift that just keeps on giving? Conversely, in the midst of global chaos, do we also detect in our encounters with anomalous forces the building of a new energy, one founded on the qualities of hope, grace, inspiration, positive belief, and love for nature?

Increasingly, particularly in the U.S., the term UFO (Unidentified Flying Object) is being replaced by UAP (Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena). The first recorded use was in the U.S.A.'s Office of the Director of National Intelligence's June 2021 report titled "Preliminary Assessment: Unidentified Aerial Phenomena," with the acronym's label evolving from "aerial" to "anomalous" later.

Since the early 1950s the term UFO has referred to flying objects that are not identifiable through conventional means. Usually, these objects are speculated to be "flying saucers" or extraterrestrial aircraft. More recently, American military and scientific experts charged by the National Intelligence office to investigate the phenomenon have wanted a way to divert sightings from stereotypical associations with UFOs and alien activity. Authorities take the view that separating the human from the nonhuman is important as government officials, scientists and other professionals that work with UAPs aim to take a more realistic and timelier look at what exactly these strange sightings are all about.

In my opinion these considerations are all well and good, but one can become a little too sniffy about attributing this or that label. I am happy to continue using the term UFO on the basis that if it looks like a duck and quacks like a duck, then a mysterious flying object, whether it be from space, fairyland or Jung's "unknown substrate," is what it is irrespective of how we choose to dress it up.

*

In its provision of excellent case studies for our investigations, Wales punches well above its weight in comparison with countries of far greater landmass or population. Anomalous events such as those that will be described clearly indicate that the history of unexplained

phenomena in Wales is characterised by large-scale activity of astounding breadth and significance.

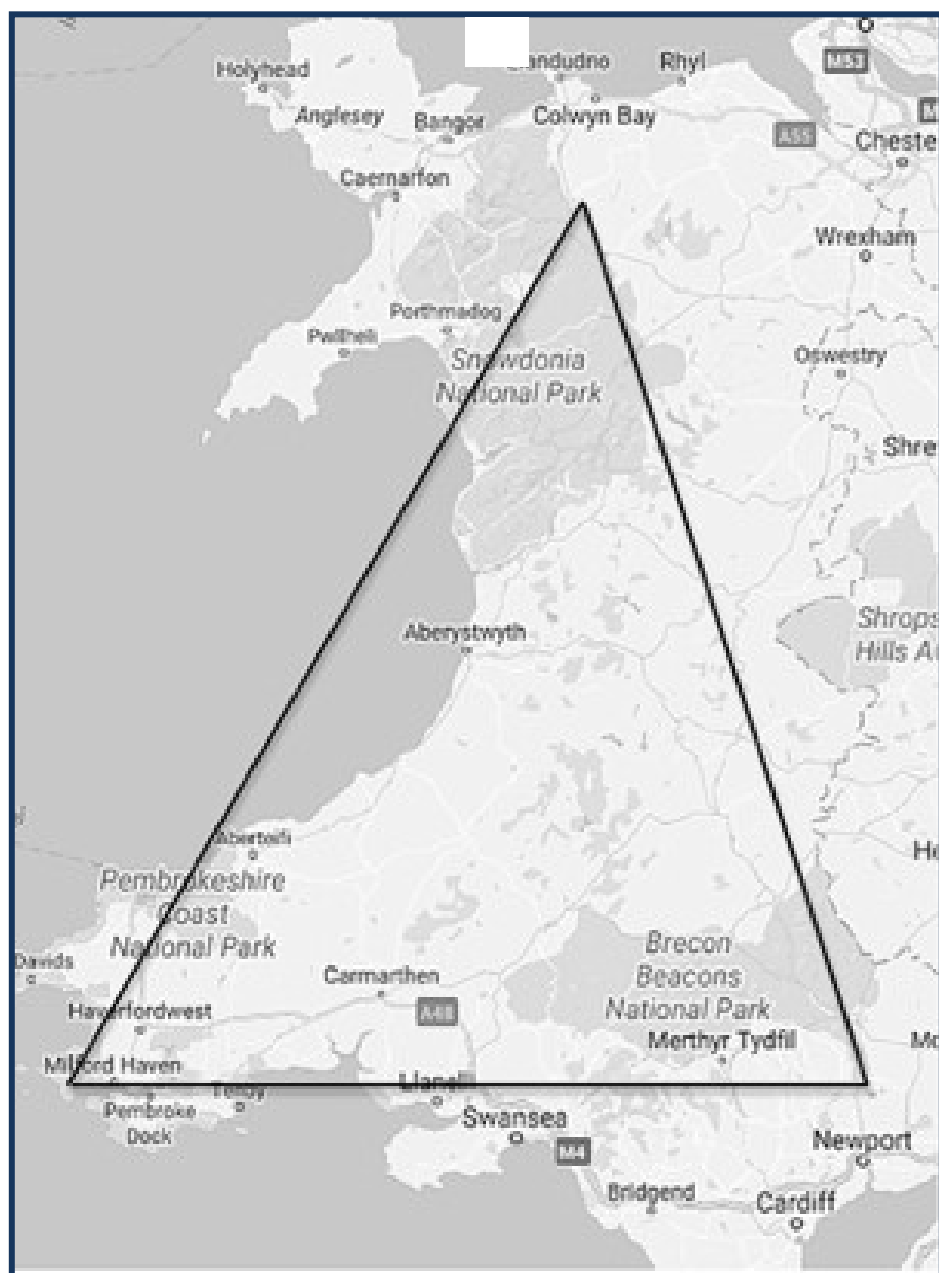
One thirty-fourth the size of Texas, for example, and with a population of a little over 3.1 million, Wales is a Celtic land filled with beauty, magic and mystery. Its legendary fare is epic. In the *White Book of Rhydderch*, the *Red Book of Hergest* and the *Hanes Taliesin*, the three volumes that make up the *Mabinogion*, the earliest prose stories of Britain, we read marvellous tales of enchantment. Spellbound, we are gripped by Arthur's fantastical exploits in which the Once and Future King quells mountaintop monsters and troublesome dragons. In the pages of "Llud and Llefelys" we read of fairies, the bad ones of the bunch that want to seize and do harm to humans. Wales' ancient power exists today in its haunting hills and valleys. Stories persist about the presence of dimensional portals in the Black Mountains area of the Brecon Beacons in the southeast and in Pembrokeshire's Preseli hills in the southwest. The western regions of Wales are favourite haunts of the Tylwyth Teg. Legends speak of them living on Pembrokeshire's enchanted islands, in underground dwellings in Cardiganshire, and under lakes in Carmarthenshire close to the hillside cave where Merlin sleeps with his fairy consort, Vivian.

There is a tradition that Shakespeare visited Brecon for background material for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The story goes that Shakespeare's friend, Robert Price, took the playwright to Cwm Pwca, the haunt of the ellyllon in the Clydach Gorge and the purported glen setting on which the work is based. The fairies are reputed to inhabit a cave in the wooded gorge. Today, the gorge and cave are popularly known as the Valley of the Goblins and Shakespeare's Cave.

Part 1 of *UFOs, Aliens and the Fairy Kingdom* focuses on key anomalous events that have taken place in Wales since the beginning of the 20th century. Part 2 examines myth, folklore, expert opinion, and current thinking in the physical sciences regarding the nature of UFOs, their occupants and origins. Are they truly visitors from the cosmos or, remarkably, are they homegrown?

PART ONE

Events



The “Welsh UFO Triangle”

The Egryn Lights 1904-1906

‘Mrs Jones, unless mistaken, your light still accompanies us.’

‘Yes, I kept both occasions to see whether any of you perceived it for yourselves.’

The town of Barmouth and its surrounds is the location of a fascinating event known as the “Egryn Lights” phenomenon, which took place between December 1904 and March 1906. This account has all the usual features of UFO sightings, including unworldly lights and the baleful presence of “Men in Black,” creepy personnel frequently described in UFO lore as appearing very quickly at the scene of UFO activities with the apparent objective of scaring witnesses from reporting on particulars. In December 1904 residents of the villages of Egryn, Bryn-crug and Towyn described seeing in the surrounding hills an enormous luminous star of intensely brilliant white light, its circumference emitting dazzling sparks. It poised

in midair, a fiery mass of every conceivable colour spreading on all sides and descending into a rainbow shower to the surface of the mountain. Even more spectacular events were seen at nearby ancient megalithic remains. There, several multicoloured columns of light emerged out of the ground and leapt upwards. One appeared to flutter before producing spheres of light, which slowly rose up its length before exploding at the top. The lights took the forms of starlike bodies,

WONDERFUL WELSH SEER.



