

SPIRIT of the STONES

FIRST EDITION
WITH EXTRA
HIDDEN CLUE

a supernatural
book of hidden
treasures by JOHN WORSLEY



who is the unseen seer ?

**what is the meaning of
the mysterious runes ?**

**who will discover the
lost diamonds ?**



it could be

YOU

Spirit of the Stones

a supernatural
book of hidden treasures

by **JOHN WORSLEY**

**In seventeen sixty -----
Came brandy by the ---
Landed at old stone ----
Square hole, round maze, square ---**

SHEERJEWEL

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The Royalty Fund

For every book sold, 50p will be deposited into a special bank account. This fund will be divided into fifty shares which will be distributed to the finders of the hidden treasures described below.

The Great Wight Eye

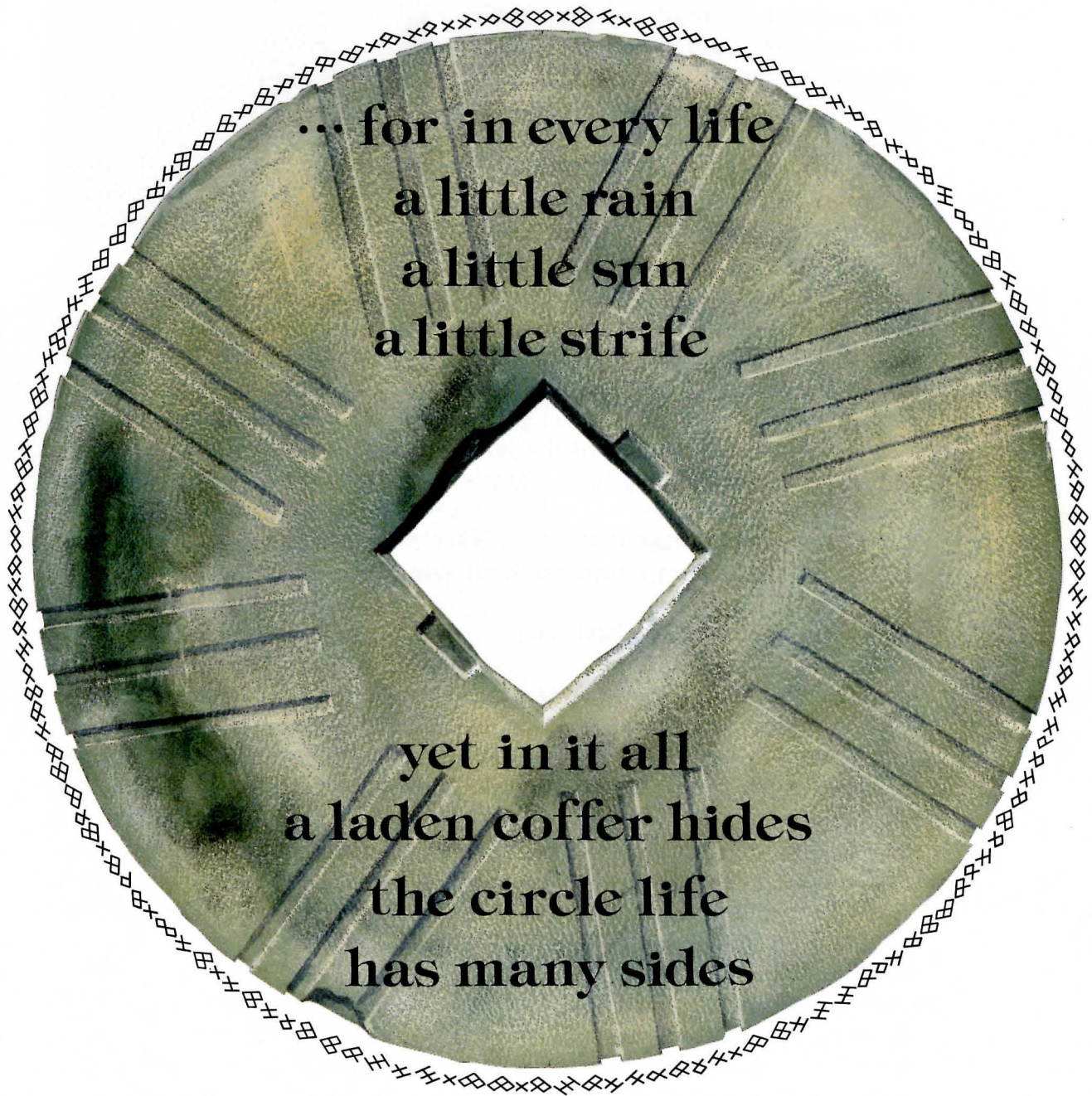
This is the unique diamond and stoneware talisman which is hidden somewhere upon the Isle of Wight. Whoever discovers this jewel may keep it and if clever enough to decipher its secret message, may claim ten shares of the Royalty Fund.



The Wight Eye Talismans

There are forty of these smaller talismans, each has a real diamond set in its eye and all are lost somewhere upon the Island. Each talisman discovered earns the finder: one share of the Royalty Fund and any person may find as many as luck or judgement will permit. The Royalty Fund will only be divided when the secret message of the Great Wight Eye has been deciphered. See last page for further details.





... for in every life
a little rain
a little sun
a little strife

yet in it all
a laden coffer hides
the circle life
has many sides

14 12 1 75 92 47 13 4

To help you on your way, remember this . . .

**A hidden lock reveals its ward
When keys be turned as fruit that's cored**

**Where two I miss upon a line
The letter's afterthought be fine
But heed indeed the joker's laugh
He may have lied or blown the gaff**

**And longer shall the riddle remain
Greater then the final gain.**

**WEM<YQEF-W-SEW-LIT-INE
EM-RHTTEBWSGZIC<BRO**

“BUT BEWARE, FOR WHERE YE BE, THEN SO BE HE”



Only the grumbling of the anchor chain broke the silence of that night as the lifting tide slowly swung “Rose”, her spars like polished ebony against the moonlit sky casting soft shadows upon her deck. Mark felt the day’s heat still in that old deck, its holied planks squeezing sticky pitch against his slipped soles as he eased himself over the bulwark into the waiting skiff.

“Watch that ditty now, young Adge”, the Captain’s whispered order referred to the small brass-bound box which Mark had slung from his shoulder by its leather strap.

‘Adge’ was Mark’s nick-name which he had earned through his nimble agility aboard the “Rose”, serving as he had for the last three years as the ship’s nipper.

The fifth child born into an already overflowing family, Mark had lived with his Grandparents since he was but a few weeks old. This is where his love of the sea had begun. Some of his earliest memories were those of Gran’ Pop Stone relating yarns of the great fishing hauls that he and his sons had brought ashore.

“Laden to her gunwales!” “. . . your Dad and your Uncle Alvar up to their waists in herring!”

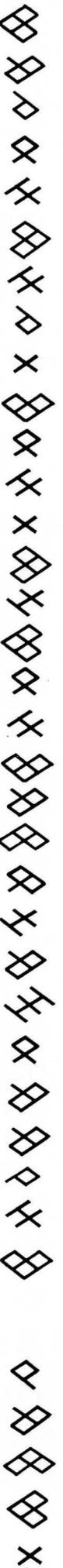
Now at 16, his apprenticeship to a seafaring life was well founded.

For much of his childhood, Mark had been separated from his family in more ways than one. In vivid dreams a pale, clear eyed girl would visit and foretell of a meeting. She would sometimes speak of strange and wonderful things but mostly her prophesies were of everyday events. Mark never spoke of the girl but his premonitions, based on her visions, were always so accurate that the old folk proclaimed that he was gifted with the ‘second sight’.

Also in the skiff that September night, as it glided towards the wooded shoreline, were Captain Joseph Kerr, a round and solid man with similar thoughts. Mark had dreamed of the Captain only the previous night . . . an uneasy dream in which the Captain was quite white in the face and was mouthing something which Mark couldn’t hear and strange white sparks were flying from his chest, whilst all about his head yellow balls of flame danced to and fro. It made him shudder to think of it now.

