

IS ANOTHER WORLD WATCHING US?

BRAD STEIGER explores
the astonishing powers
behind the **STRANGE**
DISAPPEARANCES which
have baffled mankind
through the centuries.

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THE STRANGE CASE OF THE TRAVELING DEAD MAN . . .

5:00 P.M., February 1, 1963—Thomas P. Meehan checked into the Forty Winks Motel at Redway, California, after phoning his wife to tell of feeling ill . . .

6:00 P.M.—Meehan drove to Southern Humboldt Community Hospital at Garberville to see a doctor . . .

6:45 P.M.—Meehan told a nurse that he felt as if he were dead. While she was checking him in, Meehan disappeared . . .

7:00 P.M.—A couple told the Highway Patrol that they had seen the taillights of a car drive into the Eel River . . .

8:00 P.M.—Meehan was at motel, talking to the owner. He asked the innkeeper: "Do I look like I'm dead? I feel like I've died and the whole world died with me." Meehan's shoes and trouser cuffs were wet and muddy.

9:00 P.M.—Meehan went to his room.

10:45 P.M.—The Highway Patrol found Meehan's car in the Eel River. Nineteen days later, his body was discovered in the Eel River, 16 miles downstream from where his car entered the water! Did Meehan escape from his car—only to later drown in the river? Or did the people who saw him later really talk . . . to a dead man?

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STRANGE DISAPPEARANCES
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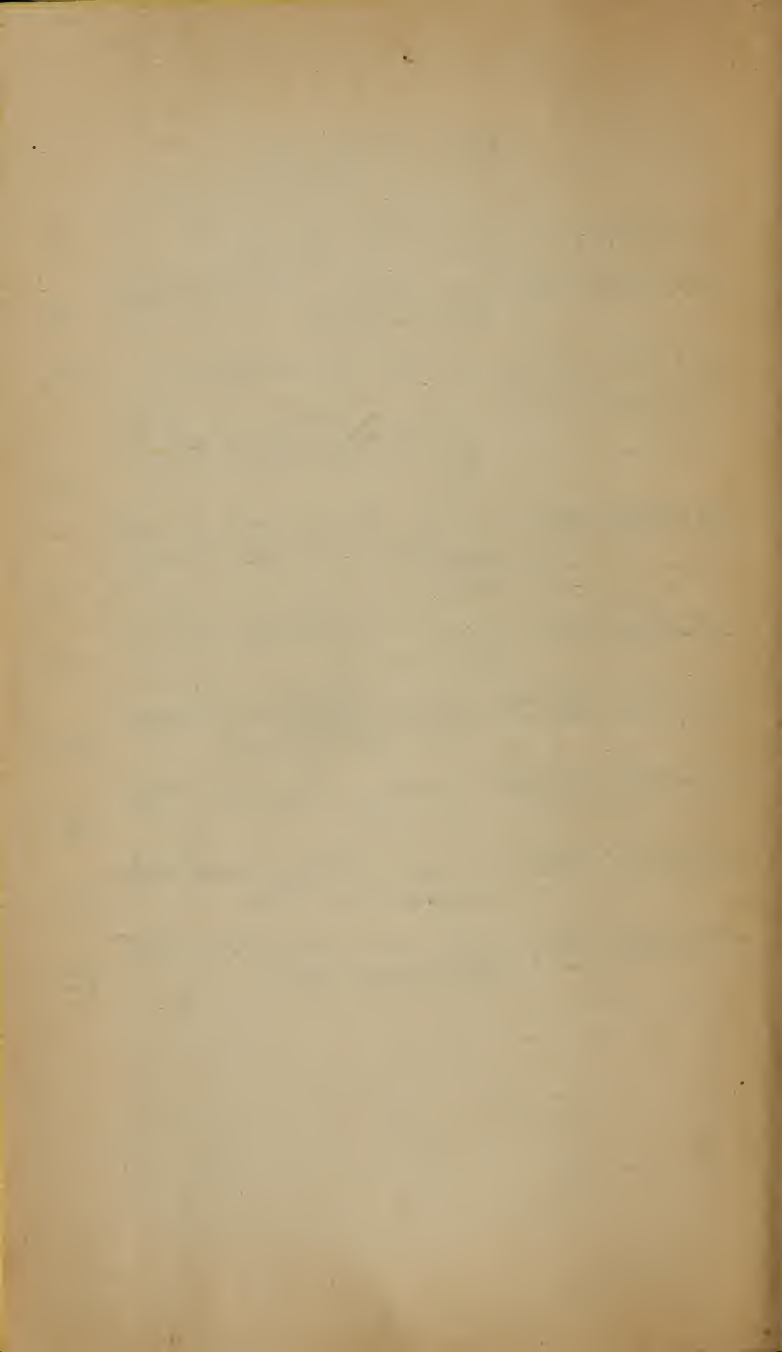
STRANGE DISAPPEARANCES

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CHAPTER 1

People Who Disappear

In any city of any size in any country in the Western World, billboards, fences, restroom walls, and the sides of vacant buildings soon become showcases for exhibitions of graffiti, the scrawled folk wisdom and social comment of anonymous Voltaires. Many of these sidewalk philosophers pride themselves upon their ability to devise original bits of ironic and pungent prose. Others, unimpressed by the mystique of creativity and original thinking, simply pirate and parrot the works which they have found amusing or provocative.

Apropos of the theme of this book, the author would like to suggest an experiment. If you were to erect a blank wall and leave it unattended in a heavy traffic area in any city in the United States, it would not be long before some graffiti aficionado would have scribbled the following memo on its surface: *Judge Crater, please call your office.*

Although the New York Supreme Court Justice disappeared in August, 1930, there would be few readers of the above quoted graffiti who have not heard the mysterious tale of the judge who simply vanished without a

trace. So often have the details of Judge Crater's strange disappearance been cited in story, song, and drama that the sage of the vanishing justice has become both an integral and romantic part of Americana.

In 1959 when writer Murray Teigh Bloom learned that the most famous medium in the Netherlands, Gerard Croiset, had aided European police in the solution of a number of major crimes, he brought with him a photograph of Judge Joseph Force Crater in order to test the psychic sensitive.

In a *Harper's* magazine article, Bloom said that Croiset held the picture in his hands without looking at it, then went into a light trance. While in this altered state of consciousness, the medium stated the photograph was of a judge who had been kidnapped and murdered approximately twenty-five years before. Croiset drew a map of New York City, and marked X's at sites he felt were important.

Although Bloom later learned that the medium had provided him with information and detailed clues that had previously been known only to the police, the strange disappearance of Judge Crater remains a mystery, and there is no conclusive evidence to prove that he was kidnapped and murdered. For the last forty years, all available data would seem to indicate that Judge Crater vanished as completely and as untraceably as a wisp of cigarette smoke in an air-conditioned room.

Unfortunately, each year finds us with hundreds of "Judge Craters," men, women, and children who have vanished totally and inexplicably—even, in some eerie cases, before the startled eyes of witnesses. In this book we shall not be at all interested in accounts of runaway husbands seeking a "poor man's divorce," wandering adolescents seeking a kind of Peter Pan paradise away from their parents, irresponsible creditors attempting to elude bill collectors, or law violators manufacturing disappearances to evade legal authorities. The strange disappear-

ances with which this book shall concern itself will not be those of the disillusioned, the disgruntled, or the disassociated, but rather of those individuals who were, from all outward signs and appearances, completely absorbed in their work or their families, fully occupied with the joy of life, eager to go about the business of living.

. . . Men such as Charles F. Holden, a retired paint contractor from Oakland, California, who accompanied his son and his brother-in-law on a week-long hunting trip in October, 1964.

While the other men planned to hunt, Holden had decided that he would be content to paint and sketch.

The three men stopped on the highway east of Crescent City, California, at 2:00 P.M. on October 11. While the two younger men began to scout the area for game, the seventy-eight-year-old Charles Holden set up his sketching board. Albert, his son, glanced back at him as they started out on the trail. The older man was sketching vigorously. That was the last image his son would have of him.

When the two younger men returned approximately forty-five minutes later, they found absolutely no trace of Charles Holden. There was not a cigarette butt, a discarded sheet of sketching paper, or even a smear of pastel to prove that he had even been there.

Sheriff's deputies and forestry officials conducted an extensive search of the area without finding a trace of the man. Deputy David Grenbemer was quoted as saying: "It is physically impossible for him to be up there. If he had fallen into the brush or if he had wandered away—any distance—we would have found him."

. . . Women such as Mrs. Joe Sanchez, a forty-five-year-old Texas housewife, who accompanied her husband and three sons on a fishing trip to Port Arkansas on March 10, 1968.

Mrs. Sanchez vanished without a trace when the rest

of her family went back to the car to find a misplaced item. When they returned to the spot where they had left her, they discovered to their sorrow and horror that their wife and mother had become misplaced forever. A ten-day search failed to turn up the slightest clue to her disappearance.

. . . Men such as Captain Charles G. Reid of the Moore-McCormack Line's luxury liner *Argentina*, who vanished from his cabin about 3:00 A.M. on October 31, 1968.

Although his disappearance has been officially dismissed as a suicide and the facts of the case have been bent and distorted to fit such a pronouncement, the approved explanation for his death at sea raises more questions than it answers. The tabloid *Midnight* ran an article by a reporter who claimed to have done a great deal of legwork finding passengers and crew willing to talk about the officer's strange disappearance. The journalist's job of reportage—if it is not a purely sensational fabrication—quotes men and women complete with their names, addresses, and places of employment, who claim that the *Argentina* had been paced by a UFO on that evening. The captain, according to this story, walked about assuring the passengers that the UFO was but some kind of electrical illusion. Later, so insisted witnesses, a UFO was seen to hover outside the Captain's cabin windows.

And now we have introduced a bizarre element into a subject that is already teeming with mysterious components. Could UFO's have anything to do with disappearing people? It would seem that whatever the phenomenon of the UFO really is, it might, indeed, have something to do with disappearing people. And so could Time warps and holes in Space and distortions of this plane that we consider Reality.

For example, at sundown on February 12, 1953, witnesses told police that they had watched an automobile

enter the throat of a storm drain near Willowbrook and Greenleaf Avenues in Los Angeles. Officers arrived on the scene within ten minutes, and according to the Los Angeles *Herald and Express*, they followed the fresh tire-tread marks into the tunnel for seven miles. Other policemen and flood control district workers continued the search for the automobile by dropping through man-hole covers.

The trackdown continued until midnight when, seven miles up the storm drain, the tracks vanished. *Herald and Express* newsmen who had accompanied the police on the incredible search up the tube were witnesses to the fact that: "In the muddy silt covering the floor of the drain, the tire-tread marks were sharp and fresh. Then no more tracks."

Is it really possible for an automobile* to disappear without a trace? All that can be stated dogmatically in the case cited above is that it would have been impossible for the car to have got out of the tunnel in any way other than the one it used to enter the flood control drain—at least in any way other than those our contemporary science knows about or lists in its accredited laws.

According to a United Press International news story datelined London, England, seven trucks along with their drivers totally and inexplicably vanished during a four-month period in 1958. Somehow, the authorities said, the seven men and their vehicles disappeared shortly after leaving the parking lot of a popular highway cafe.

Trucking firm executives testified that each of the men were reliable employees and that each of the drivers were bachelors. Could some love-struck flying saucer females have decided to go fishing above that British highway? Or, worse, could some entities on a cosmic safari have bagged some fresh mountings for their trophy rooms or trapped some new specimens for their zoos?

On the other hand, perhaps some unusually talented

men and women—or some unusually talented alien visitors—in our midst might be able to vanish quite deliberately and at will.

In the October, 1953, issue of *Fate* magazine, a Mrs. B. E. Weber of Glendale, California, wrote to the editors to tell them of a remarkable experience which she had undergone some years before.

According to Mrs. Weber, she had left the home of a friend on the east side of the city around midnight. As she neared the intersection close to her home, she saw a tall man with what appeared to be a chiffon mantle over his head walking by on a cross street. The man walked very fast, and Mrs. Weber remembers thinking to herself that the man appeared strange and peculiar.

As the man stepped off the curb to cross the street, Mrs. Weber writes, "he dissolved in the air and disappeared. I came to the spot in about two minutes, but there was no one in sight. I saw no cars near the spot and heard no sounds. The disappearance took place under a bright street light at the intersection."

If such peculiar people are not spirits or ghosts, they may be entities or aliens with the ability to instantly "beam" themselves elsewhere. If the witnesses at the scene of such examples of dissolving humanity are not totally mistaken and if they are not misinterpreting the events at which they were present, it might be theorized that some of these entities may enjoy a bit of fun and mischief from time to time.

In Fort Wayne, Indiana, on January 28, 1962, James W. Schinbeckler summoned police officers Robert Paulsen and Guy Fortier to Broadway and Taylor Streets. Schinbeckler told the officers that he had been southbound on Broadway, in the process of turning into Taylor, when a small boy ran into the path of his car. The motorist said that he had struck the boy, knocked him to the pavement, but that the lad had jumped back up, ran off without a word, then just seemed to vanish.

Schinbeckler said that the boy had in no way responded to his shouts to stop and to be examined.

What makes this report even stranger is that a number of witnesses in a nearby store told the officers that the same boy had been struck twice by cars in the intersection in the preceding three days and after each "accident," he had got up and run off. No one knew who the little boy was or where he disappeared.

If that Fort Wayne intersection was a favorite spot for some interdimensional midget to put on his "injured little boy" routine, some interdimensional hunters may have favorite spots in which to seize game.

In the period of November, 1945, to December, 1950, seven people disappeared in the Mt. Glastenbury region near Bennington, Vermont. There are no records of any disappearances in that area before 1945, but now area residents nurture theories of demons, monsters, or UFO's that lay in wait for unsuspecting victims out for a hike on a nature trail.

Middie Rivers, the first person to vanish from Mt. Glastenbury, seemed a most unlikely candidate to become lost for an hour, let alone forever. Rivers was a seventy-five-year-old hunting guide who knew the region as thoroughly as any man alive. On November 12, 1945, Rivers led four hunters into the mountain region, then, while he was returning to camp a bit ahead of the other men, he vanished completely.

Within hours of his disappearance hundreds of volunteers and local and state police began to scour the area. The search was continued for a month without their discovering even the slightest trace of the missing guide.

The strange disappearance of Middie Rivers had had just enough time to become part of the local legends when attractive Paula Weldon, an eighteen-year-old student at Bennington College, set off on a hike on December 1, 1946. While on her trek, Paula was seen by a number of fellow students, a gas station attendant, a local

building contractor, and a janitor of the Bennington Banner Building. But then the teenager turned some cosmic corner and walked into oblivion.

State and local police were soon supplemented in their search for the missing girl by state detectives and the FBI. Hundreds of volunteer searchers assisted in a meticulous exploration of the region. Newspapermen tracked down supposed leads that took them to Canada, even to the West Indies, but no one found a single thread from Paula's coat or a single hair from her head.

The third disappearance in Mt. Glastenbury occurred on the third anniversary of Paula Weldon's apparent evaporation into nowhere. On December 1, 1949, James E. Tetford vanished in a manner even stranger than the two previous victims of whatever goes hunting on Mt. Glastenbury.

Tetford had been visiting relatives in South Albans, Vermont, and had decided to return to the Soldiers Home in Bennington. He boarded a bus, found a seat, bade farewell to his relatives—but he never got off the bus and he never returned to the Soldiers Home.

An exhaustive investigation could reveal absolutely no clues to Tetford's strange disappearance. Several people saw him board the bus, but no one saw him get off the vehicle. It would seem impossible to vacate a bus en route to its next station, either voluntarily or involuntarily, without being seen by the other passengers and the bus driver. Yet, somehow James E. Tetford had managed that impossible feat.

On October 12, 1950, eight-year-old Paul Jepson was left on the seat of a truck while his father stepped a few feet away to perform a small errand. Moments later, when Mr. Jepson returned to the cab of the truck, he found that his son had disappeared. As in the previous disappearances, hundreds of volunteers were mobilized to supplement the state and local law enforcement agen-

cies, and well-trained bloodhounds were set on the trail.

The bloodhounds soon lost the scent—but was it only an eerie coincidence that the dogs lost it at the exact spot where Paula Weldon had last been seen? When the hounds came to this precise spot, they could only mill about in confusion and bay despairingly.

Two weeks later, an experienced woodswoman and expert gun handler named Frieda Langer disappeared while on a hike in the Glastenbury woods with her cousin, Herbert Elsner. Mrs. Langer was thoroughly familiar with the area, but her knowledge of the woods did not assist her any more than outdoors expertise had aided Middie Rivers in evading the fate of a strange disappearance.

Mrs. Langer slipped and fell in a shallow stream at about 4:30 P.M. She told Elsner that she would quickly run home and change clothes and rejoin him. The man waited in the woods for an hour, then decided to return to see what had delayed his cousin. He was horrified to learn that she had not been seen to emerge from the woods at all.

Volunteers trudged through the snow-covered woods of Glastenbury for a month before they called off the search. No one could believe that Frieda Langer could become lost, but the authorities knew that they had expertly and systematically covered every foot of the forest.

Only a few days after the officials had terminated the search for Mrs. Langer, Frances Christman left home to visit a friend who lived but a half mile away. Somewhere on that brief winter's eve hike, the woman vanished without a trace. One could not blame the weary volunteers and official searchers for beginning to talk of culprits and kidnapers with more than conventional human powers having been somehow responsible for the strange disappearances.

While the terror of the prospect of possibly becoming a future victim of the mysterious force at work in the region at Mt. Glastenbury began to seep into the consciousness of the area residents, it was learned that a seventh unfortunate hiker had actually preceded Frances Christman in stepping into oblivion.

Martha Jeanette Jones had vanished on November 6th, but her mother had not notified the authorities of the teenager's absence because she feared that Martha had run off with a soldier stationed in Virginia. When Mrs. Jones learned that the young man knew nothing of her daughter's whereabouts, a massive search was begun in the haunted Mt. Glastenbury area on December 12. After another thorough combing of the region, it had to be decreed that the sixteen-year-old Martha Jones had joined the other victims in obscurity.

Although Martha Jones was the seventh and last person to disappear in the Mt. Glastenbury area, there is a mysterious footnote to the accounts of these strange disappearances. On May 12, 1951, seven months after her disappearance, the corpse of Frieda Langer suddenly appeared in such an open, easily visible part of the forest that the hundreds of searchers could not possibly have overlooked it during the month-long scouring of the woods. The physical remains of Frieda Langer were the only ones ever discovered, and exposure to the elements had left the corpse in such a condition as to render detection of violence or any kind of clue to Mrs. Langer's fate virtually impossible.

In none of the other cases of strange disappearances on Mt. Glastenbury was there even a single thread of clothing or strand of hair that could be traced to any of the six victims. No motive for murder could be determined in any of the seven cases. No ransom demands were ever received by any of the victims' families. No clues were ever found to explain the total disappearance

of the victims; and with the exception of Mrs. Langer's corpse, not a single trace of any of them was ever discovered.

Each of the victims disappeared in the same season of the year in the same area of Mt. Glastenbury. As unpleasant and, perhaps, far-fetched as it is to speculate upon such matters, could it be possible that there exist cosmic or interdimensional entities that intrude into our plane of existence in much the same manner as our sportsmen embark on seasonal safaris to Africa? The old master collector of "damned" facts and perpetrator of uncomfortable theories, Charles Fort, once speculated that *homo sapiens* might be the "property" of some alien race. Our entire planet might be nothing more than a vast game preserve for some intergalactic or interdimensional sportsmen.

If such an irritating conjecture disturbs the squeamish and those who pride themselves upon their rational intellect, the author might suggest an interesting research project. Check the files of missing persons and see how often virtually "identical" people are reported missing at the same time, almost as if a certain "type" of specimen might be suddenly popular and in demand. Charles Fort included an item in one of his books which mentioned how people with the same name often figure in mysterious disappearances. Here is but one such example of "types" vanishing simultaneously, selected at random from my own files.

In the summer of 1955, police authorities in Macon, Georgia, received missing persons reports involving two men of the same age, the same height, and the same weight. To add to the string of coincidences, both men had set out for the same destination, Macon, Georgia. Carl M. Jones and Jake Mathis were both described as being forty-eight years old, 5 feet 10 inches tall, 160 pounds in weight, and gray-haired.

Of course not all strange disappearances turn out to be mysterious or even true disappearances which can be blamed on molesters from any plane of existence.

On December 29, 1958, Earl Zrust of Silver Lake, Minnesota, his wife Caroline, and their five children, aged two to ten, disappeared from their new \$20,000 home, leaving all their furnishings and belongings behind. Zrust had been a lifelong resident of Minnesota, a member of the village council, and was regarded as a solid citizen. Not a single relative or friend could offer any clue to the disappearance of the man, his wife, and their five children. The case looked like it would shape up as another mystery, another strange disappearance.

Then it was discovered that three days before the Zrusts had vanished, Earl had obtained copies of the birth certificates for each member of the family. Authorities mused that such an act seemed to indicate some kind of premeditated disappearance. Although the police and the FBI continued to draw blanks in the case, a finance company discovered the Zrust family in the summer of 1959, living safely in Reno, Nevada.

In 1965, fifteen-year-old Bruce Cottingham left his parents' home in New Milford, Illinois, to compete in a debate tournament at Illinois State University in Normal. During the tournament, the teenager disappeared without a trace.

Then, on January 28, 1971 the Chicago *Sun-Times* carried a feature which told of how Bruce had hopped a bus to New Orleans when he should have been chalking up debate points for Rockford Guilford High School. He worked in a radio station, then on the docks, almost passed an Army physical, but a leg crippled from polio held him back from full acceptance.

On Thanksgiving, 1970, Bruce came home to his parents' new residence in Waldron, Arkansas. Bruce's comment to journalist William C. Harsh Jr. was simple and frank: "I think I made many mistakes in handling it (his

six-year absence and silence). But the situation when I left was untenable and I had to do it. They (his parents) were always pretty good, actually. I just didn't like the way things were going at school."

The two cases cited above are, of course, "pseudo-disappearances." The persons involved ostensibly vanished without a trace, but they did come home eventually or they were found (by the powerful arm of a finance company if not the long arm of the FBI). We shall not further consider such cases in this volume. To the best of the author's knowledge, the cases included in this book will be only of that eerie variety in which the unfortunate individuals vanished totally and inexplicably without a trace and were never seen again.

It will be difficult to avoid the role of detective, however, and the author shall suggest several possible culprits and kidnappers.

For example, might some pocket of electromagnetic energy be responsible for these strange disappearances? Since matter is made up of invisible particles which science has named protons, electrons, and so forth, and since these particles make up all matter which is visible, depending upon the vibratory rate that is maintained, might it not be possible to raise the vibration rate of the human body so that it disappears?

A man could be innocently walking home from work and find himself suddenly drawn into such a pocket. The electrons and protons and the other invisible particles which make up his clothing are vibrating at one rate, his flesh, another, his briefcase another, and so on. Then, suddenly, the vibration rates of all of these substances become raised to the point where, from the standpoint of men and women vibrating at the conventional speed, at least, the victim simply disappears.

Another culprit might be the oft-discussed fourth dimension. The limits of our brains may handicap us so that we cannot accurately perceive dimensions and so

that we remain unaware of the true shape and extension of reality. Scientists have long dreamed of building some pluperfect machine that might be able to see around "the fourth dimensional corner" and translate what it views there into concepts which we can understand.

In 1957, Dr. Robert Tschirgi and a team of University of California (Los Angeles) scientists sought to construct a computer capable of finding the true fourth dimension that might exist all around us.

"In the world outside of us," Dr. Tschirgi said, "motion may occur in directions which we cannot see and which we must therefore interpret only as a change in time. Perhaps all of man's scientific laws are only three dimensional shadows of the real world around him."

Then there are the intriguing, albeit frightening, propositions, that these disappearing people might have fallen into "holes" in Time and Space, holes which either displaced them in the flow of Time or distorted them into a fourth or fifth dimensional world that is devoid of any physical cognates to our own three dimensional existence.

And as much as the very notion seems to offend and to upset some people, it must at least remain a tenable hypothesis that occupants of UFO's (whoever they may be) could be borrowing, replacing, kidnapping, hunting, mounting, or caging some of the many men and women who disappear each year.

The very subject matter of this book is sorrowful, terrifying, and startling at the same time that it is fascinating. The fact that people do suddenly and inexplicably disappear is known to anyone with any experience and tenure in this business of living. Perhaps such a tragedy has touched many of those who will read this book. The prospect that Uncle Fred or Aunt Sara may have been snatched by a UFO, dematerialized, or sucked into a hole in Time may, however, be both alarming and disconcerting.

The author wishes to clarify at once that he is privy to no special knowledge, occult or otherwise, which grants him privileged insight into these matters. He only maintains that there are certain elements in these strange disappearances which put them quite apart from fleeing debtors and unfaithful mates. These unfortunate men, women, and children appear to have been taken off the face of the earth by some force ostensibly beyond the ken of contemporary science.

And in spite of the view of Dr. H. Bentley Glass, the retiring president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, science has not yet discovered *all* the basic laws of our tiny, wobbling planet.

On January 2, 1971, the wire services carried a quote from Dr. Glass' departure speech which told of that prestigious scientist's contention that he and his fellows were like the explorers of a great continent "who have penetrated to its margins in most points of the compass and have mapped the major mountain chains and rivers." Dr. Glass conceded that there might be "innumerable details" to map in, but, he affirmed, "the endless horizon no longer exists."

In *Pursuit*, the Journal of the Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained, Ivan T. Sanderson snorted his outrage at such a statement.

"Be it known," Sanderson wrote, "that Dr. Glass' form of 'science' has made considerable inroads into an understanding of one aspect of our physical universe, but let us be equally assured that even technology is still almost half-an-infinity away from reaching the borders of Dr. Glass' 'continent' . . . We know nothing of the world of the intangible . . . nor of other matters mystical, but this is no excuse for ignoring them scientifically. Thus, half of reality—at least according to more than half of humanity—has not yet even been approached by this much vaunted 'science.' This is bad enough but when this same self-appointed establishment refuses even to contem-

plate, let alone investigate, *tangible* items that are unexplained, we can but deplore the dry rot that seems not only to have set in, but which seemingly has taken over. . . .”

Strange disappearances surely constitute a most startling category of “tangible items that are unexplained” by orthodox science, as the reader shall discover upon even a cursory examination of this book.

CHAPTER 2

Bitter Bierce and Dr. Hern's Holes in Space

Writer Carey McWilliams observed in a 1931 issue of the *American Mercury* that the mysterious circumstances surrounding the disappearance of Ambrose Bierce in 1913 had become "encrusted with an outlandish accretion of fanciful stories, marvelous explanations, and ingenious conjectures. The newspaper writing on the subject is already voluminous and shows no sign of abating."

In the San Francisco of 1876, Ambrose Bierce reigned as unchallenged literary king, the best known writer west of the Rockies. As any high school student who has studied American Literature will know, however, the contemporaries who nourished their lights in Bierce's shadow, are much better known today. Bret Harte, Jack London, and Joaquin Miller not only rate larger space in the textbooks, but their books remain easily available. Of Bierce's voluminous writings, only a collection of short stories *In the Midst of Life* and fragments of his *The Devil's Dictionary* are easily obtainable. But if Bierce's literary endeavors have not stood the test of time as well as those of certain of his contemporaries, he still enjoys a

last laugh in that the mysterious details of his demise are better known than the entire life histories of Harte, London, and Miller.

Bierce's last known communication to the world that he regarded with bitter disdain was in the form of a letter that he sent to his secretary on December 16, 1913. It was postmarked Laredo, Texas, and it was filled with references to the Mexican Revolution then underway. Within the letter was a sentence declaring his intention of going to Mexico ". . . with a pretty definite purpose which is not at present disclosable." As far as can be ascertained, Bierce crossed into Mexico and stepped into oblivion.