Mrs. Mary Jones, of Islaw'rffordd Farm, near Dyffryn, in North Wales, and her daughter. She is said to be accompanied by a miraculous star when she goes about her revival work in the neighbourhood. Sometimes this star appears in the heavens to guide her on her way; at other times a soft radiance illuminates her path. These phenomena have been vouched for by many disinterested witnesses.

spheres, ovals, glowing arches, bars, and luminous forms “suspended” upon incandescent “arms.” On one occasion a bloodred light no more than a foot from the ground appeared before startled onlookers in the centre of the village street. On another a group of villagers walking near Barmouth suddenly saw a soft shimmering radiance that was flooding the road at their feet. Some described it as a luminescent snowy whiteness, others as brilliant blue. Immediately, it spread around them; every stick and stone within twenty yards visible as if under the influence of the soft light. Villagers said later that it was as if some large body between earth and sky had suddenly opened and emitted a flood of light from within itself. The effect was like that of a bursting firework bomb, yet wonderfully different. They looked up and saw an oval grey mass, half open, disclosing an interior kernel of white light.

This was not the first occasion when “fiery exhalations” had been witnessed in the area. An online journal, *Science Frontiers*, reported in July 2001 that in 1790 a Welsh gazetteer published this report:

A remarkable phenomenon was seen near this town [Harlech] in the year 1694 and it continued about the space of eight months. It was a livid vapour, or fiery exhalation, which seemed to arise from the sea on the borders of Caernarvonshire. It made its first appearance on the side of a bay, a little after sunset, and from thence spread itself in the most gradual manner, until it had set all the houses in the neighbourhood on fire.

Not only the ricks of hay, corn, and other sorts of grain were destroyed, but also the vegetables in the gardens, for it had so noxious a smell that everything perished where it diffused its baleful influence. Its effects were severely felt by the cattle to whom [sic] it communicated a contagious distemper, by which many of them died.

It made its appearance regularly every night, always rising at the same place, nor did it stop its course either by rain or storms. It was sometimes visible by day, but it was very remarkable that it never did any damage except in the night. The flames were in no way violent, but its continuance at last consumed everything that opposed it.

Those few scientists who have mused over this curious old account have concluded that the “fiery exhalations” resulted from the spontaneous ignition of marsh gas; that is, the flames were will-o'-the-wisps, albeit relatively powerful ones.

Will-o'-the-wisp theory states that marsh gas (mostly methane) also contains phosphane and traces of diphosphane (P_2H_4). The latter gas reacts spontaneously with air and ignites the methane, creating weak blue flames.

In 1847, John Mason Neale, describing in *The Unseen World* the same incident, now dubbed the “Harlech meteor,” said:

.... the celebrated Harlech meteor of 1694: between Harlech and the Caernarvonshire side of the Traeth Bychan intervenes a low range of marsh land, running up some way into the country. Just before Christmas, 1693, a pale blue light was observed to come across the sea, apparently from the Caernarvonshire coast, and moving slowly from one part of the neighbouring country to another, to fire all the hayricks and some of the barns which it approached. It never appeared but at night. At first the country people were terrified at it; at length, taking courage, they ventured boldly close to it, and sometimes into it, to save, if it might be, their hay. As summer came on, instead of appearing almost every night, its visits were confined to once or twice a week, and almost always on Saturday or Sunday. It now began to cease from firing ricks, but was hurtful in another manner; for it poisoned all the grass on which it rested, and a great mortality of cattle and sheep ensued. At length it was traced to a place called Morvabychan, in Caernarvonshire, a sandy and marshy bay, about nine miles distant from Harlech. Storm or fine weather seemed to make no difference to this meteor; but any loud noise, as shouting, firing guns, blowing horns, appeared to prevent its doing mischief. It was seen for the last time in the August of 1694.

Similarly, blue-coloured lights appeared in the neighbourhood of Pwllheli in 1875, while two years later lights of various colours were seen moving over the estuary of the Dysynni.

Investigators of the 1904-05 recurrences, described alternately as the Egryn Lights or the Harlech Lights Flap, later mapped the precise locations of the many sightings in the four-month period and discovered that they were strung out like beads on a thread centred round the deep seated Mochras Fault, which runs north-south between the coastal towns of Harlech and Barmouth and passes almost directly under the village of Egryn. The nearby northeast–southwest Bala geological fault also passes by Egryn. It was learned that the area had

been subject to tremors immediately around and after the occurrence of the lights, which culminated in a minor earthquake under the Swansea area in 1906. Ground-lights were also seen in nearby Llangollen to the east in April 1905. Three local vicars who had gathered to see what all the fuss was about saw them ‘burst luridly’ and fly off.

Investigators advanced the notion that the phenomenon went back much further. They suggested that people who lived in this northwestern area of Wales 3,000 years ago might have witnessed similar lighting phenomena and marked the appearances by building stone edifices to mark the sites. This interpretation supports the belief that there is a connection between the flight paths of UFOs, earth energies and ancient civilisations.

In 1958 French UFO specialist Aimé Michel⁴ set out his ideas on the existence of fixed alignments of energy paths across the globe that are navigated by UFOs. Michel dubbed these alignments “orthotemies.” The late Bruce Cathie, a New Zealand pilot and pioneering researcher of earth energy science with whom I shared fruitful exchanges, returned to the theme in his descriptions⁵ of an all-encompassing worldwide grid, one whose interlocking lines correspond to the lines of flight of UFO appearances and whose properties are governed by the speed of light. The values of Cathie’s grid reflect harmonic relationships with the acceleration and deceleration of light, gravity and the mass of the earth

The mysterious lights in Merionethshire quickly became associated with lay-preacher Mary Jones of Islaw’rfford, near Dyffryn. A contemporary described her as ‘a simple-mannered country woman of thirty-five, her hair touched with grey. She was absolutely without self-consciousness, and had a quiet, easy mien. Her tone was deep and soft, but her brown eyes were alive with a strange light. I think she had natural powers of personality.’

*

Mary Elizabeth Powell was born at Bontddu on 30th March 1868 to Morris and Anne Powell. Bontddu was then a small gold and copper

⁴ Michel, A., *Mystérieux Objets Célestes*, Arthaud, France

⁵ Cathie, B., *The Energy Grid*, Illinois. Adventures Unlimited Press, 1990.

mining community on the north side of the Mawddach estuary, a few miles west of Dolgellau, on the road to Barmouth. The Powell family would have attended Bethania Calvinistic Methodist Chapel. However, soon after Mary was born, her parents moved to Sarnfaen farm near Talybont, a few miles north of Barmouth.

On 16th November 1887 Mary Powell, then 19 years old, married Richard Jones, who in 1881 was working on her aunt Mary Owen's neighbouring farm, Glanafon Hall. After they married, Richard and Mary Jones took on Islaw'rffordd farm, just half a mile south of Sarnfaen. They soon had a son, who they named Robert after his grandfather. A few years later they also had a daughter, Annie. Tragically, the son died in 1893 at the age of six. The couple were devastated. Mary was particularly badly hit by the experience and plunged into a depression, which intensified when a sister died a short while afterwards. Her grief and subsequent personal despair, which continued for many years, gradually led her to seek after God.

At that point, just before the onset of the Welsh Revival in 1904, Mary came across a copy of a recently published book called *In His Steps: What Would Jesus Do?* by an American Congregational minister from Topeka in Kansas, Charles Monroe Sheldon (1857-1946). The book first appeared in America in 1897. It would subsequently become a worldwide best seller, helping to bring into being the Social Gospel movement, which characterised the church's response to the social and economic challenges of life in the first half of the twentieth century. The theme of *In His Steps* focusses on imagining what would happen if a group of Christians took seriously the call to discipleship and only did in life what they felt Jesus himself would do when faced with the decisions that need to be made daily in every sphere of life. Mary was profoundly affected by the book and determined to obey the promptings of the Holy Spirit, an aspect of her faith that would become a key characteristic of her ministry. She was especially intent on rekindling her husband's faith, which had been dwindling but she was unsure as to the next steps she should take going forward.

Presently, reports of the ministry of Glamorgan-based Evan Roberts, a leading figure in the Welsh Revival of 1904-05, began to reach Mary through the press in November 1904, and she was greatly encouraged. She later spoke to a local journalist, who reported:

"I did not want to go out to the big world outside Egryn," she said with a pathetic catch of the breath. "Who was I to do that? But oh I

longed to be the means of bringing my husband to Christ. For 17 years my example had shown him the hollowness of a mere profession of religion, and my heart yearned to be allowed to undo the wrong I had thus done him. I prayed that I might convert all my relatives, friends, and neighbours; I did not ask then for more than that.”

That night, “whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell,” the Saviour appeared, and told her that the mission for which she longed was not for her but reserved for another, whose name for obvious reasons I suppress. In the morning she visited this friend and told her the message. “Oh, I can never do it! I can never do it,” was the response to the proffered commission. That night Mrs Jones's “Star” appeared for the first time. She attended the little chapel, related her vision, told how her friend had refused the heavenly commission, and added, “She has missed the one great opportunity of her life, and my service is accepted.”

On the 5th December 1904, Jones began her Christian revival work at Egryn Chapel. On this same night a star of light was heralded by a luminous arch that witnesses likened to the Aurora Borealis, one end resting on the sea, the other bathing the little hilltop chapel in a soft luminescent glow. The star then appeared, its light flooding the chapel.

From that night the star and the lights always accompanied Mrs Jones's preachings, Mrs Jones and her Welsh Revivalist congregation adopting the Egryn Lights as proof that God was communicating with them. Each night the star would appear above a particular house, its occupant afterwards coming to the Egryn chapel as a new convert. Some witnesses saw the lights around Jones making jumping motions, rushing or coming together (sometimes with a loud peel of thunder), or balls of fire rising from the ground and bursting.