All that day Mark had had an uncanny feeling that unseen eyes were watching him. Even the two oarsmen, each normally dull, gave him a morbid feeling of loss. Jimmy Oaks and ‘Smiler’ Mew had been selected from the ship’s crew for their loyalty and dependability of character. They rowed steadily and silently on and Mark shook off these feelings and attended to his task of helmsman at the short tiller.

Gradually, as the small craft approached the wooded beach, the trees seemed to give way to a long shingle spit, parallel to the tide. This spit was not only a resting place for the sea birds but it also guarded a narrow and



secret inlet. Once around the spit and a little way along the channel, the trees again closed in, to embrace the very banks of the creek.

Ten minutes or so it took for the three men and the boy to pick their way along the winding creek. Mark saw pearls of phosphorescence snaking off the slowly dipping oars and he almost felt the strange silence in the woods about. It was as if even the night's own creatures knew what was taking place and were holding their breath in anticipation.

Then ahead and to the left, a small pin-prick of light seemed to be signalling as a few tall reeds came between the landing group and their appointment. The low line of a stone quay, rounded with age, bore two shadowy figures. The hand and cuff of one man, lit dimly by a candle lantern, was the only light to compete with the moon-drenched sky above.

'Are ye there, Tom?', softly called the Captain.

'What's the pass?' snapped an instant reply.

'FULL CIRCLE' hissed the Captain.

'Come on then, but watch the cackle, the Press boys are about!'

One of the men came forward, clambering onto the narrow bed of silt below the stone wall, and grabbing the bow of the boat, he helped the two crewmen pull the skiff ashore so that her stem just touched the masonry and she was firmly aground. Capt. Kerr stepped over the forward thwart and onto the gunwale, where he was helped up to the quay by the man with the lantern, which he now put on the ground at his feet.

Mark, who had remained at the skiff's tiller whilst this was going on, was unaware that the man on the beach seemed to be keeping his head low, chin to chest, all this time and was unnaturally reluctant to look at anyone. What appeared to be a close-fitting knitted hat was pulled low across his brow.

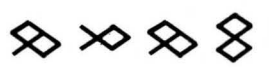
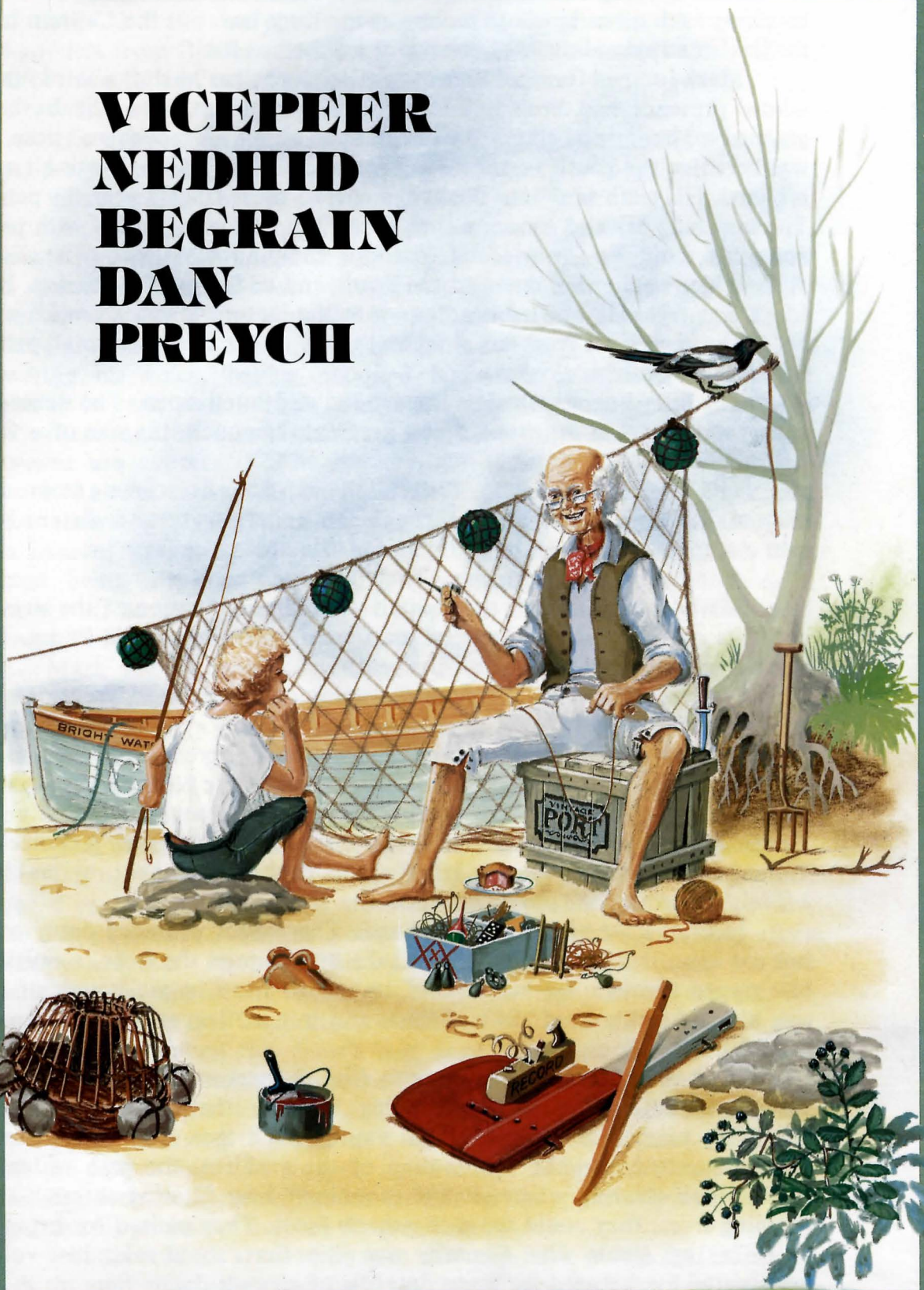
The Captain was now in deep murmured conversation with the lantern man and although not meaning to eavesdrop, Mark couldn't help overhearing a few words in that oppressive stillness. . . .

' . . . all here. . . . Tom's at sea. . . . in the box. . . . final lot'. Then the Captain whispered, "Adge, up lad", and jested for him to bring his ditty box.

Mark carefully placed the box on the quay and prepared to pull himself up. As he did so and his eyes were level with the top of the stonework, he noticed the boots of the man. Aided by the pale light of the lantern he could clearly see that they were of good quality and were obviously the boots of a gentleman with an unusually high instep. Also, on looking up at the man, he could see that those boots didn't go with the rest of his appearance. His ragged cloak and battered hat were of a totally different class.

'Come on up, then', an irritated tone from the man. Mark sprang onto the quay. As his toes touched the grit there came the crash of two rapid musket shots. Splinters from the boat's gunwale stung his legs. A man screamed below. He turned to see Jimmy Oaks falling backwards onto the beach, a neat black hole in his forehead. Two men were fighting in the silver water. The one across the transom of the boat, Smiler Mew, had his right hand at the throat of his assailant, who was forcing the other's head back, tearing his hair. . . . back, back. In his fighting hand an evil, claw-like knife was inches away from the lower man's throat, held away

VICEPEER NEDHID BEGRAIN DAN PREYCH



only by the slippery grip of wet fingers on the sleeve of that thrusting arm. . . . the last grip those fingers were ever to know.

Now the Captain was struggling with the lantern man; they were not touching each other but both pulling at the ditty box. . . . the Captain had the leather strap and the other man grasped the box itself.

Mark jumped forward to help the Captain but as he did, a third man, whose presence had been unknown until now, burst from the bushes, grasped his collar and clamped a rough hand about his mouth and nose. It was here that the youth's good strong teeth came into action. Mark bit and bit hard. His teeth sank into the fleshy part of those fingers near the palm. The taste was dry and sour and then, BLOOD. The man howled with pain and relaxed his grip for a second, just long enough for Mark to twist clear. A hard kick to the shin renewed the howls and added much swearing, but Mark was free. He bowled headlong into the lantern man's stomach and heard the hiss of air from his stricken throat. As he folded, a small pistol fell from beneath his cloak.