Bierce's biographers have theorized whether or not his cryptic reference to "a pretty definite purpose which is not at present disclosable" could have been either a presentiment of his fate or a clue that he planned to engineer his own strange disappearance.

It is well known to students of Bierce's life and career that he once wrote three short stories under the collective heading of *Mysterious Disappearances*. One of Bierce's biographers, Franklin Walker, suggested that "The Wickedest Man in San Francisco" may have become so intrigued by the prospect of men and women simply vanishing without a trace that he set about planning his own enigmatic death. In Walker's opinion, such a morbid joke would have appealed to Ambrose Bierce, the writer who kept a human skull before him as he worked at his desk. Although the act of physical death would be inescapable, Bierce would be able to escape its normal attributes. He would cheat the undertaker, the biographer, and the public ". . . by disappearing completely rather than dying in the traditional manner."

Bierce was a journalist for most of his writing life, and I first learned of both Ambrose Bierce and strange disappearances through the medium of a collection of his

newspaper articles that had been published originally by the Neale Publishing Company and reissued by E. Haldeman-Julius as a title in the famous Little Blue Book line. I acquired this book in 1949, and since the original copyright by Neale had been obliterated in the Little Blue Book edition, there seems little way of affixing an exact publishing time to these articles other than an occasional date given within the text of individual articles. I have seen only a scant number of the pieces in Bierce's *Tales of Haunted Houses* collected in other anthologies, so I have always valued the little book as being a rather rare volume of the unusual.

For the most part, the book relates anecdotes and reports of homes with alleged haunting phenomena; but there are four tales that deal with mysterious disappearances (including one which has become a classic in the "stranger than science" genre of eerie reportage) that are worthy of summarization and quotation in a book such as this.

THE SPOOK HOUSE

Bierce writes that this haunted area was on the road leading from Manchester in eastern Kentucky, to Booneville, twenty miles away. The deserted house was destroyed in 1863 by stragglers from the column of General George W. Morgan when he was retreating from the Cumberland Gap to the Ohio River.

For five years prior to its destruction, the mansion had been known as the "Spook House," because the plantation owner and his family had all disappeared one night without leaving a trace of their physical bodies anywhere on earth. It seemed apparent that the family had not undertaken a planned excursion since their household goods, clothing, provisions, as well as the horses in

the stable, the livestock, the Negroes in their slave quarters, all remained as they had before the man, his wife, and their five children had vanished.

Whatever strange, man-disintegrating force may have existed on the old plantation, it was able to exercise its power once again on a stormy night in June, 1859, when Col. J. C. McArdle, a lawyer, and Judge Myron Veigh, both of Frankfort, Kentucky, sought shelter within the foreboding walls of the mansion. Judge Veigh never exited from the strange sanctuary.

Col. McArdle's account of his friend's complete and mysterious disappearance appeared in the *Frankfort Advocate* of August 6, 1876.

According to Col. McArdle, the moment the two men had entered the mansion the terrible noise of the storm was immediately cut off. The sudden silence was so overwhelming to the senses, that Col. McArdle believed himself at first either to have been struck deaf and blind or to have been killed by a stroke of lightning as he crossed the door.

Then, after recovering their senses, the two men found the room.

"This apartment was suffused with a faint greenish light," Col. McArdle wrote, "the source of which I could not determine, making everything distinctly visible, though nothing was sharply defined.

"Everything, I say, but in truth the only objects within the blank stone walls of that room were human corpses. In number they were perhaps eight or ten . . . They were of different ages, or rather sizes, from infancy up, and of both sexes. All were prostrate on the floor, excepting one, apparently a young woman, who sat up, her back supported by an angle of the wall. A babe was clasped in the arms of another and older woman. A half-grown lad lay face downward across the legs of a full-bearded man. One or two were nearly naked, and the

hand of a young girl held the fragment of a gown which she had torn open at the breast.

"The bodies were in various stages of decay, all greatly shrunken in face and figure. Some were but little more than skeletons."

While he stood stupefied with horror by this ghastly spectacle and still holding open the door, Col. McArdle noticed the construction of the door was such that it could only be opened from the outside. "On the inside there was no knob, nor any kind of projection—only a smooth piece of iron."

Judge Veigh ignored Col. McArdle's warning and walked quickly to the center of the room so that he might closer examine the bodies. "A strong disagreeable odor" overwhelmed Col. McArdle, and he reeled, felt himself falling "and in clutching at the edge of the door for support pushed it shut with a sharp click."

Col. McArdle knew no more until he awakened six weeks later in a hotel at Manchester. He had lain ill with a constant delirium ever since he had been found by strangers several miles away from the house and brought to the hotel.

"No one believed a word of my story," he wrote in the *Advocate*, "and who can wonder? And who can imagine my grief when, arriving at my home in Frankfort two months later, I learned that Judge Veigh had never been heard of since that night? I then regretted bitterly the pride which since the first few days after the recovery of my reason had forbidden me to repeat my discredited story and insist upon its truth.

"With all that afterward occurred—the examination of the house; the failure to find any room corresponding to that which I have described; the attempt to have me adjudged insane, and my triumph over my accusers—the readers of the *Advocate* are familiar. After all these years I am still confident that excavations which I have neither

the legal right to undertake nor the wealth to make would disclose the secret of the disappearance of my unhappy friend, and possibly of the former occupants and owners of the deserted and now destroyed house. I do not despair of yet bringing about such a search, and it is a source of deep grief to me that it has been delayed by the undeserved hostility and unwise incredulity of the family and friends of the late Judge Veigh."

But Col. McArdle was never to convince the suspicious survivors of Judge Veigh that he had not murdered his friend. And search as he might, Col. McArdle never found that errie "room" wherein his friend had disappeared forever. Col. McArdle died in Frankfort, Kentucky, on December 13, 1879.

THE DIFFICULTY OF CROSSING A FIELD

In this instance, said to have occurred on a morning in July, 1854, a planter named Williamson, who lived six miles from Selma, Alabama, vanished before the eyes of his wife and child, and a neighbor and his son.

Mr. Armour Wren gave the following account of the matter while under oath in the course of legal proceedings relative to the settlement of the Williamson estate:

"My son's exclamation caused me to look toward the spot where I had seen the deceased (*sic*) an instant before, but he was not there, nor was he anywhere visible. I cannot say that at the moment I was greatly startled, or realized the gravity of the occurrence, though I thought it singular. My son, however, was greatly astonished and kept repeating his question in different forms until we arrived at the gate. My black boy Sam was similarly affected, even in a greater degree, but I reckon more by my son's manner than by anything he had himself ob-

served." (This sentence in the testimony was stricken out.)

"As we got out of the carriage at the gate of the field, and while Sam was hanging (*sic*) the team to the fence, Mrs. Williamson, with her child in her arms and followed by several servants, came running down the walk in great excitement, crying: 'He is gone, he is gone! Oh God! What an awful thing!' and many other such exclamations, which I do not distinctly recollect. I got from them the impression that they related to something more than the mere disappearance of her husband, even if that had occurred before her eyes. Her manner was wild, but not more so, I think, than was natural under the circumstances. I have no reason to think she had at that time lost her mind. I have never since seen nor heard of Mr. Williamson."

James Wren insisted that he had seen Mr. Williamson disappear, but he did not give testimony in court. Mrs. Williamson's manner had become increasingly "wild," and she did come to lose her reason. The slaves, of course, were judged incompetent to testify. The courts decided that Williamson was dead, and his estate was distributed according to law.

AN UNFINISHED RACE

On September 3, 1873, an amateur athlete named James Burne Worson made a tavern wager that he could run to Coventry and back to Leamington, Warwickshire (England), a distance of a bit more than forty miles. Worson set out with the gentleman who had bet against him; a line draper, Barham Wise; and Hamerson Burns, a photographer, following in a light cart.

Worson jogged along for several miles, boastful of his endurance, scornful of the occasional cheer or jeer from the wagon ahead of him.

Then, as the record has it: "Suddenly—in the very middle of the roadway, not a dozen yards from them, and with their eyes full upon him—the man seemed to stumble, pitched headlong forward, uttered a terrible cry and vanished! He did not fall to the earth—he vanished before touching it. No trace of him was ever discovered."

As might be expected, the authorities were more than a little skeptical of the fantastic account related by the three eye-witnesses, and the men were taken into custody.

"But they were of good standing, had always been considered truthful, were sober at the time of the occurrence, and nothing ever transpired to discredit their sworn account of their extraordinary adventure, concerning the truth of which, nevertheless, public opinion was divided, throughout the United Kingdom," Bierce writes. "If they had something to conceal, their choice of means is certainly one of the most amazing ever made by sane human beings."

CHARLES ASHMORE'S TRAIL

On the evening of November 9, 1878, sixteen-year-old Charles Ashmore left the family circle in the farmhouse near Quincy, Illinois, in order to fill the drinking bucket with fresh water from the spring. When he did not return, the family grew uneasy, and Christian Ashmore and his eldest daughter, Martha, took lantern in hand and went in search of the tardy teenager.

"A light snow had fallen, obliterating the path, but making the young man's trail conspicuous; each footprint was plainly defined," Bierce writes in his account of this classic case of the strange disappearance. "After going a little more than half-way—perhaps seventy-five yards—the father, who was in advance, halted, and elevating his

lantern stood peering intently into the darkness ahead . . . The trail of the young man had abruptly ended, and all beyond was smooth, unbroken snow. The last footprints were as conspicuous as any in the line; the very nail-marks were distinctly visible."

Ashmore and his daughter took a wide circle around the tracks so that they might remain undisturbed, then they proceeded to the spring. The spring was covered with ice, hours old. The teenaged Charles had not progressed any further toward the spring than his final tracks indicated. And there were no tracks leading away from that ultimate trail.

Young Charles Ashmore had disappeared without a clue.

But Bierce writes that four days later Charles' grief-stricken mother went to the spring for water and returned insisting that she had heard the voice of her son calling to her as she passed the spot where his footsteps had ended. She had wandered about the area, thinking the voice to be coming first from one direction, then from another. She pursued the source of the voice until she had become exhausted with fatigue and emotion.

Later, when authorities questioned her as to what the voice had said, she protested that even though the words were perfectly distinct, she had been unable to receive any continuity of message.

For months afterward, at irregular intervals of a few days, the voice was heard by the several members of the family, and by others," Bierce concluded his account. "All declared it unmistakably the voice of Charles Ashmore; all agreed that it seemed to come from a great distance, faintly, yet with entire distinctness or articulation; yet none could determine its direction, nor repeat its words. The intervals of silence grew longer and longer, the voice fainter and farther, and by midsummer it was heard no more."

Bierce followed the accounts just summarized with a postscript entitled, "Science to the Front." It seemed to him that the theory of Dr. Hern of Leipzig, which was expounded in the scientist's own book, *Verschwindend und Seine Theorie*, might offer an explanation for the subject of mysterious disappearances, ". . . of which every memory is stored with abundant example."

According to Bierce, the theories of Dr. Hern had attracted some attention ". . . particularly among the followers of Hegel, and mathematicians who hold to the actual existence of a so-called non-Euclidean space—that is to say, of space which has more dimensions than length, breadth, and thickness—space in which it would be possible to tie a knot in an endless cord and to turn a rubber ball inside out without 'a solution of its continuity,' or, in other words, without breaking or cracking it."

It was Dr. Hern's contention that in the visible world that we call our reality there exist void places, *vacua*, and something more—"holes, as it were, through which animate and inanimate objects may fall into the invisible world and be seen and heard no more." Dr. Hern viewed Space as being pervaded by ". . . luminiferous ether, which is a material thing—as much a substance as air or water, though almost infinitely more attenuated." The scientist believed that "all force, all forms of energy must be propagated in this; every process must take place in it which takes place at all."

In an attempt to restate Dr. Hern's theory, Bierce writes: "But let us suppose that cavities exist in this otherwise universal medium, as caverns exist in the earth, or cells in Swiss cheese. In such a cavity there would be absolutely nothing. It would be such a vacuum as cannot be artificially produced; for if we pump the air from a receiver there remains the luminiferous ether. Through one of these cavities light could not pass, for there would be nothing to bear it. Sound could not come from it; noth-

ing could be felt in it. It would not have a single one of the conditions necessary to the action of any of our senses. In such a void, in short, nothing whatever could occur."

Bierce next quotes the statement of an anonymous mathematician who had studied the theory of Dr. Hern: "A man enclosed in such a closet could neither see nor be seen; neither hear nor be heard; neither feel nor be felt; neither live nor die, for both life and death are processes which can take place only where there is force, and in empty space no force could exist."

Out of genuine concern (or his genuine love of the morbid), Bierce wondered: "Are these the awful conditions under which the friends of the lost are to think of them as existing and doomed forever to exist?"

The question remains whether Ambrose Bierce himself was the victim of such a void, or if he deliberately devised a method whereby it might appear as though he had simply vanished in the twinkling of an eye.

There are some points that should be made clear. First of all, Bierce was not snatched from "the midst of life" in mid-career or at the peak of his productive powers. He was seventy-one years old and suffering from asthmatic attacks, the result of sleeping off the effects of Demon Rum on a tombstone in a chilly San Francisco graveyard.

Bierce had been an extremely handsome man when he was younger. He stood six feet tall, had reddish-blond flowing hair, and a full beard. Several biographers have made much of his "animal magnetism," and one states that young women asserted that they ". . . could *feel* him when he stood ten feet away." Coupled with his strikingly good looks, Bierce was obsessed with cleanliness and attractive clothing. It might be suggested, therefore, that a seventy-one-year-old man no longer desired the pressures and mental tensions inherent in the "once beautiful."

A second point to be made is that Bierce felt that his finest hours had been spent during the Civil War. He rose from drummer boy to first lieutenant, and he survived the bloody battles of Shiloh, Chickamauga, Murfreesboro, Kenesaw Mountain, Franklin, and Nashville to be discharged brevet major. The war took its physical toll of Bierce. He was wounded twice, once seriously in the head; but each time he returned to the thick of the battle like a star quarterback returning to the game after having been mobbed by a three-hundred-pound lineman. He truly seemed to love war, war as a science, as some cosmic chess game in which the pieces were living humans. His brother Albert, however, felt that Ambrose was never the same after his head wound. "Some of the iron of the shell seemed to stick to his brain and he became bitter and suspicious."

But another bit of the iron seemed to hasten Ambrose's maturity from an ignorant farmboy to a confident, intellectually mature man, eager to be a writer.

In spite of his intense animal magnetism, Bierce failed with women so often that he became an earnest misogynist. All the ingredients were there: he was handsome, virile, and strongly attracted to the opposite sex. But he worshipped women too much. He idealized woman and tried in vain to place her upon a pedestal. When he discovered that they, just as he, were creatures of flesh and blood with idiosyncrasies and failings, he grew disillusioned and even more bitter. His tirades against women were filled with his harshest invective, and their potency increased after he had destroyed his marriage to the lovely San Francisco society belle Ellen Day.

He was married long enough to father two sons and one daughter. He never stopped hating his wife for having failed him, and he loathed his sons for behaving as if they had come from a broken home. One son died of alcoholism at an early age, and the other was killed in a knife fight during a saloon brawl. Somehow, in spite of

his sour view of the virtue of women, Bierce maintained a voluminous correspondence of long-standing with both his daughter and his secretary, Carrie Christiansen.

Through all of his domestic difficulties, his struggles to establish himself as a writer, and his petulant sniping at his employer, William Randolph Hearst, Bierce continually rekindled his memories of the Civil War as having been the peak moments of his life. At age seventy, many of his biographers maintain, he made two important decisions: one, he would retrace the paths he had taken on the old Civil War battlefields; two, he would go to Mexico where the counterrevolutionary forces of Carranza and Villa had risen against the federal troops of President Huerta.

On October 13, 1913, a reporter from a New Orleans newspaper managed to obtain an interview from Ambrose Bierce in which the writer claimed that he had never amounted to much after the Civil War. Then Bierce told the reporter: "I'm on my way to Mexico because I like the game. I like fighting; I want to see it."

In that final letter from Laredo, Texas, dated December 16, 1913, Bierce declared to Carrie Christiansen that he was crossing the border into Mexico "with a pretty definite purpose which is not at present disclosable."

Although that was the last word Ambrose Bierce ever set to paper before he mysteriously disappeared, there seems to be a certain amount of substantial evidence to indicate that the old warrior was seen alive after that date.

George F. Weeks, a friend of Bierce's from California, set out on a personal search in February of 1919 for any trace of the author. In Mexico City, he found an officer who told him that Bierce had been killed in a campaign in January 1914.

Other leads indicated that the author had been executed by a firing squad, murdered by guides, or killed by soldiers who grew impatient with his stinging tongue.

One investigator theorized that the clever Bierce had never really crossed the Mexican border at all, but had re-entered the United States to live and die in obscurity and to have a last laugh at all those who puzzled over his mysterious disappearance.

Most of Bierce's biographers maintain, however, that the lure of war would have been too strong for the author to have resisted going into Mexico. Odo B. Slade, a former member of Pancho Villa's staff, recalled an elderly American with gray hair and an asthmatic condition who served as a military advisor to Villa. The American was called Jack Robinson, and he criticized the Mexicans' battle strategies with the accomplished eye of a military expert.

In his book *They Never Came Back*, Allen Churchill comments: "It is easy to picture the malevolent oldster parading his military knowledge before the Mexicans. It is also possible to relish him urging companions to call him by the boyishly adventurous name of Jack Robinson."

Odo B. Slade and author Louis Stevens (*Here Comes Pancho Villa!*) both state that this "Jack Robinson" quarreled violently with Villa and was shot to death when he announced his intention of leaving Villa and transferring his allegiance to Carranza.

Edward H. Smith (*Mysteries of the Missing*) reasoned that Ambrose Bierce ". . . started out to fight battles and shoulder hardships as he had done when a boy, somehow believing that a tough spirit would carry him through. Wounded or stricken with disease, he probably lay down in some pesthouse of a hospital, or in some troop train filled with other stricken men. Or he may have crawled off to some waterhole and died, with nothing more articulate than the winds and the stars for witnesses."

It is possible to see the author of such works as *Cobwebs from an Empty Skull*, *The Devil's Dictionary*, *Mys-*

terious Disappearances, and *The Damned Thing* finding a final satisfaction in crawling off into some cave and dying like a wounded but free beast; but some state that it is also possible that Bierce may have toppled into a hole in Space “. . . through which animate and inanimate objects may fall into the invisible world and be seen and heard no more.”

CHAPTER 3

Lost in Time and Space

About 7:30 A.M. on Sunday, August 25, 1968, church secretary Dixie Lee Arensen left her home for the non-denominational Hillcrest Church in order to prepare the bulletin for the morning's services. Her husband Jonathan was the associate youth minister at the church, and he was still preparing for his duties which were to begin at 9:00 A.M. He said good-bye to his wife outside the house, then went back in to shave, dress, and do some last-minute work.

Since it is only a five-minute drive from the Arsensen home to the Hillcrest Church, it seems reasonable to assume that Dixie Lee arrived there about 7:45 a.m. She let herself in with her own key, unlocked her office door, then took out a sheet of stencil paper and turned on the IBM electric typewriter. As the typewriter hummed into readiness, she removed a handwritten sheet with information for the bulletin from her purse and placed it on the desk beside her. She sat back comfortably in her chair, began to type. . . .

At 9:15 A.M. Jonathan Arensen arrived at the church. He walked to the office to greet his wife. He could hear

the electric typewriter humming, but when he opened the door to the office, he was startled to find that his wife was not at her desk. It was not like her to leave a machine running and unattended.

The puzzled husband began to look for his wife in the church proper, then extended his search to the church grounds. No Dixie Lee.

Then it occurred to him that she might have become ill. That might explain the electric typewriter left running. He ran to the rest room, confident that he had solved the mystery. When he found the room empty, he was beginning to feel alarmed.

Dixie Lee's car still stood at the curb on the side street leading to the church door that she had unlocked. Why would she have suddenly decided to walk home, especially when he was at home and could have brought anything she had forgotten if she would have given him a call on the telephone?

By now it was nearly 9:30 A.M. and children were arriving for Sunday School. The youth minister felt torn between his duty to the children and his concern for his wife. The church's pastor had resigned that July and the minister that morning was merely visiting the church on a trial basis. The teachers and the restless pupils were looking to the youth minister for direction, but he was consumed by anxiety.

Then a twelve-year-old girl handed Jonathan Arsenen his wife's glasses. Dixie Lee was terribly nearsighted. She even wore her glasses to go to the washroom. She could scarcely see a thing without them. And Dixie had only the one pair.

Where had the girl found the glasses?

She was not certain. She thought she had picked them up from Mrs. Arsenen's desk. But maybe she had found them on the floor next to the desk. She couldn't remember. But she thought she should give them to Mr. Arsenen right away.

For the first time Jonathan Arsenen yielded to fear. His wife would not have gone anywhere without her glasses. At 2:00 P.M. he called the police.

A missing person report was sent out on Dixie Lee Arsenen, and a search was instituted that became virtually world-wide in its radius. Since her parents were missionaries, Dixie had spent many years abroad. Dixie Lee's expired passport was discovered among her things at home, however, and it became clear that the twenty-year-old bride had not developed a sudden and unexplainable yen to revisit her old homes around the globe.

On September 1, Dr. Harry Schaefer, Dixie Lee's father, left his mission in Kenya, Africa, to fly to Granada Hills in order to offer whatever comfort and aid he might provide to the sorrowing young husband and the investigating authorities. In October, Mrs. Schaefer decided not to battle anxiety alone back in Kenya, and she, too, came to California.

The police investigation led them to proceed on the assumption that the twelve-year-old girl had found Mrs. Arsenen's glasses on the carpet and that their position on the floor was suggestive of foul play. According to their reasoning, the fact that the glasses were lying on the floor offered a strong indication that the glasses had been knocked from the young woman's face. But, of course, it is not a demonstrable *fact* that the glasses were indeed found on the carpet. The young student had become confused by the excitement her innocent discovery had precipitated, and she was uncertain whether or not she had discovered Mrs. Arsenen's glasses on the carpet or on the desk.

Dr. Schaefer was quoted as saying: "Dixie is a gifted, sensitive, lively girl who wouldn't impose this situation on her family and her friends if she could help it."

The Los Angeles police department's missing person report on Dixie Arsenen comments: "Foul play feared

due to circumstances of subject's leaving . . . nothing in subject's background would indicate sudden departure."

"I've stopped making guesses," said her husband, Jonathan. "I just do not know what to think."

Did Dixie Lee Arensen somehow meet with foul play as she sat at her typewriter in the office of the Hillcrest Christian Church? Or did she meet with a fate far beyond our contemporary science's ability to deduce?

On Sunday morning, August 6, 1956, thirteen-year-old Donald Lee Baker of Rockvale Avenue, Azusa, California, set off on a bicycle ride with his new friend, eleven-year-old Brenda Howell who was visiting a married sister. The ride was to be a brief one, for Helen Baker, Donald's mother, had instructed him to be home by 8:30 A.M. so that he might accompany her to church services.

When the children had not returned by evening, Mrs. Baker and her husband Jesse, a chemical plant foreman, picked up Brenda Howell's sister, Mrs. Mary Edwards, and the three of them notified the police.

Officers soon located Brenda's bicycle and Donald's jacket in the brush near the reservoir at the edge of the Angeles National Forest. Navy divers were commissioned to search the mile-long, sixty-foot deep body of water, while police officers, sheriff's deputies, and hundreds of volunteers began to carefully scour the area.

No trace of the two children has ever been found.

On March 23, 1957, eight-year-old Tommy Bowman stepped around a corner of a forest trail just ahead of six members of his family and vanished without a trace. This particular forest trail happened to be in the same Devil's Gate Reservoir area above the city of Altadena, not far from Azusa in California's Angeles National Forest where Donald Lee Baker and Brenda Howell had disappeared on August 6, 1956. Although it may seem unbelievable that a human being could simply walk around a corner and disappear, Tommy Bowman's fa-

ther, sister, brother, uncle, and two cousins insisted through their horror and shock that that was exactly what had happened.

Within hours after the distraught Bowman family had notified the authorities of Tommy's disappearance, the area was being searched by over four hundred volunteers, trained rescue dogs, mounted patrols, and bush beaters. Woodsmen thoroughly examined any crevices into which the child might have crawled or fallen. The forest trail on which Tommy was last seen was crossed and recrossed by dozens of keen-eyed outdoorsmen. The extensive search was supplemented by low-flying helicopters that criss-crossed the entire area again and again.

To men knowledgeable in the ways of woodlore it was quickly and easily determined that the eight-year-old had not slipped off the trail. No dislodged rocks, torn-away shrubs, or broken branches betrayed such an accident at the spot where Tommy had last been seen. And it must be remembered that the boy's family had been but a few steps behind him, and they surely would have heard Tommy cry out if he had somehow tripped and fallen off the forest path. Even if the boy had not screamed out in fear if he had missed his footing, the family would have been close enough behind him to have seen and to have heard him fall.

The volunteers and the professionals searched for little Tommy Bowman for a week, but it appeared that the boy had been literally plucked from the earth by some unseen and unknown force.

July 13, 1960, marked the day of six-year-old Bruce Kremen's first Y.M.C.A. hike. It also marked the day that the boy would disappear without a trace and become another addition to the list of the unfortunate who were claimed by California's Forest of Disappearing Children.

Little Bruce had been brimming with enthusiasm for the hike at the outset of the trek, but the altitude seemed to be too much for him. Noticing the boy's discomfort,

the group leader told Bruce to return to the main camp and rest. The leader told the boy that since they were still within sight of the camp, it would be best if he went back at once.

The conscientious leader halted the column of eager boys while he walked with Bruce until they were within just a few yards of the camp's perimeter.

"Now, Bruce," he told the boy, "you walk the rest of the way and report to one of the leaders standing there in the clearing."

With a wave and a smile, the leader turned to rejoin the troop of laughing, jostling boys awaiting his return.

Although it was just a few yards to camp, little Bruce Kremen never made those last few steps. For some terrible, inexplicable reason, Bruce Kremen vanished without a trace just nine days before his seventh birthday.

More than three hundred volunteers continued to comb every foot of the forest within ten square miles for twelve days before they regretfully called a halt to their futile search. Bruce Kremen had become another tiny victim of whatever devil inhabited the Devil's Gate region of the 690,000 acres of wilderness.

In each of the four mysterious disappearances in that four-year period the exhaustive efforts of hundreds of experienced volunteer and professional searchers produced not a single trace of clothing, not a single identifying possession, not even a skeleton or skeletal fragment. The authorities were forced to discard every possible lead. Wild animals, sex maniacs, kidnappers, freak accidents—all were eliminated as a result of meticulous investigation.

On October 4, 1940, Mr. and Mrs. Earl Kirk disappeared along with their car and everything in it somewhere on the highway between Sudbury and Sault St. Marie, Ontario. Kirk, a successful businessman in North Bay, Ontario, had his business affairs in order and his bank account solidly intact. He and his wife Dolly were

very close to one another and both were devoted to the four children whom they had left at home.

A friend and business associate in Sudbury had asked the Kirks to spend the night, but they had declined his invitation and had explained that they wished to make Sault St. Marie before calling it a day. The last person known to have seen Earl and Dolly Kirk was an operator at a gas station in Sudbury. He remembered pointing out to them the street that led to westbound Highway 17.

More than one hundred men worked for six weeks, dragging rivers and lakes along the highway, searching the bush, before the coming snows and freezing weather forced them to abandon the investigation. Absolutely no clue has ever been found to indicate what happened to the Kirks or to their automobile.