On 22nd December three people saw a large light to the south of Egryn Chapel, describing that within the light could be seen a bottle or black person, and that surrounding the large light were smaller ones of many colours.

A man saw three lights in formation like a Prince of Wales feathers over a farmhouse on the 2nd January. In what was probably the same sighting, a woman saw lights between Dyffryn and Llanbedr.

By the 15th January *The Barmouth Advertiser* was reporting on Jones's group, stating that “close upon 40 converts” had been enrolled. However, the journal at this stage did not refer to the phenomenon of

the lights.

The next day Mrs Jones in conversation with an enquirer said: "I have seen the light every night from the beginning of the Revival about six weeks ago. Sometimes it appears like a motor-car lamp flashing and going out, and injures nothing at all; other times like two lamps and tongues of fire all round them, going out in one place and lighting again in another place far off sometimes; other times a quick flash and going out immediately, and when the fire goes out a vapour of smoke comes in its place; also, a rainbow of vapour and a very bright star."

The enquirer asked, 'Have the lights been seen by anyone who had not been converted?'

'Yes,' Mrs Jones replied.

By the 9th February, Jones's preachings and the accompanying lights phenomena had attracted wider coverage, articles published in both the *Daily News* and the *Guardian* prompting the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Mirror* to send journalists to North Wales to investigate. The resultant media frenzy lasted for about a week.

On 11th February, the *Daily News* reported an Egryn resident's remarkable account:

At 8.15 p.m. I was on the hillside, walking from Dyffryn to Egryn. In the distance, about a mile away, I could see the three lighted windows of the tiny Egryn chapel, where service was going on. It was the only touch of light in the miles of countryside. Suddenly at 8.20 p.m. I saw what appeared to be a ball of fire above the roof of the chapel. It came from nowhere and sprang into existence simultaneously. It had a steady, intense yellow brilliance, and did not move... It seemed to me to be at twice the height of the chapel, say fifty feet, and it stood out with electric vividness against the encircling hills behind. Suddenly it disappeared, having lasted about a minute and a half... The minutes crept by and it was 8.35 p.m. before I saw anything else. Then two lights flashed out, one on each side of the chapel. They seemed about 100 feet apart, and considerably higher in the air than the first one. In the night it was difficult to judge distance, but I made a rough guess that they were 100 feet above the roof of the chapel. They shone out brilliantly and steadily for a space of

thirty seconds. Then they both began to flicker like a defective arc lamp. They were flickering like that while one could count to ten. Then they became steady again. In the distance they looked like large and brilliant motorcar lights. They disappeared within a couple of seconds of each other... I set off to walk the four miles to Barmouth, stopping here and there for ten minutes to watch for fresh lights... Just after half-past ten I was startled by a flash on the dark hillside immediately on my left and looking up I saw I was comparatively close to one of the strange lights. It was about 300 feet up the hillside, and about 500 feet from where I stood. It shone out dazzlingly, not with a white brightness, but with a deep yellow brightness. It looked a solid bulb of light six inches in diameter and was tiring to look at. I ran at the stone wall by the side of the road, climbed it, and made a run for the light. It was gone before I had covered a dozen yards, and I could find nothing but the bare hillside. When I reached the road again, I looked back along the way I had come and saw in the roadway near the Egryn Chapel another of the bright lights.

The latter event is probably the same as reported by another witness at Egryn Chapel that took place at around 10.30 p.m. on the 11th. A *Daily Mirror* journalist, speaking with the Society for Psychical Research, reported the account:

... I then told Mrs Jones how anxious I was to see the light for myself, and she said she would pray that it might appear to me. I made arrangements to drive back behind her carriage. Both drivers consented to drive without lights. In the first carriage were Mrs Jones and three ladies, in my own with me, the *Daily Mirror* photographer, a keen witted, hardheaded Londoner... For three miles we drove in silence, and I had given up hope. It was close on midnight, and we were nearing Barmouth when suddenly, without the faintest warning, a soft shimmering radiance flooded the road at our feet. Immediately it spread around us, and every stick and stone within twenty yards was visible, as if under the influence of the softest limelight. It seemed as though some large body between earth and sky had suddenly opened and emitted a flood of light from within itself. It was a little suggestive of the bursting of a firework bomb - and yet wonderfully different. Quickly as I

looked up, the light was even then fading away from the sky overhead. I looked up to see an oval mass of grey, half open, disclosing within a kernel of white light. As I looked it closed, and everything was once again in darkness. Everyone saw this extraordinary light, but while it appeared to me of snowy whiteness, the rest declared it was a brilliant blue.

More than two months later the Egryn Lights phenomenon appeared to widen its sphere of activity when in the early hours of the morning Reverend E.W.E. of Ystrad in Rhondda, 127 miles from Barmouth, reported seeing lights near Penrhys Hill after attending a meeting with Mary Jones. Two days later a Dr. R.J.M. saw similar lights at Libanus where Mrs Jones was holding a meeting.

One particular report from Mrs Jones highlights the appearance of a chilling figure in black that was not what he seemed. Returning home one night well after midnight from one of her mission meetings, Mrs Jones dismissed her driver, telling him that her brother would walk her the rest of the way home. She pointed to the figure of a man she believed to be her brother approaching up the lane. The car drove off and Mrs Jones walked on to meet her chaperone. The man then turned and walked before her down the lane. Puzzled, Mrs Jones called out to her brother by name. The figure looked back over his shoulder, and she realised it was not her brother. Afraid, she began singing softly one of the Revival hymns. The man stopped abruptly and, according to Mrs Jones, transformed into an enormous black dog which ran from bank to bank across the road in front of her as though to prevent her advancing any further. There and then she believed that the figure before her was the Devil who was angry about her Christian evangelist work. She prayed aloud for strength whereupon the black dog rushed growling into a nearby hillside.

Mrs Jones's story would sound absurd were it not for the corroborative testimony of another Egryn villager. A highly intelligent and well-respected young woman of the parish reported that on three nights in succession at midnight she was visited in her bedroom by a man dressed in black whose appearance corresponded with the person seen by Mrs Jones in the lane. The young woman said that the visitor gave to her a message and forbade her to reveal its contents.

The theme of "secret messages" conveyed to a parishioner in a deeply devout Christian community has its parallels with celebrated events such as at Lourdes, Garabandal and Fátima.

Two episodes among the Egryn Lights series of events echo witnesses's experiences during the renowned Pembrokeshire UFO encounters of 1977. The first describes how on the 10th February 1905 a remarkable phenomenon occurred at Brynchrug Chapel between Towyn and Abergynolwyn, 25 miles from Dyffryn, where Mrs Jones was holding a meeting. The *Daily News* of 16th February described the Brynchrug event:

The chapel became bathed in mysterious light. After the meeting a professional gentleman returning homeward suddenly saw a gigantic figure rising over a hedgerow, with right arm extended over the road. Then a ball of fire appeared above, a long white ray descended and pierced the figure, which vanished. This extraordinary manifestation was witnessed simultaneously by a prominent local farmer from another standpoint. A party of youths returning from a Brynchrug meeting saw a ball of fire preceding them high above the road. Hastening forward they overtook the light, which then remained still. They knelt in the roadway, bathed in this mysterious light, and united in prayer, while the light remained stationary.

In the second case, *The Barmouth Advertiser* of 23rd March described scenes that unfolded during a revival meeting held ten days earlier 13th:

Mrs Jones was holding a revival meeting at a Methodist schoolroom, Ty'n-y-Drain, a mile and a half from Llanbedr in the direction of the mountains... It was about 11 o'clock at night, Monday, March 13th, with a little drizzling rain, but not very dark... After proceeding some distance, the mysterious "light" suddenly appeared above the roadway, a few yards in front of the car, around which it played and danced, sometimes in front, at other times behind Mrs Jones' vehicle. When we reached the crossroads where the road to Egryn makes a sharp turn to the left, the "Light," on reaching this point, instead of following the road we had travelled and going straight on as might have been expected, at once turned and made its way in the direction of Egryn in front of the car! Up to this point it had been a single "light" but after proceeding some distance on the Egryn road, it changed. A small red ball of fire appeared, around which danced two other attendant white lights. The red fire ball remained stationary for some time, the other "lights"

playing around it. Meanwhile the car conveying Mrs Jones proceeded onwards, leaving the “lights” behind. These then suddenly again combined in one, and made a rapid dash after the car, which it again overtook and preceded. For over a mile did we thus keep it in view.

The comparisons between the Egryn phenomena and others that took place much later are exemplified by three witness accounts of Mrs Jones’s activities. These describe appearances of spectacular large-scale, multicoloured aerial phenomena, mindful of the extraordinary scenes witnessed one night in Pentyrch, north of Cardiff, in 2016, a UFO episode described in full in Chapter 4. The features shared with the Pentyrch sighting are italicised.

