

MAIL BAG

Correspondence is invited from our readers, but they are asked to keep their letters short. Unless letters give the sender's full name and address (not necessarily for publication) they cannot be considered. The Editor would like to remind correspondents that it is not always possible to acknowledge every letter personally, so he takes this opportunity of thanking all who write to him.

Not a "musical UFO" or Poltergeist
Dear Sir,—With reference to the item in *World Round-up* in the July/August issue (Vol. 17, No. 4) of FSR, headed "Musical UFO, Poltergeist, or what?" I personally investigated this occurrence at the time, and heard from Mrs. Williams the full account of their frightening night-time experience.

She described the noise as being a horrific din of a train crash, complete with whistles, screeches and metallic clangs. This was followed by an assortment of sounds; explosions, church bells, a clock chiming, snatches of conversation and strains of Oriental music. Then the whole sequence of sounds began again and was repeated over and over for an hour-and-a-half, like a tape recording being played back repeatedly. A humming sound was present all the time.

Following the report in the Bournemouth *Evening Echo*, Mrs. Williams received at least a dozen phone calls from others within the radius of a mile who had also heard the noises. Most of these people were more impressed by the "music", descriptions ranging from "music through a computer-like science fiction" to "celestial music of the spheres".

However, following a letter on this matter to the *Evening Echo*, I paid a call on Mr. A. Newland, and I now feel that the incident is explained.

Mr. Newland is a railway supervisor, and on the night in question, he and his men were carrying out track-laying work in the vicinity. He was able to explain all the sounds heard, including the hum and musical sounds, even the "rail crash", as the result of the work going on, which is, apparently a very noisy business, and has previously been heard as much as ten miles away.

Mr. Newland, although not wishing to debunk UFOs in general (he said he quite believed such things could exist)

did not want people to get fanciful and quite mistaken ideas about a very normal occurrence.

Leslie Harris, Secretary, Bournemouth Cosmic Research Group, 6 Heathwood Road, Winton, Bournemouth, Hants, BH9 2JX.

Dear Sir,—Here is an item of interest. It is from *Culloden* by John Prebble (chapter 7, page 316, of the Penguin edition):

"In August 1748 before the town council of Aberdeen eleven men and women swore to the truth of a vision which they had seen in a valley five miles west of the city.

"On the fifth of that month at two in the afternoon, they saw three globes of light in the sky which increased in brightness until twelve tall men in bright attire crossed the valley. Then were seen two armies. The first wore dark blue and displayed Saint Andrew's cross on its banners. The other was uniformed in scarlet and was assembled beneath the Union flag. Twice the red army attacked the blue and was beaten back. When it attacked a third time it was scattered by the Scots army.

"Those who watched saw the smoke of the cannon, the glitter of steel and the colours waving but heard no sound. When the blue army was triumphant the vision passed."

For some similar cases, see chapter 18 of Charles Fort's *New Lands*.
Roger Sandell, Beaconsfield, Bucks.

World War I UFOs?

Dear Sir,—I have read with the greatest interest the article "UFOs in Wales in 1905" by Roger Sandell.

Apparently, the phenomenon continued during the First Great War. Arthur Machen, who was a great reporter as well as a great imaginative

writer, has described it in a text entitled "The Great Return".

Machen insists on the fact that "the lights have been seen again."

It would be very interesting to know how much of "The Great Return" is factual reporting, and how much of it imagination.

I appreciate FSR very much.
Yours etc.,
Jacques Bergier, Paris 8, France.

More on Baker Street and UFOs

Dear Editor,—I note in May/June 1971 number a letter from Jacques Bergier of Paris, mentioning my one-time neighbour Sherlock Holmes. I can claim him, surely, as I live within a mile or so of Baker Street!

He mentions Sherlock Holmes' UFO contact or interest as published by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

But he has overlooked the fact that Conan Doyle was very interested in Spiritualism and psychic phenomena, and this is noteworthy for the John A. Keel contention of the tie-up or link between UFOs and the psychic! As Doyle was Irish, although he took his medical degree in Edinburgh, he must certainly have been Celtic and possibly had the Second Sight.

Sherlock Holmes was undoubtedly English, but Dr. Watson, his great friend and chronicler was certainly a Scotsman, and therefore likely also to have had some Second Sight, potential or actual.

This indeed seems to be a case where The Myth becomes greater than The Man!

All good wishes and hopes for a Great Future for FSR, and for my fellow travellers and colleagues in this Hunting of the Snark in an Alice in Wonderland world!

Judith Gee, 27a Goldhurst Terrace, Hampstead, London NW6.

We have a job to do and we rely on you to help!

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& FSR CASE HISTORIES**