In 1943, six Chinese chicken producers disappeared mysteriously from their farm in Acton, Massachusetts. Neighbors and police officials found a fully furnished home, the Jungs' truck, a dining room table set for six persons, and several hundred starving chickens, but not a single trace of the Jungs. There were no signs of violence, and the arrangement of plates and dishes of food around the dining room table indicated that the Jungs were about to partake of the evening meal when they vanished without a single tangible token of their passing from the face of the earth.

In each of the cases recounted thus far in this chapter—Mrs. Dixie Lee Arensen, the unfortunate child victims of the Forest of Disappearing Children, the Earl Kirks, and the Chinese Farmers—one must keep alive the suspicion that each of them could have met with foul play at the hands of some clever, sadistic, but very human, agency. At the same time, is it not possible to postulate the theory that these men, women, and children might have inadvertently and inescapably become lost somewhere in Time and Space?

The strange disappearance of Thomas P. Meehan, a

thirty-eight-year-old Concord, California, attorney and a referee for the State Department of Employment Appeals Bureau, on February 1, 1963, would seem to suggest that a bizarre kind of distortion of Time occurred in some mysterious manner.

Meehan left Eureka for Concord at about 2:00 P.M. He drove as far as Myers Flat before he stopped to telephone his wife and complain that he felt ill. She told him to spend the night at a motel and not try to drive through.

It is from this point on that the time sequence becomes most confusing—all the more so when the startling climax of the day's events is realized.

Approximately 5:00 P.M.—Meehan checked into the Forty Winks Motel at Redway.

Approximately 6:00 P.M.—The attorney drove to the Southern Humboldt Community Hospital at Garberville to see a doctor.

At 6:45 P.M.—Meehan told the nurse that he felt as if he were dead. While she was checking him in and before he had seen a doctor, Meehan disappeared.

At 7:00 P.M.—A Myers Flat couple told the Highway Patrol that they had seen the tail lights of a car on Highway 101 drive into the Eel River.

At 8:00 P.M.—Attorney Meehan was talking with Chip Nunnemaker, the owner of the Forty Winks, at the motel. Meehan asked the innkeeper: "Do I look like I'm dead? I feel like I've died and the whole world died with me." Nunnemaker noticed that Meehan's shoes and trouser cuffs appeared wet and muddy.

9:00 P.M.—Meehan went to his room.

9:30 P.M.—Motel employee Harry Young went to Meehan's room to tell him that the call he had put through to Mrs. Meehan could not be completed because a storm had disrupted telephone service. Young saw that Meehan had changed into a black suit and a white shirt.

10:45 P.M.—The Highway Patrol found Meehan's car

submerged in the Eel River, its tail lamps still shining like beacon lights for the searchers. Skid marks indicated that the vehicle had gone off the highway at high speed. Officers found blood on top of the car. The right front window of the car was open. Meehan was nowhere in sight, but droplets of blood and muddy footprints led up the bank for thirty feet—then vanished.

No trace of Thomas Meehan was found. Then, nineteen days later, his body was discovered in the Eel River near Myers Flat, sixteen miles downstream from where Meehan's car had veered into the river. The evidence of the autopsy suggested that the attorney had survived the crash with a superficial head wound, then, later, had died of drowning.

Did Thomas P. Meehan's illness and confused state of mind lead him to weave in and out of hospitals and motel rooms and into a cold and swirling river? Or did that same confused but powerful mind exert an influence upon Time and Space?

If Meehan's automobile went into the river at 7:00 P.M. (and it must have, since no other automobiles were reported missing or were ever found in the river on that date), then how did he appear back at the motel to chat for an hour (8:00-9:00 P.M.) with the owner? Chip Nunnemaker did take note of Meehan's muddy shoes and trouser cuffs and the attorney's repeated complaint that he felt as if he were dead. Employee Harry Young saw Meehan at 9:30 P.M. and observed that Meehan had changed out of his wet clothing. Had Nunnemaker and Young actually talked with a dead man?

Although Meehan did not disappear without a trace forever, he certainly did disappear and reappear all during the evening of February 1st; and after he was last seen by Harry Young in his motel room, Meehan's body was not found until February 20.

Meehan's car was seen to plunge into the Eel River at about the same time he was sitting in the hospital in

Garberville waiting to see a doctor. The police found drops of blood and muddy footprints that led up the bank for thirty feet before they simply vanished. Could Meehan have made his way back to the Forty Winks Motel?

Or did Thomas Meehan actually die by drowning when his automobile went into the river at about 7:00 P.M.? Could his ill and confused mind and the will to live have projected an image of himself to the nurse, to Nunnemaker, to Young while his actual physical shell floated lifeless in the Eel River?

The author Ambrose Bierce, whom we visited at some length in the previous chapter, wrote a remarkable short story entitled "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge." In this tale, a man sentenced to a war-time death by hanging from the girders of a bridge is able to visualize the rope breaking and an escape from his captors all in the split second of reality before the taut rope snaps his neck and snuffs out his life-spark. Could the dying Thomas Meehan have discovered the same relativity of Time and could his mind in an altered state of consciousness have manipulated man-made time in a manner that would confuse all those who insist on measuring the passage of moments by the movement of a clock hand? Could the dying Thomas Meehan have wavered between dimensions of Time, dimensions of being, and utilized the unfathomable power of mind to influence matter?

In the September, 1956, issue of *Fate* magazine, Miriam Golding related an experience which occurred to her in the fall of 1934 when she stepped out of an elevator into another plane of existence.

Miriam and her fiance were riding a crowded elevator in a Chicago music store when she inadvertently got off at the wrong floor and found it impossible to push her way back into the jammed car. Miriam sighed, prepared to await the elevator car's return; then looking around her, she was astonished to see that she was not in a

downtown office building at all, but a large railroad station.

She watched crowds of travelers hurrying about. Railroad announcers gave times of departures and arrivals. People bought tickets, grabbed sandwiches and snacks from lunch counters, idled impatiently in waiting rooms. Miriam approached the Information Booth, but stalked away indignantly when the girl seemed to completely ignore her repeated inquiries.

At last Miriam noticed a to-the-street sign and followed its direction into the open air. It seemed to be a beautiful, mid-summer afternoon. A new red brick building was being constructed across the street from the station. Crowds of people jostled by on the streets. But everyone ignored Miriam and she had no idea where she was.

She wandered aimlessly for several minutes until she noticed a teenaged boy standing near the center of the sidewalk, staring in all directions. She approached the blond boy, hardly daring to hope that they might establish contact with one another. Then he noticed her and smiled: "I guess they let you off at the wrong stop, too!"

Miriam immediately understood that ". . . however fantastic, the same thing had happened to both of us. Our mutual plight created a bond and for want of anything better to do, we continued together down the broad avenue."

The boy explained that he had been playing tennis in Lincoln, Nebraska. He had gone into the locker room to change his shoes, and when he came back out to the courts, he found himself in that same railroad depot. The two of them marveled at whatever strange force could transport a tennis player from Lincoln and a shopper from Chicago to the same unknown train station.

Eventually they found themselves in the open country where, amazingly, Miriam saw her fiance's sister on a

sandbar with a number of other girls. They noticed her, too, and they began to call her name and wave at her.

Her new friend became very excited. Perhaps the girls formed some kind of connection or link between dimensions. He hurried out of his clothes until he stood only in his tennis shorts.

"It's not far to swim," he told Miriam. "They see us! I know I can make it to them in a few minutes."

The figures of the girls remained on the sandbar, but the teenager, even though he was a strong swimmer, could get no nearer to the girls and the hoped for link between worlds. Exhausted, he returned at last to shore and fell to the sand in complete discouragement. When they looked again at the sandbar, it had disappeared.

Miriam felt despondent. Would she be forever trapped in this other plane of existence? Then she became suddenly enveloped in darkness. She felt as if she were floating through space.

With a jolt she found herself on a stool in the music store, a magazine spread out before her. A clock was signaling closing time, and the clerks were directing impatience glances her way. Miriam looked about for her fiance, but she could not see him. She decided to go directly to his home, but this time she would take the stairs and avoid the elevator.

"When I got to my destination," Miriam Golding wrote, "my fiance opened the door. He certainly looked relieved. He said he'd lost me on the elevator. After stepping out on the main floor, he had been unable to locate me. Thinking I had gotten off on some other floor, he had waited a while, then decided to go home."

Miriam entered the home and was surprised to see her fiance's sister with the same friends she had seen on the sandbar. The sister smiled and teased her that she had seen her in town, "but you were so engrossed in each other you didn't even hear us!"

Where had Miriam Golding been during those strange hours away from conventional reality?

What distortion of Time and Space made downtown Chicago appear to be a river and a sandbar?

How had the girls been able to serve as a kind of link between dimensions, so that at least some kind of communication, even though false (they saw her with her fiance rather than a blond teenaged boy; she saw them on a sandbar rather than a crowded Chicago street), had been established?

Or was it all some kind of fantasy, an illusion prompted by unknown elements working upon the brain?

In his *Orbits of the Unknown*, John Macklin related the experience of a Father Litvinov, who just before midnight one evening in 1933, opened the church door to admit a young man in ornate knee breeches and a look of horror on his face. Once the priest managed to calm the hysteria that had begun to seize his strange visitor, he heard a most incredible story.

The young man gave the name of Dmitri Girshkov, and he claimed that he was to have been married that day.

On his way to the church, he had stopped by the cemetery to visit the grave of a boyhood friend. As he had stood there paying his respects, he was startled to see an image of his friend, who had been dead for over a year. The next thing he knew it was evening, and how as he made his way back to the village, he was frightened to find nearly everything changed in the small Siberian town.

Dmitri ran from the church, shouting in anguish that he must find his family, his friends, his bride. Father Litvinov became aware of a strange light and a gray mist. In the blinking of an eye, the curiously dressed young man had vanished.

Greatly intrigued by the provocative and eerie experi-

ence, the priest went back through old parish records. He discovered that two other priests and a schoolmaster had seen the boy who stepped out of the past (or who stepped into the future, depending upon one's point of view) within the last two centuries. At last he found the name of Dmitri Girshkov and the records of a young man who had stopped by a friend's grave on his wedding day in 1746 and who then disappeared.

C. R. Colby is one of many authors who has repeated the strange disappearance of the four crewmen who vanished without a trace from the Seven Hunters Lighthouse on the island of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides off the northwest coast of Scotland on December 14, 1900. Investigators found everything within the lighthouse to be in order. The only items missing—in addition to the four crewmen—were two sets of oilskins and two pairs of seaboots. Most amazing was the fact that the relief crew had had to pound down the lighthouse door to gain entrance. The tower door had been bolted from the inside.

Emile Schurmacher recounted the tale of Jerrold I. Potter who disappeared from a DC-3 as it flew from Kankakee, Illinois, to Dallas, Texas, on June 29, 1968.

Potter and his wife Carrie had been looking forward to attending the Lion's Club convention in Dallas for a long time. The fifty-four-year-old businessman was said to have been in good health, in affable spirits, and secure in his financial considerations.

According to Schurmacher's account in *More Strange Unsolved Mysteries*, Potter got up to go to the lavatory as the DC-3 was north of Rolla, Missouri, approaching the Fort Leonard Camp area. His wife watched him start toward the compartment in the tail end of the airplane. Several of his friends exchanged brief comments with him as he walked toward the lavatory.

Then the DC-3 gave an unaccountable jolt "as if it had bumped over an invisible obstacle in its flight path." The plane quivered a bit, then recovered almost at once. The

passengers remained unconcerned by the slight "bump."

After a few minutes, Mrs. Potter glanced down the aisle to see if her husband was returning to his seat. She became uneasy when he was nowhere in sight. She expressed this discomfort to a stewardess, who checked the lavatory and found it empty.

Co-pilot Roy Bacus answered the stewardess' signal and was stunned to hear her report that a passenger was missing. He investigated the area of the rear lavatory and found that the boarding door was ajar. Bacus rushed forward to Pilot Miguel Cabeza with a small section of safety chain. Cabeza radioed that he was changing his course, indicated the nature of the emergency, and headed for Springfield, Missouri, the nearest airport.

Investigating authorities found it difficult to accept the theory that Potter had mistakenly opened the exit door instead of the lavatory door. According to airline officials, the door bore a warning inscription in large white letters on a red background. The door was hinged at the top and was secured by a safety chain and a heavy handle that could only be released by turning it 180 degrees to free two thick plunger bolts.

The president of Purdue Aviation Corporation, Grove Webster, commented: "It would take a concentrated effort to open the door during the flight. The door was locked securely on take-off. You can stand in the doorway of a DC-3 in flight and not be sucked out. The plane is not pressurized. And to open the door takes a lot of effort. Crews close the door for our stewardesses and open it. And it is harder to open and close in flight than on the ground."

There were twenty-two passengers and two stewardesses in the cabin when Potter disappeared, yet no one saw the businessman force open a door and plummet to his death. In fact, no one could recall seeing him after the DC-3 hit that "bump" in mid-air. Could Potter have

been in precisely the proper position for entrance into a "hole" in Space and Time? No trace of the unfortunate man has ever been found on this plane of reality.

That splendid little journal, *Fate* magazine, often carries reports from the readers which tell of individual encounters with such "holes" or "force fields" and with what appear to be glimpses into other dimensions of being, co-existing with our own.

Louis F. Love of Coconut Grove, Florida, told in the April, 1951, issue of how he had approached such a mysterious area when he lived in Norfolk, Virginia. As he turned a corner of a particular street, he found his entire body "literally repelled out into the center of the street." Love was firm in his assertion that no human being had touched him and that he felt no pain, yet:

"I tried to resist this strange force and managed to take one step toward it—only to be repelled farther across the street. It seemed to be the opposite of gravity . . . It pushed hard enough to force me to walk backwards in order to remain standing."

Love remembered that he felt a deep sense of impending danger. Although there was only a little light in the street, he could see a "deep, total blackness" at the corner. He decided to go home by another route.

Rose W. Bushnell of South Fork, California, recalled the early morning of April 20, 1905, when she and her parents, her sister, her grandparents, and a number of friends and relatives heard the screams of men, women, and children coming from the clear sky above their house.

"The screams . . . at first seemed to come from a great distance, fading away for about two minutes and then rising again, a little louder each time," she writes in the December, 1953, issue of *Fate*.

The terrible screaming lasted for a period of about fifteen minutes, screams that sounded like "those of men,

women, and children together, as if in terrible pain . . . Words cannot describe those horrible sounds. I can hear them yet."

Did Rose Bushnell and her family and friends hear some strange, natural phenomenon? Or did they hear the cries of terror and alarm of unfortunate men, women, and children who had somehow become lost in another time, another place?

Thomas Phillips of Pasadena, Texas, told of the time on January 10, 1960, when on a business trip he stopped for a train between Belleville and Sealy, Texas. He first saw the train coming off to his right, about three hundred feet ahead. Strangely enough, the train, pulled by an old style locomotive, had seemed to move out of a cloud of fog.

As he drummed his fingers impatiently on the steering wheel, waiting for the train to pass, Phillips suddenly realized that there were no crossing lights, signs, or signals. As the freight cars passed slowly in front of him, he also noticed that the train seemed to be lighted " . . . by a source entirely apart from the lights of (his) car."

When the last boxcar passed before him, Phillips saw to his surprise " . . . that there was no sign of a railroad bed, not even a break in the pavement where one ever had been."

Apparently, trains, too, can become lost in Space and Time.

Another *Fate* reader, Inez M. Weijo, of Ely, Minnesota, reported her experience during the winter of 1924, when she and four others found themselves stalled in the snow near an old country school house near Embarrass, Minnesota.

As they were shoveling their way free, they looked up to see a wagonload of hay pulled by a team of horses fast approaching them on the narrow road. Two men sat on top of the hay, seemingly unconcerned with the plight of those in the stalled automobile.

"As it came abreast," she writes, "I jumped aside on my side of the road. Martha jumped to the other side of the road. Just as the team drove between us, it disappeared. Whereas Martha and I had been unable to see each other from the sides of the road because the hayrack was in the way, we now stood facing each other in amazement . . . When we recovered somewhat, we looked for a trail to show us where the wagon had been, but we found none."

While one part of the world sleeps through the night, another part of the world toils by sunlight. Would it not be a remarkable and fantastic proposition to consider that when one dimension of the state we call Minnesota shudders amidst snow and ice, another dimension of that same state makes hay on sizzling summer days? And only on rare occasions does one dimension ever get a peek at the other.

And if trains and hayracks might become lost in Time and Space every now and then, the same thing apparently may happen to television signals.

Many students of the paranormal are familiar with the strange case of the television call letters KLEE-TV of Houston, Texas, which appeared on the home screen of Mr. H. C. Taylor, a specialist in long distance television reception, who lived in Lancashire, England. Now the very fact that Taylor somehow managed to pull in a signal from such a far away spot as Houston is extremely noteworthy, but it is not the punchline to the story. Taylor received the signal in Septemer, 1953. The KLEE call letters had not been broadcast since July, 1950, when the Houston station changed its letters to KPRC.

Quite understandably, the chief engineer of KPRC doubted Taylor's claim; but he later admitted that the photograph Taylor sent him did indeed show the old KLEE call letters on the standard call-letter slide utilized by the station.

Nearly everyone in this electronic age is aware of the

fact that television call letters can occasionally be picked up at enormous distances from their point of emanation due to unusual atmospheric conditions. Perhaps no one can adequately explain precisely why such things may happen from time to time, but they happen often enough so that we simply accept them as unusual, but not startling, occurrences. It would seem, however, that the very notion that a station's call letters could be picked up three years after their last broadcast would have to fit into the category of "startling," and there are probably few individuals who will tackle the task of providing a "reasonable" explanation for how such a thing could ever occur.

Some very sane and sober theorists did suggest the possibility that the broadcast waves from KLEE might have penetrated the ionosphere into space and not rebounded until they finally hit a celestial object several light years away. Other more bold speculators even suggested that the KLEE signal may have been received by beings on another planet or in a space ship and been retransmitted for purposes of establishing communication.

Then again, as this author suggested a bit earlier, maybe even television signals can become lost in Time. In any case, on November 23, 1955, Taylor tuned in his set for long-range reception and once again saw before him the call letters, KLEE-TV.

CHAPTER 4

People, Animals, and Things that Fall into Other Dimensions

On June 3, 1968, Dr. and Mrs. Gerardo Vidal attended a family reunion at the home of Senor Rapallini in Chascomus, a town situated near National Route 2 in Buenos Aires province, Argentina. The Vidals arrived in the late afternoon, partook of a lavish dinner, then began the drive back to their residence at Maipu. Another couple, who happened to be both near neighbors in Maipu and relatives attending the same celebration, decided to leave at the same time as the Vidals.

The two cars set out on Route 2 just a few minutes before midnight. The first couple arrived home without incident, but they awaited the return of the Vidals before retiring for the evening. After they had waited for several minutes, they began to fear that the Vidals might have met with an accident.

They discussed the matter for but a few more moments, then they decided to get back into their automobile and retrace the route back to Chascomus in order to look for the Vidals. Although the hour was late, their concern for their relatives outweighed considerations for their own comfort. But strangely enough, they traveled

the entire eighty miles back to the Rapallinis without seeing a trace of the Vidals or their automobile.

Deciding against staying the night in Chascomus, they set out once again on Route 2 to Maipu. This time they strained their eyes at virtually every foot of the highway in an attempt to see down the steep banks. They returned to Maipu without having seen a trace of the Vidals. A telephone call to the Maipu hospital informed them that no accidents had been reported that night.

The Vidals had disappeared without a trace and without a clue.

Then, forty-eight hours later, Senor Rapallini received a long-distance telephone call from the Argentine consulate in Mexico City, Mexico. It was Dr. Vidal.

Incredulously, Rapallini listened to his friend asking him to remain calm and not to worry about them. He and his wife were both safe and unharmed. They would be flying back to Buenos Aires, and Dr. Vidal gave him the date and hour of their arrival so that they might be met at the airport.

Astonished friends and relatives gathered to meet the plane from Mexico City. Dr. Vidal emerged from the airplane wearing the same clothes that he had been wearing on the evening of their mysterious disappearance. Mrs. Vidal was taken directly from the airport to a private clinic, the victim of a "violent nervous crisis."

Dr. Vidal had been admonished by the consulate not to issue any public statements about their strange "teleportation" from the province of Buenos Aires to Mexico, but he did relate enough details of the bizarre journey for the newspaper *La Razon* to put together a story made up of comments from Dr. Vidal and interviews with the Vidals' friends and relatives.

A correspondent in Argentina sent this author copies of the various reports printed in *La Razon*, and the eerie account has been translated as follows:

Dr. Vidal and his wife left the city of Chascomus a

few minutes before midnight and were traveling on Route 2. They were listening to the radio and driving at a speed which would permit them to keep the tail lights of their friends' automobile always in view.

They were just outside the suburbs of Chascomus when the Vidals' automobile became enveloped in a dense fogbank. He slowed down. The Vidals became aware only of blackness.

The next thing Dr. and Mrs. Vidal knew was that it was suddenly bright daylight and they were on an unfamiliar road. When Dr. Vidal stepped out of the car to inspect the situation, he was amazed to discover that every bit of paint had been scorched off the automobile's surface.

Dr. Vidal flagged down a passing motorist to ask directions. Completely nonplussed, he returned to his wife to tell her that the man had said that they were outside of Mexico City. Both man and wife refused to accept the man's statement, and they remained unconvinced until they had stopped several other motorists and were given the same reply to their query.

One can imagine the mental turmoil that must go on within two people who are forced to face the undeniable fact that their return trip to Maipu had been detoured to Mexico City, another continent and several thousand miles away from their home. Later, in the Argentine consulate, they had to accept another startling fact: *their blackout during the strange trip had lasted for forty-eight hours.*

"In spite of the halo of fantasy that the story of the Vidals seems to wear," *La Razon* commented, "there are certain details which do not cease to preoccupy even the most unbelieving: The entrance of Vidal's wife into a Buenos Aires clinic; the proved arrival of the couple on an airplane that arrived nonstop from Mexico; the disappearance of the car; the intervention of the consulate; the serious attitude of the police in Maipu in regard to

the event; and the telephone call from Mexico to the Rapallini family—which was confirmed by *La Razon*—make all of this acquire the status of a matter worthy of being considered in these times of space adventures and fantastic appearances of flying saucers.”

In a follow-up to the strange account of the Vidals' experience, *La Razon* interviewed Professor Alejandro Eru, secretary of the Argentine College of Parapsychology, for his remarks on the peculiar case. Eru, professor of humanities at the University of La Plata, responded by providing the reporter with three similar cases of unexplainable transportations.

“A man who lived near Bahia Blanca suffered a dizziness when a strange aerial craft appeared before him,” Professor Eru said. “Ten minutes later, he came to, but he found himself in Salta, one of the northernmost provinces in Argentina. The authorities in both locales communicated with each other immediately, and the man's automobile was found in Bahia Blanca in exactly the spot where he claimed it would be.”

The second case Professor Eru delineated for the journalist involved a professor of law on the faculty at Santos. “This man claimed that a flying disc had sucked him aboard and had taken him on a fantastic aerial journey before it released him,” Professor Eru said.

Communicating entities were involved in the third case history the professor presented to *La Razon*.

“This experience involves a most widely known and highly responsible painter, sculptor, and theatrical artist, whose initials are B.S.P.,” Eru noted. “For many years he was the director of the Art Salon of the Municipal Bank.

“B.S.P. testified that he had been contacted by a blond Nordic-appearing man who had eyes so clear that he appeared blind. The blond spoke in a guttural, unintelligible language, but his mannerisms were friendly. The artist got only a glimpse of the inside of the entity's craft before a wave of dizziness engulfed him.

"When he awakened," Professor Eru went on, "B.S.P. saw that he was flying along with three blond beings. One of them, very gentle, interrogated him in a language also unintelligible, but B.S.P. understood, or at least believed he perceived the man's thoughts, by telepathic communication.

"B.S.P. was told not to be frightened; they would return him to Earth in precisely the same spot from which they had plucked him. B.S.P. said that all during the flight he was in a kind of swoon, but he believed that he saw beneath him the terrain of Japan, France, and, later, Chile. When he awakened from the peculiar trance state, he found himself to be standing in exactly the same spot at which he had first encountered the blond being."

In a summation for *La Razon*, Professor Eru said: "In none of these cases do the witnesses speak of hallucinations. Nor do they speak of having been intoxicated or doped. What caused these phenomena? Well, unfortunately, we cannot answer that conclusively. It may be that 'friends' from other worlds possess some type of electromagnetic wave with which they attract any non-magnetic object from the surface of the earth so that they might use this object in their studies."

La Razon asked the professor how parapsychology viewed such a theory.

"From our viewpoint," Professor Eru answered, "we find it noteworthy that these beings can manage telepathy with such great mastery, because they seem to be able to make our minds understand things which cannot be expressed by speech. At the same time, they capture, without difficulty, our answers. Nothing more, with any seriousness, can be said of these phenomena at this time. But for some special reason, the North Americans have kept the Vidals' car in their powerful laboratories to examine it!" (*Author's note*: The Vidals' car, a Peugeot 403, was said to have been sent to the United States for examination in scientific laboratories. Dr. Vidal received

another automobile of the same make in exchange for it.)

In the September—October, 1970, issue of *Flying Saucer Review*, Gordon Creighton wrote that Mrs. Vidal died of leukemia early in 1969, “. . . this information having been revealed, through a slip, by a member of the family to an investigator whose country of origin is in continental Europe.”

Could Mrs. Vidal's fatal bout with leukemia have been prompted by exposure to intense radiation during that bizarre forty-eight-hour disappearance and teleportation to Mexico?

And did the Vidals drive into a hole in Time and Space—a tear in our dimension which leads to another—or were they transported from one geographical location to another by beings from another world or another dimension?

In that same issue of *Flying Saucer Review*, Creighton reported several other alleged teleportations which occurred in South American countries shortly after the Vidals' mysterious flight.

A young newlywed Brazilian couple stopped for a rest as they traveled through the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul. They were sitting in their Volkswagen when they were both overcome by drowsiness. When they awakened, they were in Mexico.

In another case in Rio Grande do Sul, two young men traveling by jeep claimed to have run into a bank of white fog. The next thing they knew was that they were on an unknown landscape which turned out to be in Mexico.

Creighton quotes the January 15, 1969, issue of the Rio de Janeiro newspaper *Diario de Noticias*, which speaks of two other cases of instant transportation:

“There are rumors that two persons who were traveling in their car along the President Dutra Motorway were transported from there to a town in the USA and

close to the Mexican border. The car bore marks made by the hooks of the transporting vehicle.

"Another Brazilian couple (named Azambuja) are also said to have been transported to Mexico in their car in similar circumstances."

It would seem that somewhere in Brazil there exists an ultradimensional shortcut to Mexico! Or were these automobiles really transported by some other-worldly, or other-dimensional, vehicles?

In numerous cases already discussed in this book, the observant reader has no doubt noted the simultaneous manifestation of mist, fog, or "white clouds" with the strange disappearances. Creighton recounts the experiences of Graciela del Lourdes Gimenez, an eleven-year-old Argentinian girl, who walked into a cloud of white mist and was not seen again for three hours. When she did reappear, she found herself in an unfamiliar section of town; weeping and in a distraught state, she appealed to a resident of the area for help.

In another instance, Senor Marcilo Ferraz and his wife encountered a white cloud on the road as they neared the frontier of Brazil and Uruguay. When they regained consciousness, they, too, found themselves in Mexico. Both of the Ferrazes suffered severe traumatic shock, and when Senor Ferraz learned that he had developed a tumor on the brain, he shot himself.