The ditty box smashed to the ground and burst open. The contents scattered: papers, a notebook and a grey canvas pouch, the size of a five pounders ball shot.

The woods were no longer silent. Sounds came from all around. . . . someone crashing through the undergrowth and distant but ever closer sounding hoof beats thumping into muddy leaves.

A shout from the darkness, 'They'll be upon us, lads!'

'Away, Adge, away', the Captain was fumbling amongst the strewn contents of the box. The lantern man was staggering to his knees, his companions making off towards the beach.

Hooves galloping closer now, clattering over some wooden bridge. A shot. Two more.

The old quay was little more than a causeway across the creek and at a point close by, it crumbled into the remains of some sort of a lock-gate. As it was near high tide, the creek's flow was unarrested. Certainly no escape in that direction, and no time to use the boat. It was now a choice of either being caught by heaven know's who, and possibly shot, or making off inland through the unknown woods.

Instinct now had the upper hand. The woods provided cover and not too soon, for as the Captain and the boy entered the trees, a musket ball ripped through the bushes and embedded itself in the bough of an oak above Mark's head. Bits of bark and minced leaves cascaded upon their retreating footprints.

They were lucky at this stage to find themselves on a straight and narrow tunnel-like pathway ascending through the trees. They ran, stumbled, pitched and clawed their way through that long tunnel until some distance on, at the culmination of the gradient, the path widened into a small clearing where, in the moonlight now filtering through the thinning trees, they could see each other's faces. They paused for breath.

Taking stock, the Captain was the first to speak, his voice punctuated by the need for great lungfuls of air.

'Ye are a good lad, Adge. I'd be done for now but for your turn-in.'

'Who were those men?' asked Mark.

'A bad lot, that's for sure. That feller with the hat I don't know, but I reckon I seen that other-un afore.'

'The one with the knife?'

'Aye, and the one you had a meal off', he grinned. 'A couple of no-gooders from t'other side.' He jerked his head towards the mainland. 'I'll bet two farthin's they're not Islanders, any rate!'

'What's it all about?' asked Mark.

'It's diamonds, nipper. See this 'ere bag, she's full up with 'em. Real perty, too, all good uns and proper cut like.'

'Diamonds? But whose are they?'

'Ah well, that's the check of it Three trips like this I've done, the last just afore ye joined us. Each time we meets up back there and the stones get handed over. 'Ordinormally' old Tom Cheek is here to meet up with but I was athinkin' somethin' was amiss as soon as I was ashore this night — really chilly welcome 'twere.' He continued, now lowering his voice, having regained his wind 'As to who's the rightful owners, well I don't really ask, but the rumour of it is that somewhere on this island there's a lot of counter thinkin' where the Revenue are concerned. The Excise Capn's got a mite powerful and justice is about as dead as poor old Smiler. Seems that this pouch and them others buys some back-handed freedom for the runners. Oh, not the likes of us honest brandy boys but them hard 'uns See, this island, being as it is and where it is, gives them a real good back door where stuff can be brought ashore nice and peacable, stowed neat and moved on later, sometimes in broad light.'

Mark had sometimes wondered about the Captain's occasional visits ashore and now these revelations gave the reason for certain of the mid-voyage lay-offs when he had been required to remain in the foc'sul, shut away to only guess at those mysterious bumping noises alongside the old ship's hull. A little smuggling was no surprise, but that the old man was involved with this sort of company came as quite a shock.

'You seem a bit quiet there, lad. Oh, I know what ye'r thinkin' . . . your Cap'n mixed us with a bad bunch, but it ain't all how it looks. All right, I've done my bit of keg trottin' and maybe caught meself a few, who don't I asks but the trouble is ye get's sucked into it deep afore ye know and that's about it. This was to be my last run with this lot and that's the bargain of it no payment this night to let me off the hook. But I sees now that this crowd is in it for keeps and mean real trouble. They reckon 'lily liver's best dead liver' and they're agin any fall-outs like me — that explains the double cross, but the joke is, I've still got the stuff, and that's not all' With a wink the Captain revealed the small pistol belonging to the lantern man, which he must have picked up with the canvas bag. The weapon fitted snugly in his right hand and he eased the lock back carefully with his left wrist, apparently not wishing to release his possessive hold on the grey pouch.

Just then Mark's attention was diverted back along the tunnel of trees through which they had just made their escape. Two fireflies were dancing to and fro, to and fro, hypnotically, in the yawning blackness Fireflies! Had they been in the tropics, they would have blended unnoticed with the scenery, but fireflies on the Wight?



The dance continued, the two flies' luminosity now dim, now a little brighter. They appeared to be swelling and then there was a third smaller one.

With a curse Capt. Kerr leaped to his feet. 'HELL, THEY'RE STILL COMIN' ON!' Then, 'Quick lad, we'll be away.'

The fireflies now had faces and shoulders suspended just beneath them . . . the faces of their pursuers, flaming torches held aloft, running up that woodland path.

Brambles snagged and tree roots tripped them as they blundered forward anew, off the path now but down-hill at last.

Breaking through a narrow withy patch the boy and the old man finally came upon a gravel cart track curving in a wide sweep off to their right but straight into the moonlight to their left.

A short pause and they realised that to make off to the left would leave them exposed to view, so along the curve of the track they continued their escape.

Soon the old man was flagging behind the boy. 'Hold on a moment, Adge.' They both slowed to a stop. Away behind them, out of sight around the bend, came their pursuing enemy, footsteps crunching audibly on the gravel.

'Come on, Adge, on to the verge and be quiet.' They were off again, half running, half walking on the grassy side of the track.

The lane's curve still continued to the left. It seemed to go on for ever until, over the top of the hedge and between some distant trees, the chimney of a farmhouse could be seen silhouetted against the night sky. Moments later they were at the narrow gate and Mark was horrified to see the huge outline of a horse and rider blocking their progress. And far worse than that, two black barrels of a pair of horse pistols were pointing directly at them.

'Hold fast there', came the loud command.

The Captain, taken by surprise, swivelled round to face the stranger, raising his pistolled right hand as he did. The two shots were simultaneous, blending into one huge, ear-puncturing explosion. Mark felt the flick of air as a ball shot passed his ear. Spits of liquid fire shot from the Captain's left hand which was clutching the diamond pouch to his breast.

The musket ball, having passed within inches of Mark's ear, had squarely HIT the small grey pouch, penetrated it, discharging some of the stones, and continued its relentless way mortally on into the Captain's chest. His knees folded and he slumped forward onto his face, still gripping the smouldering pouch in his left hand.

The Captain's shot had also found its mark. The rider slumped forward in his saddle leaning against his horse's neck. Still looking at Mark he slowly raised his second pistol until it was levelled at the boy's chest. There was no mistaking his intention.

Mark's brain told him to run but his feet seemed as if nailed to the ground and it was too late.

He didn't hear the gun's report but only saw the orange flash as the exploding powder spewed out the deadly missile.

'Dear oh dear, oh deary me' 'Bless my soul'.

A curious sensation of detachment and suspension. Mark was trying to feel his injuries. He was sure that the musket shot had hit him and must have caused some grievous harm.

'My goodness me, it just won't do!'

The misty haze about Mark's eyes was gradually resolving into recognisable shapes.

'Now there's one too many. I just don't know what I'll do.'

The first shape that Mark became really aware of was quite alarming. It was Capt. Joseph Kerr, or should it be ex Captain Joseph Kerr? J. Kerr Esq. was standing looking extremely foolish and bashful. He was quite naked, trying to cover his humiliations with his two fat hairy hands. They were more than adequate.

A silver-haired old man in a gold-trimmed lilac gown was at the Captain's side, about to offer him what appeared to be a curious glowing robe, similar to the ones being worn by the other two figures standing a little way back. Mark was amazed to see that these figures were none other than Jimmy Oakes and Smiler Mew, the latter living up to his nick-name, his face beaming with a grin which threatened to split his head in two.

A twinkle in the eye of Jimmy Oakes also betrayed the much enjoyed amusement which their Captain's confusion afforded the pair.

'I'll have none of that there dumb insolence', growled J.K.