In early January 1905 a young woman from Barmouth told a reporter what she had seen one night between 10 and 10.30 p.m. “At first, I saw two very bright lights, about half a mile away [between Dyffryn and Llanbedr], *one a big white light, the other smaller and red in colour. The latter flashed backwards and forwards, and finally seemed to become merged in the other. Then all was darkness again. It did not appear in the same place again, but a few minutes after we saw another light which seemed to be a few yards above the ground. It now looked like one big flame, and all around it shone like one big glare of light. It flamed up and went out alternately for about ten minutes, very much in the same way as some lighthouses.*”

The second account, made by a Mr. L.M. to the Society for Psychical Research, describes what he and his wife saw at about 11 p.m. after Mrs Jones had concluded her service at the Calvinistic Methodist Chapel at Llanfair, about a mile and a half from Harlech. “...Mrs Jones was passing us home in her carriage, and in a few seconds after she passed, on the main road, and within a yard of us, *there appeared a brilliant light twice, tinged with blue. In two or three seconds, after this disappeared, on our right hand, within 150 or 200 yards, there appeared twice very huge balls of similar appearance as that which appeared on the road. It was so brilliant and powerful this time that we were dazed for a minute or two. Then immediately there appeared ascending from a field high into the sky, three balls of light, deep red. Two of these appeared to split up, while the middle one remained unchanged.* Then we left for home, having been watching these last phenomena for a quarter of an hour.”

Thirdly, Mr. D.D. spoke of events that took place on 26th July 1905 at a meeting of the Salvation Army in Robert Town Square in the colliery town of Ynysybwl, near Pontypridd. This was one week before Mrs Jones held an open-air meeting in the same square on 2nd August. Mr. D.D. was one among numerous witnesses to see unusual light phenomena in and around Ynysybwl, but his report is significant relative to the later Pentyrch incident because he told an investigator that he saw “*over a wood on the mountainside a black cloud from which emerged first a white light, then a yellow, and finally a brilliantly red triangle.*”

By July 1905 Mrs. Jones’s revivalist work was drawing criticism from some quarters. In an article published that month in *The Aberdare Leader* journalist Beriah G. Evans (later becoming a Liberal politician and Welsh Nationalist) stated on her behalf:

Mrs Jones is a fairly fluent speaker. She has a strong, guttural accent, which betrays the Northern speech, but her addresses are by no means dialectical or colloquial. She is well steeped in Scriptural knowledge and can recite texts and also hymns with ease and accuracy. She speaks with great fervour, but makes no demonstration of hysteria, and her appeals are directed more to the intellect than to the emotions. She is very sparing in her references to the strange lights with which her name has been associated. In justice to the seeress it must be said that she makes no effort whatever to trade on sensationalism by making capital out of the visions which others, less scrupulous and more diplomatic have utilised for purposes of sensation-mongering.

Spectacular light displays such as occurred at Egryn are often assumed to be the work of Mother Nature. In this context a description commonly applied is “earthlights,” a term coined by English investigator Paul Devereux in his 1982 book *Earthlights*. Earthlights were known to traditional and ancient peoples. They were fairies to the Irish and other Celtic peoples, though also harbingers of death known as “corpse candles” to the Welsh.

Devereux believes that earthlights are exotic geophysical or meteorological phenomena. They appear in all colours, shapes and sizes, though the small globular orange ball variety is very common. Most sightings occur at night, when some lights can be seen from miles around. They can move against the wind and reach extraordinary

speeds. Devereux wrote of their electrical and magnetic attributes, and suggested that some form of plasma energy is assumed

A companion theory posits that earthlights are literally generated within the earth's crust as a result of tectonic strain in minor fault lines. Devereux has some sympathy with the theory, stating there is certainly an association between the appearance of earthlights and geophysical factors such as stresses and strains in the earth's crust, but these do not necessarily have to amount to earthquakes. For instance, evidence suggests that the pressure of bodies of water on underlying geology can provide sufficient tectonic forces to produce luminosities in the atmosphere. Devereux points out that there are doubtless many more sources of energy, geological and meteorological, that could power these lightforms.

Devereux investigated the Egryn Lights phenomena. Drawing on reports from December 1904 to March 1905 of the lights near Egryn and also those seen several kilometres to the north and south, Devereux plotted on a large-scale map the exact location of each sighting. He then sought the advice of professional geologists who pointed out the existence of a major, deep-seated fault, the Mochras Fault, which runs north south between the coastal towns of Harlech and Barmouth and passes almost directly under the village of Egryn. When Devereux compared the places where the earthlights had been observed with the path of the fault, he found a striking correlation: the reported sightings were strung out like beads on a thread. Checking the geological records, Devereux learned that the area had been subject to tremors immediately around and after the occurrence of the lights, culminating in a minor earthquake under Swansea in 1906.

Modern witnesses who come close to earthlights may report hallucinatory episodes, suggestive of magnetic fields that are known to be able to affect parts of the brain. One thing that struck Devereux in his review of witness accounts is the similarity of descriptions stating that earthlights sometimes behave as if they have a rudimentary intelligence.

Intriguingly, it was recently announced that scientists in Romania had created laboratory plasmas, which, they observed, behaved exactly like living cells. Moreover, the late quantum physicist David Bohm, who was recognised as laying the foundations of plasma physics, observed that once electrons were in a plasma, they stopped behaving like individuals and started behaving as if they were part of a larger and

interconnected whole; he remarked that he frequently had the impression that the sea of electrons was “in some sense alive.”

Devereux is impressed by some witness reports that the lights sometimes display illogical effects, in particular that they are often visible from one side but not the other. This leads Devereux to suspect that earthlights may be what he terms “macro-quantal” events, phenomena that should exist only at the sub-atomic quantum level but have somehow manifested on our larger macro-scale of experience.

Such observations encourage investigators to consider that earthlights are actually geophysical-based manifestations of conscious intelligence, representative of an older form than biologically-based consciousness. In this context, Devereux uses the term “ancestor lights.” One implication of this observation is that phenomena such as earthlights may be brought into being by some form of conscious control mechanism. This next and final account on the Egryn Lights brings into sharp relief this remarkable possibility.

On one occasion Beriah G. Evans, accompanied Mary Jones with others, including local ministers, on a visit to a local chapel. Here is part of Evans’s account of what happened:

Having passed the railway level crossing without seeing anything, we were told to wait, and watch the southern sky, and even as she spoke there apparently, a couple of miles away, between us and the hills, flashed a giant white light in the form of an enormous star, but emitting from its surface dazzling sparklets like flashing rays from a diamond. In the quiet of the night the sullen splash of the waves on the beach to our right answered by the sobbing sigh of the wind in the firs to our left. The sky was overcast with darkening clouds, no other than this mysterious star visible. And though the starlight was what we had longed for, and travelled far to see, it sent an eerie feeling creeping down the spine.

“It may be the headlight of the train?” faintly suggested our doubting Thomas.

“No,” was Mrs Jones’s quiet reply, “it is too high for that.”

Even as she spoke and as though in corroboration, the star made a sudden jump towards the mountains, returning immediately to its old position, and then rushing at an immense speed straight towards us. Then came the unmistakeable

rumbling roar of the train approaching from the direction of Barmouth. "I thought it was the train," came with a sigh of relief from our solitary unbeliever. "No," was Mrs Jones's confident contradiction. "That is not the train light; it is now that it comes." And a second light, very different in character from the first, was now perceptible at distance below the "star," both obviously rushing rapidly upon us. As the train drew near the "star" disappeared. With a rush and a roar, the train was past, but the tremulous sigh of relief at the disappearance of the "star" was hardly breathed before it reappeared nearer and if possible more brilliant than ever. Then it suddenly vanished. "Wait!" was Mrs Jones's quiet rejoinder. In a moment, high upon the hillside, two miles away from where the star had been an instant previously, a light again flashed, illuminating the heather as though bathed in brilliant sunlight. Again, it vanished, again to re-appear a mile further north evidently circling, the valley and in the direction for which we were bound. "Come!" said Mrs Jones. "Let us go. It is all right. We shall have a good meeting." And we did.

So far, the light and star had been equally visible to the five who formed the company. But now comes a more remarkable thing. Having proceeded a little over half a mile along the main road, all walking abreast, I saw three brilliant rays of dazzling white light strike across the road from mountain to sea, throwing the stone wall some twenty or thirty yards in front into bold relief, every stone and interstice being visible. There was not a soul near the house from which the light could have come. Another short half-mile, and the blood-red light, apparently within a foot of the ground, appeared to me in the centre of the village street just before us. I said nothing until we had reached the spot. The red light had disappeared as suddenly and as mysteriously as it had come, and there was absolutely nothing which could conceivably account for its having been there a moment before.

"Mrs Jones," I said, and this was the intimation the three other members of the party had of what I had seen, "unless mistaken, your light still accompanies us."

"Yes," she replied calmly, "I kept both occasions to see whether any of you perceived it for yourselves. The first you

know it was white, but I have seen it sometimes blood-red as you saw it now.”

One reasonable interpretation of Mrs Jones’s remark: “I kept both occasions...” is that she believed she possessed the conscious power to control the lights by her own volition. Psychic phenomena and the means by which individuals can draw on one’s innate powerpack of “ancestor lights” to make impressions upon the physical world will be explored in Part 2.