The newspapers *Diario de Noticias* and *Folha de Goias* both carried accounts of a bizarre case which occurred in the State of Goias, Brazil, on the night of April 20, 1969. In this instance, a Senor Dolor Roque saw some lights as he was riding into the town of Itacu on his horse to obtain some medicine from a pharmacy. When he next opened his eyes, he found himself on the bank of the Paranaiba River near a place known as Itumbiara—a distance of 250 miles from Itacu.

Hailing a man with a horse and a cart, Roque be-

seeched the driver to take him to the nearest bus station. When he returned to his home, he found his family very distressed by his disappearance, since the horse had made its way back to its stable the night before.

Researchers who set themselves the task of investigating such baffling phenomena have long observed that those instances in which human beings, animals, and such inanimate objects as stones, pottery, and buildings are transported from one place to another are among the most puzzling of all paranormal occurrences.

Author Harold T. Wilkins once commented that mysteries such as instances of teleportation “. . . should serve as a reminder that the physical universe holds surprises for those who rashly predetermine that all natural phenomena may be summed up in mathematical equations and neatly listed in a textbook. To scientists willing to consider the as yet unknown, teleportations stand as a challenge to research in a field no less real and potentially fruitful than atomic energy.”

Wilkins has retold an account of an eerie case of interrupted teleportation that occurred in Bristol, England, on December 9, 1873. In this instance an elderly couple who identified themselves as the Thomas Cumpstons told authorities an incredible story of being nearly sucked into a hole in space.

The Cumpstons had been staying at the Victoria Hotel across from the railroad station, preparatory to a visit to a seaside resort. At three that morning they had been awakened by a terrible noise in their room. The floor seemed to split and open, and their cries of terror seemed to be strangely repeated and re-echoed.

Thomas Cumpston fell down and began to vanish in the mysterious hole in the floor. Mrs. Cumpston got hold of her husband's arm and began to pull him to safety.

“We screamed,” Mrs. Cumpston told the authorities, “yet each time our screams were most horribly re-echoed. I said to my husband, take out your pistol and

Come for the filter...



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nicotine av. per cigarette,
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...you'll stay for the taste.



A lot of good taste
that comes easy
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nicotine av. per cigarette,
FTC Report Oct. '74.

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined
That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

fire it. He fired into the ceiling, yet the terrible noises continued."

In desperation, the couple fled by way of the bedroom window, dropping the ten feet to the street below them. They hurried to the railroad station where they told the night superintendent that they had escaped from a "den of thieves and rogues."

Bristol police authorities searched the Cumpstons' hotel room but could find nothing that could in any way account for the elderly couple's bizarre tale. When they interviewed the landlady, they obtained her comment that she had heard some strange noises coming from their room, but that the sounds were of a nature beyond her experience.

The Cumpstons were considered respectable people of good social position in their home city of Leeds, so they were dismissed in charge of their attorney and it was recorded in the official accounts that the couple had suffered a most remarkable kind of collective hallucination.

Harold T. Wilkins observed in his retelling of the strange tale that it becomes impossible to explain the strange noises and the hole in the floor "... unless one assumes that under certain conditions an unknown force operates which is able to create a vortex in solid matter. It should be noted that matter is 'solid' only relative to human perceptions; on the atomic level it may be described as mostly empty space. A human being drawn into such a vortex, or whirlpool . . . may be deposited in some spot dozens, and even thousands, of miles from his starting point . . ."

As we have already noted, things as well as people may be drawn into these weird vortexes and transported to other places or other dimensions.

In 1966, an elderly Maine resident wrote a letter to the *Bangor Daily News* "On the Maine Street" column which told of a barn that totally disappeared during a rain-

storm. According to Harry Davis, the incident occurred during the month of June, 1924. He remembered the day well because he had driven to the school to pick up his children so that they would not be drenched in the heavy rain.

About a mile out of the town of Monson, where the Davises lived at that time, there stood a large farm building known locally as "Sprague's Barn." The barn had been constructed of heavy, hand-sawn timbers and it stood in the midst of a large field. The next morning the residents of Monson were astonished to learn that the huge barn had completely disappeared.

Although some people worked on the theory that a tornado had suddenly swooped down and picked up the large and sprawling building, the "twister" hypothesis seemed weak when it was noted that not a single shingle or bit of timber lay anywhere in the area. Letter-writer Davis went on to state that even though construction has been quite heavy in that area during the past sixty years, no one has ever found a single board, nail, or implement from "Sprague's Barn."

Frank Edwards, popular storyteller of the unusual, summarized an account of a vanishing Eskimo village for his book *Stranger than Science*. According to available records, the thirty inhabitants of the village on the shore of Lake Anjikuni had been going about their mundane daily tasks when they simply disappeared, leaving the Northwest Mounted Police with a most disturbing unsolved case on their hands.

Pots of food hung over dead fires. Ivory needles protruded from garments that were in the process of being mended. Kayaks lay battered and neglected at the lake's edge. Highly prized rifles stood beside the doorways of the empty huts. Seven dogs lay dead of starvation where they had been left tied to trees. And, perhaps most baffling of all, a fresh grave had been opened and the body had been removed.

In the Far North country, a man never leaves the camp on a journey of any consequence without taking his rifle with him. A dog is valued as highly as a fellow human being and is as much a part of a journey as is a rifle. As far as the empty grave is concerned, desecration of the dead is unthinkable to an Eskimo.

As Frank Edwards summarized the case: "Evidently the village of about thirty inhabitants had been pursuing its normal way of life when for some reason they all rushed out of their huts and none of them ever got back from whatever had attracted their attention. For reasons unknown, the inhabitants of the village—men, women, and children—had left it, willingly or unwillingly, in the dead of early winter . . . Skilled trackers failed to find any trail if they had fled over the tundra. The presence of their battered kayaks was mute evidence that they had not ventured out into the lake . . . Months of patient and far-flung investigation failed to produce a single trace of any member who had lived in the deserted village of Anjikuni. . . ."

Volume thirty-two of the (British) *Journal of the Society for Psychological Research* carries statements from Mr. and Mrs. Clifford H. Pye in regard to a house that disappeared.

The Pyses were on a vacation trip, traveling by bus, when they sighted an attractive house on the outskirts of Boscastle on the coast of northern Cornwall.

According to Clifford Pye's statement, the bus had stopped to let off a passenger almost outside the gate of ". . . a rather substantial house standing on the left-hand side of the road. It stood back from the road some 20 yards or so . . . The house was double-fronted and of a style of architecture which I judged to date from the late 1860's or early 1870's. It had a fresh, trim appearance and seemed to have been recently painted. . . ."

"The most striking feature, however, was on the lawn where amongst beds of scarlet geraniums there were sev-

eral wicker or cane chairs or tables over which there were standing large garden umbrellas of black and orange."

Mr. and Mrs. Pye saw no one on the grounds and saw no sign identifying the place as a hotel, but they had no doubt that such was the case. Mrs. Pye expressed the sentiment that both of them shared. The place was just what they were looking for in a guest house for their stay in Boscastle.

But when the Pyes went back to the guest house to book rooms, they found "just empty fields running across the cliffs."

According to Clifford Pye: "During our stay . . . we made a thorough search of the locality, but failed to find any place remotely resembling that we had seen. On a subsequent visit to the Travelga guest house I told our experience to the proprietor, who assured me that from his knowledge there was in the neighborhood no such house as I described."

Author Edmond P. Gibson, in referring to the case, wrote that the strange experience might best be explained as a collective hallucination "engendered by the Pyes' wish to find a suitable place for their vacation."

Although Gibson theorizes that one of the couple might have conjured the place up in the subconscious and the other might have viewed it telepathically, he admits that ". . . to call the incident a collective hallucination describes what occurred but does not explain it. There is no evidence that any such house ever stood on the site noted, so it cannot be called a ghost house, unless it was displaced in space. Yet there must have been some underlying cause in the subconscious minds of the Pyes that caused this vision to be seen at the same time by both."

Did the Pyes have a collective vision or did "some underlying cause" in their subconscious minds permit

them a view of another dimension, another reality which sits somewhere on the edge of our own?

Mr. R. W. Balcom of Live Oak, California, contributed a personal experience shared with his wife to the September, 1968, issue of *Fate* magazine. According to Mr. Balcom, the two of them were traveling to Lake Tahoe during the early morning hours. A few miles east of Placerville on Highway 50, they stopped to eat at a quaint and rustic-styled restaurant, which neither of them had ever noticed on any of their previous trips to the region.

The food was excellent, and the waitress and cook were so friendly that the Balcoms truly meant their promise to stop back again.

They tried to do so on their return drive from Lake Tahoe, but the restaurant was nowhere to be seen.

The Balcoms traveled that route three successive weekends in 1962, searching for the friendly little restaurant with the good food that had simply vanished into nothingness.

"Since then we have journeyed over Highway 50 to Lake Tahoe many times," Balcom concludes, "never again finding the little restaurant."

Did the Balcoms have the same kind of collective hallucination that the Clifford Pyes shared? Or were both couples subconsciously tuned to enter the higher, or lower, vibratory rate of another dimension?

Lois B. Tracy told of the night in 1934 when she was driving with her family on a stretch of road between Bartow and Ft. Meade, Florida, when the Model T Ford in front of them drifted sideways off the road and into the swamp and disappeared.

"My father jammed on the brakes. We could not understand what happened," she writes (*Fate*, June, 1964). "The car had not driven off the road, but just had drifted sideways. We pointed our headlights into the swamp

and we looked with flashlights, but we could find no sign of that car.”

Frances E. Peterson of Keokuk, Iowa, remembered the Sunday afternoon in 1935, when she, her husband, and their four children were returning from a weekend visit in Missouri. They decided to take a shortcut on a dirt road. They drove down a hill into a valley, then as they reached the rim of the valley, they were astonished to see “. . . a well where women in sun bonnets and long, full skirts covered by large aprons were drawing in a wooden pail by a windlass. Other women were carrying the water in pails balanced on wooden yokes across their shoulders. Bearded men, who were tending sheep and gathering wood, wore loose-fitting trousers, smocks, and large black hats.”

The Petersons had never heard of such a settlement in the area of St. Patrick, Missouri, and as it turned out, no one else had either.

“Many times since then we have looked for this lovely Old World settlement,” Mrs. Peterson commented. “We have inquired of old settlers and relatives in the area . . . but no one knows of such a valley . . . Did we ride backward in time?” (*Fate*, April, 1959)

The men and women who have had the experiences cited above will always wonder whether or not they had some kind of collective psychic experience or whether their physical bodies somehow managed to pass into another dimension. For other individuals the answer becomes a bit more clearly stated, although no more clearly defined or explained, for they were left with undeniable physical evidence that they had been confronted with some force as yet beyond the grasp of orthodox science.

At about 2:00 P.M. on Tuesday, April 17, 1951, Mrs. Ernest Harrleson was working in her farm home south of Georgetown, South Carolina, when she heard a peculiar

sound overhead. She had had no time to puzzle out the sound before it was climaxed with a loud ripping sound.

Mrs. Harrleson dashed out her front door to see a shower of shingles and bits of lumber dropping out of the sky. More than half the roof had been torn off an unoccupied tenant house across the road and a bit west of the Harrleson home.

Walter S. McDonald, writing in the Charleston, South Carolina, *News and Courier* for April 24, 1951, stated: "The single section of the roof which did not fall to the rear lies to the right and front of the house, some 50 feet away, while the remainder is scattered over an area of about 150 by 100 feet at the back. There were no signs of burns and the floor was undamaged except where the chimney fell through. There were many tin and wood shingles scattered about individually, but some small sections of the roof were included in the debris. Small timbers of the roof were broken apart cleanly, as if snapped in half by a powerful force."

Yet no one could identify that "powerful force."

Roofs of buildings, barns, unfortunate men, women, and children may have been claimed by some as yet unidentified "force," or these people and things may have been somehow translated into another dimension. And if it is possible that people, animals, and things may fall into these other planes of being, in the next chapter we shall observe that they may likewise fall *out* of these uncharted regions of an undreamt of reality.

CHAPTER 5

People, Animals, Things that Fall out of Other Dimensions

On October 26, 1956, Mrs. Faye Swanson of Stanyford Drive, Broadmoor, California, stepped out into her back yard at 8:05 A.M. and found the body of a small, furry monkey that had fallen out of the sky during the night. The body had struck her clothesline with such violent force that a solid four-by-four post had splintered.

A spokesman from San Francisco International Airport said that no airliner had been transporting monkeys during the night. No authority from any organization could offer an explanation for the origin of the dropped monkey, and the *San Francisco Chronicle* headlined the question: "Who's Throwing Monkeys at the Earth?"

As wise pundits have long agreed, what goes up, must come down. In like manner might we observe that a certain portion of the people, animals, and things that fall into other dimensions may at some time fall out of that strange rent in Time and Space.

Admittedly, the idea of a monkey leaping from the branch of a tree in South America and crashing to the earth in California does tax the credulity a bit if one insists on holding fast to the respectable tenets of ortho-

dox science. Neither, of course, is the author insisting that these misplaced and displaced people, animals, and things necessarily arrive in areas out of geographical context solely because of holes in Time and Space, but this chapter shall deal with mysteriously arriving objects, both animate and inanimate, whose transport remains difficult to explain by conventional hypotheses.

In the middle of May, 1969, Mrs. Mable Rippy of Rock Bridge, Tennessee, found herself plagued with some unwanted creature that was eating eggs out of her chicken house. Then one day she heard noises that signaled molestation coming from the coop. She grabbed her shotgun and headed toward the chicken yard.

Something brown and furry dashed out of the door in the shed and began to scurry up a nearby cedar tree.

The eighty-two-year-old widow leveled her shotgun and blasted away. Mrs. Rippy, her neighbors, and several visiting authorities were completely at a loss to explain how a three-pound, fifteen-inch, *brown monkey* had found its way to the hills of Tennessee.

On June 16, 1963, a four-foot, fifty-pound, shark-like creature was caught in the St. Clair River near Detroit, Michigan. Experts identified the aquatic denizen as a monkfish, a member of the family that includes sharks, skates, and rays.

Dr. Willis Matthews, chairman of Wayne State University's biology department, noted that the fish would have had to have swum more than a thousand miles in fresh water to have reached the Detroit area. Monkfish have not been known to be able to survive in fresh water.

In the winter of 1955, residents of Senzu-mara, a village on the Japanese island of Oshima, found the carcass of a five year old, 1,000-pound elephant on their beach. An examination of the huge corpse by trained experts disclosed that the creature had been dead for about a week. A careful check revealed that no elephants were

missing from Japanese zoos and that there were no reports of any elephants having died aboard ship.

No evidence exists to indicate that the villagers of Senzu-mara had actually discovered the carcass of a thawed baby mammoth, suddenly dislodged by a passing iceberg. No indisputable evidence can prove that an elephant walked around a clump of trees in Africa and instantly, tragically, found itself transported to the Pacific Ocean where it could only flounder and drown, but such a theory might serve the human compulsion to provide an answer to every mystery.

As I write this chapter (August, 1971), farmers in the state of Iowa are a bit nervous about reports of a strange, cat-like creature prowling about in the far northwestern part of the state. In the spring it, or something similar, was sighted in northeastern Iowa, and the thing proved itself equipped with an enormous appetite by eating large sections from several pigs. In self-defense, or maybe just for sport, it broke the necks of a number of large dogs.

Year after year, in nearly every section of the United States, sensible men and women file reports of large, cat-like monsters marauding about the landscape. Strangely enough, the monsters are never shot or killed, but they do very often leave paw prints, which are seldom precisely identified, but which can be demonstrated beyond doubt not to be that of any known indigenous animal.

In 1968, a Connecticut Company bus driver swore that he had seen a "baby tiger" walk across Valley Street and disappear into the brush. He told police officers that he had made the sighting about 5:00 P.M. near West Rock. Although seven New Haven police cruisers were on the scene within minutes of the call, they could find neither mother nor baby tiger in the area.

At about the same time in Branford, Connecticut, a large, unidentified wild animal was seen walking "in a

most stately way" near the driveway of Senator Lucy T. Hammer's forty-acre country estate. The tracking dogs of game wardens and police were able to find only the slashed remains of a squirrel.

It was the practical husband of Senator Hammer who first saw the great cat-like animal strutting near the driveway. Thorvald Hammer, an iron company executive, was eating breakfast when he noticed their bizarre intruder.

"My husband went out and watched him walking in a most stately manner down our path," Senator Hammer said. "The animal went around a bend and my husband lost sight of him. He must have gone into the woods."

Or did he walk around a bend and re-enter the other dimension from which he had briefly emerged?

An item in the Lock Haven, Pennsylvania *Express* for June 7, 1956, told of the fantastic experience of Thomas R. Kessell, a brewery worker from Johannesburg, South Africa, who came to his senses walking a street in New York City with no memory of how he had come to be on that particular scene beyond a dim recollection of exiting from a Johannesburg tavern in April.

Is it possible that a human being can also walk around a dimensional "bend" and find himself mysteriously transported to a place far from his destination?

The shortest distance between two points may not be a straight line, after all!

It would be quite understandable why someone such as Thomas Kessell who had undergone such an experience as interdimensional transport, would undergo a loss of memory. Perhaps an amnesiac reaction would be necessary for survival.

Charles Fort tells in one of his books of a naked man who suddenly appeared on High Street, Chatham, Kent, England, on January 6, 1914. People walking on the same street gave witness that the man had quite literally appeared from nowhere. He was just suddenly there,

confused, frightened, without a stitch on a bitterly cold day.

In *Lo!*, Fort writes that six people were discovered wandering on the streets or near the small town of Romford, Essex, England, between January 14, 1920, and December 9, 1923. None of these mentally distraught individuals were able to tell how they had got there or anything else about themselves.

It may be that interdimensional transport may drive many of its experients totally mad, and it would surely be judged preferable to spend a few months in a kind of mental fog than suddenly to be deposited naked and gibbering wildly on a crowded city street. We can imagine the enormous tension that would be placed upon nearly anyone's credulity to step, for example, out of the privacy of his bathtub and to set foot upon an icy metropolitan avenue.

For those who question such stories as those of Thomas R. Kessell and his claim that he suddenly "found" himself walking a street in New York City after leaving a pub back in Johannesburg, the enigma is reinforced by the problem of just how the man could have entered the country unnoticed. The man did not recover his memory until he had undergone a couple of psychiatric sessions. He had no passport, yet he could not have boarded either a ship or an airplane without one. The idea of a "wetback" from South Africa is more than a little preposterous.

The mystery of Thomas Kessell led *Fate* magazine reader H.M. Cranmer of Hammersley Fork, Pennsylvania, to contribute a similar puzzler which had occurred when he was a schoolboy in 1897. According to Mr. Cranmer, an Irish immigrant lad named Thomas Eggleton left the home of his employer, Hamilton Fish, a farmer, to mail a letter at the country-store post office.

Tommy mailed his letter, bought a nickel's worth of candy, and started out for home.

The next morning at 5:00 A.M. a search was begun for the young man, who had never returned to his room or to the farm of his employer. His tracks were found leaving the general store and leading to the Kettle Creek bridge. There were no tracks leading off the bridge.

An extensive area search was continued for several days, and Mr. Cranmer could remember that the schools were closed for two weeks because pupils were afraid to walk to and from school.

Three years later when Mr. Cranmer's mother asked the farmer if he had ever learned what had become of Tommy, he replied in the negative, and asserted that even the young man's mother in Ireland had never heard a word from him.

Hamilton Fish passed away shortly after that visit to the Cranmer home. "Another year passed," Cranmer wrote in *Fate* magazine (November, 1956), "and the Boer War in South Africa began. One of Mr. Fish's daughters said a letter for her father from Tommy had come from South Africa. Tommy had been wounded in the head and this had restored his memory. For four years he had lived in South Africa without knowing who he was or whence he came. When the head wound restored his memory, the last thing he could recall was working for Mr. Fish in Pennsylvania."

Thomas Kessell leaves a tavern in South Africa and finds himself on a street in New York City.

Thomas Eggleton leaves a general store in Pennsylvania and finishes his walk in South Africa.

Can it be that some unknown natural laws or some unguessed-of manipulators may have established an incredible kind of foreign exchange program between the eastern United States and South Africa?

In a similar case, the works of Charles Fort yield an account of a man who had been walking along Euston Road, London, "but nine months later when next he was

aware of where he was, found himself working on a farm in Australia.”

In a village near Frankfurt-am-Oder, Germany, in the summer of 1850, a man was found wandering as if his eyes were beholding another world. He could with effort produce a few words of German and was at last able to explain to the authorities and to journalists that his name was Joseph Vorin, and that he had come from beyond vast oceans, from a nation named Laxaria in Sakria.

Don't bother looking for Laxaria on any map or in any history book. It simply has never existed—on this plane of reality.

Parisian newspapers reported the case of a strange young man who, on September 17, 1905, was charged as a vagrant. The charge was no doubt as meaningless to the young man as were his words to the Paris authorities. The young man spoke a tongue which no linguist, Orientalist, or specialist in African dialects could interpret.

Were the two men cited in the above cases actually unfortunate displaced persons who were sucked into an interdimensional void on their world?

The famous and oft-repeated account of the “Green Children” of Woolpit, Suffolk, England, is regularly cited by writers seeking to demonstrate everything from alien infiltration to other-dimensional interpenetration. Whoever the children may have been, they presented us with one of history's great enigmas when they crawled out of that English cave back in 1200 A.D.

Attired in bizarre and unconventional clothing and as green of skin as a shamrock, the peculiar boy and girl added to their plight by being able to converse only in a language totally unintelligible to the local citizenry.

Accounts of the Green Children are not relegated to collections of medieval fairy tales. Such recognized historical sources of William of Newburgh's *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*, Abbot Ralph of Coggeshall's *Chronicon An-*

glicarum, and the writings of Gervase of Tillbury contain references to the mysterious tots.

The knight who sheltered them for a time (it is a wonder the two were not burned as witches) noted that they nearly starved to death, avoiding all food, until he thought to place green beans before them.

The boy did not live long, but as the girl continued to eat the staple foods of twelfth century England, she began to lose her green skin color.

It was observed from their first day of emergence that the children's clothing had been made of a material completely unidentifiable to England's most learned men, so after the girl had been taught some English words, she was interrogated as to her place of origin.

According to her testimony, she and her brother had lived in a cold land where the sun never shone, a land of perpetual twilight. One day they had followed some small animals into a cave. The cave went deeper and deeper into the earth, and when they emerged they found themselves in a strange land. They wandered about, crying and weeping over their fate, until the English field hands discovered them.

Sir Richard de Calne continued to give the strange girl refuge and trained her as a domestic servant. When she matured, she married a man from Norfolk. There is no record extant which describes whether or not their union was fruitful, and if it was, whether or not their children were born with greenish-colored skin.

Where was the land of perpetual twilight from which the Green Children traveled? Did they truly enter a cave, or were they pulled into a hole which transported them into our plane of reality?

Where was Laxaria?

Are we talking about poor, mentally warped individuals who may have been kept in total isolation until puberty or maturity and who were deliberately brain-

washed with a story of an imaginary world before they were loosed upon the public? Could the people in the cases cited above have been the unknowing and terribly abused pawns in someone's extraordinarily elaborate hoax?

But a hoax is really not fulfilled unless someone either steps forward to take the credit for it or somehow manages to make a great deal of money from it. In none of the cases just related did anyone step forward to effect either of those hoax-fulfilling functions.

In 1953, a schoolteacher in Wellington, New Zealand, named H.F. North arrived in a London police station insisting that a hoax was the farthest thing from his mind. He simply wanted to go home, and he had no idea what on earth he was doing in London!

According to North, he had left his home one morning to walk to the school where he taught. The school was in Wellington, New Zealand.

The next thing he knew, he told the police, was that he was walking the streets of London, England. He had no idea how he got there, and he was further stunned to learn that he had also lost four days in the process.

Police authorities found themselves totally unable to check North's movements in London or to discover how he had made the journey. Examining psychiatrists determined that the schoolteacher had had complete amnesia from the time he left home until he went to the police station in London. It appeared that H.F. North had simply materialized in London after vanishing in Wellington, New Zealand.

Another irritating mystery that has thwarted man's prying intelligence for centuries is that of large chunks of ice that literally fall from the sky. It has become a standard practice to attribute these ice falls to airplanes, which allegedly scatter these huge chunks of ice from their wings and landing gears. The airlines themselves become a bit upset by these official explanations. It

hardly enhances their public relations if the mass mind is filled with grim images of jet airliners dropping two-hundred-pound ice-bombs to crash through their roofs and mash them as they sleep.

Those individuals who have seriously concerned themselves with the phenomenon of ice falls have gotten the airlines off the hook by their declarations that the world's populace was dodging chunks of ice from the sky long before man had mastered heavier-than-air flight (no one has ever blamed a balloon for dropping ice chunks). The mystery remains, of course, more complex and bizarre than ever.

Do we live inside some great, cosmic, self-defrosting refrigerator?

How can ice drop from the sky?

Is it possible that a section of the "Green Children's" land of ice and cold and perpetual twilight might from time to time pop into our dimension and send a mass of ice plummeting to earth?

Ronald J. Willis, publisher of the International Foretan Organization's Journal, *INFO*, dealt with the tired attribution of ice falls to airplanes in Vol. 1, No. 3:

"It is difficult to imagine how an ice coating of several inches or more over the surface of the wings and control surfaces of an airplane could avoid bringing the airplane down with it. Older de-icing equipment used an expandable rubber covering to break away any ice layer and this layer could hardly be more than one-half inch thick at any time. Modern commercial planes use an electrical heating system to melt ice as soon as it forms so there is nothing to fall."

Willis goes on to state that the Federal Aviation Agency had informed him that although military planes usually do not have such de-icing equipment, their great speed and construction made the possibility of accumulating any appreciable amount of ice extremely rare. Willis is also familiar with the theory that ascribes such

falls to "ice meteorites" from space. "Some astronomers," he notes, "see comet nuclei as having large masses of ice therein—and our masses may be the detritus from broken up comets."

In an effort to gain as many scientific explanations for ice falls as possible, Willis contacted authorities at various universities. As might be expected, a number of scientists denied that they had ever heard of such strange falls. Others, who may have heard references to such phenomena, declined to comment upon them. Some authorities did respond to Willis' query, however, and their opinions are quite interesting to examine.

Professor Davis of Drexel Institute said: "I would say almost positively that the large chunks of ice which have fallen could not have been meteorological in origin. Atmospheric processes cannot form or sustain the masses of ice which have been observed in such falls, especially under the meteorological conditions which have existed at the same time."

Professor Rense of the Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Research, University of Colorado, remarked: "The meteorological theory has no reasonable support. Though some astronomers think that meteoritic material composed of ice exists, one doubts whether such chunks could survive the intense heating upon entering our atmosphere."

Professor Stewart of the University of Virginia commented that he had read of phenomenal ice falls and had been mystified by them. He said that he had read of a German who had been killed by a six-foot mass of ice.

"No hailstone was ever that big," he went on to say. "Perhaps there are ice meteorites, which do not completely abate away on the way down . . . this is a very mysterious thing . . . It can be put in the class with the small percentage of UFO's which cannot be explained away."

On October 16, 1960, two ice chunks the size of foot-

balls hurled from a cloudless sky in eighty-five-degree weather and narrowly missed two golfers in Melbourne, Australia.

On April 25, 1968, a Lakewood, California, man, Bert Martin, watched a large hunk of ice falling out of a clear sky above a Hollywood street corner. There were no tall buildings near the corner, and there were no airplanes visible overhead. The largest fragment of the ice weighed twenty-five pounds.

On September 9, 1958, a seventy-pound mass of ice smashed through the roof of Dominick Bacigalupo in Madison Township, New Jersey, and demolished two kitchen chairs.

Ronald Phipps, Manor Road, Richmond, Surrey, England, had his roof broken through by a block of ice of several pounds weight on July 24, 1958.