'Just you remember, I'm yer Skipper.'

'Now, now', said the silver haired old man, 'you must understand right from the start that all possession and rank must be left behind on this, your greatest voyage'.

'Give me back me clothes', swore J.K. 'I'm not wearin' one of them fancy dresses I'm a feller, not a bloomin' fairy'.

'You really must not take that attitude. Remember you have rather an important interview ahead of you. Apparently YOU have to answer a few questions concerning the diverting of certain liquid spirits and some other matter about a bigamous relationship with two women, or is it three, now?'

The Captain's face purpled into an expression that threatened imminent eruption but he could only splutter, 'Who . . . who . . . WHO told you about me wimmen . . . er I mean me wife?'

'Don't forget now that we on the other side are blessed with all knowledge and little is hidden. To the nature of man there are many facets and no one person is all good or all bad. Our only concern is whether there be true and rightful justification in his deeds, and on the answer to that question will depend your position in the here-after, and indeed, in your next incarnation.' He continued 'So just YOU bear that in mind when you address these other two gentlemen, who I must say have been most helpful. They may well turn out to be YOUR Captains in a very short while.' The possibility was more than the Captain could, or wished to comprehend. 'You just cover yourself up with that nice clean robe and behave yourself.'

Jimmy Oakes' eyes gave an extra twinkle and Smiler serenely smiled.



Turning to Mark the silver-haired old man's face took on a perplexed frown. 'Now young man, Mr. Oakes and Mr. Mew here, inform me that you have been christened with the fore-names of Mark and Antony' (this was indeed true, for Mark had been named after the famous leader, but thinking it a little too grand, he preferred to use his first name and only the initial of the second), 'but according to my schedule, you shouldn't be here now. I really only have room for the other three and my paperwork only has their names as Holy Consignment. My pre-crossover briefing instructed the acquisition of two size 8 and one size 15 transport robes and you are clearly none of these . . . more a 5½ I would guess'.

'Am I dead or dreaming?' gasped Mark.

'Oh yes, quite dead, quite, quite dead, of that there is no doubt whatsoever.'

It was then that Mark noticed the two bodies, the Captain's and his own laying in the shadows. Of the horseman there was no sign. Presumably the creature had wandered off with its rider, perhaps dead or badly injured, still in the saddle.

Mark began to realise that the old man was some sort of an Angel and not of solid flesh and blood at all. And Mark was likewise.

The Angel was muttering to himself, 'It's all the fault of that new computer. Things haven't been the same since it was installed. More efficient, they said it would be, but believe me, by the time you've punched in the correct programme and sorted out the interface read-out from the tabular indexing, you might just as well have used the old system. Give it to me any void.'

Mark didn't understand all this but was now getting used to his new spirit state. He found that he could move about by just thinking and willing movement. This was all a little tricky at first as he still had half an eye on the Captain's antics.

J.K. had now managed to cover his modesty by squeezing himself into the white garment, which even at the celestial size of 15, proved to be a dangerously tight fit in certain unmentionable regions.

'I'm sorry', said the Angel, becoming aware of Mark's presence once again. 'You must think me quite rude not to have introduced myself. I am Brother Cecil, although I prefer to be called Stan. You see, the real meaning of the name of Cecil is dim-witted'. He smiled shyly, lowering his gaze, a little pleased at his own honesty.

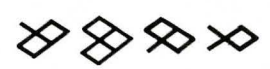
'HAW HAW — See Saw bloomin' daft!' roared J.K.

The Angel Stan merely disdainfully glanced in the direction of this latest outburst, pointed his index finger to the heavens and then slowly lowered it until it was directed at the guffawing seafarer. The effect was instantaneous. J.K. lifted the hem of the robe as though it were a skirt, showed his chubby knees and jiggling up and down in a grotesque fling, started to sing in a high pitched, wheezy contralto voice, horribly off key. The words were of some lewd sailors' ballad, far too risqué to commit to paper here, but the song was quite recognisable to the two crewmen. Were

2
2+

TA
PAM

If each pilgrim need store
Then where to break the way for best?
For truth and what is really meant
Each word examine with intent



it not for their spiritual condition they would have collapsed to the ground with mirth. As it was they collapsed sort of upwards and rolled about horizontally three feet from the ground.

Totally out of control of his own actions, J.K.'s eyes were the only give-away that he was losing a desperate battle for his dignity. Angel Stan left poor J.K. to continue his helpless dance and returned his attention to Mark. 'As I was saying, I am one of the advance contact Angels and my duty is to guide new spirits such as yourself over to the other side and unfortunately, although you are obviously ready to make the journey, I'm afraid that I am unable to take you along with me this time.'

'With all respect,' said Mark, 'I'm in no great hurry to leave'. He was now starting to enjoy the new sensation of mobility.

'That's entirely understood,' replied Stan, "but I must warn you that to be earth-bound is a dangerous state for a spirit of your innocence. For upon this middle plane, the snares of evil are set and you must tread with great prudence. Your only sound defence would be the sacred 'WIGHT EYE' talisman — that which blunts the needle stare of the wicked ones. But alas, I do not have one for you and my next trip to this dimension is not due until four days' time. Then I have to transport some Revenue Officer, who I believe is now wounded nearby. I will see that your correct papers and robe are ready but until then you will be on your own.

'Four days' said Mark, "that's fine, but I don't want to stay here, it is a little grim!"

'Not to worry, just make sure that you're at this spot no later than 23.30 on the 13th, and I mean by earth-time, that is most important', then . . . 'leave the rest to me. Now I must be on my way.' Stan snapped his thumb and fore-finger in the direction of the madly gyrating J.K. and the big man ceased his dizzy dance, falling into a sullen, sulky silence.

The Angel turned to the two crewmen, who were sinking slowly to the ground, their eyes moist with their recent revelry. 'Now my good souls, please copy my actions and you'll be through to the other side before you know what's happened. That goes for you also, Mr. Kerr. He stood squarely on the balls of his feet, his supple body stretched fully, arms aloft to the dawning sky, bent to touch his sandalled toes and sprang upwards, launching himself away, disappearing with a sound just like the rustle of the wind in the trees, his departing words trailing into space . . . "See you on the 13th.'

Jimmy and Smiler were the next to leave; a cheerful salute in Mark's direction and they were gone. The Captain, however, was understandably a little reluctant to follow. He quickly whispered to Mark,

'About them wives, Adge, I really made 'em happy, y'know, an none knew of t'other's existence. Twer real luvy duvy, right beaunts, all of 'em.... Tammy, Rosie, Alice, Pam.

'I thought Stan said there were three', interrupted Mark. The Captain just winked, stretched his arms aloft, bent to his toes . . . RRRIP went the backside of his robe . . . he launched himself away.

'I'll give 'em bloomin' size 15 when I gets me hands on 'em . . . ' the departing words trailing into space.

The windless trees rustled

The fresh chill of the season was in the air of that new day. The gradually lightening sky diffused a soft amber aura over the surrounding fields and hedgerows, progressively separating the darker shades of shrub from the pale jade grey of low pasture.

Mark lingered over the crumpled figures lying on the gravel. Silent homage for the two lives so easily extinguished and for the anguish of the world over so many such losses.

Whilst he was in the midst of these thoughts the first stabbing shafts of direct light came into the lane as the young sun peeped through lace lapped tree-tops of woods through which, only hours ago, a desperate chase had taken place.

Mark's attention was caught by bursts of razor light crackling up from the dull grit of the track. It was then that he remembered the diamonds and he became immediately aware that, in spite of the gems' own purity, they had had great significance in the events of the preceding night. He determined then and there that he would do all in his power to end their influence on the actions of the local rival factions. He would remove and hide them far from man's greed. Perhaps one day they might be found by someone far more deserving.

Mark decided to gather the spilt gems first. Now for a ghost to move physical objects requires a great deal of concentration and it was with much mental effort that the departed youth scooped seven diamonds from the gravel. Next for the diamond pouch itself. This presented another problem, for the mortal remains of the Captain were slumped over it. There was only one thing for it. Mark would have to move the body. This required all the mind power that the ghost, in his inexperienced state, could muster.