*

What may be drawn from this remarkable event in northwest Wales? While it exhibits all the usual features of a UFO flap, including unworldly lights and the presence of “Men in Black,” its undoubted fairyland aspects provide it with a distinct otherworldly quality of strangeness. This is exemplified by the remarkable scenes where multicoloured columns of light leapt out of the ground, fluttering like fairies at play, their balletic movements producing star-like bodies, spheres, glowing arches and luminous forms suspended upon incandescent arms. These scenes indicate powerfully that events casually labelled as UFO-related are never what they seem; that one must look upon them with an unjaundiced eye and be open to alternative interpretations.

Over the centuries Wales has witnessed many episodes of encounters with non-human visitors, some evoking happy emotions, others of a much darker nature. In 1656 John Lewis of Cardiganshire woke from sleep after midnight. His family remained sleeping. He saw a light enter the room followed by a dozen small men and three small women. They embarked on a wild dance and his room grew lighter and wider than physically possible. During their dance the visitors broke off to eat what looked like bread and cheese they had brought with them. They offered Mr Lewis meat. He heard no voices and received their thoughts in Welsh. The beings wanted him to remain calm. After four hours Mr Lewis tried vainly to wake his wife. Eventually the beings departed and Mr Lewis, clearly in another world, “pixie-led,” was unable to find either the door or his bed in his small room.

In 1856 Ronald Rhys of the Vale of Neath, an area long renowned as a fairyland community, was walking home from his work as a farm

labourer when he saw a strange light in a nearby field. It was making a whooshing noise and Rhys went to investigate. The next thing he knew he was floating in the air. After that his memories were patchy. He later made a sensational report that tiny people with swords collected his blood and one bald-headed green being cut into his stomach and, extraordinarily, took out his organs! When Ronald woke up he was lying in the field, his organs in place. He returned to work and discovered he had lost a full week. Rhys afterwards exhibited symptoms similar to radiation exposure. His skin was pink and scarred and his hair was falling out.

Taliesin, the Welsh bard wrote that King Arthur and his Knights invaded an unearthly country to seize the cauldron of Annwn, a magical vessel fired by the breath of nine maidens. Its rim was studded with bright pearls. Servant boy Gwion burned his thumb while stirring its contents. He put it into his mouth and was immediately inspired. The cauldron taught Gwion about the patterns of the universe and of the language of birds.

In 2016 Caz Clarke, a resident of Pentyrch, described the appearance over a local field of extraordinary red barrel shaped objects. In these she saw three-dimensional movements and lights like those on a fairground ride. Like Gwion when faced by his own magical dish studded with pearl-like portholes, Ms Clarke felt in these moments a force reach into her and free her from fear. She felt elated, almost, she said, as if she was being touched by a benign force.

Welsh myth has it that fairies are a real race of invisible or spiritual human-like beings, rarely seen, who inhabit a world of their own. These include the Gwragedd Annwn: beautiful fair-haired fairy women, the same size as humans, who live in underwater palaces beneath the lakes of the South Wales Black Mountains. Welsh culture even suggests that fairies can be embodied as members of the human race. Collectively, Wales' invisible race is known as the Tylwyth Teg, the Fair Family.

The Fair Family of Wales may be divided into five classes: the Ellyllon, or elves; the Coblynau, or mine-fairies; the Bwbachod, or household fairies; the Gwragedd Annwn, or fairies of the lakes and streams; and the Gwyllion, or mountain fairies. Welsh folklore offers a number of origins for the Tylwyth Teg. One has it that the first fairies were men and women of flesh and blood. Another portrays them as the souls of dead mortals, neither bad enough for hell nor good enough for heaven. They are doomed to dwell in the secret places of the earth until

the Day of Judgement when they will be admitted into Paradise. The western regions of Wales are favourite haunts of the Tylwyth Teg. Legends speak of them living on Pembrokeshire's enchanted islands, in underground dwellings in Cardiganshire, and under lakes in Carmarthenshire close to the hillside cave where Merlin sleeps with his fairy consort, Vivian

Today, strange things seen in the skies—and events closer to the earth, such as on Stack Rocks in Pembrokeshire and in a field by the Village Hall in Pentrych —are passed off in our technological world as visits from outer space.



Contemporary artist's illustration of the Egryn Lights



Two present day photos of Mary Jones's family cottage at Islaw'rffordd, situated midway between Barmouth and Harlech

The Daily Mirror

No. 400.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1905.

One Halfpenny.

WONDERFUL WELSH SEER.



Mrs. Jones, of Llanfyllter, near Cardiff, is shown with her daughter, Miss Jones, who is a seer. The photograph was taken at the house of the seer, where she is known to have seen many of the 'mystic lights'.



The house in which Mrs. Jones lives is shown in this photograph. It is situated in the village of Llanfyllter, near Cardiff, and is the scene of the 'mystic lights'.

FEVER-STROCKEN LINCOLN.



The children of the fever-stricken Lincoln are shown in this photograph. They are standing in front of the house where the fever-stricken Lincoln is located.

THE BERBAN GIANT GOES MOTORING.



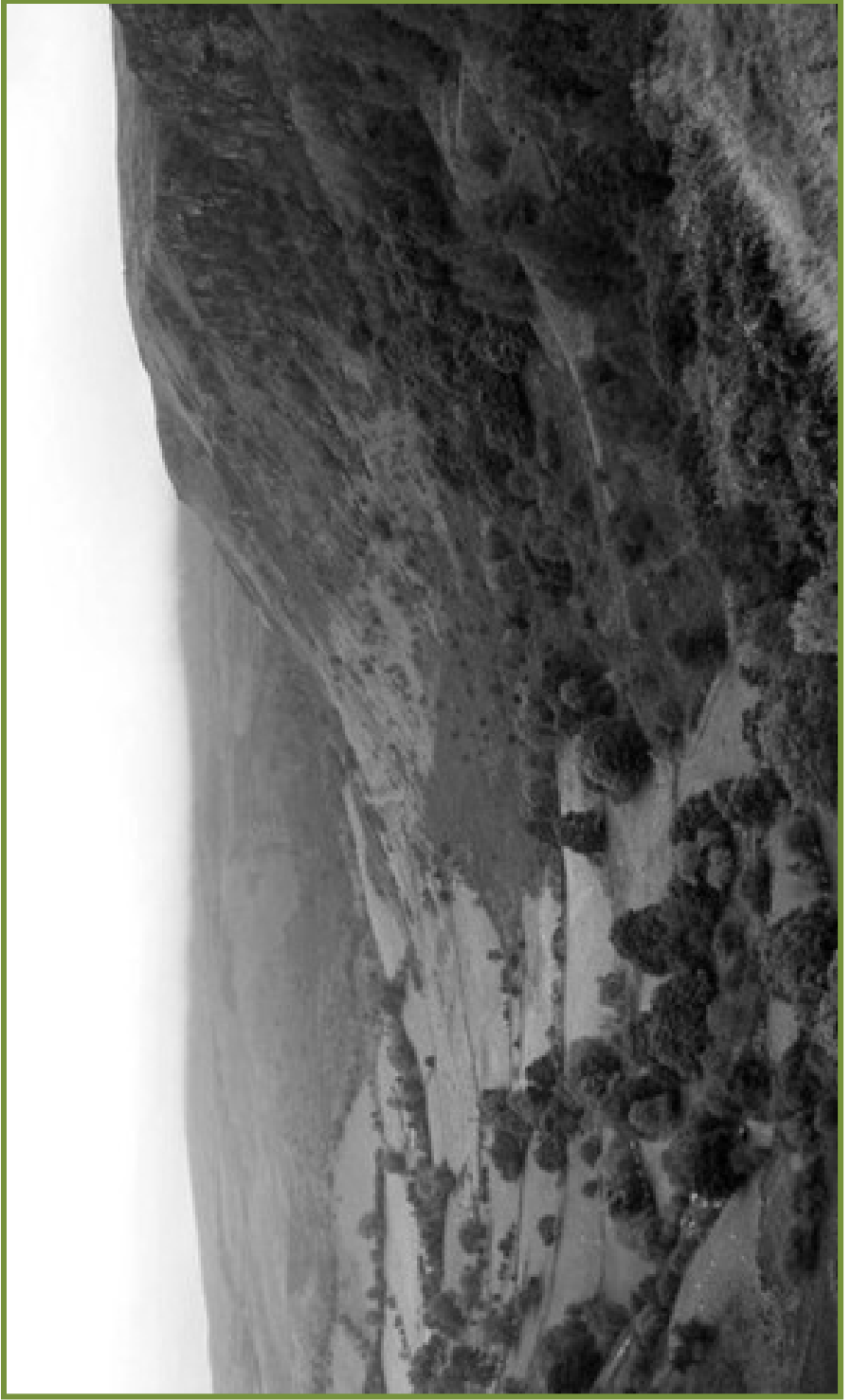
The Berban giant, who is a well-known figure in the Berban district, is shown in this photograph. He is sitting in the motor car with his family.

WATCHING FOR THE MYSTIC LIGHTS.