One could go on like this, citing ice fall after ice fall, virtually *ad infinitum*. The books of Charles Fort are full of them; *Fate* magazine chronicles several each month, as does the *INFO* journal on a quarterly basis.

There seems little purpose in continuing such a listing, for one could certainly fill the pages of a good-sized book with such accounts of remarkable ice falls. After a time they become a bit dull, after all. There are just so many ways that even the most imaginative of authors can find stimulating ways of phrasing reports of people's roofs, windshields, livestock and body parts being smashed by large chunks of falling ice.

Then, too, even if the author were to catalog several hundred of such incredible ice falls, the skeptic could still rationalize them away without resorting to the tired theory of the chunks having dropped from airplane wings. Ice, it cannot be denied, is formed from water, and every literate person knows at least hazily about such matters as water vapors rising, condensing, evaporating, sometimes freezing.

In other words, the question remains whether or not

the mysterious ice falls might not in some way be attributed to some kind of natural process of water vapors freezing, rolling down the sky snowball fashion, and picking up several pounds of ice by the time they smash through someone's roof. Since this element of doubt regarding the phenomenal origin of ice falls may cling as a residue in the brains of certain readers, it would seem wiser to spend the time and the space listing various sky falls not so easily attributed to natural causes.

A service station attendant in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, was pumping gasoline on the afternoon of February 19, 1965, when he noticed that it had begun to rain. Rain is a relatively common occurrence in Bloomsburg, but then the attendant noticed that the raindrops were bouncing. Upon scooping up a number of the strange droplets, he found that they were tiny plastic pellets about the size of shirt buttons.

Authorities soon determined that the rainfall of plastic globs had been confined to an area four blocks wide and five blocks long, twenty square blocks in all. People scooped up handfuls for souvenirs. Each pellet was flat on one side and rounded on the other.

Quite naturally, the citizens of Bloomsburg were more than a little curious for an explanation for the peculiar rainfall. About a month later, an official pronouncement declared that the pellets were virgin polyethylene, a substance often handled in pellet form since it is quite dangerous in the liquid state.

The majority of people nodded their heads in satisfaction as if a handy identification had in some way answered the much greater question: *Where had the plastic pellets come from?*

On the morning of July 14, 1960, Charley Wissell of Alden, Illinois, had just got well into the job of cultivating the weeds from his healthily sprouting corn when he came to a large rock in the middle of a corn row. He knew for a fact that the rock had not been there when he

planted the corn; and to verify his memory of the field, one could plainly see that the growth of an adjoining row of corn was disturbed in such a manner that it looked as if the rock had materialized in the field at about the time the corn had sprouted.

The rock lay several corn rows from the fence, and it had made a crater and compressed the topsoil beneath it in such a way as to give every indication that it had been dropped from a great height. Wissell was certain that no one had driven a truck into his field and dumped the rock in the midst of a corn row. If such a thoughtless act had been perpetrated upon his crop, there would have been deep tire tracks left in the soft soil. There were no such tracks.

Wissell's own theory was that the rock—26 inches long, 14 inches thick, and 218 pounds in weight—was a meteor. In short order he had put in a call to Dr. Gerard Kuiper, director of the Yerkes Observatory at Williams Bay, Wisconsin. Since the observatory was only ten miles from the farm, Dr. Kuiper decided upon an immediate field trip to the site of the reported meteorite.

At first the scientist agreed with the farmer's assessment of the rock, but subsequent tests proved they were both in error. The mystery rock was no meteor.

Dr. Kuiper told William Braden of the Chicago *Sun-Times* that he had assumed the rock to have been a genuine meteorite, "but we treated it with hydrochloric acid and it bubbled and developed gas like a carbonate—which to the best of our knowledge can form only on the earth."

Dr. Kuiper also noted that tests on the rock produced no evidence of gamma radiation, a tell-tale sign of exposure to cosmic rays in space. The rock was of terrestrial origin, and since the scientists were convinced that the Illinois farmer had not designed an elaborate practical joke, they were left with the mystery of determining its place of origin.

"We've made experiments to see from how high a rock like that would have to drop to make such a crater," Dr. Kuiper said. "We found it would have to drop from about 200 feet elevation. If it didn't drop, somebody must have dug a hole and planted it there. But the crater looked real.

"There's no chance a meteorite landed nearby and sent an earthly rock sailing into the cornfield," Dr. Kuiper went on. "We've searched the area for other craters and haven't found any. I have no explanation, and it's very frustrating. This is the kind of thing one would like to clear up."

We would also like to clear up such strange sky falls as the following:

October 23, 1947; *Marksville, Louisiana*—Fresh water fish of several varieties, up to nine and one-half inches long.

The weather was calm, foggy, with wind velocity only about eight miles per hour. There were no "tornado" conditions reported.

October, 1949; *Portal, North Dakota*—Five-inch salamanders "fell like rain."

The local citizenry had never seen salamanders before they "dropped" in on their town.

November 11, 1968; *Cannifton, Ontario*—Brown-colored oval objects about twelve ounces in weight.

The mystery object fell on the driveway of Wesley Reid, who turned it over to government authorities. Available reports indicated that fragments of quartz and almost pure zinc were discovered in the object.

August 27, 1968; *Sao Paulo, Brazil*—Meat and blood over an area of one square kilometer between Cocpava and Sao Jose dos Campos.

According to *Flying Saucer Review* November-December, 1968: "The pieces of flesh were found lying at distances of half a metre apart, their size varying between lengths of 5 cm. and 20 cm. The meat was of a

spongy texture and violet in color, and was accompanied by drops of blood. The sky at the time was quite clear. No aircraft had been seen just prior to, during, or after the event, nor were there any birds in the sky. The police removed samples."

February 23, 1955; Horseheads, New York—Whispy radioactive fuzz over a residential area half a mile square.

Dr. Charles R. Ruterber, professor of chemistry at Elmira College, pronounced the fuzz, "radioactive above normal, but not dangerous." Dr. Ruterber said that the stuff could have been cotton fiber somehow blasted there by some sort of explosion.

July 30, 1963; Mexico City, Mexico—Rain of mushrooms near the Mexico City airport.

According to Mexican press, thousands of grayish, mushroom-shaped objects halted traffic for some time just northwest of the Mexico City airport. The sky was completely clear at the time of the fall and there was not a single cloud visible. The "mushrooms" were described variously as "balls of cotton," "giant cobwebs," and "foam." Upon landing, the objects rapidly disintegrated.

September 3, 1969; Punta Gorda, Florida—Basketfuls of golf balls.

The Punta Gorda Police Department picked up several baskets full of golf balls that came down in a conventional rainfall. Investigation could yield no clue to their source.

Again, the author presents but a miniscule sampling of the strange things that continue to fall from our skies. Believe me, I could go on for pages!

For example, one of my very favorite sky falls is that of the old artillery shell that fell in Naples, Italy, on February 7, 1958. The shell casing bore the date of 1942. In what limbo had that shell been falling for sixteen years?

And from whence came the hundreds of pounds of shredded, black bristled flesh that fell on the ranch of a man in Los Nietos Township, California, on August 9,

1869? And what unidentifiable animal yielded the half a wagon load of flesh that fell across to hillsides in Bath County, Kentucky, on March 3, 1876?

Just as the author could fill a book with ice falls, he could certainly compile a couple hundred pages of mysterious and bizarre sky falls. But if I haven't convinced the reader that some incredibly weird things have fallen out of clear skies for no apparent or even strenuously deductible reason with these few examples, then I can see no purpose in providing him with an encyclopedic listing of anomalous sky droppings.

In his *Journal for the Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained*, *Pursuit*, April, 1969, Ivan T. Sanderson notes that "very close to 99 percent" of these things that fall from the sky are quite ordinary items that may be found somewhere on earth. "The list of items both animate, like fish and frogs, and inanimate, like statues and pennies, seem almost if not always to be identifiable as known earthly objects," he writes.

"This would seem to us to indicate that said items don't really fall from the sky but are teleported, though indeed this performance may involve not only spatial transference but time transference. How else come Roman coins and beastly old human skulls?"

Sanderson fully admits that "numerous items said to have plumped to earth . . . are not known on the surface of same," but a careful examination of any listing of sky falls will substantiate his point that the great majority are "perfectly ordinary and commonplace earthly items," even though these items might be terribly out of geographical context.

All of which may bear out this chapter's point of contention: A certain portion of the people, animals, and things that fall *into* other dimensions may at some time fall *out* of that strange rent in Time and Space.

CHAPTER 6

Monsters and Marksmen from Other Worlds

Some time in 1965, Jim Templeton, his wife Ann, and their two daughters Frances and Elizabeth were having an outing on a lonely stretch of marsh near the Solway Firth in Westmorland, England. Five-year-old Elizabeth was sitting alone on a grassy knoll when Templeton, a fireman, snapped a photograph of his daughter examining the flora of the marsh.

In this instance, the simple and pleasant domestic act of taking one's daughter's picture touched off a controversy that still rages in UFO buff circles. When Templeton had the film processed, the frame that held little Elizabeth also contained the image of a man in a white "space suit" standing in the background.

Templeton knew as certain as he breathed that there had been no other people, space-suited or otherwise, near them when he took that picture. But there in the background, where there should only have been grass and blue sky, stood a most mysterious stranger.

Experts said that from the angle of the picture, the stranger appeared to be about seven feet tall. The fact that the marsh overlooked an atomic works, a North At-

lantic Treaty Organization radio-tracking base, and a rocket-testing station might, some theorists reasoned, be good cause for a "stranger" to be in the area.

The photograph has received wide circulation and has been published in a variety of periodicals. If it is not some clever fake—which every photographic expert who has studied it seems to agree it is not—it truly appears to be a photograph of someone dressed in a space suit. Theories have ranged from the camera's lens and its sensitive film having caught an interloper moving across the marsh on another optic wave length, to a passing UFO-naut having beamed his image down into the lens from an overhead UFO.

Templeton, who often served as official photographer for the Carlisle fire brigade, said that he took the photograph to the police as soon as it was developed. He told reporters that the police experts "checked and double-checked," but all they could tell him after a full day's investigation was that it seemed to be ". . . a man in a tight white suit about seven or eight feet tall and wearing protective headgear."

Templeton and his family were certain that they would have noticed such an unusually attired and tall individual if he had been present at the time of the picture taking.

Detective Superintendent Tom Oldcorn, head of the Cumberland and Westmorland Criminal Investigation Department, told journalists that the photo was a complete mystery to him.

"At first we thought it was a double exposure or some fault with the camera," he said, "but it's nothing like that.

"I don't read science fiction myself, and I'm still convinced that it is a freak picture. But Mr. Templeton is no hoaxer and he says there was no one in front of his camera except for the little girl. It's very puzzling."

Britain's Ministry of Defense set their experts to exam-

ining the exposed film, the print, and Templeton's camera.

According to a Ministry spokesman: "Maybe the figure is wearing a space suit or a high-altitude flying suit. Maybe it is a creature from outer space. We can't really say because it is not really clear enough."

In August of 1967, John A. Keel received a photograph of a little "space man" that had been taken by a fourteen-year-old North Carolina boy named Ronnie Hill.

After several years of research in the complex field of UFO-logy, Keel has heard all the various claims of contactees, and he has found himself embroiled in one bizarre confrontation after another. Approaching the photograph and the photographer with great caution, the writer was pleased to find that the teenager had an excellent reputation in his small community and that he had a number of affidavits to support his story.

But even honest young people may be tempted by the opportunity to accomplish a great hoax, so Keel took the photograph to several professional photographers for their expert analyses. Keel's conclusion, as reported in *Saga* magazine, was that while it was impossible to state that the photograph was absolutely genuine, ". . . we do feel that it most probably is and that Ronnie's story should be taken seriously."

Ronnie's own testimony placed him in the family garden on the afternoon of July 21, 1967, when he noticed a "strange odor in the air which smelt like gas" and a strange "sound of silence." After a time there came a buzzing sound and an increasingly strong odor of gas. The teenager saw something like a black hat in the sky, then a white ball about nine feet in diameter.

Frightened, but with unusual presence of mind, Ronnie ran into the house to get his Kodak Sabie 620 camera. When he came back out into the garden area, he saw the white ball on the ground. The white ball soon paled into

insignificance, however, when a little man about four feet tall emerged from behind the object, carrying a black, funnel-shaped object in his hand.

When the little man was about fifteen feet away, Ronnie began snapping some pictures of the mysterious visitor to North Carolina. Soon the big hat-shaped object reappeared in the sky, pulled the round ball and its occupant back into its hold, and "took off at tremendous speed and disappeared over the treetops."

Keel writes that by Ronnie's recollection the little man wore a skin-tight, silvery metallic suit. "Its head seemed to be a bluish green . . . The eyes were 'tilting or slanted.' It wore a silver helmet and there was a dark blue belt around the waist . . . The little fellow . . . moved 'slowly and wobbly' and seemed to have trouble controlling his legs when he turned."

Keel published the photograph of the little man, copyrighted in Ronnie Hill's name, in the March, 1969, issue of *Saga*. The reproduction clearly shows the funnel-shaped object in the interloper's hand. The white ball rests in the background. The little fellow does seem to be wearing a shiny, metallic space suit, but the picture is fogged quite a bit and rather bluish in hue. Keel comments that the fogging effect ". . . is actually in Ronnie's favor . . . It may be caused by radiation or actinic rays of some kind coming from the object."

Is it possible that citizens of other dimensions have found a way to burrow into our world and to create temporary holes in our Space-Time continuum? If the strong smell of gas and the peculiar buzzing sound would indicate a physical tampering with our conventional laws of physics, then we may have been the unwitting hosts to other-dimensional travelers for centuries.

The motives of these dimension-hoppers are difficult to assess. Are they our "guardian angels" come to subtly guide and direct us? Or are they our "devils" come to harass and confuse us? Or are they actually quite indif-

ferent to our eventual fate and merely come over from time to time to check up on our intellectual progress?

On some occasions, it appears, some of their number may behave toward us rather like mischievous boys hurling rocks at frogs in a pond.

On March 27, 1952, the window of a trolley car in Philadelphia shattered for no apparent reason.

On June 6, 1952, a Pittsburgh woman was wounded in the hip as she held the ladder for her husband while he tightened a shutter on the second story of their home. Her injury was attributed to a "spent bullet," but there was no indication of whether or not a pellet was found in her hip or who had fired the "spent bullet."

A "stray bullet" was held responsible for wounding a seven-year-old boy in Swissvale, Pennsylvania on June 20. Again, the official account neglected to mention whether or not that "stray bullet" had been found.

Over in Great Britain in May of 1952, something shattered the windshield of a car driven by a girl applying for her driver's license, on the Scunthorpe-Doncaster road in Linconshire England. No pellet or anything else was ever found that could have caused the damage.

On that same English road on May 5, the windshield of a truck was suddenly shattered. No pellet, stone, or culprit was discovered.

On the next day, a window exploded on a schoolbus filled with children on that same road. Fortunately, none of the children were injured.

On May 9, 1952, on a road between Esher and Cobham in Surrey, a motorist named Eric Sykes had his windshield shattered.

Journalists quoted police officials as saying: "There have been about 20 incidents of this kind along here in the last 18 months, and we are completely mystified."

Five miles from Newbury in the Berkshires, a motorist reported having his windshield pierced by a bullet on June 12. Police there said that they, too, had had other

reports of shots being fired at motorists on that stretch of road. No one, however, had ever found any evidence of the phantom marksmen, not even a spent bullet in some motorist's seat cushion.

Back on the Portsmouth Road between Esher and Cobham, one incident mentioned a hole that had penetrated the automobile's metal door. Still no pellet could be found, and official statistics showed that twenty-two windshields had been shattered on that road within the past fifteen months.

The next day after the release of those statistics, a motorist reported that he had just become the owner of windshield number twenty-three. A feature story in the *Evening News* claimed that their statistics indicated a more accurate total of thirty windshields shattered on the haunted road.

By September, the phantom marksmen had decided to seek new shooting galleries in the United States. By Thursday of the week of September 22, 1952, fifty businessmen in the city of Kokomo, Indiana, had complained that someone was shooting holes in their plate glass windows.

Captain of Detectives C.C. Unger had found that the mysterious perforations were all similar—a small opening through the glass, too small to have come from a B-B shot or an air gun pellet, with a crater smashed on the inside of the glass at the point of impact. The damaged area was about the size of a quarter, and was at eye level or a bit above. It was apparent to the police ballistics experts that the holes had all been made by the same type of missile, but there was not a spent pellet to be found in any of the business places.

Captain Unger ordered extensive tests with all types of air rifles in an attempt to come up with the particular kind of gun that might be responsible for the damage to the downtown business district. With dismay the police

investigator learned that no make of rifle available to the crime lab had caused the holes.

Police Chief Don Scott issued a front page appeal in the Kokomo *Tribune*, beseeching anyone who might have any knowledge pertaining to the steadily rising damage to the business district to step forward and declare himself.

No member of the citizenry stepped forward to perform his civic duty. Everyone was as baffled by the mystery holes as were the police.

Captain Unger grew increasingly frustrated. It seemed impossible that a phantom marksman could travel over central Kokomo shooting out windows over a sixty-block area without being seen by someone. Furthermore, it seemed equally impossible to accomplish the shattering of all those windows without leaving at least one pellet *somewhere* on the inside of the glass. To complicate the case, the phantom rifleman paid a brief visit to Peru, Indiana, a city some twenty-one miles north of Kokomo during that same week in September. Apparently the invisible sharpshooter had found targets more to his liking in Kokomo, for he had only picked off six windows in Peru.

Then the mysterious sniping stopped altogether, with no official any closer to a workable theory than one put forward by a British magazine that a ghost fond of firing his dueling pistols had been responsible for the "bullet holes" in the windshields on that afflicted road in England.

If the phantom marksmen really were interdimensional beings out for a bit of tasteless sport at Earthlings' expense, they must have wearied of the game until April of 1954. This time, the windows in Bellingham, Washington, seemed to be the most inviting.

In one week, the newspapers reported that an unidentified "someone" had cracked more than 1,500 windshields.

Life magazine carried an account of the Bellingham windshield seige in its April 12, 1954 issue. "With ghastly regularity the tiny pellets flew through the air and glass cracked, sometimes as cars were in motion," recounted *Life*. "But drivers failed to see how the deed was done. The phantom respected no one. Jagged, ugly scars appeared in the windshields of police cars. Angry businessmen stalked one another, but glass kept breaking."

Once again, in spite of numerous theories, no one found a single pellet on the inside of the splintered glass.

On April 15, the perforating pranksters aimed their sights at the city of Seattle. The *Seattle Daily Times* carried a front page story lambasting the "windshield-peppering hoodlums" who had cracked hundreds of windows in one night. Police Chief H.J. Lawrence was quoted as stating that he had called a conference of police officials in a cooperative effort to stem the situation that had spread from Bellingham to Seattle and other communities to the north.

"It would take 200 people to do the damage being done in Seattle," he said. "It seems a physical impossibility for any group to have done this damage. It would take a carload of whatever material is being used to do the damage already inflicted in Seattle."

Chief Lawrence and his busy officers were as unable to duplicate the perforations in their ballistics department as had any of the other beleaguered police across the nation. Nor did any of his men find a single B-B or pellet.

On April 17, three counties in Northern Ohio were struck by the invisible marauders. Then the phantom marksmen seemed to go on a real rampage—reports of suddenly shattered glass came from Los Angeles, Chicago, Kentucky, Cleveland, New England, and a dozen cities in Canada.

At last, in Portland, Oregon, someone saw *something*—tiny, round, blackish pellets about one thirty-second of

an inch in diameter. One woman claimed that she saw some hit a windshield of an automobile and eat right through it in a kind of "bubbling action."

A newspaper reporter in Cleveland, Robert Cubbedge, did not claim to have seen any pellets, but he did serve as eye-witness to craters appearing on ninety windshields in a used car lot.

Cubbedge described the phenomenon as "some kind of transformation taking place" while he watched it. He wrote that there was no gravel, sand, or pellets falling on the clean windshields, but he stated firmly that he had ". . . watched the mysterious something that pockmarks automobile windshields develop before my eyes."

In King County, Washington, two sheriff's deputies watched the same thing happening to truckdriver Robert M. Noble's windshield. When they went back to their patrol car to radio in their report, they found that their own windshield had been pitted.

Mr. and Mrs. Gary May of Port Weller, Canada, were sitting in the family car when they heard sharp pinging sounds on their windshield. Mrs. May put her hand outside and quickly withdrew it, with a sharp, stinging pain in her right thumb. She was later treated for a small, burn-like welt.

A man in Binghamton, New York, was also struck by one of the hot, invisible pellets and was treated for a small flesh wound on his arm.

Manuel Careaga, a well-known attorney and realtor of Ensenada, British Columbia, heard a thud against the rear window of his car. When he stopped to investigate, he found no pellet of any kind, but as he watched, his rear window "melted like snow."

Sooner or later, people demand that their experts and authorities announce a solution to such a mystery—especially when the enigma is a costly one. By the same token, experts and authorities usually feel compelled to provide the citizenry with comfortable and logical expla-

nations for all mysteries—regardless of whether or not the explanations may suit the facts.

The Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company attributed all the handiwork of the phantom marksmen to pitting caused by flying sand, gravel, or the chemicals used to de-ice highways.

From Great Britain came word that the more than one hundred windshields that had eventually been shattered on the stretch of highway between Esher and Cobham had all been caused by one or more of five contributing factors: stress caused by ill-fitting glass; frame distortion; vibrations from unequal road surface; changes of temperature; sound waves from the exhausts of passing vehicles.

Another mystery solved, and the phantom marksmen (whoever or whatever they might have been) went laughing back into their own dimension until August of 1961 when they paid an evening's visit to Springfield, Massachusetts, and shattered the rear windows of one hundred randomly selected automobiles. That seems to have been the end of that particular gambit, however. After all, even a fun thing like smashing glass can become boring after so long.

Frightening people half out of their wits, on the other hand, is a perpetually amusing sport, always challenging one to create fantastic and grotesque disguises. Perhaps we should at least consider the possibility that our neighbors from other worlds or other dimensions may really look like gargoyles, demons, and monsters. We might be in the uncomfortable position of having asked our inventively masked partner to unveil at midnight only to find that he has not been wearing a mask at all.

If there is another dimension somehow sharing this planet with our own borders of reality, it may be safe to assume that it is peopled by an intelligent species or two, who share their world with assorted animals, birds, reptiles, fish, and so forth. And if it is possible that from

time to time there appear "holes" in our dimension or theirs which permit—or enforce—passage between the two worlds, then it may be that all the creatures of our legends, myths, and nightmares have had their origin on this other plane of reality.

On July 26, 1970, the London *Sunday Express* reported that troops and police were hunting a huge reptilian monster in the woods near Forli in Central Italy. According to the *Sunday Express*: "The monster—some call it a dinosaur—was first seen last Tuesday by Antonio Samorani, a 48-year-old peasant. He reported that he had been chased by a 'huge scaly thing at least 15-feet long. It walked on thick legs and its breath was searing hot. I ran for my life and it followed me for a couple of hundred yards.'

"Police were skeptical at first, but changed their minds when they saw large footprints in a glade near where Samorani says he saw the monster.

"Police Chief Dr. Pedoni said: 'We are convinced some sort of creature of colossal size is hiding in the woods. Three other people have seen it. We are combing the area with armed police and soldiers with nets. If possible we want to catch it alive. Over a thousand guns will be out looking for this animal when the hunting season opens on August 1. If the local hunters reach it first, we will be powerless to stop them.'

Police Chief Pedoni did not have to worry about local hunters slaughtering some saurian creature that had awakened from a sleep of aeons in a remote cave. As is the pattern in these monster sightings, the fearsome beast is clearly seen by numerous witnesses, is found to leave footprints and an occasional mauled domestic animal, then disappears by finding its way back into the "hole" in Space and Time from which it arrived.

In the spring of 1956, Henry Morton of Wadesboro, North Carolina, saw a giant man-like creature in his watermelon patch. Every watermelon grower has to be

concerned about the pilferage of his crop, but this was ridiculous.

"It was foggy when I drove up to my riverside field," Morton said later. "When I got closer, I could see that the big object appeared to be a man in a stooped over position. Then the creature, the beast, came out of the watermelon patch and disappeared."

The next day, Morton showed rural Policeman Manley Thomas tracks in his melon patch that measured 13 inches by 5 inches.

It may be that the various reports of "Abominable Snowmen," the Sasquatches, and Oh-Mahs, and the like have no basis in physical reality at all. Some researchers have amassed thousands of eye-witness reports from sober and respectable men and women. Footprints, dung, even photographs abound. But no one has ever brought an apeman back alive. Perhaps the "Abominable Snowmen" are the apes—or the residents—of another dimension co-existing with our own, who may, from time to time, stumble into our world.

The same may be true of those pesky tales of large cat-like animals that annually crop up in so many sections of our nation. I suppose the only reason that they take second berth to the giant apeman reports lies in the fact that our science does recognize the existence of the cougar, the mountain lion, but there are no official records of any of the primates ever having prowled our forests. Therefore, whenever farmers in New England, Iowa, Nebraska, or any section of the South complain that a monstrous cat has been mangling their livestock, it is easy enough to theorize that a cougar has somehow managed to migrate in search of more plentiful hunting grounds.

In May and June of 1959 (to choose one of hundreds of reports), residents of the western section of Lorain County, Ohio, were having trouble with a giant cat pos-

sessed of a large head, a huge light-brown body, and an insatiable appetite for dogs, cats, and sheep.

Mrs. Iva Witteman, Royalton Road, Columbia Station in Lorain County, went out to check her eight sheep at about 8:00 P.M. She found six of them literally ripped apart. One had been completely skinned, and another was missing.

Sheriff's Deputy Charles L. Dugger said that he had never seen anything like it, and he ruled out a dog pack as wanton marauders. Mr. and Mrs. Witteman and a friend had been visiting in their house only 250 yards from the pasture in which the sheep were kept, and they had heard nothing.

In July of 1964, the cat tale now featured a five-foot tall, tailless, earless, two-hundred-pound lion-like creature that walked on its hind feet. Two campers on Mt. Tamalpais in Marin County, California, complained to authorities that two such creatures had disturbed them on three different occasions. They said that the cat-people had heads close to their bodies and were very muscular below the shoulders. In one instance, the two campers had heard the creatures "chittering" back and forth for about seven hours.

Samuel Johnson, a Chicago motorist, ran into his nightmare on a road near Niles, Michigan. He could remember it only as "something that had red eyes, brown hair, and squealed!" Johnson's car window had been shattered in four places where the monster had punched it before the door had been knocked open.

"The thing attacked me," Johnson told authorities. "I kicked it away and fainted."

One wonders if the creature truly meant to do the motorist any real harm if a few kicks could drive it away after it had expended enough energy to punch a car door open. Perhaps the other-dimensional traveler had not been properly groomed in the social amenities of our plane of reality.

The imaginative reader cannot help bringing to mind the ancient tales of werewolves, cat-people, and other assorted ghosts and ghouls and wondering if even these eerie legends might not have had their basis of reality in actual sightings of creatures or citizens from other realms of being. As we have been recounting, these sightings of weird and grotesque monsters are as much a part of our rocket-ship, moon-shot era as they were of the centuries of animism and superstition.

On the evening of February 27, 1971, thirty-five-year-old Donald Childs of Lawton, Texas, suffered a heart attack when he looked out in his front yard and saw a wolfman on its hands and knees attempting to drink out of an empty fish pond.

When he was released from the hospital two days later, Childs told police officer Clancy Williams that the creature had been “. . . tall, with a lot of hair all over his face, and dressed in an indescribable manner.”

Other witnesses who viewed the incredible creature said that it was wearing pants “which were far too small for him.”