So intent was the spirit upon his task that he failed to notice the approach of a short plump man, who, on his way to tend his cows, had come upon the two bodies lying where they had fallen. The man crept to within a few yards and nervously eyed the great corpse of the Captain.

Mark focussed all of his mental abilities into his one objective. He grasped the dead man's right leg and pulled. Slowly the bulky corpse rolled over, its glassy gaze peering through the spirit's invisible body, fixing upon the trembling man.

From behind Mark came a stifled scream, the shock of which caused him to half materialise. He turned and saw the horror-struck dairyman.

The little man's jaw dropped and, as the full realisation of what his bulging eyes had witnessed fully sunk in, his stubby legs propelled him backwards as if with a mind of their own. A dozen stumbling paces in this fashion and then twisting his round body to the direction that his feet had already taken, he galloped headlong away from the scene. (Three weeks later he reluctantly allowed his daughter to coax him from the stair cupboard to resume his dairy duties but, much to the cows' discomfort . . . his trembling fingers had lost their friendly technique.)

The surprise of this encounter had caused Mark to drop the loose diamonds. Momentarily ignoring them, he turned again to the dead captain. There the pouch was, crushed, scorched and with a ragged hole through which Mark could see the precious stones, hard and cold. The dead Captain's face had a peaceful expression, an innocence all uncanny



considering
his wayward life. Around
his neck was a twisted silver chain
attached to a small compass, which was resting
on the lifeless chest, the needle still swinging to and
fro about the irresistible influence of its polarity.

Mark quickly removed the instrument and its chain and tucked
them in the neck of the pouch. He then hurriedly snatched up those
of the fallen diamonds that he could manage and made off at full speed
along the strait of the track. Pausing at a point where the lane forked he
examined his charge. In his haste he had either only managed to pick up a
few of the lost diamonds or had dropped some of them along the route of his
own retreat. In his PALM he had but four. In spite of the damage to the pouch
where it had been HIT by the musket shot, its contents were intact.

Mark still had that eerie feeling of the day before. The feeling that he was being
watched by something that shadowed his every move. Now he started to hear
curious clicking noises from within his mind. This was starting to unnerve
the young spirit. He determined to leave the spot as soon as he could.

Slipping the four loose diamonds into the pouch with the rest of the jewels,
Mark set off on his journey. Movement, he found, was an easy matter.

By starting at a normal walking pace and gradually taking longer and
longer strides, he was able to cover the ground at an incredibly swift
speed. In fact, with a little extra concentration, his long floating
strides developed into a low dream-like flight. A wonderful
experience but, as soon as he allowed himself to begin to

enjoy this new freedom, the pouch of diamonds seemed

to slip through his fingers and he sank slowly

to the ground. 'Perhaps a little more practice

was needed', he thought, and then, considering

the problem more deeply, he pondered upon the

fact that although the act of concentration on

flight caused him to lose his grip on the pouch, all

of his clothing stayed with him. Maybe this was due to

some personal aura imparted from spirit to possession.

This could be the answer. . . The link between soul and

material possessions. Unfortunately he had no suitable

pockets in which to carry the pouch. He thought of tying it

to his belt but he had no string then he remembered the

Captain's compass. He opened the small bag and withdrew it.

The silver chain made an excellent make-shift cord. By tying it

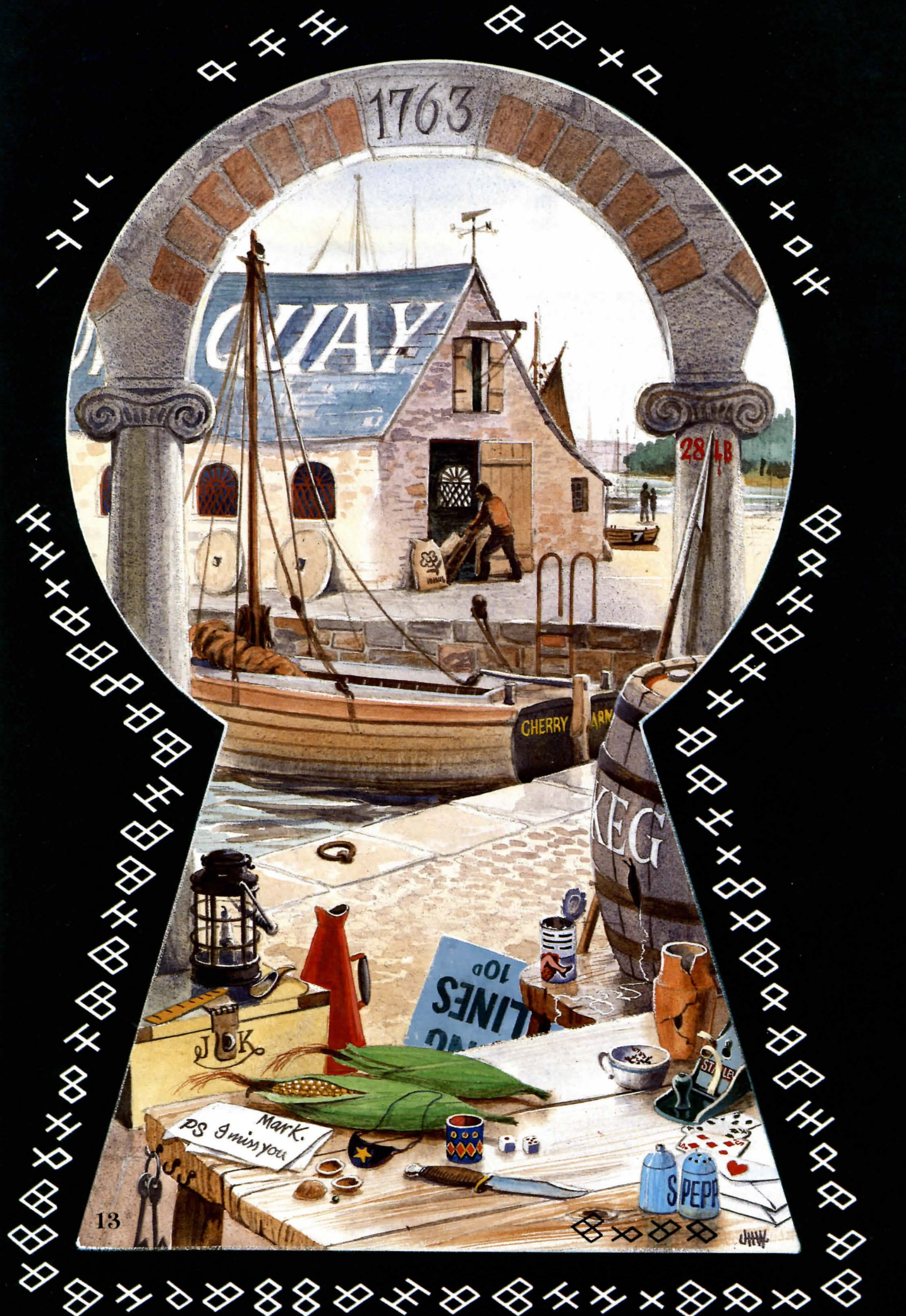
around the neck of the pouch and then to his belt, he could devote

his energies entirely to the act of exploring the exciting possibilities of

his new powers. First Mark tried floating up to a height of about ten

feet and, yes, the pouch had stayed at his hip firmly attached to his belt.

It worked! Remaining invisible he continued his progress. First the
bounding paces and then into that beautiful long low flight.



1763

QUAY

28 LB

CHERRY

KEG

10¢ LINES

Mark.
PS I miss you

SPEPP

CHW

The day's early rays were now warming nature's creatures to their busy harvests. Sweet ripe scents of the earth's gifts filled Mark's mind with dizzy delight as he found a fresh awareness, a clarity of sight and sound beyond those of the distracted mortal that he once was. The annoying clicks had now subsided and were barely audible.