A flashlight photograph showing some people outside Egryn Chapel, where Mrs. Jones is conducting her revival mission, watching for the mystic lights. Mrs. Jones was conducting a meeting inside when this photograph was taken.

Contemporary newspaper reports of the Egryn Lights



The Berwyn Mountain range

UFO in the Berwyn Mountains, 1974, the Welsh “Roswell”

In May 1947 in Roswell, New Mexico, an object fell to earth. A few weeks later Roswell Army Air Field issued a press release stating that they had recovered a “flying disc.” Evidently someone had spoken out of turn and the Army quickly retracted the statement, saying instead that the crashed object was a conventional weather balloon. Discussion on the incident did not recur until the late 1970s, when retired lieutenant colonel Jesse Marcel, in an interview with ufologist Stanton Friedman, said he believed the debris he had retrieved from the scene was extraterrestrial. The US Government denied this and denies it now. Nevertheless, many remain convinced that a UFO crashed in the desert, its debris recovered and live occupants taken away.

Wales has its own Roswell, dubbed by some as the “Roswelsh” event. It is the story of a UFO that reportedly crashed in the Berwyn Mountains in 1974. In common with the events in New Mexico twenty-seven years earlier, investigators believe that not only were the remains of a craft taken away but that, sensationally, live occupants were found, put in crates, and taken away in strict secrecy by the military.

The Berwyn range of peaks sits at the apex of Wales’s isosceles UFO triangle. The peaks occupy an area approximately bound by Bala in the southwest, Corwen in the northwest, Llangollen in the northeast, and in the southeast by Oswestry in Shropshire. The range largely consists of sparsely populated moorland thick with heather, interspersed with grassland and bracken. Its main summits are Cadair Berwyn at 832 metres above sea level, Moel Sych at 827 metres, and Cadair Bronwen at 784 metres.

There are numerous stories in Welsh folklore that point to prior appearances of strange objects seen on the land and in the skies of the Berwyn region. One such is the *ceffyl dŵr* (water horse), which will let a traveller ride it but often throws them off and kills them.

An especially frightful and malicious creature is the Llamhigyn Y Dwr, the Water Leaper. It is a giant, limbless frog or toad with a bat's membranous wings (sometimes even a bird's feathery wings) and a long, reptilian tail with a large stinger at the tip. It leaps across the water using its wings, hence its name. Its favourite prey is sheep that wander too close to the water's edge, and, fatally, fishermen. It is said that its appearance alone will, Medusa-like, strike one dead.

The region also accommodates the dreadful afanc, a cross between an alligator and a dwarf that lives in Llyn yr Afanc on the River Conwy. Long ago it caused floods in the Conwy Valley, which drowned cattle and ruined crops. Villagers made a plan to get rid of the monster, using a maiden as bait. The maid sat on the side of the lake and sang. Enchanted by her presence, the afanc approached slowly and rested its head on her lap, with its claws upon her breast. Local man Hu Gardan and his helpers threw chains over the monster, which angrily leapt back into the water, ripping the maiden with its claws as it left. However, the chains held firm and the afanc was dragged back out of the lake by oxen. Instead of killing the monster, Hu Gardan took the afanc to Glaslyn on the eastern flank of Snowdon, where it lives till this day. In fact, the journey with the afanc was so difficult that one of the oxen's eyes burst from its socket, causing it to cry many tears. So that now there is a field called Gwaun llygad yr ych (meadow of the ox's eye), containing the Pwll llygad yr ych (pool of the ox's eye), which never dries out.

Folklore tales also speak of unusual aerial phenomena in the Berwyn hills going back centuries. The westerly part of the range that abuts the mountains of Snowdonia, in particular Cader Idris ("the Chair of Idris the Giant") is the home of the Cŵn Annwn, the Hounds of Hell. These are the fabled hounds of Annwn, the Celtic Otherworld. In the Mabinogion the Cŵn Annwn run with the Wild Hunt led by Arawn, King of Annwn, and at other times by Gwyn ap Nudd, King of the Fairyfolk. If one is unfortunate enough to hear the howling of the hounds, the die is cast—one's death is nigh. Legend has it that anyone who stays the night on Cader Idris will find death, go mad or become a genius. On the first night of each New Year, it is said that mysterious lights can be seen around its peak. Note that the twentieth-century UFO events in the nearby Berwyn Range took place in the month of January. In addition to the Cŵn Annwn, villagers living in the shadows of the Berwyn hills tell tales of being plagued by flying dragons, a synonym in medieval times for UFOs.

If all this were not enough, the region suffers phantom bombers, lake monsters and, in common with many other places in Britain, “ABCs” (Alien, or Anomalous, Big Cats). One might say that the Berwyn hills’ impressive mythological pedigree makes what occurred in 1974 at least as suggestive of a modern-day fairy tale as a UFO story.

*

From a study of witness testaments concerning the Berwyn event and, subsequently, research findings by first-rate investigators such as Andy Roberts, Scott Felton and the late Tony Dodd, a fascinating account emerges. During the twelve months prior to the Berwyn incident the north of England bore witness to a phenomenon dubbed the “phantom helicopter.” More than one hundred credible sightings were reported, including over the Cheshire skies a few miles to the east of the Berwyn range. It appeared at night at low altitude, often over difficult terrain, dangerously close to power lines, and in very poor weather. Witnesses felt that the phantom crafts were engaged in looking for something. The phenomenon ended on or around the date of the Berwyn incident.

On the night of 23 January 1974 villagers in Landrillo and Llandderfel, near Bala, witnessed over several hours, strange lights across the sky. The authorities later attributed the lights to a bolide meteor shower. A bolide is categorised as an extremely bright meteor, especially one that explodes in the atmosphere. Astronomers refer to them as fireballs about equal to the brightness of the full moon. That night these meteor sightings were recorded at 7:25 p.m., 8:15 p.m., 8:30 p.m. and 9:55 p.m., the latter appearance being the most dramatic. These times coincide with witness observations of the Berwyn UFO incident

At around 8:30 p.m. villagers heard a colossal explosion, closely followed by a deep rumbling. One witness recalled it as being ‘like a lorry running into a house.’ Its shockwaves reverberated through homes, overturning furniture, knocking objects off shelves, rippling walls, and upsetting pets and livestock. Scientific instruments registered the tremors between 4-5 on the Richter scale (corresponding to a “light earthquake”). Frightened, the villagers congregated outdoors. The tremors were felt in Wrexham, Cheshire, Wirral, Liverpool, and even as far as the Isle of Man

Locals at first thought that something, perhaps an aircraft, had crashed into Cadair Berwyn Mountain. Others believed they had seen something else. One farmer described seeing an object the size of a bus,

white in the middle, travelling along the mountain. It then dipped and the farmer thought it was going to crash. Other witnesses spoke of red and amber pulsing lights and an egg-shaped craft flying past. Witness Elfed Roberts reported seeing from his car a green light in the sky ahead of him. He described it as an arcing light.

Many witnesses telephoned the local police to report these strange events. The Gwynedd Police Constabulary Major Incident Log for that night includes these sample calls:

- *Explosion. PC receiving 999 calls of UFO. A witness who saw an object on the hillside reported: 'Saw bright red light, like coal fire red. Large perfect circle. Like a big bonfire. Could see lights above and to the right and white lights moving to bottom. Light changed colour to yellowish white and back again.'*
- *'There's been a large explosion in the area and there is a large fire in the mountainside. I am speaking from ... and can see the fire where I am.'*
- *'Saw bright green lights, object with tail - travelling west. Saw about Bangor direction - dropped down.'*
- *'Saw a circular light in the sky at an estimated height of 1,500 feet. This object exploded and pieces fell to the ground. Mr X estimates the pieces would have fallen into the [Irish] sea between Rhyl and Liverpool.'*

A detailed observation of a “flying sphere” was made at Betws-y-Coed at 21:58. It was also reported that on the 24th at the Shropshire village of Gobowen, 3 miles north of Oswestry, a disc with revolving-coloured lights was observable from 9.15 p.m. for 10 minutes.

In 2010 key witness, retired district nurse Pat Evans who at the time of the crash was living in Llandderfel, near Bala, told reporters for the *Daily Post* for its looking-back piece on the infamous event that she saw something strange on the mountainside:

We'd heard an almighty bang and we live at the foot of the mountain. I thought it might have been a plane crash. Me being a nurse and my girls being in St John Ambulance, I thought we could help. It (the object) couldn't have got there any other way apart from being flown there, so it had to be a UFO of some sort. I'm talking about something that could only have got there by flying and landing. We just

saw this huge ball glowing and pulsating on the mountain...the object glowed orange, red and yellow and was moon like, but without windows or doors. I've never seen anything like it before or since. I have no idea what it was... Some lights seemed to be scattered around it and I just wish we'd stayed to see what the end result was – whether it would just disappear or fly away. We didn't see anybody on the road even though there were various reports that we were told to go away by armed police and military etc, which was all totally untrue.