The first reports of the wolfman came from west Lawton. Police officer Harry Ezell said that they received calls describing “something” running down the street, dodging cars, hiding behind bushes then getting up and running again.

Twenty minutes later, Officer Ezell stated that they received a call from a man who had seen the monster sitting on a railing outside of his apartment.

“He told me he saw the thing when he opened the window curtain about 11:15 P.M.,” Ezell told newsmen. “He thought it was all a practical joke because the subject was perched on the railing. It looked like some monkey or ape. He thought it was a joke until it turned its head and looked at him, then jumped off its perch on the second floor railing onto the ground 17 feet below.

“The man told me the person ran from the area on all

fours, something like an ape or monkey would," Officer Ezell went on. "He described it as wearing only pants which covered his leg to near his knee, as if it had outgrown the pants.

"He described it as having a horribly distorted face, as if it had been in a fire, and it had hair all over its face, upper parts of the body and lower parts of its legs."

A group of soldiers from Ft. Still encountered the monster fifteen minutes later, and they freely admitted that the thing had frightened them.

The wolfman was sighted on Friday and Saturday nights in Lawton. Sunday night was quiet, and on Monday night, Major Clarence Hill, commander of the police patrol division, sent out an alert to be on careful watch for the "wolfman."

But the nightmarish creature, whoever or whatever he might have been, had already moved back into the dimension from which he had come—or else it had traveled north to make its den under an old farmhouse near Fouke, Arkansas.

Bobby Ford, twenty-five, moved into the old Crank place on May 1, 1971. He had lived in the home for less than five days when he had a face-to-face encounter with a six-foot-tall, hairy monster. Ford was quoted in an Associated Press release as saying the creature had frightened him so badly that he had run "right through the front door—without opening it."

Lest the reader be tempted to laugh too readily at Bobby Ford's "feet-get-moving" attitude toward the unknown, he should be reminded that he might someday find himself similarly confronted by a monster possessed of the strange talent of being somehow able to run right through the doors between dimensions without opening them.

CHAPTER 7

Mystery Winds and Explosions from Nowhere

The Nebraska farmer sat upright in his bed, clutched his startled wife, then swung both feet onto the cold winter floor.

"My God!" his wife gasped, "What was that!"

"The barrel we keep the tractor gas in must have exploded," he answered, as he shrugged into a flannel shirt and snagged his trousers off a bedside chair. "I'm running out to get the stock out of the barn. It's sure to be on fire. You call the fire department in town and tell them to blow that siren good and loud and get out here fast!"

"It's funny we can't see any flames," his wife said, reaching for her robe.

The farmer scowled at his wife's observation. He walked to the window and looked out.

It was a clear night with a full moon and bright stars. He could see the gas barrel sitting perfectly intact atop its makeshift tower. The livestock were beginning to settle down, but their German Shepherd pup was still howling its complaint at whatever had shattered the stillness of the winter night.

"What in hell?" the farmer intoned softly. "There's no smoke, no fire. Do you suppose it was one of them damn sonic booms from some big jet?"

"Big jets" that are never spotted, earthquakes that are never recorded on seismographs, explosives that never leave debris, and UFO's emerging from other dimensions are the suspects most often named by those who have suffered property damage and who have had the devil scared out of them by mystery blasts that have been reported across the United States and in other parts of the world.

In Modesto, California, on October 3, 1950, a mystery explosion shattered the night with such violence that a general fire alarm was sounded for fifteen miles around.

In Thanet and Margate, England, in the early morning of October 19, officials reported the "biggest explosion since the war." Vibrations were felt as far away as Deal, but no one offered an explanation.

On November 10, 1950, a thirty-mile area in the lower St. Lawrence River area, Canada, was vibrated by a mystery blast. Federal transport department officials tried to pin this one on a U.S. Air Force plane with engine trouble that dropped a bomb.

On January 4, 1952, a series of mystery blasts shook Los Angeles and San Diego. The first explosion sounded at 3:33 A.M. in the vicinity of Los Angeles' International Airport. The second thundered forth from San Diego's Mission Hills at 8:30 P.M., followed by a third at Point Loma a half an hour later, and a fourth nearly two hours later in the Chula Vista region.

Police officials stated that their investigation revealed that no explosions had been set off at those times. Scientists selected the old scapegoat of exploding meteorites, even though none had been reported or observed on that date.

Niagara Falls, New York, residents were rattled out of their sleep by an explosion, followed by a mysterious

light in the sky, on the night of March 23, 1953. A check with officials at the U.S. Air Force base in Niagara Falls revealed that no planes were missing that night. A Coast Guard launch plowed the water for two hours without finding any debris. The approved explanation was that a meteorite had exploded above Niagara Falls.

On January 30, 1954, Mrs. Robert Arledge was thrown to the dining room floor of their new six-room home in Gadsden, Alabama, by a terrific explosion that left her with slight burns. Fire investigation officials found no evidence of fire or explosion, even though the floor of the house from the front to the rear doors had been tilted up.

State Police, Cornell University geologists, and Army and Air Force explosives specialists examined the gaping holes left on the Howard Lacey farm at Venice Center, New York, on each November 12th for 1966, '67, and '68, and ruled out ordinary explosives.

"It's getting to be an annual affair at Howard Lacey's place: Something goes boom in the night and leaves a hole within 300 yards of the one before," stated an Associated Press release.

On each November 12th for three years in succession, Lacey and his neighbors were shaken out of their beds by a loud explosion during the night; then upon investigation, they would discover a large crater on, or near, his farm. Lacey's mystery blast in 1968 was the loudest and the largest of all. The noise could be heard more than twenty miles away, and the crater was eighteen feet wide and almost five feet deep.

Pressed by newsmen for some kind of explanation, a Cornell University geologist could only shake his head and reply: "There's a hole in the ground out there—that's a fact. The rest is open to conjecture."

Another New England community, Moodus, Connecticut, has been plagued by mystery blasts for nearly three

hundred years, baffling scientists as well as inhabitants of the village.

"The noises sound just like explosions and come without warning at intervals of two or three years," said a researcher from Williams College who had been investigating the phenomena.

"The 'Moodus noises' always occur within the radius of a few miles around the village," he went on, "but although we have frequently investigated the explosions, we have found no clue as to their cause. To the best of our knowledge, no smoke or steam is ever seen at the site of these mystery blasts and no buildings, trees, or rock formations have ever been affected."

Observers have stated that one of the weirdest aspects of the "Moodus noises" is that it seems impossible to determine their direction. Residents at varying distances from the village invariably report the noises as having occurred near them.

Investigating scientists have long debated the origin of the "Moodus noises," but since the explosions have been recorded on Williams College and Harvard University seismographs, the most comfortable theory among orthodox researchers is that the "noises" are some form of earthquake phenomena.

The villagers of Moodus are far from satisfied with such an explanation, however. A local hunter testified that he distinctly heard an explosion sounding above him, and not from beneath his feet. Other inhabitants argue that if the noises were due to some form of earthquake, then tottering buildings or other damage logically would have occurred during at least one of the blasts.

In the summer of 1959, a violent shock, accompanied by two loud explosions, was reported in an area from one hundred miles northeast of Amarillo, Texas, to Roswell, New Mexico, two hundred miles to the southeast. In the

town of Pampa, fifty-five miles northeast of Amarillo, the wall of a downtown building was cracked by the blasts.

Investigators found that seismograph stations said the shock could not have been caused by an earth tremor. Further inquiry determined that no supersonic flights had been scheduled over the area at the time of the mysterious explosions.

Unexplained blasts in the sky over the San Francisco area in a three-day period during that same summer knocked dishes from their shelves and cracked the plaster on innumerable household walls. Windows were shattered over a thirty-five-mile area; and the unidentified explosions were also held responsible for opening the door to a bank vault, triggering fire alarms, and setting off a warehouse sprinkling system.

Within a few days of the mystery blasts in Texas, New Mexico, and California, two unexplained explosions rocked Henderson, North Carolina within a period of twenty-nine hours. Authorities there finally offered an official theory that some unnamed parties had suspended explosives from trees.

Army and Navy spokesmen denied that they were the "unnamed parties" who had set loose floating blobs of strange, exploding plastic material along southern California beaches in 1968.

On April 16, 1968, seventeen-year-old Louis Duenweg and three friends discovered strange, whitish blobs bobbing at the water's edge along Huntington Beach. Duenweg broke one of the things open, then stopped to wash off sand particles in order to better examine the unfamiliar pinkish substance within the plastic-like shell. There was a sudden hissing noise; and before the teenager could run, the blob exploded, temporarily blinding him and burning his face.

About a week later, another young man scooped a similar object out of the sea along Seal Beach. He cracked it

open, became disinterested in his find, tossed it over his shoulder. A resultant blast knocked him to the beach and made a small crater in the sand.

Quite naturally, surfers, fishermen, and coastal residents become a bit uptight when mysterious, unidentified explosive globs are found floating off their beaches. Military spokesmen insisted that they were not in anyway responsible for the blasting blobs. The Los Angeles County Crime Laboratory was said to have fished a number of blobs out of the ocean for careful analysis, but it seems that no official report was ever released which designated the explosive plastic's place of origin.

Concerned citizens who protest that an unidentified *someone* seems to be fouling up our atmosphere with mysterious explosions and increasing the existing hazards of our surface by setting adrift exploding blobs are laughed off by the authorities as alarmists. However, those who make a serious study of phenomena associated with UFO sightings are quick to point out that such mysterious blasts and inexplicable skyfalls date back to man's prehistory. Unfortunately, an uninformed and an entrenched science disregards such documentation as pure, unadulterated kookery. But neither, it seems, do the skeptics offer explanations that are any more acceptable to the individuals who have endured mystery blasts and such phenomena as glowing, and sometimes fatal, rain.

On the Wednesday before Christmas, 1965, it rained in Buckeye, Arizona. According to old-timers and the weather bureau, rain during the holiday season is unusual enough, but this rain left glowing spots that varied from a quarter of an inch to two inches in diameter.

Buckeye Civil Defense Director George Hamner checked the spots with his geiger counter, and was relieved to find that they registered no harmful radioactivity.

Jerry Benson, a high school biology teacher, told reporters: "At first they looked like aluminum, but taking

a real close look at them, they appeared to have a pale green glow. The first time I walked across my backyard, I didn't see anything, but the more I looked, the more spots I saw.

"I don't believe that the rain activated spots of phosphorus in the soil," Benson went on. "An earthworm that got covered with the stuff turned into a glowworm!"

It is better to glow than to burn. Later in 1961, a rain fell near Huixtla in Chiapas State, Mexico, that, according to United Press International, killed several children. When the deadly liquid touched human skin, it produced blisters that later became dark stains that resembled hot oil burns.

On the night of Saturday, August 18, 1962, many San Franciscans thought that an airborne armada of enemy bombers was poisoning the skies above their city. Between 10:00 and 10:30 P.M. a mysterious rumbling noise that sounded like the flight of heavy super-bombers came from somewhere above San Francisco. Navy spokesmen from Alameda Naval Air Station denied running any engines after 10:00 P.M. A theory that atmospheric conditions could have been "just right" to magnify thunderclaps fell sour when authorities were reminded that the evening of August 18th was clear, with virtually no wind.

Nor was there any wind on U.S. Route 75 between Madisonville and Centerville, Texas, on April 19, 1963, when Louis A. Johnson of Houston was returning from a trip to Fort Worth; but that did not prevent "something" from lifting his automobile into the air, turning it completely around, and setting it back down on the highway, traveling the opposite direction from which he had come.

Johnson, a Marine Corps veteran of World War II, said that his unexpected and unexplainable ride was more exciting than anything he had experienced in two invasions.

"I can't even describe the sensation," he was quoted as saying. "When I realized what had happened, and that I'd come down partly on the shoulder of the road, I put the car into lower gear and eased to a stop. I didn't think the car had been hurt any, but when I got to Houston, I stopped at a service station and they found that the oil pump wasn't working too well."

Several eye-witnesses saw Johnson's automobile suddenly sprout wings, and in an attempt to fit what they had seen into some form of recognizable reality, most of them believed that a tornado had swooped down and momentarily hoisted him aloft. There was no tornado, of course, and there are few tornadoes that could elevate a two-ton automobile into the air. There are probably *no* tornadoes that would set an automobile back down on the highway without damage to either car or occupant.

Yet something did lift Johnson's automobile into the air. Could it have been the same "something" that is responsible for the mystery blasts? Is it possible that some aircraft not visible to the human eye is soaring around breaking the sound barrier with horrendous sonic booms and occasionally reaching down to pluck up an automobile . . . or a garage . . . or a roof?

There was just a slight breeze in the air in Albany, New York, on April 10, 1964, when Teddy Bix, who was in his yard raking leaves, saw the garage at 13 O'Connell Street leave its foundation. According to the *Albany Times-Union*, the garage shot up about fifteen feet, turned twice, banked slightly, then headed due east before losing altitude, skimming over a snow fence, and crash-landing in complete ruin more than fifty feet from its take-off point.

When William F. Rider, who lived downstairs at the O'Connell Street address, came home from work, he nearly drove his car into the garage that was no longer there. Michael Keaveny, the owner of the property, told investigators that the garage was fifteen to twenty years

old, braced with interior beams, and had withstood some "terrific wind storms" without showing any ill effects.

The Albany Weather Bureau passed over the evidence that there was only a slight breeze at the time the garage had left its launching pad and decreed that a "freak gust" had created a vacuum that had raised the building. The explanation does not sound too bad until one stops to reason that a vacuum, with stronger pressures on the outside, would be more likely to hold the garage in place, rather than hoist it up through the air.

A good portion of the roof of a building at 1503 Shendoah St. in Hollywood, California, was ripped away and scattered in pieces up to 280 feet away. Mrs. Bertha Fink was left lying in pouring spring rain; Mrs. Rachael Benveniste was tossed out of her bed; and Mrs. Sarah Eisenberg found her ceiling cracked and leaking.

Authorities attempted to classify the mystery force that struck that Hollywood roof in spring of 1963 as a sonic boom, a gas explosion, or a small tornado. Upon investigation, however, gas company officials ruled out their utility as the culprit, the weather bureau denied the existence of a tornado striking Hollywood on that evening, and everyone wondered if a sonic boom were really capable of ripping away a five hundred pound hunk of roof.

San Francisco seems to have more than its share of mystery blasts. In May of 1961, the Rock Solaneo and Contra Costa districts were shaken with undetermined explosions for a period of two weeks. The ground shook, windows rattled and cracked, and pictures fell, as the entire area was rocked by blasts, explosions, shocks, and jars.

The *San Francisco Examiner* stated that its reporters had checked "... military facilities in the area, quarries, contractors, city and county officials, every commercial operation which uses explosives ..." and found them all as mystified as anyone else.

According to the *Examiner* the mystery blasts usually began around 9:00 A.M. and sometimes as many as a dozen would shake the area in a single day. The mysterious explosions were heard in all parts of Vallejo and across Carquine Strait in Contra Costa County.

On June 15th, a blast of undetermined origin occurred which separated the causeway connecting Mare Island with the mainland. This mystery blast took place at 3:00 P.M. and rattled several buildings. Day shift workers at Mare Island were delayed on their way home while a crack several inches wide was filled.

Investigating Naval and shipyard personnel considered clue after clue to the mystery explosion, and thoroughly ran down a hint of sabotage and the accusation that an Air Force practice bomb might have gone astray. Sabotage was eliminated as a cause, and Air Force officers at the Fourth Air Force and at Hamilton Field countered the veiled accusation levied at them with an indignant denial. As far as the public has ever been informed, investigators were unable to discover a single acceptable explanation for the mystery blast at Mare Island.

At 10:15 A.M., April 2, 1957, a tremendous blast thundered through six counties in northern New Jersey and was heard in Philadelphia. The explosion blew out windows, cracked sidewalks and swimming pools, sent alarmed housewives out into the streets, and shook the State House in Trenton.

Seismographs at Columbia University stated that no earthquakes showed on their recorder.

Meredith Johnson, New Jersey State Geologist, pointed out that Trenton does not lie on any major fault which could be responsible for a quake.

Spokesmen at McGuire Air Force Base denied that any of its F-660's had been flying over New Jersey that morning and explained that their pilots were under strict orders to fly at least thirty miles out to sea before at-

tempting to break the sound barrier. In addition to McGuire's denial of responsibility for any sonic boom, each of the six airfields in the New Jersey-Pennsylvania-New York area which base jet aircraft stated that they had no jet planes aloft at the time of the mystery blast.

Once again, after exhaustive investigation, officials could find no culprits on whom to place the responsibility of a massive explosion of undetermined origin. All they were left with was the undeniable physical evidence of shattered windows, cracked walls, damaged sidewalks, ruined swimming pools, and sprung doorways that an unidentified someone or something had detonated in a blast of heroic proportions.

A similar pattern of physical damage and super-volume noise minus an apparent cause and a responsible party occurred on the night of November 13, 1958, in Dade County, Florida. Two powerful blasts at 6:20 and 6:27 P.M. shook houses, cracked plaster, shattered windows, and sent dishes rattling out of cupboards. The explosions were heard from Homestead to Hollywood, a distance of forty-five miles, and the sirens on police cars, ambulances, and fire trucks went screaming in all directions.

The authorities soon discovered that Florida had not been invaded—at least not by a visible antagonist—but they never discovered what had caused the two terrific mystery explosions. No missiles had been fired over Cape Kennedy (then Cape Canaveral), and both Miami Air Traffic Control Center and Miami International Control Tower confirmed that no jet planes, commercial or military, had been over South Florida at the time of the thunderous blasts.

On April 8, 1971, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, the home of Mr. and Mrs. M.A. Woodworth of 10819 122nd St. exploded with such violence that neighbors were knocked off their sofas and beds, and lawns were covered with debris within a three hundred yard radius.

Fortunately no member of the Woodworth family was injured, as they were vacationing in Saskatchewan at the time. Mrs. Woodworth's sister, who lives in the basement of the home, had luckily chosen that evening to visit friends.

Police and fire officials investigated, but at the time of this writing, they have been unable to determine the cause of the blast. A very eerie clue to the mystery blast might, however, have been glimpsed by a Woodworth neighbor, Miss Anna Wojno, who happened to be watching her brother parking his car in the driveway next to the house when it exploded.

"The kitchen window blew in from the force of the explosion," she said. "A picture of a Halloween witch, a cutout, came flying through, sitting on her broomstick. It wasn't burnt or anything."

In each occurrence of a mystery blast, the investigators have meticulously checked on the possibility of jet aircraft breaking the sound barrier, an earthquake being carried along a faultline, military facilities testing weapons, contractors and quarries moving rock with explosives; and in each case, the baffled researchers have found no one to whom they might attribute the guilt for a strange blast that may have shaken the area for miles around. In the continuing phenomenon of the mystery blasts, the most important item in the investigators' dossiers remains blank: *Who or what is causing them?*

CHAPTER 8

Vanishing Airplanes, Ships and Armies

It was a sunny June morning in 1885, and the sternwheeler *Iron Mountain* was pulling into the dock at Vicksburg, Mississippi. She was bound upstream on the great Father of Waters, carrying a load of cotton and molasses from New Orleans to be unloaded in Pittsburgh.

The *Iron Mountain* put in to Vicksburg for stores, unloaded its Vicksburg passengers, and picked up travelers bound for Pittsburgh. As she pulled away from the dock the string of loaded barges she was towing behind her swung out along the river. The line between the riverboat and the barges was taut and secure.

Passengers onboard waved good-bye to their families and friends until a bend in the river obscured the Vicksburg port from view.

That was the last anyone ever saw of the stalwart *Iron Mountain*.

No crew member, passenger, or any of the cargo was ever seen or heard from again. The only remaining witness to the enigma was the silent and forlorn string of

barges. Another steamer, the *Iroquois Chief*, intercepted the *Iron Mountain's* barges as they came drifting back downstream, rounding again that fateful bend.

The *Iroquois Chief* had had to swing out of the way to avoid the orphaned barges. Then she turned and caught the barges, bringing their downward journey to a halt. The captain of the *Iroquois Chief* expected another steamer to come and claim his river catch, but no one did. Later examination showed that the cable had been chopped off with an axe, not broken. This was an emergency action adopted by the old riverboats only when the steamer could be saved solely at the expense of losing the barges. These had been the barges behind the *Iron Mountain*. But what had happened to her?

The *Iron Mountain* was no easily misplaced steamer. Built in 1872, she was nearly 180 feet in length and 35 feet wide. She was powered by five huge boilers.

What kind of calamity could claim a steamship of this size, including all fifty-five persons on board, and yet leave no evidence of its work? No sign of debris was ever discovered, either from the huge riverboat itself, its deck-piled cargo, or its many passengers and crew. There was no sound or smoke from a possible explosion or fire; no floating bodies or wreckage. Had she sunk, the usual amount of debris, cargo, or bodies, would have surfaced, and on a river as well traveled as the Mississippi, such debris would not long remain unsighted.

The riverboat *Iron Mountain* had utterly vanished, and since that day in 1885, not a scrap of evidence has been unturned to lessen the mystery of its disappearance. For all practical purposes, the *Iron Mountain* and all those on board vanished off the face of the earth.

If we truly are under the watchful eye of a non-terrestrial race of beings, subject to sudden capture in accordance with some inexplicable decree and if that non-terrestrial race wishes to call the least amount of attention

possible to its activities, then what better spot for "fishing" than a lonely ship, surrounded only by miles and miles of vast sea?

If such a thesis could be proven by the number of mysteriously abandoned ships found adrift throughout the centuries, then one could easily find enough of these derelicts to provide ample evidence to substantiate the hypothesis. Perfectly seaworthy vessels have been encountered repeatedly on the planet's waterways with nary a crew member or passenger on board.

Something very mysterious made off with the *Iron Mountain*, but what managed to abduct the crew of the *J.C. Cousins*, while leaving the vessel intact?

An eighty-seven-foot, two-masted topsail schooner, the *Cousins* was originally outfitted as a luxury liner in San Francisco. Then, in 1881, the *Cousins* was purchased by a river pilot service, the Welsh, Wood, Doig & Olson Company, of Astoria, Oregon. She had been brought to the northern port to wage a cut-rate war against rival pilot services.

The Columbia River, along which the *Cousins* had been engaged to travel, was a notorious graveyard for ships. No ship's captain would traverse its waters without following behind a competent local guide.

On the fatal morning of October 6, 1883, Captain Alonzo Zeiber left his lodging in Astoria for the last time. In his pocket he carried his orders, telling him to proceed through the mouth of the Columbia River, then to cast anchor. There he was to wait for a French barkentine, due to make landfall from a voyage out of Saigon with a cargo of spices and ivory. The French skipper had paid a high price for the security of Zeiber's escort through the treacherous quicksand of the Columbia sandbar.

By noon of October 6 the *J.C. Cousins* had Fort Stevens, Oregon, sighted athwart her port beam. The schooner waited until the flood tide turned against her

in mid-river, then she dropped her mudhook off the gray sands of Clatsop Spit. There she sat in readiness, waiting for the ebb tide which would help her to ride high over the foaming bar to the safety of the open ocean.

A lookout from Cape Disappointment, Washington, later reported that he had seen the schooner set off across the bar at five o'clock in the evening. Throughout the starlit night, the vessel was constantly under the surveillance of the U.S. Coast Guard at Canby Lighthouse on the Washington shore. Early on the morning of October 7, the Guardsmen carefully noted that the *J.C. Cousins* was heading for the open sea.

Then the inexplicable happened.

The *J.C. Cousins* had safely cleared the quicksand of Clatsop Spit. The sky was cloudless, the water even. Then, before the horrified eyes of onlookers on shore, the *Cousins* made a swift about face and aimed her bow directly towards her doom: Clatsop Spit. Alerted Coast Guardsmen rushed rescue equipment to the shore area nearest the impending disaster, and local landsmen stood ready to lend assistance. Doctors and nurses were on hand. Something had to be terribly wrong with the crew of the *J.C. Cousins* for them to suddenly take such a kamakazi course toward destruction.

With a stomach-turning lurch, the *Cousins* ground its copperclad bottom into the merciless sandbar. Angry combers washed over her, grinding her hull deeper into the sand.

As powerful telescopes focused upon the disaster, watching for survivors of the wreck, the thought was in everyone's mind that the *J.C. Cousins* had deliberately run aground. Suspicions ran through the onlookers' minds as they watched for the crew to break out distress signals of either flags or rockets. None ever came. No lifeboat put forth from the wreck, no figures dove overboard and attempted to swim to shore.

No one could say exactly when the telescopes were

lowered, and uneasy glances were exchanged over the fate of the crewmen. The time for waiting, however, was past. The Coast Guardsmen put to sea in surfboats. No one responded to their hails as they drew alongside the beached craft. Over the rail went the Guardsmen, calling for crew members as they went.

No one responded.

The deck was deserted. The boarding party entered the cabin and found the noon meal, untouched, upon the table. The galley stove was still warm, and some potatoes had boiled dry in a pot. But still no crew members.

The crews' quarters were in perfect order; there were no signs of a struggle anywhere. The captain's log was brief. Captain Zeiber had made his last entry out in mid-river, at sunrise: "All's well. . . ."

But all was not well, for the captain and crew of the *J.C. Cousins* were never seen or heard from again. Something or someone had claimed their bodies, leaving no physical evidence of their whereabouts. Furthermore, the disappearance had been effected under the watchful eyes of the United States Coast Guard, and several casual observers on shore. Somewhere between the open sea and a treacherous sandbar, invisible hands had taken possession of the fated *J.C. Cousins*, steering the schooner to its destruction and causing its inhabitants to vanish into thin air.

Perhaps the most famous derelict case in the annals of sea history is the strange tale of the *Marie Celeste*. This story has been recounted so many times that it should serve these pages only as another example of a strange disappearance at sea. Again, the question rises as to what—or who—plucked up the hapless crewmen of the *Marie Celeste* and set them down in oblivion.

The *Marie Celeste* was found adrift near the Azores on December 5, 1873. The sails were set and the ship was tacking, but the ship was completely deserted. The last log entry had been made on November 25, and not the

slightest trouble had been hinted at in its pages. The ship was in excellent condition. But no trace of its fourteen crewman was ever found.

On November 6, 1840, the French vessel *Rosalie* was found abandoned on the open sea. She had been bound from Hamburg to Havana and her valuable cargo remained untouched. Only the crewmen, apparently, had been on someone's master list of supplies, for they vanished without a trace.

In an even more bizarre case, a ship was discovered near Diamond Shoals, North Carolina, with not a single sailor aboard. The mess tables, however, had been all set for a meal.

An abandoned ship can manage to stay afloat for quite a while, provided it does not encounter stormy weather or treacherous reefs. An airplane, however, cannot accomplish the same feat. An unmanned airplane must eventually crash to the ground. The rub with airplanes is that the wreck is inevitably found, but in the meantime, the crew and passengers have disappeared.

The Curtiss C-46 *Commando*, also known as a *Dumbo*, was a huge, two-engined aircraft. Should the need arise, the craft could manage quite well on one engine, as well.

The aircraft was built with two floors, an upper one for passengers and a lower one for baggage and cargo or extra fuel in special tanks. This rugged plane transported supplies and served many servicemen well during the Second World War.

One of these C-46's was commissioned to carry thirty-two men, mostly military men, on a flight over the state of Washington. The weather was bad, but the flight was routine, nonetheless. The plane passed through the mountainous area southeast of Seattle, where Mt. Rainier raises its lofty peak, and disappeared.

When ground control lost radio contact, a state-wide search was begun for the missing craft. Within hours, a smudge was observed high up on one of the glaciers, at

the 11,000-foot level. Closer inspection revealed bits of metal, wings, and the remains of a fire. A rescue party set off on foot for the scene of the disaster.