The gravel lane below him gradually broadened into a neat verged pathway with a strangely flat and smooth surface. Mark followed its course until it crossed a shallow brook by means of a solid bridge. Here he paused, hovering above the spinney of trees which flanked it. A peculiar sound came to his notice. A continuous and monotonous rattling hum which became progressively louder until, with a startling suddenness, a most extraordinary carriage came into sight, moving down the wide pathway towards the bridge. The like of this carriage Mark had never seen before. It was lacquered red with enormous black lumpy wheels and grey smoke was snorting from a vertical pipe at its forward end. It was pulling a waggon with some sort of vegetable crop, which was loosely covered with a pair of green canvas sheets, upon one of which was a roughly painted initial, H. A thin man was perched upon a high seat on the leading vehicle and appeared to be directing its movements by means of a hand wheel and several levers.

Mark was so taken aback at this sight that he totally forgot his purpose. He sank to the ground immediately in the path of the oncoming machine. His abrupt contact with the roadway jolted him out of his invisible condition, only for a moment, but long enough for the tractor driver to receive the shock of his life. He swerved the heavy machine violently across the highway in order to miss the "Idiotic, fancy-dressed hippy — just askin' to be run down". The trailer, swinging obediently after the tractor, smashed its side against the brickwork of the bridge. Carrots shot in all directions, some rolling under the trailer's wheels to meet a premature end as vegetable purée, wasted on the tarmac.

Mark's prompt disappearance was unnoticed by the tractor driver, whose channelled wits were fully exercised with the task of rescuing as many of the carrots as possible. Perhaps a little bruised but nevertheless marketable.

The bridge itself gave Mark the answer to this latest puzzle. For there, against the wall, was an inscribed tablet on which the date of construction revealed that he was in a different time than that of his life. He had somehow projected himself into a future by at least 154 years and, judging by the age of the fabric of the bridge, possibly over 200 years.

So this was an example of how the world would be. Machines, noisy and smelly, the tools of man. For the better or not, Mark couldn't know, but the prospect of seeing further such things filled him with an exciting anticipation. He resolved, however, that if similar accidents were not to occur, he would have to be very careful. In no way did he wish to disturb the natural order of things and to this end he would not overstretch his powers and would avoid the major highways and settlements in his travels.

A new world indeed and with the ambition of discovery and the purpose of his original task, he moved again forward to what surprises might lie ahead.

what is the meaning of the mysterious runes?

The early assembled children's sweet singing gave the day new hope as Mark's ghost gently drifted across the recently cropped fields and up over the school yard, its black surface defaced by chalky hop-scotch scrawls. The highway beyond was quite busy with the traffic of commerce. All shapes and sizes of self-propelled vehicles passed below the awe-filled spirit. However, remembering the incident with the tractor, Mark didn't stop to marvel but kept on towards his adventure.

Having gained a little height, he was now able to see for some considerable distance ahead and only the occasional tall tree or church spire obscured his vision. The tree-tops were a delight to pass through revealing all sorts of hidden clearings which Mark could peep into as he glided amongst the high nesting birds. The landscape was indeed beautiful. Even the industry of man couldn't overcome that of nature. Certain structures, though, were very strange to Mark's eyes. For instance, the line of tall cage-like towers linked by long curving cables, which crossed his path and disappeared away into the distance. It reminded him of the dockside rope-walk where the rigging for the great ships was spun. This, however, was on an immense scale by comparison.

Passing below the cables, Mark was suddenly shaken by a frightening invisible force. Had he any bones, they surely would have been rattled to dislocation. So violent was the effect upon him that he lost control of his faculties and when he finally recovered, he found himself sitting on a gritty beach. All that he could remember for the moment was that terrible shaking and the numbing hum which blocked out his mind.

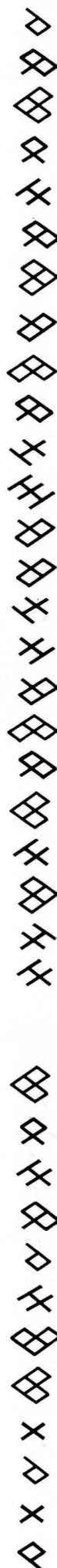
Looking down at himself, he was alarmed to see that he had half materialised, and although his feet and legs were quite visible, from the waist up there appeared to be nothing. It was fortunate that the beach was deserted. Gathering his wits, he managed to fade out his bottom half, but he did not notice that some of the gems had shaken loose from the pouch.

As he left to resume his travels, he noted that the area had an odd significance about it; a measure of shape and hue strangely symbolic.

Away he sped, as a petrel clipping the waves. Then, in a wide wheeling turn, back towards the beach, clipping a low headland and sweeping across the mouth of a muddy estuary. Mark was a bird. Like one of the many wildfowl about him the exalted spirit lifted up and over the untouched woodland.

The spirit's trace had served him well and was here marred only by one curious incident. Up from the flaming autumn ash trees came a long, spine chilling howl. It was obviously from some poor tethered creature, terrified by the approach of his ghostly form. It was an echo from the past; primeval and full of instincts lost. The hairs upon the nape of Mark's neck stood on end as though to the final touch of the noose.

Maintaining his direction, Mark was soon to come to a broad stretch



of river, beyond the far bank of which he saw the forbidding sweep of the very 'force cables' which so recently had caused such havoc.

Approaching with caution, he got to within a dozen yards of where the cables dipped overhead. It was here that he found the force commenced. He withdrew two paces from the distressing hum.

How could he cross the path of this opposing power? Then in a flash he realised that this was one of man's inventions, contemporary only to the time in which he now moved. Suppose he were to return to his own time, then surely the power would not be present. Willing a return to September 1779, he concentrated all thought. The clicking in his head suddenly rose to a piercing screech and faded again, barely audible.

The crops were different; the hedgerows were different, but the little wood ahead was basically the same and, thank goodness, the force cables had gone.

Entering the narrow woods by means of the path, Mark heard the sound of voices. A well-dressed man was in deep conversation with a high ranking officer of the Excise service. Mark, who of course could not be seen by the men, was able to get as close to them as he wished. They were



standing on a narrow rustic bridge over a small brook, which, although now almost dry, promised by the depth of its banks a capability of coping with the worst of storms.

The discussion was obviously not a friendly one. The revenue officer held a cruel whip in one hand and was shaking his other, fist clenched, under the nose of his companion. This man was pleading his case in steady forthright tones.

'I tell you ag'in, there was a whole bagfull when we sprung on 'em but this here's all we've been able to find.' He opened his right hand to reveal two shining gems. Mark then noticed the man's boots — the same boots he had seen in the light of the lantern the previous night. It was the man who had attacked the Captain.

The man continued his defence: 'All of them fellers were accounted for, dead the lot of 'em. Your chap darn near dead too, and all we can find is two of the diamonds, and them aways along the lane from the two stiffs.'

Here the officer interrupted: 'You'll come up with all of those diamonds, Mr. Hammond, or believe you me, you'll regret ever having heard of them.' He continued in an even more menacing tone, 'Don't you forget that you are in a most vulnerable position, being a family man.' The last of these words were sneered.

'You touch a hair on her head and, by heavens, I'll kill you.' was the passionate reply.

'Enough!' The officer brought his riding crop slashing across the face of his opponent. There was then a terrible silence and Mark saw little pricks of red blood oozing to the surface of the white flesh revealed by the weal across the man's cheek.

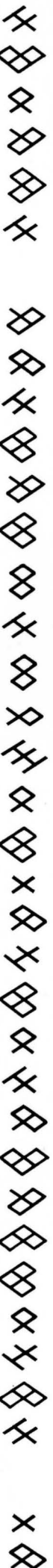
Suddenly the moment was broken as rage got the better of the injured man and he hurled the two diamonds into the leering face of the revenue man. 'Curse you for your evil!'

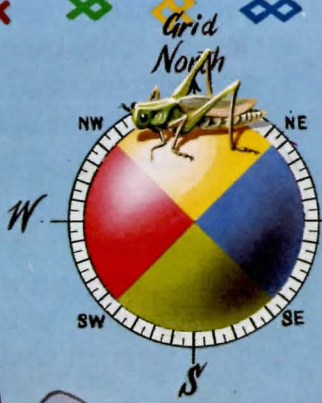
The officer, falling back against the rickety handrail, toppled backwards into the deep gully. There was a sickening crack as his neck broke. The man, seeing instantly the gravity of the situation, turned on his heel and ran up the path and away through the trees.