On the night, wanting to put her training to good use and assist any injured until the arrival of the emergency services, Pat, accompanied by her daughters, set off to help. After climbing above the tree line Pat rounded a bend on the B4391. Abruptly, she slammed on the breaks as she and her daughters saw the large red-orange pulsing ball of light on Cadair Berwyn a few miles off to their left.

Unable to identify it in detail, Pat drove on for a few minutes before returning to the same spot. The light was still there so she parked and with her daughters observed it for a while. A light drizzle was falling but the night was otherwise clear and Pat was able to describe the ball as “large” and forming a “perfect circle,” but it did not appear to be three-dimensional. Pat's first thought was that the glow was from the flames of an aircraft but was straightaway unconvinced because the glow was not making movements in the manner of flickering flames. Perfectly spherical and still, the glow pulsated between red and orange. In an interview she recalled, “There were no flames shooting or anything like that. It was very uniform, round in shape...it was flat and round.”

As Pat and her daughters watched in puzzlement the light changed colour several times from red to yellow to white. The three women also observed smaller white lights lower down the mountain. These were flashing like “Christmas tree fairy lights” and making a zigzag movement towards the glowing object. The astonished witnesses firstly assumed that they were seeing the lights of handheld lanterns.

However, Pat quickly realised that a rescue team could not possibly have been organised in such a short time so as to arrive at the mountain before she and her daughters. Pat continued driving to the mountain, still intent on helping any survivors but even as she was making the initial climb, she realised that the crash had probably occurred on an inaccessible part of the peak. She said she then turned round and returned home.



Moel Sych Mountain in vicinity of crash

In his book describing the Berwyn incident, Paul Devereux attributes the “earthlights” seen on Cadair Berwyn to geophysical stresses.⁶ Devereux adds that his colleague, the late Keith Critchlow, got into discussions with scientists who were investigating the mountain in the days after the incident. Their Geiger counter gave off extraordinarily high readings at the Bronze Age archaeological stone circle known as Moel Tŷ Uchaf on the slopes of Cadair Berwyn.

Devereux went on to map approximately 85 UFO sightings in Wales against tectonic and geomagnetic factors. Interestingly, together with geologist colleague Paul McCartney, Devereux found that sightings corresponded more with earth (epicentre) movements rather than with the positions of static fault lines.

Devereux and Critchlow’s investigations should be considered in tandem with the late John Michell’s remarkable insights⁷ on the true nature of megalithic constructions. The renowned academic was struck

⁶ Devereux P., *Places of Power: Measuring the Secret Energy of Ancient Sites*, Cassell Illustrated, 1999.

⁷ Michell, J., *The Flying Saucer Vision*, Abacus, London, 1974

by Stonehenge's remarkable resemblance to a UFO when viewed from above. He pointed out the significant features that characterise the resemblance: the well-defined outer rim consisting of low bank and ditch and its Aubrey holes, and small circular pits around the perimeter like portholes seen in UFO craft. In the centre is the perfect stone circle of the UFO's raised cabin enclosing the horseshoe-shaped trilithon construction that appears above the surrounding rim like a domed cockpit. The smaller Preseli bluestones stand inside the circle, visible through its openings just as witnesses observe occupants inside UFOs, as in 1959 when teachers and pupils in New Guinea saw a UFO hovering in full view over their school.

In 1994 British UFO researcher Jenny Randles lectured on the Berwyn case at the Fortean Times UnConvention. During her presentation she mentioned the anomalous radiation count at the Moel Tŷ Uchaf circle. After her lecture a member of the audience, a science correspondent from *The Sunday Express*, told Randles of rumours of a leukaemia cluster among children in the Bala area that had arisen in the years following the Berwyn incident. The correspondent told Randles that at the time he connected the rumour with possible leaks from the Trawsfynedd nuclear power station (25 miles east of the Berwyn crash site) but he could not prove this. He told Randles that in the light of later claims of UFO crashes or the presence of secret military hardware, it could be implied that whatever had crashed in the Berwyn Mountains had possibly been radioactive in nature and of sufficient strength to subsequently generate the leukaemia cluster around the Bala district.

After the Berwyn incident police participated in the search for a downed aircraft, in some cases commandeering vehicles to assist but their public position was that nothing was found. Similarly, a team from RAF Valley on Anglesey conducted a search and, reportedly, found nothing.

Documents leaked in 2008 showed that many of the reports made to police that evening were from residents, like Pat Evans, who were convinced they had seen a UFO before the "earthquake" struck. One resident reported seeing 'a bright red light, like coal fire red' on the mountainside, as well as 'light above and to the right... and white lights moving to the bottom.' The documents also reveal a police officer's testimony. He said, 'large explosion in the area and... a large fire in the mountainside. I can see the fire [from] where I am.' A local hotel manager told investigators that the conversation in the bar was increasingly about the military 'sealing off the area.' As with the

Pembrokeshire UFO flap of 1977, there were also rumours about an American military presence.

A few days after the incident a family driving along a quiet road twenty miles from the Berwyn range heard a humming sound filling the air. Seemingly out of nowhere a saucer-shaped object passed in front of them above the treetops and then vanished. In the same period, two truckers driving home to Lincolnshire noticed a cigar-shaped object hovering over Bala Lake.

Three weeks after the event Geraint Edwards saw a UFO by Cadair Berwyn. It was a Friday evening. He was in a car with others on the way to play a pub darts match. At 6:45 p.m. they saw something to the southeast. It looked like a rugby ball but its ends were more “pointy.” It hovered for at least ten minutes.

Five other reports of UFOs seen over the UK at about 10:00 p.m. on 23 January 1974 were unearthed during the Ministry of Defence investigation. Three sightings were in the Home Counties, one in Lincolnshire, and another in Sussex.

Replying to a letter in May 1974 from local Member of Parliament, Dafydd Elis Thomas, Brynmor John, then a junior RAF minister, explained that: ‘the phenomena could well have been caused by a meteor descending through the atmosphere burning up and finally disintegrating before it reached the ground. Such a hypothesis would also explain the absence of any signs of impact. It has also been suggested that at 8:32 p.m. that evening there was an earth tremor in the Berwyn Mountains which produced a landslide with noises like detonation.’

It was reported that the tremor’s epicentre was in the Bala area at a depth of eight kilometres. However, officials maintained that a reading and depth of those proportions ruled out a cause that could be attributed to something crashing into Cadair Berwyn. Such an object, they stated, would have to be several hundred tons in weight and leave a massive crater. The Royal Astronomical Society, using data provided by the NASA Astrophysics Data System, published in *Astronomy & Geophysics*, vol. 47, an article: *Bala earthquake 3.5, 20:38, Wednesday, 23 January 1974*:

24th Jan Gwynedd police received reports of what appeared to be a meteorite that had crashed in flames on Cader Fronwen 2km south of Llandrillo, 10km east of Bala. Anglesey coastguard described the meteorite as green. Coastguards in

Isle of Man, Formby and Cumberland described green flares. However, the Institute for Geological Sciences said that for a preliminary magnitude reading of 4 a meteorite would have to have been very large and therefore unmistakeable.

A detailed observation of a "flying sphere" was made at Betws-y-Coed at 21:58. A report on that night's event was also made at Gobowen at 9.15 on the 24th of a disc with revolving, coloured lights, observable for 10 minutes. Astronomers searching the area by helicopter over the weekend saw nothing. (This conclusion, of course, takes no account of an operation by the military that would have sanitised the crash scene with hours of the event.) Certainly, there was no evidence of a large scar in the landscape that would be expected of so great an impact. Consequently, the prevailing professional opinion became that the tremor must have been caused by an earthquake.

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The Berwyn narrative now attains a certain X-Files quality. Locals spoke of a substantial military presence after the incident, including the arrival of official-looking "Men-in-Black" figures that went around questioning the villagers about what they had seen that night. Military jets and helicopters criss-crossed the area. Roads were barricaded and people shepherded away from sensitive locations. A few even claimed they had seen strange boxes being carried away in lorries. Farmers reported that they were forbidden from tending their cattle. The feeling among locals was that something was obviously being sought.

A few months after the event a curious organisation emerged from the shadows. UFO investigators in the north of England received "official" documents from a group calling itself the Aerial Phenomena Enquiry Network (APEN). At this time APEN was not an unknown body and had been linked with the Men in Black phenomenon. On previous occasions it had contacted UFO researchers via letter and cassette tape offering pieces of information but never contact details. The format of the letters received was heavy with bureaucratic terminology references: "Code=7 Case number 174L 74-71/349 ST Classification = Jasmine Clearance date=02 DE 74" in one case.

Jenny Randles was one such recipient. On the one-hour audiocassette tape she received was an introduction from a male

American claiming to be someone called “J.T. Anderson, Supreme Commander of APEN.” It contained television and radio broadcasts of UFO reports, occasionally interrupted by other voices, evidently terrified and in panic, claiming that UFOs were hostile and that the listener should be wary of their nature and intentions.

It has been speculated that APEN may have been part of a government disinformation unit whose remit was to cover up the true facts and divert attention from secret weapons testing. APEN issued similar communications in connection with other notable UFO events, including the sensational Rendlesham Forest case in December 1980 in the east of England.