After many exhausting hours of mountain-climbing the weary search party approached the spot on the Tahoma Glacier where the wreckage had been observed by the planes. The stricken C-46 lay strewn upon the ice. Blood on the bulkheads gave silent witness to the tremendous force of impact when the transport had hit the ice.

With grimly set lips the rescue party went about their business of finding the bodies. Out of thirty-two men on board there was a possibility that one or more might have survived. If so, they must be found immediately, in order to receive proper medical attention.

The rescue party worked quickly and efficiently. They looked among the scattered and broken parts of the plane, the crevices in the glacier, and the devastated C-46 cabin. With horror they began to realize that *there were no bodies to be found.*

The blood-spattered bulkhead gave grim evidence of the men's presence in the plane when it crashed, and the impact against the ice was so great no one on board would have been able to walk away from the site of the crash. Yet, inexplicably, the bodies of the thirty-two men had vanished, and no trace of them was ever found. Could someone whose identity we have not guessed have a morbid interest in collecting mangled specimens of the human race?

In another instance, it seems that human specimens may only have been required for a specific purpose and, once that function was fulfilled, no longer necessary to keep on hand. On October 15, 1844, the schooner *Commerce* dropped anchor off Truro, Massachusetts. Scarcely a ripple disturbed the water on that placid autumn day. Yet, though the weather was fine and the ship still safely anchored, by the following day the ship's entire crew had disappeared.

All nine crew members were experienced commercial fishermen and excellent swimmers. Yet, inexplicably, they had vanished.

In the following three weeks, however, the bodies of the men washed ashore one by one along a thirty-mile stretch of beach. Not one body offered any evidence of either an accident or foul play.

Did something pluck the crewmen of the *Commerce*, examine their bodies for some reason unfathomable to us, then dispose of their dead bodies in the same vicinity from which they were taken? No satisfactory explanation of the mystery has ever been given.

In more recent times, a similar sea tragedy occurred, with only a slight variation. It was October, 1953, and the United States Navy auxiliary ship *Wrangell* was cruising through the North Atlantic. Upon sighting a distress flag, the crew maneuvered their vessel over to a Portuguese fishing boat. On board the sailors found one dead man, and one emaciated dog. There were no clues anywhere on the boat as to how the rest of the men had met their fate. The only one who could have cleared up the mystery was the shivering dog, but he could only thump his tail and bark.

And what was it about the fishing boat *Correct* that managed to lure men to their deaths? In 1943 John Pilles bought the *Correct* from his sister, Julia. Her husband, Raymond Jacobs, had drowned the day he purchased the boat from an Amagansett, New York, man. Jacobs had been in another boat being used to tow the *Correct* to its new home port of Greenport when he suddenly and inexplicably disappeared. A few days later, his body was found floating in Gardener's Bay. Michael Actu, Jacobs' brother-in-law who was assisting with the towing operation, stated that Jacobs "just disappeared" from the boat that was towing the *Correct*.

Then, in 1958, John Pilles took to sea in the raft and was never seen again. For four days, area police unsuc-

cessfully searched the Greenport harbor for his body. Reports began to trickle in saying that the original, unidentified owner of the craft from Amagansett had also disappeared. His drowned body was eventually found, however. Could the *Correct* have been a floating window to another world?

Another case, of a bit older vintage, raises more questions than it answers. It was a clear spring day March 24, 1878, and inhabitants along the west coast of England were basking in the good feeling of another winter gone. Suddenly a large cloud, coming from the northwest and heading southeast toward the Isle of Wight and the Channel, appeared on the horizon. The cloud was estimated to have been twenty-four miles in length and a half a mile in depth. And though there was no wind that day, the cloud passed overhead with unusual speed.

The sky through which the incredible mass passed was clear and calm, but watchers below heard a steady roaring from within it, not unlike the sound of tornado winds, and they felt a numbing cold. Snow flurries could be seen occasionally within the cloud. When the cloud had passed, though, no trace of the wind or cold remained, and the springtime weather returned.

Cruising the English Channel at the time of the appearance of the strange cloud were two sailing vessels: the HMC *Eurydice*, a 921-ton naval training ship with 360 men aboard her, and, about a mile behind her, the merchant schooner *Emma*.

Five-hundred-foot-high cliffs along the coast of the Isle of Wight hid the approaching cloud mass until it was almost upon the *Eurydice*. Her captain had no time for emergency preparation. Just as the order to take in the sails was given, the tornado winds of the weird mass hit the defenseless *Eurydice*. A howling darkness descended upon the *Eurydice*, and she was lashed by heavy snow and icy spray.

For a full half hour the hapless ship wrestled beneath

the Satanic fury of the energy mass, until finally, the badly battered vessel ceased to struggle, capsized, and sank beneath the Channel. Only two of the 360 men aboard her survived.

Meanwhile, a mile behind the *Eurydice*, the *Emma* breezed by, completely untouched by the violent mass that had sunk her sister beneath the waves.

What could have been the source of such a destructive energy mass? What, in 1878, could possibly have given birth to the single-minded impact of that "cloud" as it engulfed the *Eurydice*? The field is widened if one will recall that 1878 was a big flap year in terms of UFO sightings.

In the September, 1959, issue of *Fate*, a report was made on the eighteen ships which the U.S. Navy has utterly lost within a 178-year period. These are the ships to which the Navy will admit its defeat. All disappeared mysteriously at sea. They are listed below with the number of crew members on board and the date on which they were last seen:

The U.S.S. *Saratoga*, March 18, 1781, six officers and 80 men

The U.S.S. *Insurgent*, August 8, 1800, crew of 340

The *Pickering*, August 20, 1800, crew of 91

Gunboat #7, June 20, 1805, approximately 35 men

U.S.S. *Wasp*, October 9, 1814, 141 officers and men

U.S.S. *Epervier*, July 15, 1815, crew of 142

U.S.S. *Lynx*, January 11, 1821, one officer and 50 men

U.S.S. *Wildcat*, October 28, 1824, one officer and 14 men

U.S.S. *Hornet*, September 10, 1829, crew of 140

U.S.S. *Sylph*, August, 1831, crew of 13

U.S.S. *Seagull*, March 14, 1839, crew of 16

U.S.S. *Grampus*, March 14, 1843, crew of 65

U.S.S. *Porpoise*, September 21, 1854, crew of 70

U.S.S. *Albany*, September 29, 1854, crew of 193

U.S.S. *Nina*, March 15, 1910, crew of 30

U.S.S. *Cyclops*, March 4, 1918, 382 passengers, 15 officers and 221 men

U.S.S. *Conestoga*, March 23, 1921, crew of 56

Factual reports, such as the above list, cause one to seriously ponder the cause of a ship or plane's disappearance. There were a powerful number of people aboard some of those vessels, and the sea could not possibly be hiding them all. When disaster strikes a ship, the wreckage, or at least floatable items are visible on the ocean surface for weeks. When a ship is reported missing, another ship in the area is immediately dispatched to find out what it can about the missing vessel. If the ship met with some kind of physical catastrophe, some evidence of this would be found. If it encountered some non-physical reality, or ultra-physical reality, then the ship could possibly vanish without a trace.

If there are really windows between this dimension and another, and people walk through them, then what is to stop a ship from sailing through one? And once through, its passengers and crew dead from panic or starvation, what is to stop that ship from becoming a ghostly *Flying Dutchman*, slipping in and out of two dimensions, and confounding those who see them from this plane of existence?

Early in January of 1890, the *Marlborough*, a three-masted ship, left Lyttelton, New Zealand, bound for her home port of Glasgow. On board were several passengers, an experienced captain and a crew of veteran sailors.

She never sailed into Glasgow town. In April of the next year an inquiry was held, at which time another ship's crew reported having seen the *Marlborough* near the Straits of Magellan. No explanation was forthcoming as to why the captain had sailed around South America instead of Africa.

That was the last official word regarding the *Marlborough* until twenty-four years later, when a sailing vessel sighted a stranded vessel in an alcove of Tierra del Fuego which is a particularly desolate part of Argentina.

An investigating party rowed over to the strange ship. Her name was the *Marlborough* and though her masts were intact, her sails were in shreds. A green mold grew on everything. Passengers and crew were scattered in various places around the ship, their bodies long since shrunken and mummified.

No evidence remained to offer an explanation of what had befallen her. The ship's log had rotted away. There were no signs of violence.

It was determined that the ship could not have spent the entire twenty-four-year period in that particular cove. Someone would have to have spotted her, and in her rotted condition she could not have lasted there long without being dashed to pieces.

The tricky part to this story is that the *Marlborough* could not have lasted anywhere on the open sea for that length of time. She could, however, have entered a warp in the Time-Space continuum and sailed around in confusion until hunger claimed the lives of those aboard her one by one. When she was spotted by that other ship, near the Straits of Magellan, she could have already have entered another dimension and been seeing another landscape other than that of South America. Also, though visible to others, those others may not have been visible to her.

The famous ghost ship of Halifax, Nova Scotia has often been written about, but the May, 1954 issue of *Fate* magazine carried an interesting personal encounter with this ship, reported by Roy Grant.

According to Grant, his father and six other men had been sailing aboard a fishing schooner on the Northumberland Strait between New Brunswick and Prince Ed-

ward Island. It was approximately the turn of the century.

It was just after sundown and Roy Grant's father was at the wheel. "Look out!" cried one of the men. "Don't you see that ship crossing our bow?"

Grant saw a full-rigged ship going across their bow not more than two hundred yards away. As all of the men stood watching the ship, it suddenly burst into flames. Then they knew immediately that they were gazing upon the area's most infamous ghost ship.

Grant turned the schooner directly toward the burning ship, and although they sailed toward it all night, the other vessel always stayed the same distance apart from them, and by daylight it had faded away.

Can a ship be called a ghost ship if it never existed in the first place? In the spring of 1960 a marine radio operator in Marshfield, Massachusetts, received the following message: "We are sinking 15 miles off Scituate. . . ."

The name of the ship, which was not given at the time, was later learned to be the *Andrew A.*

Within ten minutes an already airborne amphibian plane had responded to the SOS. It took two hours, however, for the stricken vessel to be located. Only a black hull was visible, capsized and wallowing in the water. When the pilot turned for a better look, however, it utterly disappeared.

No vessels were reported missing from the area, and no record of the *Andrew A.* was ever found. In fact, the only clue to the enigma was a man's blue-gray felt tip hat—a type seldom worn on shipboard—found floating near the scene. Could it be possible that even as ships from our dimension enter into the next, that ships from that dimension can enter ours?

If ships seem to be prime targets for other-dimensional shenanigans, consider for a moment the equal susceptibility of airplanes. Whereas a ship is surrounded by miles and miles of lonely sea, the airplane is surrounded

by miles and miles of lonely sky. Also, planes are just as prone to unwitting entry into another dimension, as a look at the unsolved aerial mysteries will show.

The records regarding air travel bear just as many bizarre cases of planes utterly vanishing, planes found with no traces of the crewmen or passengers, and missing planes that mysteriously appear after years of absence.

Like the Liberator bomber, *Lady Be Good*.

The *Lady Be Good* had taken off for a mission on April 4, 1943, then disappeared. Seventeen years had to pass before she was found . . . lying a few hundred yards from a main caravan route on a rocky outcrop.

Why had not any of the hundreds of people traveling that route seen her before? Where had she been?

To deepen the mystery, the *Lady Be Good's* radio was found to be in perfect working order; and from the condition of the rest of her equipment, she could have been judged to have crashed only that afternoon. It had been seventeen years, though, since she had been seen.

What could have caused the crash? There was no air action anywhere near that area for five hundred miles around.

Several years earlier, on the same side of the globe, another bizarre disappearance had occurred. It was July 24, 1924, and Flight Lieutenant W.T. Day and Pilot Officer D.R. Stewart took off over Mesopotamia in their single engine plane for a routine reconnaissance over the desert. Their estimated flying time was four hours.

When Day and Stewart failed to return, a search party was swiftly organized. The findings of the search party only intensified the mystery, however.

The plane was found easily enough. It had plenty of gasoline left in the tank, and the engine had no difficulty starting. There was no evidence that the plane had been shot at. So why had Day and Stewart landed?

Further investigation showed the members of the search party where the two fliers had evacuated the

plane and started walking side by side through the sand. The tracks went on for about forty yards, then simply stopped. The arrangement of the tracks indicated that the two men had halted side by side. Then they vanished.

Elaborate searches throughout the surrounding area could not discover a single clue as to the fate of the missing airmen, and they were never seen or heard from again.

Going back further yet, on March 7, 1922, pilot B. Holden left the airfield at Chester, England, for a short flight to Wales. His plane was sighted a half hour later on its return trip toward Chester, but the fated plane never landed. Holden had taken his plane over one of the most densely populated areas in the world, but no sign of either Holden or his craft was ever found. It would have been impossible either to land or to crash without being detected by numerous people. Investigators of the strange and unusual have pointed a finger at the large number of UFO sightings reported from Wales during this period.

In another World War II mystery, the aircraft was found, but the crew was missing. It was August of 1942 and the San Francisco harbor was being guarded heavily against Japanese attack. Two naval officers, Lieutenant Cody and Ensign Adams, took off in an L-8 blimp on routine submarine patrol. Not far from the city they spotted an oil slick, a possible indication of a lurking sub. Several patrol boats and fishing vessels observed as the blimp dropped depth charges on the alleged sub.

Then, before several witnesses, the blimp suddenly shot straight up into the air, in a maneuver impossible for its low-powered engines. The blimp was seen to level off at 2,500 feet, then drift aimlessly for two and a half hours. Eventually, evidently losing gas, it came down at a California beach and fishermen hastily grabbed its mooring lines.

A concerned inspection of the inside of the L-8 revealed everything to be in perfect order—except for one thing. There was no sign of either of the two naval officers. None of the many watchers of the blimp had seen anyone fall out. The blimp had been under constant surveillance. Yet the two men had vanished.

Invisible force fields that reach out and snatch airmen here and there could certainly annoy our military forces around the world, even though the absence of small units of men has never successfully stopped the war machine before. But what happens to the general in charge when his aides inform him that his entire army has vanished?

It was 1939 and Japan and China were at war with one another. On December 10, the Chinese made a last ditch stand outside the hills of Nanking in an effort to turn back the rapidly advancing Japanese. To help stem the tide, a request for additional troops was made.

In answer to this request, 3,100 Chinese troops were rushed to the area. During the night the troops, with six or seven howitzers, strung out along a two-mile line. General Li Fu Sien personally inspected his troops to see that they were well hidden against any aerial attack, then retired to his own quarters a mile behind the lines.

By morning, with the exception of one small group stationed at an outpost near a bridge, every man had vanished.

Not a sound had been heard by the outpost guards all night. No signs of a struggle were in evidence. Guns were in place and some campfires were still burning. Surrender or retreat would have been impossible to accomplish without detection. The men had simply vanished, and not one of the 2,988 soldiers was seen or heard from again.

In Gallipoli, in August, 1915, war was once again the reason for brother to rise against brother, and blood to be spilled on the all-absorbing ground.

The summit of Hill 60 was held by Turkish forces. An allied assault was planned for the afternoon of August 21, 1915. Three thousand infantrymen were to take part in the attack.

Around noon, the New Zealand division, positioned on a ridge overlooking the terrain, saw five hundred British soldiers of the Norfolk regiment form a single line and begin the advance on Hill 60.

A few hundred yards ahead of the British regiment was a thick fog, which clung to the land and was impossible to see through. The New Zealanders could not help notice that although a strong wind was blowing, the fog was oblivious to it. Tenaciously it clung to the hillside, refusing to move.

One by one, the British soldiers walked into the dense mass, vanishing from view as they did so. The New Zealanders awaited the Britons' emergence from the cloud, but they never came out. After a few minutes the cloud—still solid and compact—rose from the ground and drifted away. The five hundred soldiers had vanished.

Then the horrified New Zealanders noticed something else: the cloud was drifting against the wind!

The British have had their trouble with vanishing armies in the past, as well. In 1898 a platoon of infantrymen vanished inexplicably in the Sudan. Also in 1898, a company of Royal Engineers marched into the Khyber Pass on the Northwest frontier and never marched out.

Fearing that tribesmen had ambushed the engineers, authorities sent in an infantry battalion to search for survivors. The trail left by the engineers was easy enough to follow. But then, abruptly, the tracks ended. The only explanation was that the whole company had been suddenly snatched from the ground.

The British have not been singled out to suffer from cases of vanishing troops. In 1711, during the Spanish War of Succession, 4,000 fully equipped troops set out in

an expedition into the Pyrenees. Their campsite for the first night was later found by searchers, but no other trace of the 4,000 men was ever found. It was as though they had vanished off the face of the earth.

In keeping with the time warp theory, it should be possible for an army to walk into just such a warp, bend it around, and end up marching past inhabitants of the "future."

A case is on record that would seem to fit this hypothesis.

In the mid-eighteenth century, Archibald Bell, a farmer of Glenary, and his son were walking down a local road. Before long the noise and clatter of many feet alerted the men to the imminent approach of a marching army. As soldiers were not adverse to recruiting unwilling victims to serve in their ranks, and right on the spot, the two Bells retired hastily to a hiding place some distance above the ground.

They saw pass beneath them a vast army. There was something peculiar about the men, though. They were wearing uniforms unlike any seen in the Highlands. And the cut of their breeches was in the style of another era altogether. Just as the elder Bell was noticing the absence of a ground swell of dust accompanying the soldiers, the army disappeared. Both men blinked their eyes, but the road was empty and untrodden.

To their dying days the elder Bell maintained that the vision had been one of the future, while Bell the younger insisted that they had seen an army of the past.

Missing ships, missing planes, armies that vanish, and ghost ships that appear out of nowhere. How can anyone know whether or not the next plane or ship he takes is scheduled to duly reach its destination . . . or takes a trip into oblivion?

CHAPTER 9

Triangles of Terror and Kidnappers From UFO's

Draw a line from Florida to Bermuda, another from Bermuda to Puerto Rico, and yet a third through the Bahamas back to Florida, and you have the approximate area known as the "Bermuda Triangle."

Then, draw a line from a tip of the coast of Japan southward to Guam Island, then east to Wake Island and back to Japan. You now have an approximation of the area known as the "Devil's Triangle," otherwise known as the Devil's Deep or the Devil's Sea.

These two triangular spaces—actually they more closely resemble ovals—are two of the most sinister and bizarre areas on the globe. Innumerable ships and airplanes have entered these regions only to vanish utterly.

Both areas are well known to the general public. The absence of the submarine *Scorpion* engendered quite a bit of press for the Bermuda Triangle, and interest in the one region led naturally to research into its Pacific counterpart.

Since the 1840's over 1,000 sailors have been "lost" in the Bermuda Triangle area. Airplanes are lost at an average rate of fifty a year. In the past twenty years, the Ber-

muda Triangle has claimed forty of these. In the short period between 1949 and 1955, nine ships disappeared from the Devil's Deep, with a total of 215 lives lost.

The mysterious tragedies connected with these two areas are too well known for a copious, detailed history to be presented in these pages. Yet a brief summing up would not be out of order.

The most perplexing page in the history of the Bermuda Triangle—and the most revealing—came in 1945 when five TBM Avenger torpedo bombers left Fort Lauderdale Naval Air Station for routine maneuvers. Each plane carried a life raft and a life jacket was provided for each of the total of fifteen men. Less than 250 miles from the base, all five planes disappeared forever, but not before the flight commander had radioed some very interesting messages. Excerpts:

“Emergency, emergency, we seem to be off course. We cannot see land . . . We are not sure where we are. It would appear we are lost . . . We don't know which way is west. Everything is somehow strange . . . Direction is unclear. Even the ocean looks different.”

After hearing these words, the horror and confusion at the Naval Air Base only increased when a rescue plane also lost radio contact and vanished into oblivion.

In the years since this tragedy the mysterious forces at work in the Bermuda Triangle have not abated.

Bill Verity, a sailor attempting to duplicate the voyage made by a monk in 550 A.D., sailed a twenty-foot craft from Fenit, Ireland, to the shores of Florida. He left May 22, 1970, and was last seen August 14, 1970. The Coast Guard sent out search details for Verity, but the Twilight Zone of the Atlantic—the Bermuda Triangle—had claimed another victim.

According to the *St. Petersburg Times*, June 8, 1969, Carolyn Cascio, twenty-four, and one male passenger, rented a Cessna in Pompano Beach and stopped at Georgetown in the Bahamas for refueling.

The small aircraft left for Grand Turk Island, about 250 miles away, at 4:30 P.M. At 7:30 P.M. the Grand Turk airport got a call from her saying that her direction finding equipment was not working properly.

She stated that she was circling "two islands and nothing is down there," but guests at an Ambergris Cay hotel saw a plane circling overhead at that time. At 8:22 P.M. a jet pilot tried to assist with directions, but was unsuccessful. Finally Carolyn Cascio radioed: "I'm out of fuel, I'm sinking."

No trace of the woman, her passenger, or her plane was ever found.

The Pacific Ocean has proven just as lethal.

The schooner *Joyita* was found November 10, 1955, abandoned and in bad shape. The ship's log was missing, and there were no signs of violence to account for twenty missing passengers and five missing crewmen. She was found north of Samoa, six hundred miles off course. She was drifting on the outer perimeter of the Devil's Deep. As with other floating derelicts, the *Joyita* had to be written off as yet one more sea mystery.

Four years later, in 1959, 3,500 miles from where the *Joyita* was found, a wine bottle with a message enclosed was discovered at Whirltoa Beach, eight miles north of Waihi, Australia.

"Abandoning ship," the hastily penned message read. "Strange circular metallic object forcing us aboard it. Help us."

The note was signed by the steward of the *Joyita*.

Numerous other cases can be sighted, perhaps less dramatic than the message in the bottle type, but all equally bizarre, and all equally frightening.

The pattern is the same: an area where many UFO's have been observed, and a resultant "haunted" stretch of water into which ships sail and airplanes fly, never to come out on the other side. Or an abandoned vessel is found, perfectly seaworthy but minus its crew.

If radio communication is effected within the last few minutes before the disappearance of these hapless crafts, the pilots' confusion also follows a pattern. Generally some malfunction with the direction finding equipment occurs, leaving the pilot bewildered as to his whereabouts. Should the pilot then seek his bearings from his physical surroundings, his confusion and resultant panic only increases, for, in the words of the ill-fated flight commander of the five Avenger bombers, "Even the ocean looks different." It is also interesting to note that when Carolyn Cascio reported that she was circling two islands with nothing on them, she was actually being observed by guests at a Caribbean hotel.

What kind of force could it be that mixes direction finding equipment and causes a person to see nothing where something very obviously is?

One cannot help being reminded of the mechanical difficulties encountered by cars approaching a landed UFO. In such cases a force like an invisible hand seems to reach out and cut the power supply of the automobile. The car is then immobilized until the UFO releases its paralytic grip. Once the UFO takes off, the car is returned to its former working order.

One explanation for the curious loss of direction experienced by those flying or sailing through an area such as the Bermuda Triangle could be that which physicists call a vortex.

There are innumerable vortices covering the whole surface of the earth, and others within it. Within one of these vortices, called the Oregon vortex, a curious phenomenon has been discovered by investigating scientists. For some reason, light appears to be bent as it passes through the vortex, but only when passing through it in certain directions. Such might explain the optical illusions experienced by Carolyn Cascio and the Avenger flight commander.

In the October, 1964, issue of *Pursuit* (The Journal for

the Society of the Investigation of the Unexplained), further information was relayed about the Oregon vortex.

According to *Pursuit*, "magnetic stripes" were found underlying the region of the Oregon vortex. These were said to "run parallel to the coastal mountain chains of Oregon and the offshore, undersea ridges. Their singularity is that each 'stripe' or strip of the basaltic rocks of which the parallel ridges are composed have alternative polarity." Could this, *Pursuit* speculates, cause light to bend at certain nodal points?

The physical evidence that has been gathered to explain the strange phenomenon at the Oregon vortex is readily applicable to the theme of this book. Could holes between this dimension and the next exist in ultra-physical areas such as the Oregon vortex—or the Bermuda Triangle or the Devil's Deep? And if they exist, are they being deliberately manipulated to our distinct disadvantage by an intelligence belonging to another dimension?

Has Someone Else learned how to duplicate these "physical" conditions wherever a lonely hiker is walking, a single ship is sailing, or an airplane is flying solo?

There are numerous incidents on record in which an alleged "saucer-napping" took place; that is, the optical evidence indicated that occupants of an unidentified flying object of some kind were responsible for the disappearance of someone. Flying Saucer or no, illusion or no, something has been carting off people for centuries. Most of these snatched victims are never seen again. The bodies of others may be found months later in an area that had been well searched when the victim was first reported missing. Saucer-napped men and women may show up months later, alive, but the victims of amnesia.

In the December, 1970 issue of *Saga*, author John A. Keel reports a strange case in which about forty school-children suddenly and inexplicably vanished. The inci-

dent happened in the summer of 1967, in an Indian village out of the Canadian north accessible only by air.

Forty-eight hours after the children had disappeared, they all reappeared unharmed, talking excitedly about where they had been. They had been taken, they said, by a group of very small men who had put them through a series of examinations and had treated them very well. Each child was given a small white cube which was sweet, but did not melt like sugar. Did those cubes contain something to make the children forget what had really happened to them?

There are many classic cases in which the unfortunate victims did not return. A rundown of the most famous of these would include:

1. Oliver Larch, who walked outside on Christmas Eve, 1889, to fetch a pail of water. Oliver, who lived near South Bend, Indiana, was heard to cry out, "Help! They've got me!" When his parents ran outside to his aide they could see their son's tracks in the snow. Half-way to the well they simply stopped. Far above them, the Larches could, heart-wrenchingly, still hear eleven-year-old Oliver's pitiable cries for help.

2. The seven-year-old girl of Brooklyn, New York, whose cries for help brought her mother running. When the mother arrived she found her daughter ascending, unassisted, into the sky. She pulled at her daughters knees, and after a bit of struggle, both fell heavily upon the ground.

3. James Greer, who set out to walk across a forty-acre field near Zanesville, Ohio. His brother Al was with him. Suddenly, to Al's horror and amazement, James began to rise into the sky.

"Help, Al!" James cried, "Something's pulling me into the sky!" Brother Al grabbed quickly for James' thrashing legs, missing them by a fraction. While James screamed his terror, Al was forced to watch helplessly as

his brother rose high into the sky. When the body was lost from sight, a sudden blinding flash of light was seen in the sky, streaking northward.

In a case soon to become classic (first reported in the January, 1963 issue of the APRO Bulletin), Telemaco Xavier was refereeing a soccer match between two small villages within the Amazon jungle. At the celebration following the game, Xavier's absence was noted.

The next day a rubber plantation worker volunteered a story to the police that only deepened the mystery of what had happened to the still-missing Xavier.

According to the laborer, he had seen a round, glowing object, giving off sparks, descend to the ground. Three men jumped out of the object and grabbed a man—Xavier—who had been walking alone between the trees at the margin of the clearing where the soccer game had been played. Xavier struggled violently, but was unable to break free of his captors. While the terrified laborer watched from behind some bushes, Xavier was bundled into the glowing object, which then took off from the ground and sped through the sky at a fantastic speed.

It has been suggested that Xavier was the obvious choice for the beings to capture, as Xavier, being the referee, would appear to be the person in authority. Personally, I think such an attempt for a humanly understandable explanation of the choice of Xavier falls short of the mark. If anything, they probably chose Xavier because he was walking alone in a deserted area, and they wished their deed to go unnoticed. The rubber plantation worker had successfully hidden himself, though, and was able to report all to the legal authorities.

Whatever it was that Hans Gustafsson and Stig Rydberg encountered, you may be certain that they are glad it didn't get them!

The two men were driving from Hoganäs to Heisingborg in South Sweden, just before Christmas, December

20, 1958. A thick fog had reduced their road speed to 25 miles per hour. Then just before 3:00 A.M. they came to a clearing in the forest that lined both sides of the road.