Mark was horrified to see that even now the remorseless greed of these men persisted. He was rooted to the spot. Slowly, he became aware of a growing chill upon his soul. The atmosphere was thick with menace. There, over the distorted body of the Revenue Officer, was forming a most evil presence. The black ghost of a sinful man. Mark could see it and it could see Mark. His head screamed . . . it was the sort of scream that sets one's teeth on edge and stands small hairs on end.

With a guttural inhuman snarl the wicked creature closed in, fixing the helpless spirit with a cold glassy stare. The eyes were cruel . . . far, far worse than the eyes which he sensed had been watching him that day.

Mark was unable to cope with this awful threat. It was not a MAN, it was a slobbering demon, and it was upon him.





A web of evil was enveloping Mark, like sticky binding threads that dragged upon his will. The power that held him was more than his spirit, in its fragile innocence, could meet. Any form of defence seemed futile. Held as he was, he could only watch as the grotesque devil drew him closer, as if hand over hand, pulling upon the invisible gossamer strands which imprisoned him. The concentration of this terrible power was immense and it was blindingly focussed on its prey. The stale stench of concentrated corruption was on the point of making Mark swoon as its slavering jaws prepared to consume him forever.

And then it hesitated. It had noticed the jewel pouch with its contents glinting through the hole. Its icy hand stabbed out in a flash, like the tongue of some warty toad snatching an unwary fly. The brittle fingers closed on the pouch.

The silver chain was just strong enough to resist the greedy attack but three of the diamonds were ejected from the hole.

Now that the attention of his enemy was divided between himself and the scattered gems, Mark felt the vice-like grip upon him ease ever so slightly.

Now it so happened that on that far off day, a family of magpies were chasing one another through the trees of that narrow wood. Chattering as she did so, the hen amongst them swooped down, attracted by the glittering specks shining from the first of the fallen autumn leaves. The birds she had been chasing wheeled around and joined her. Each of them (unaware of the ghostly conflict that was taking place) pecked up a diamond and flew off to the family nesting place, a thorn spinney a short distance away, and hid the precious stones. They were indeed devious creatures.

This was too much for the evil one. Releasing Mark, he clawed the air in the wake of the departing birds. A single tail feather fluttered to the ground but they were gone. And so was Mark!

Finding himself free, Mark commenced his practiced long loping paces as the prelude to full flight away from the scene. Evil, however, was quick to respond and before Mark could launch himself into flight, he became terribly conscious of the fiend that closely followed along that wooded path. Each long stride that Mark took, promised the escape of flight, but every time that he had just started to float away, he was brought back to the ground by the influence of the pursuing demon force. It was scratching at his fleeing heels. If ever there was the need of the protection of the Wight Eye Talisman, it surely was now!

Bound by measured bound, evil chased good across the changing landscape. This way and that, Mark twisted, trying to shake off his follower, but to no avail. Then he mustered all his mental effort and willed for that 'other time', the future in which he had so recently developed his powers.

There was the sudden discordant screech in his head and the pattern of his surroundings slowly dissolved by subtle changes; he found himself heading for another wood. Glancing behind him he was dismayed to see that the evil one had learnt the same tricks and was still at full chase.

The revelation was staggering. Mark felt that he was being drawn again by a strange powerful force towards the mind of this person. He was experiencing a tingling feeling and a hot flush throughout his whole being. His mind was going numb and he couldn't think. The atoms were buzzing and his hands felt as though he had veins full of porridge. The only emotion was that of fear. Fear that he was no longer in control. Only those eyes those dreamy, dreamy eyes.

'Look what I've found!' shouted one of the children. The spell was broken and Mark quickly backed away, shaken, but feeling better now that he was fully conscious.

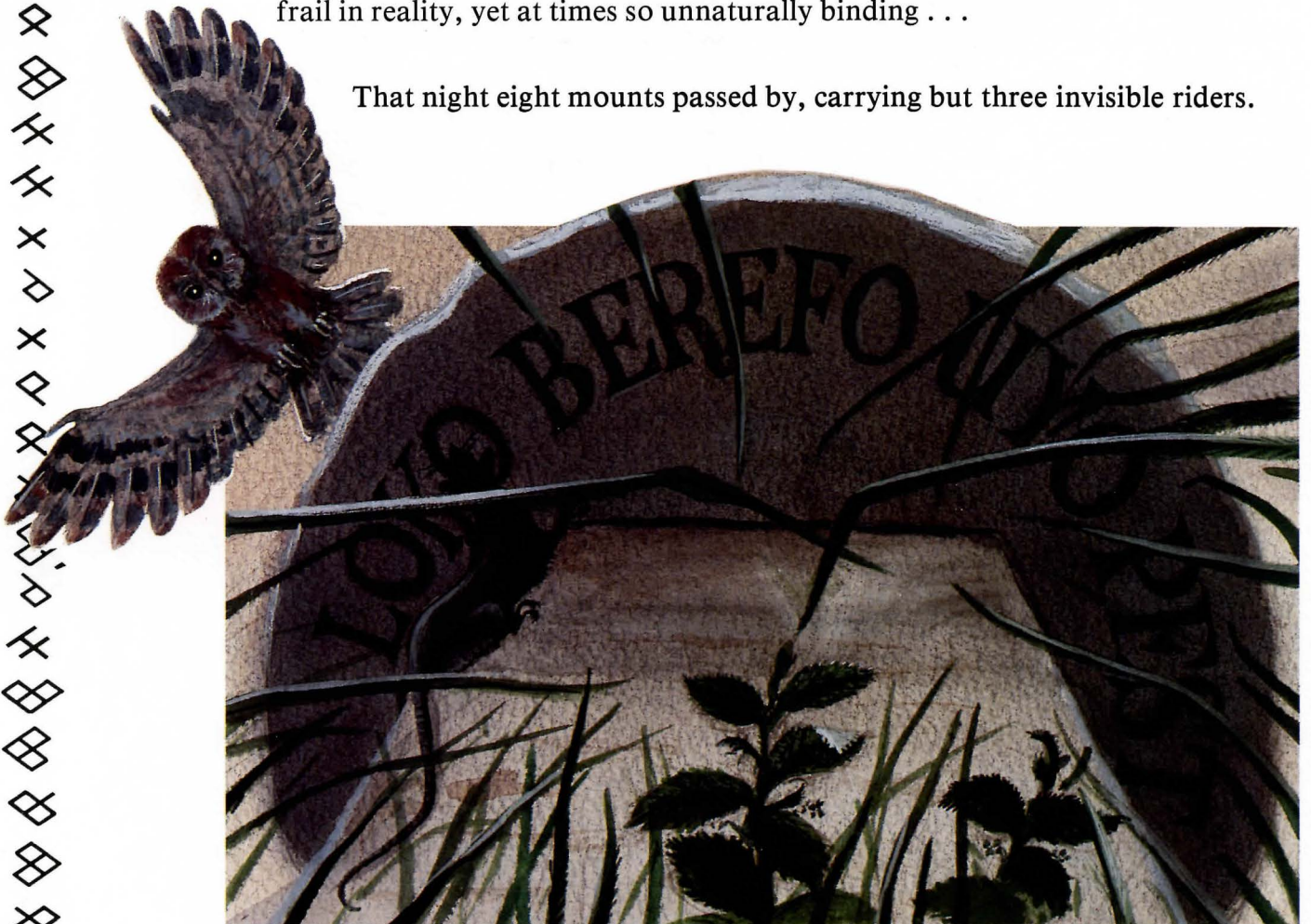
A strange thing, indeed, that the ghost should be frightened by the living. Could this, in some way, explain his feelings of being watched?

Mark decided to leave this place now that the people were distracted and he floated slowly away, as a wisp of evening marsh mist through fern and twig towards a setting sun. Taking great care to avoid the force cables, he did not notice that he was a little lighter than when he first came to the spot.

As the light was growing dim the spirit found a place to stop. Well into a sloping field and away from intrusion, it was a place for thought and for the recreation that comes with rest.