During interviews in 2006 British ufologist Nick Redfern claimed that APEN had a far-right wing agenda, and was under investigation by Special Branch. It is the case that some of the cassette tapes sent to UFO researchers included the sound of Nazi marching and Nazi marching music. Redfern also said that APEN manipulated and spread misinformation amongst various British UFO groups in the form of smear campaigns and false allegations in efforts to undermine the groups and, ultimately, to bring them together under the umbrella of APEN. The APEN documents sent to the Berywn investigators claimed that an extraterrestrial craft that had come down in the area was retrieved by an APEN crash retrieval team, which had been on the scene within hours. More significantly, APEN claimed that they were recommending for hypnotic regression an unnamed key witness to the event. In 1974 hypnotic regression was virtually unknown in the British UFO community.

In the 1990s witnesses began coming forward to say that they had been part of a UFO recovery operation in the Berwyn area. Sensationally, they claimed that NHE bodies were taken from the wreckage and transported to Porton Down in Wiltshire for analysis. Porton Down is the site of the U.K.’s top-secret Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment. It was also said that the crashed UFO had been accompanied by other alien craft that subsequently submerged in the Irish Sea and were eventually flushed out by the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force.

Seasoned investigators took up the cudgels and discovered startling new facts and lines of enquiry. Scott Felton claimed that a relative of Pat Evans told him that on her return home Pat was stopped by a military patrol, which ordered her away from the mountain to allow

them to close the road. Pat denied that this happened. She also denied that she had seen bodies from the craft and had been ordered to keep quiet by the Ministry of Defence.

However, Felton also received testimony from a number of people who said that police or soldiers had stopped them. A hotel chef was stopped whilst returning from Corwen, a reporter from Bala had his camera confiscated, and two students noted a very heavy police presence in Llandrillo just after 9:30 p.m.

Felton also poured cold water on the oft-quoted suggestion that the lights seen on Cadair Berwyn were from poachers' lamps. It is true that police were looking for poachers that night. However, this activity was going on several miles away on Cadair Bronwen and had finished by 9:00 p.m. Felton's investigations confirmed also that the report of a plane accident that some residents had spoken of did not take place at the time of the event and had been conflated with an incident in 1982 when a light training aircraft crashed with very little disturbance to the locals.

Scott Felton's research ultimately led him to conclude that a UFO had landed in the Berwyn hills on many occasions prior to the January event. He understood that the military was very much aware of this activity and that on the night of the 23rd they were to conduct an operation, using the meteor story as a cover if necessary. Felton reviewed his evidence and concluded that the object that had been visiting Berwyn in recent days returned. Observed by the waiting military personnel, it came down, stayed for about an hour and a half, and departed unhindered. Felton believed that it came and went in this fashion for another three weeks afterwards.

The late Tony Dodd (formerly a contributor to "UFO Magazine") claimed in 1996 that he was contacted by a serviceman whistleblower who said he was present at the Berwyn event. The soldier said that he had been attached to a barracks in southern England at the time. A few days before the incident the soldiers received orders to head for Birmingham, then west to Chester and, finally, to Llangollen where they set up base. Believing they were to be part of a live drill of some kind, the unit awaited further orders.

As soon as the "earthquake" occurred they were ordered to move to Llandderfel and not to stop under any circumstances until reaching their destination. On arrival, still expecting to participate in a drill the 5-man team found themselves being ordered to place two oblong boxes

onto their military truck. They received strict orders to leave the boxes shut and not to stop until they reached Porton Down. Unwisely, the team stopped for refreshments, whereupon their tail, a plain-clothed man carrying high-level military police ID, appeared and ordered them to get back into their truck and not stop until they reached the Wiltshire facility.

At Porton Down the soldier and his buddies reportedly watched from behind transparent screens as scientists opened the boxes to reveal two frail “grey alien” creatures. Each had been placed in a decontamination chamber, presumably at the Berwyn crash site. As they were being removed, the soldiers saw the creatures’ obvious “not of this world” appearance. In the following days there were rumours that some of the NHEs retrieved were alive.

In his book *Cosmic Crashes* Nick Redfern provided further details of the soldier’s testimony, assigning him the pseudonym “Prescott.” Redfern claimed that Prescott was one among scores of troops despatched to recover wreckage from Cadair Berwyn. He describes the delivery of the oblong boxes to Porton Down and adds Prescott’s description of the greys as five to six feet tall, humanoid in shape but skeletal thin with covered skin. In his later book, *A Covert Agenda*, Redfern suggested that the “phantom helicopters” seen in the preceding months were crewed by UFO crash retrieval teams on permanent standby. Redfern gave serious consideration to the idea that there existed a jointly funded CIA-Ministry of Defence rapid response project.

Researcher Russ Kellett did great work to uncover in 2000 a Marine and Coastguard document, which refers to an exercise carried out by RAF Jerby Head during the late afternoon and early evening of 23rd January 1974. RAF Jurby Head was a Royal Air Force air weapons range that operated on the northwest coast of the Isle of Man between 1939 and 1993. Bombing practices were carried out at sea with the use of dummy bombs, including inert nuclear weapons. Tellingly, the main user of the range was the United States Air Force.

The document names the exercise as “Photoflash.” It relates that coastguards were advised to expect at least 10 aircraft taking part and around 80 flashes in the Liverpool Bay area and along the North Wales coastline. The document did not elaborate on the nature and purpose of these “photoflashes” but Kellett believed that their role was to light up the sea to reveal the position of submerged craft. Kellett concluded that

three separate UFOs were flushed out of the sea that night and, crucially, military craft were involved and that there was an engagement. A fisherman saw one craft come out near Puffin Island, an uninhabited island off the eastern tip of Anglesey. His colleagues told him to say nothing about it.

Kellett was also in correspondence with witnesses who claimed they were moved on by military personnel on the roadside at Llandrillo where one of the craft came down. The men told Kellett that they saw occupants getting out the craft and helping two of their own that were injured. The NHEs were then loaded onto the back of a flatback truck and taken away. Kellett understood that there were actually two craft that came down, one crashing near Bala at a position that corresponded with the epicentre of the supposed “earthquake.” The other ship smashed into one of the Berwyn hills. Kellett also claimed to have in his possession fragments from one of the craft.

In June 1977 the head of S4 (Air), the MoD branch that handled UFO matters, asked the Provost and Security Service of the Royal Air Force Police, to make discreet enquiries into events in Wales. Earlier in 1977 the P&SS had moved to RAF Rudloe Manor in Wiltshire.

RAF Rudloe Manor, dubbed by UFO investigators “Britain’s Area 51,” lies 10 miles northeast of Bath. It was one of several military installations situated in the area, which are now used by Defence Digital, the UK’s Strategic Command, which manages allocated joint capabilities from the three armed services. Declassified files indicate the site was the centre for UFO investigations in the 1950s. On the surface, it appears to be nothing more than a quaint English manor house but researchers have argued for years that it remains the centre of British research into UFOs. MoD insiders claim that an astonishing 2.2 million square feet of vast caverns divided into many smaller chambers lie underneath Rudloe Manor. Nearby is the heavily secured Corsham Computer Centre, which the MoD says is a Royal Navy data processing centre. Researchers claim that important files related to the history of the UFO phenomenon are kept here under lock and key, including evidence of extraterrestrial contact from the Berwyn Mountains incident in 1974.

In 2007 the MoD released the entirety of their UFO files to the National Archives, reportedly to avoid having to respond any longer to Freedom of Information Act requests. There were 60,000 documents, but 18 key files were missing for some of the better-known cases. After

another request the MoD located theses files, each containing 100 to 200 documents but then recalled them before they were released. Insiders within the ministry claimed that the files, rumoured to include details of extraterrestrial contact in the Berwyn Mountains, were moved to a safer facility, with fingers pointed to Rudloe Manor. Access to the underground facilities at Rudloe Manor is two miles away at the Corsham Computer Centre.

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There is a fascinating precursor to the Berwyn event. In 1972 Manchester citizen Peter Taylor was driving home from work one night. As on the two previous nights, Taylor reached at 7:30 p.m. the tiny Cheshire village of Daresbury, the birthplace and childhood residence of Alice's creator Charles Dodgson ("Lewis Carroll"). The village is a relatively short distance from the eastern limit of the Berwyn range.

As on the preceding two nights, the lights of Taylor's new Ford car faltered at precisely the same spot. On this occasion, however, events unfolded in a very dramatic fashion. To his utter dismay, Taylor found that he was on an unfamiliar road and completely lost. Astonishingly, he discovered that he was forty miles north of Daresbury near the town of Preston in Lancashire. He phoned his wife Sandra from a roadside call box and learned that he had gained two hours in as many seconds.

Daresbury, centred round the Ring o' Bells Inn, is at the epicentre of a zone of high strangeness where witnesses have repeatedly claimed all manner of bizarre goings-on. These days the area around Daresbury and the neighbouring villages of Moore, Helsby Hill and Runcorn is known by researchers as "Wonderland." Over recent years, there have been repeated reports of car engines cutting out, the appearance of bright lights, a golden ball hovering above Sankey Way, and a huge cigar-shaped object the size of an aeroplane that travelled beside a car near Preston Brook.