Noting a light, the two decided to step out of their car and investigate. What they saw next was enough to feed the most fearless man nightmares for a month.

They had gone but a few paces when an odd shape loomed up out of the mist. It was a disc approximately twenty-five feet broad and a yard high. It was perched on legs about two feet long and strangest of all, it seemed to be composed of light.

Then, before the horrified eyes of Gustafsson and Rydberg, four little "things" began to leap about the saucer in a macabre dance. They looked like animate clumps of mist, darker than the fog, and they had neither arms nor legs.

Hypnotized, Rydberg and Gustafsson, watched the bizarre movements of these "jelly-bags." Then, without warning, three of the jelly-bags fastened themselves to the two young men; the nightmare struggle had begun.

A tremendous force began to drag the two toward the strange vehicle, and they tried not to visualize the horror that awaited them should the jelly-bags succeed in pulling them inside the glowing craft. At last Rydberg managed to free himself. He made a dash for the car and lay heavily upon the horn in the hope of summoning someone to their aid.

The effect was instantaneous. Gustafsson, who had been clutching desperately at a post and was stretched out horizontally in the air as a result of the drag exerted on him, suddenly fell to the ground. The jelly-bags leapt to their vehicle and entered it. With a high-pitched whistle, the saucer took off.

It was three days before Rydberg and Gustafsson had the courage to tell anyone of their experience. After a barrage of questions and tests, the two were able to lead police officers to the clearing where the marks made by

the vehicle were still visible. Psychologists asserted that the two were telling what they believed to be the truth, and that their statements were based on an actual occurrence. A test under hypnosis confirmed an opinion that the two had been caught in a strong magnetic field.

Rivalino Mafra da Silva was not quite so lucky as Rydberg and Gustafsson.

According to the newspaper *Correio da Manhã*, of Rio de Janeiro, August 26, 1962, twelve-year-old Raimundo de Aleluia Mafra, of Duas Pontes, district of Diamantia, state of Minas Gerais, Brazil, swears that his father, Rivalino, was kidnapped from in front of his house by two strange ball-like objects on the morning of August 20, 1962.

The events, according to the newspaper, began the night before when young Raimundo was awakened by the sounds of weird footsteps in the house. He cried out to his father, who arose and lit a candle.

The thing illuminated by the flickering flame was impossible for the boy to describe. It was not quite a shadow, more like a strange silhouette. It seemed to float about the room just above the floor.

"It was half the size of a man and not shaped like a human being," Raimundo later told the police.

The shadow looked at Raimundo and his father, then went to where Raimundo's two brothers were sleeping.

"It looked at them for a long time without touching their bodies," Raimundo reported. "Afterward it left our room, crossed the other room, and disappeared near the outer door. Again we heard steps of someone running and a voice said, 'This one looks like Rivalino.'"

Rivalino called out to the thing, and it asked if he were indeed Rivalino. When Rivalino confirmed this, the thing left. Later, both father and son could hear voices outside, stating clearly their intent to kill Rivalino.

The next morning a frightened Raimundo went outside to get his father's horse. He sighted the two balls

floating mid-air, side by side, about three feet above the ground.

"They were big," the boy reported. "One of them was all black and had a kind of irregular antenna-like protuberance and a small tail. The other was black and white, with the same outlines, with the antenna and everything. They both gave out a humming sound and seemed to give off fire through an opening that flickered like a firefly, switching the light on and off rapidly."

Raimundo cried out in terror to his father, who then stepped outside. At that moment the two balls merged into one. The now bigger ball rose from the ground and discharged a yellow smoke that darkened the sky. Emitting strange noises, the ball crept slowly towards Rivalino.

Then all at once it was upon him, enveloping him with the yellow smoke until he disappeared within it. An acrid stench filled the air. When the smoke dissolved, the balls were gone. And Rivalino Mafra da Silva had vanished.

Raimundo rushed to the police department and told his story to Lieutenant Wilson Lisboa, demanding that the officers find his kidnapped father before it was too late. The police investigated thoroughly, but other than a few drops of blood found 150 feet away—which could not be said definitely to be Rivalino's—not a trace of the man was found.

In an effort to find a motive for the "crime," police investigated Rivalino's past. Unwittingly, this investigation only deepened the mystery for them.

It seems that on August 17, shortly before his disappearance, Rivalino had been on his way home from work when he had spotted two small, three-foot-tall men digging a hole in the ground near his home. They ran away into the bushes when he approached. A red glowing object shaped like a hat rose from behind the bushes and disappeared into the sky at a terrific speed.

Rivalino had told this story to some of the men with whom he worked. They chose not to believe him, even though Rivalino did not have a reputation as a spinner of tall tales.

Father Jose Avila Garcia also chose not to believe the story. He told the police that he felt Rivalino had been murdered and that Raimundo had simply made up the story about the balls of light.

Yet Antonio Rocha, a friend of the priest, had been fishing near the Rivalino home when he had seen two ball-shaped objects hovering over the house. After hearing Raimundo's description of the balls he had seen, Rocha was convinced that the two had sighted the same objects.

As if to confirm the findings of the police, within four days of the kidnapping more than fifty people observed a strange object cross over the town of Gouveia, a few miles south of Diamantia. The object's color was white and its shape was like that of a soccer ball. The entire thing was encircled by a fluorescent glow. It was observed that the object changed course from north to northwest during its two minute transit.

The disappearance of Rivalino Mafra da Silva remains an unsolved mystery to this day, and even though the vast majority of Diamantia district residents retain their skepticism regarding the remarkable story, those closest to Rivalino's home say an extra prayer at night before seeking an uneasy sleep, and the people walk by twos and threes there, never alone.

It seems fairly evident that something has been busily snatching *homo sapiens*, perhaps for a specific purpose. UFO investigators hope that by discovering the methods and patterns of these kidnappings, they might be able to learn something of that purpose . . . before it may be too late. We may be being whisked away in time warps or spaceships, or illusions of both, but something is snatching at us.

CHAPTER 10

Strange Men and Women Who Walk Through Space

In February of 1971, shortly after an article of mine on Time travel had appeared in *Saga* magazine, I received a letter from an unusually talented gentleman named Al Kiessig, who claimed the ability to walk through "doorways" between dimensions. In subsequent correspondence, Kiessig shared numerous experiences with me. I found my correspondent to be an open and sincere man. The reader, of course, will have to judge for himself as to the validity of the following experiences.

In Kiessig's terminology, it was in Missouri that he found the "West Door," the door of evil, and the "East Door," the entrance into the Spirit World. According to Al Kiessig: "At the West Door, the wanderers of the spirit world can leave and enter our world clothed so as to be seen as one of us—and no human eye can detect the difference.

"There are two places, one in Missouri and one in Arkansas, where I walked into this next door neighbor of ours. It is very silent. It looks like our world, but there is no sound, no wind, no sun, even though it looks like the sun is shining.

"In the state of Missouri I found two fields that had doors, or what I call 'vortexes.' No matter where you walked you would come back to your starting place, and if you hit the center of the vortex, then you would come out from a mile to two miles beyond the place you entered in a section that would be unrecognizable to you until you stopped and regained your inner balance. Then the surroundings would gradually become familiar.

"Each door is different, but it is my belief that if one could recognize these door openings, one could pick the door in Arkansas that would permit me to step into your front yard in Iowa.

"In December of 1965, my wife and I moved back to Arkansas. Shortly thereafter, I left the house about 9:30 A.M. one morning to walk with my dog along two sides of a 40-acre field. I walked to the corner directly opposite the house up on the side of a steep hill. From that corner to the road was $3/4$'s of one side of the 40-acre square, and as it took me about 45 minutes to get to that corner, there was no reason why I should not have been back to the house before noon.

"So I started walking along the fence. I walked up one hill and down another, paying no attention to anything but the fence. Then I stopped to rest and my dog came to me. From then on, he stayed close to my side, which was odd for him. I was walking slowly, since I have emphysema and I have no wind to speak of.

"Then I noticed the quiet. No shadows. No wind. I said to myself that I would walk to the top of the hill so that I could see just where I was.

"When I finally reached the top, I saw a fenced-in hayfield. Less than $3/4$'s of a mile away there were two wooden-frame, two-story houses. Each house had the usual accumulation of stuff in the yards, but there were no cars or garages. There was a mud or gravel road in front of each house. One house appeared to me to be facing south with a road running east and west. The other

house was facing me with a road running north and south. These roads did not connect.

"There was no sign of life. There was no smoke from the chimneys. All this time Joe, my dog, stood there looking at me. So when I said, 'Let's go back the way we came,' he was one happy dog.

"It wasn't until we got to that strange corner that we felt the breeze and heard the crows and other birds. We were glad to be back. I walked to the house the short way, because I knew it would be about 12:30 P.M., and I would be a half-hour late.

"When I was nearly to the house, I noticed that the winter sun was only about two hours from setting. I was amazed to see that the clock in the house said 3:30 P.M.!

"In Missouri I found a number of places where one could stop his car while driving and have his body pains chased away.

"There was a place on the acreage that we were renting that healed the painful areas of your body just according to how you lay down and in what position you were in.

"In the region of the Ozarks, it was nothing for me to see into this other dimension. I could not enter, but I could see into it, as if through a large window; and I could see the people, *live* people, who entered our world or dimension, using the same mode of transportation so as not to give themselves away as aliens.

"Who are *they*? As much as I have probed into this, the only thought that comes to me more often than other theories, is that this other dimension is the 'Hell on Earth' where Jesus went to preach for the three days before he ascended into Heaven.

"I have entered these 'doorways' while driving and saved myself hundreds of miles of driving. Unfortunately, the reverse has also happened to me.

"Some of these doors to other dimensions open like an elevator door with no elevator there to step into. Others

open into a land of no life. Some take you back into the past, and some take you into the future on this world. Then there are doors that open into chambers that send the body to a distant star.

"This world we know as Earth is not the only world inhabited by people like us. We must keep our minds open wide.

"There is no way that I can prove any of the events stated in this letter," Kiessig closed in one of his long letters to me. "My word, which is well known hereabouts to be good as gold, must do."

Is it possible that some men and women may have a peculiar psychic make-up which permits them to transgress the boundaries between this plane of reality and other dimensions?

Can these men and women be possessed of abilities which enable them to travel to realms of being normally unobtainable to those in the physical body?

Or are these only personal hallucinations created out of some psychic need within certain personality types?

As Al Kiessig admitted, he had only his word to substantiate his claims, and even though his friends and neighbors in Arkansas might swear by his promises and his oaths, such testimonials do not stand up well under the critical scrutiny of the scientific testing laboratory.

In several cases of "interdimensional intervisitation," however, there exist enough witnesses to take the experience out of the subjective and place it into the evidential.

In 1953, a schoolboy in the Philippines was seen by many to disappear from closed rooms, then, incredibly, to reappear in another section of his city of Manila. In 1965, United Press International correspondent Vicente Maliwang interviewed Cornelio Closa, the famous "Invisible boy," who was then a twenty-five-year-old married man, the father of two children, in order to record

his impressions of the astounding events which had taken place in his life thirteen years before.

Journalist Maliwang and his photographer Eduardo Martinez managed to speak with Cornelio in the presence of his father, a twenty-three-year-old sister, and an eighteen-year-old brother. Cornelio admitted that he was hesitant about repeating his story, especially in the company of strangers.

"If you told me the same story," he smiled, "I wouldn't believe you, either. I would laugh in your face!"

Before he fully relaxed for the interview, Cornelio asked that his wife remove their children from the home.

"My wife knows the story," he said, "but the children wouldn't understand. Besides, I would be just as happy if I could forget that it ever happened. It seems like a frightful dream, a nightmare. But I know it happened and nothing can ever change that fact."

The strange, frightful dream began for Cornelio in September of 1951 when he was a sixth-grader at the Zamora elementary school. One day he met a beautiful girl dressed in white with long blonde hair reaching down to her waist. She was barefooted, about Cornelio's age, but the boy noticed she floated, rather than walked, when she moved beside him.

Although the girl did not open her smiling lips, Cornelio was able to "hear and understand" what she said. When she touched his hand, he felt different, very light. He became unaware of his surroundings.

"I don't remember anymore what else happened during that first meeting," he said, "but I went home later and did not tell anybody of my experience."

The beautiful blonde girl came often. Cornelio remembered that the things around him looked real and natural, but somehow he had the feeling that *he* was no longer real.

"There were many times when the girl and I would

float around and go to many places in the city," Cornelio told the reporter. "We went many times to movie houses and visited the International Fair that was being held in the city. When I was with her, I didn't feel exhausted or hungry."

The strangest thing, Cornelio recalled, was that nobody seemed to notice them.

Soon, Cornelio's schoolteacher complained to his parents that he had been skipping school. Father Closa put the law down to his son, but even an enforced march to school would not prevent the ethereal girl from snatching the boy away from his classroom.

The girl would appear before him in school. She would hold out her hand. Cornelio would feel some "sensation," then there would be no other thought in his mind but to go with her.

"Even with the door closed," Cornelio remembered, "I was able to go through it, just be walking through it as if it were open. Then I would hear my classmates shouting, 'Cornelio is gone!'"

At home, the Closa family would lock all the doors and windows, but to absolutely no avail.

"I kept on seeing the girl, and I was able to go out with her despite the closed doors," Cornelio said. "Sometimes I would be gone as long as three days, although I had no knowledge of my own how long I had been away."

Finally his despairing parents sent Cornelio to a mental institution, then to a welfare institution. Authorities said that he was a normal boy who would be better off living with his parents, so Cornelio was sent home. The drastic measure had accomplished the cessation of the strange girl's visitations to the young boy, however. Two pastors added to the separation by intense prayers, and Cornelio's nightmare was at an end.

Although we are pleased to learn that Cornelio Closa is now able to lead a normal life, we are still left with the

great mystery—*where had he been?* Was the beautiful blonde girl, who communicated with him through telepathy and who floated with him invisibly through the air, an actual citizen of some other dimension, or was she but a projection of his own psyche, an externalization projected to help him deal with his amazing talent of dematerializing his body.

One would write the schoolboy's experiences off to an energetic imagination and a passion for mischief—or at best to a series of out-of-body experiences—if it were not for the fact that he did disappear from closed classrooms, surrounded by classmates and teacher, and locked doors and windows, ringed in by members of his family.

Michael Helferty of Picton, Ontario, Canada, saw no lovely blonde girl beckoning with outstretched hand, but neither can he nor anyone else explain *where* he went for five days.

The thirteen-year-old Helferty was last seen walking along Lake Street toward Outlet Beach to go swimming on July 30, 1960. Then he disappeared.

By the time he was found sleeping in a nest of grass alongside the Canadian National Railway tracks west of Picton five days later, his frantic parents had posted a five hundred dollar reward for information on his whereabouts and police, friends, and volunteer searchers had painstakingly combed the area.

Michael was unaware that any more than a few hours had passed since he set out to go swimming, and he had no memory of where he had been. He showed no signs of exposure, sunburn, hunger, or thirst. He was fresh and alert and not the least bit tired. The Helferty family physician declared him well-nourished, well-cared for, and clean. Strangely enough, his clothes were perfectly dry, even though there had been a heavy dew during the night.

The only thing at all unusual was that Michael was wearing his swim trunks, rather than his underwear,

under his trousers. Since he had set out to go swimming with his trunks in his hand, it appears that he at least may have entered the water.

Michael himself found it difficult to believe that he had "lost" five days, and he insisted that he had no knowledge or memory of where he had been.

His father could only shake his head and utter: "It's a mystery, but somebody's taken care of him, that's for sure."

Michael Helferty swore that he had no conscious memory of where he had spent his strange five-day vacation. Little Kathy Cramer may have remembered where she disappeared to, but she was not telling anyone.

The six-year-old girl disappeared from her home on Park Street in Wood's Hole, Massachusetts, about 7:00 P.M. on August 15, 1960. Local police officers, state police, firemen, a crew of volunteers, and two police bloodhounds meticulously scoured a two-mile area, while a Coast Guard vessel patrolled the adjacent water front. At 9:00 P.M. two hundred airmen from nearby Otis Air Force Base initiated a search-march for the missing Kathy Cramer.

It goes without saying that the Cramer household was carefully searched before the original alarm concerning Kathy's absence had been issued. In addition, Falmouth Deputy Police Chief Antone Morgardo and Rev. Wilkin J. Kingwell, rector of St. John's Church in Newtonville, testified that they had carefully explored the house three times. Yet, incredible as it may seem, the six-year-old object of the massive search was found at 3:00 A.M., peacefully sleeping on her bed.

When gratefully weeping yet stunned and incredulous parents asked Kathy where she had been, the six-year-old stubbornly announced that she was not telling.

Stern police officers, solicitous neighbors, coaxing relatives all got the same answer: "I'm not telling!"

Had some kidnapper decided better of his dangerous

gambit and returned the child, desperately making a game of it all with her, making her promise not to tell where they had been?

Or had some cosmic, interdimensional being removed the child for a time for some purpose of his own, then brought her back to our plane of reality with a promise not to betray the "Good Fairy's" secret?

There may be a number of other possible explanations, but one that we should consider is that the child herself may have discovered the marvelous, albeit awesome, secret of psychically "crawling" through the cracks and crevices between spheres of existence.

In the June, 1959, issue of *Fate* magazine, writer Keith Ayling recounted one of the Paris *Surete's* (France's counterpart of the FBI) most mystifying unsolved cases. The puzzling crime involved the apparent ability of a man to make mock of Time and Space.

The incident concerned the disappearance of a valuable painting from the home of M. Pierre Dubois in April, 1929. Police could find no fingerprints, no signs of a forced entry, no clues to the method used to spirit away a \$50,000 painting from under the very noses of the Dubois family and their five servants.

Two days after the painting had been stolen, M. Dubois received a telegram from his son, Captain Marcel Dubois, the well-known French toxicologist, who was working for the army in Algiers. Captain Dubois wished to know if his favorite painting still hung in the dining room.

M. Dubois was irritated that word of the picture's theft had leaked out, although he was puzzled by what means his son in Algiers might know of their loss when they had so carefully managed to keep word of the painting's disappearance out of the Paris newspapers. Resigned to his son's recriminations, M. Dubois telegraphed:

"Picture has been stolen. Police working on case. Surete expects to recover same. Papa."

When Captain Dubois received the return message, he was not angry with his father for being careless with the precious painting. He knew that his own yearning to once more physically possess his work of art was responsible for that painting to have materialized on the pink stucco wall of his apartment in Algiers. He also knew that he was not mad, because he had had the District Commissioner, the local postmaster, and a fellow doctor verify the painting's presence.

According to Captain Dubois, it had been Abdul Oab, the head man of the Arab village where he had been giving inoculations, who had convinced him of the power of the mind.

For purposes of demonstration, the Arab had asked Dubois to think of something in Paris that he would very much like to have with him in Algiers. Dubois thought of the picture in his father's dining room, because it was the thing he had most admired in his youth.

At Abdul Oab's bidding, Captain Dubois turned around to behold the same painting on the stucco wall behind him.

The Arab told the Frenchman that there were conditions. Captain Dubois might possess the painting for only forty-eight hours. Then the painting had to return to Paris where it belonged.

In the presence of Captain Dubois' three friends, Abdul asked the young doctor if he believed that the picture could be sent back. Dubois nodded his affirmation. The Arab raised his hand and the wall was instantly blank.

According to Ayling: "The next morning Dubois received another telegram from his father. The picture had been restored to its place on the wall of the Dubois dining room. The police had been informed."

Parisian newspapers suggested numerous theories to

explain the enigma, ranging from poltergeists and practical jokers to an elaborately staged hoax to boost the value of the painting.

Dr. Alexander Canon, M.D., a noted author and authority on psychic phenomena, accredited the incident to a demonstration of the Yogi power of Maya which, according to Dr. Canon, "works on the mind in such a way that people are able to manifest what they visualize."

"One thing is certain," Ayling assures us, "this strange thing happened, and the Paris police, the French newspapers, and the *London Times* reported it."

Mrs. Frank L. Nickerson of Seattle, Washington, told (December, 1953, *Fate* magazine) of her meeting with a young man who seemed to possess the ability to control his environment in yet another way.

According to Mrs. Nickerson, in March of 1949, her husband had a job crewing ships. He came to know one young man quite well, a slender, slight blond named Donald.

One night as the three of them were visiting, Mrs. Nickerson offered to take Donald's picture. The young man laughed and told her that no one could take a picture of him.

Mrs. Nickerson prided herself on her ability as a photographer, and she became impatient, thinking that Donald meant that he had never seen anyone take a good picture of himself.

"But I mean it," Donald warned her as she carefully checked the light and her camera. "No one can take my picture. There will be nothing on the film."

Mrs. Nickerson snapped two pictures of their friend. Later, when she picked up the prints, she found that the photographs of her husband, sitting in the same chair with the same lighting, had turned out perfectly; but the two negatives of Donald had turned out completely blank.

In her conclusion, Mrs. Nickerson writes that Donald "seemed to avoid us after that."

Did their young friend avoid them for fear that they might begin to realize a certain bizarre truth about him?

Who might these "angels" or "devils" be who walk about in our very midst, while we either entertain or reject them, totally unaware of their true nature or their true purpose?

Joseph Kerska of San Francisco told of the incident involving seventeen-year-old Carmen Chaney one hot summer day in Fresno, California, in 1936 (*Fate*, January, 1961). Although in an earlier chapter we discussed the confusion understandably inherent in the interdimensional transfer of a man or woman from their home in one locale to a geographical location half-way around the world, it would seem that the old woman observed by Miss Chaney and several others was not a confused and innocent space traveler, but a deliberate and aware dimension-hopper.

Carmen Chaney first noticed the strange old lady in black as she crossed Tyler Street at the intersection. The old woman moved slowly, with difficulty, as if her legs were not functioning properly. Assuming that the lady must be ill, Carmen and her aunt Frankie ran out into the street to help her.

When the old lady saw the two solicitous women approaching her, her reaction was far from that of relief at sighting succor on the way. In fact, she reacted with panic, as if she wanted no one to approach her.

Kerska writes: "Only 20 feet from her now, they were fascinated by her large, blazing eyes, set deep in a chalk-white face, the skin of which appeared to be stretched tightly over her skull. She was about four feet, 10 inches tall, thin and scrawny; snow white hair showed in wisps under her large black hat; she wore a high-necked, long-sleeved dress and high button shoes of a decade gone by. The black of her hat, which was pulled

down low over her face, as well as that of her dress, was old to the point of decay, as both had turned greenish. She carried no bag or purse. Altogether she was a pathetic figure."

By now several of the neighbors on the block were watching the strange old lady retreating from the two well-meaning young women. The old lady hobbled into an alley, then she looked around helplessly, as she realized that more than thirty people were intently observing her bizarre behavior.

"She stopped for a brief moment," Kerska said in *Fate*, "then she vanished! Disappeared in the blink of an eyelash!"

The many witnesses to the fantastic disappearance excitedly exchanged opinions and speculations. Police officers who were summoned to the scene chose to believe that the old woman had been ill and had simply stumbled out of sight of her observers. But an extensive search of the alley and the houses on either side ". . . revealed nothing, and the police, after a number of sarcastic comments, drove away."

It is easy to make sarcastic comments when one is dealing with such bizarre, inexplicable phenomena as the fate of disappearing people. Sarcasm comes readily to the tongue when such reports are related by even the sincere and the respectable members of our society. But demeaning the phenomenon contributes nothing toward explaining the phenomenon.

None of the various theories that have been presented in this book for the reader's evaluation can be proved conclusively at this time. Whether there truly are "holes" and "doorways" between dimensions of reality, whether there may exist kidnappers from other planes of being, whether swirling vortexes and triangles of terror may snatch up ships and planes and their crews and send them spinning into another Space-Time continuum, and whether there may actually exist uniquely talented men

and women who can "will" themselves in and out of dimensional "windows" must at this time be considered possible, but unproved. This author only wonders how many people, ships, and planes must vanish under mysterious circumstances before the practitioners of orthodox science will weaken enough to permit themselves to become seriously interested in the elusive *how's* and *why's* of strange disappearances.

On August 6, 1970, the Caldwell, New Jersey, *Progress* carried a story about a mysterious "silver thread" that hung in the sky over the city.

The *Progress* maintained that the thread was no illusion. "Too many people, including policemen and reporters have caught sight of it to deny its existence," the newspaper stated. "To some it looks like a strand from a giant cobweb stretching off into the clouds. . . .

"It looks rigid, as if it were a wire, not a string. It appears silver when the sunlight strikes it. On Monday it hung about 150 feet above the houses on Forest Avenue and Hillside Avenue. . . .

"The Caldwell police tried to trace it on Monday, found signs of it up Hillside and down toward West Caldwell, but lost it in the clouds before tracking down the origin. . . .

"The mystery of the silver thread among the clouds has yet to be solved. It all looks perfectly innocent and harmless—but where does it come from, where does it go, and why?"

John A. Keel, noted UFO-logist and author of numerous provocative books (i.e. *This Haunted Planet*), traveled to Caldwell to investigate the phenomenon, along with such investigators as Dr. Berthold Schwarz. They found that the "silver thread" had been visible periodically throughout the month of August. The line could not have been dangling from some out-of-sight kite or balloon, because it remained stationary.

Dr. Schwarz learned that on the afternoon of August

31, Mrs. A.P. Smith had heard a noise like a loud thunderclap, which she thought was a jet breaking the sound barrier. Later, she noticed that a section of the "silver thread" had fallen to the ground.

Honoring a promise to Keel, Mrs. Smith obtained a specimen for the investigator, then she called the police and delivered the rest of the thread into their hands.

Writing in Vol. 11, No. 3, of the *INFO Journal* (P.O. Box 367, Arlington, Virginia 22210), Keel found that the substance appeared to be nylon fishline. However, when he visited a kite store in New York City to compare it with the strings being sold, he was unable to match it with any of the types available.

"It is quite stiff, more like a fiber from a plastic broom, and is translucent," Keel reported.

INFO's editorial comment was to quote Charles Fort's statement: "I think we're fished for."

But we still don't know *who* is doing the fishing and whether our people who disappear under strange circumstances are, in dreadful reality, being "landed" in the nets of some interdimensional fishermen.

Let he who would scoff at such fanciful, yet fearsome, theories step forward and jerk the silver line that dangles above New Jersey.

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THE FOREST OF VANISHING CHILDREN...

ON SUNDAY MORNING, AUGUST 6, 1956, 13-YEAR-OLD DONALD LEE BAKER OF AZUSA, CALIFORNIA, SET OFF ON A BICYCLE RIDE WITH HIS 11-YEAR-OLD FRIEND, BRENDA HOWELL. WHEN THE CHILDREN HAD NOT RETURNED BY THAT EVENING, THE POLICE WERE NOTIFIED. THEIR BICYCLES WERE FOUND IN HEAVY BRUSH NEAR THE RESERVOIR AT THE EDGE OF THE ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST. NAVY DIVERS WERE COMMISSIONED TO SEARCH THE DEEP BODY OF WATER, WHILE POLICE, SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES AND HUNDREDS OF VOLUNTEERS SCoured THE AREA. NO TRACE OF THE CHILDREN WAS EVER FOUND.

DURING THE NEXT FOUR YEARS, THREE MORE CHILDREN WERE TO VANISH IN THE SAME FOREST AREA—VANISH FOREVER! THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF FOUL PLAY, NO SIGN OF THEIR BODIES OR BELONGINGS. ONE OF THE CHILDREN WALKED AROUND A BEND IN THE TRAIL, JUST AHEAD OF SIX MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY—AND WAS NEVER SEEN AGAIN!

WHO—OR WHAT—WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE EERIE DISAPPEARANCES?