The beliefs, the superstitions and the habits that enslave us all are so frail in reality, yet at times so unnaturally binding . . .

That night eight mounts passed by, carrying but three invisible riders.





who is the unseen seer ?

The doubts of loneliness and the uncertainties of what may lie ahead disturbed Mark's senses through the dark hours. The night was full of devils looming up before him with threats of unimaginable menace. The infernal clicking in his head was working overtime.

A high blanket of cloud obscured the heavens, in spite of which mysterious starry beads hung in rigid necklaces winking at him. Through all his fevered confusion came the one welcome vision, his old dream. The girl with the transparent eyes. There was something about the girl which Mark sensed was good. She had about her an undefinable spiritual security.

All too soon the vision was fading and Mark was left reaching out into an empty darkness.

Although the girl had departed, Mark knew that he was no longer entirely alone and that somewhere, some time, there would be another meeting.

As night became morning, he took his bearings. He felt it was time to leave his valley refuge and go forth towards a new light. The invisible wings of his spirit bore Mark away over the late crops, up the long slope of the field to the crest of the hill, and beyond into a new day.

Before, Mark had been as a petrel, clipping the wave tops. Now he was a kestrel. The practice of the previous day brought the reward of accomplished flight. He could now rise like a lark and enjoy every moment of it. Gone the need for the ungainly long preliminary strides. Flight was immediate.

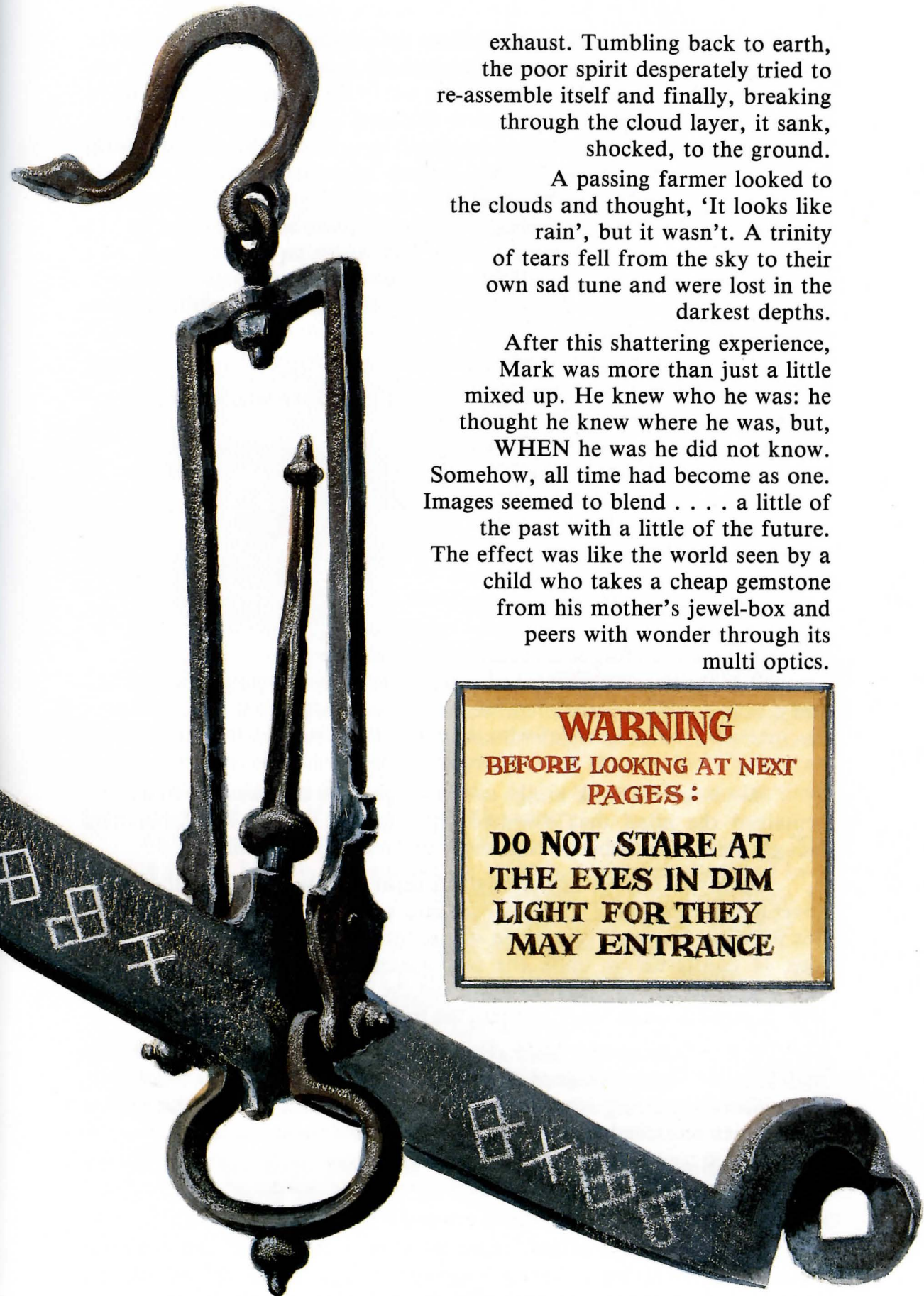
Exhilarated by this great sport, the silver pillowed clouds presented a novel playground. Up he soared into their soft vapours. Ever upward, through mist until he broke into crystal sunlight and there, below him, stretched an immense featherdown quilt, through which he caught an occasional glimpse of patchwork earth.

Again the heady delights of altitude urged him on to greater feats, so up towards the cold thin layers of the deep blue stratosphere he climbed. Even the irritating clicks in his mind had settled to a peaceful count.

This was pure joy. Gone were the fears and complexes of the previous night. Mark felt triumphant. Above all creatures, above all birds, even the mighty eagle could not fly this high! As Mark exalted, he little knew of his next lesson, approaching at 800 knots from the south-west.

To the airline pilot, the glassy smudge ahead looked like any other freak pocket of crystallized moisture and it presented no problem whatsoever. Sliced first by the wing and then by the great tailplane, Mark's ethereal portions were ignominiously scrambled by the slipstream and jet



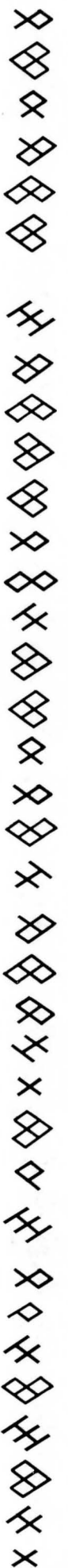


exhaust. Tumbling back to earth, the poor spirit desperately tried to re-assemble itself and finally, breaking through the cloud layer, it sank, shocked, to the ground.

A passing farmer looked to the clouds and thought, 'It looks like rain', but it wasn't. A trinity of tears fell from the sky to their own sad tune and were lost in the darkest depths.

After this shattering experience, Mark was more than just a little mixed up. He knew who he was: he thought he knew where he was, but, WHEN he was he did not know. Somehow, all time had become as one. Images seemed to blend . . . a little of the past with a little of the future. The effect was like the world seen by a child who takes a cheap gemstone from his mother's jewel-box and peers with wonder through its multi optics.

WARNING
BEFORE LOOKING AT NEXT PAGES :
DO NOT STARE AT THE EYES IN DIM LIGHT FOR THEY MAY ENTRANCE



Poor Mark was not long down from the clouds and here he was, once again, struggling to overcome another setback, and just when things had started to look so good. However, it was not in his nature to be kept down for long and this, he felt, was a new challenge. Fortunately, the double vision was soon to fade, although he would later find that it would return, from time to time. Now another feeling overcame him, not entirely unfamiliar for he had experienced it only the day before. It was that buzzing, tingling, drawing feeling. Someone, somewhere, was thinking of him, and those thoughts were pulling him away to a new place and, perhaps, to a new time. The effect was by no means as severe as when he had first experienced it and he was content to allow himself to drift towards its telepathic attraction.

Then, as he floated along, the young spirit became aware of other beckoning calls, mere whispers at first but gradually intensifying to the point where he found that, by concentrating initially on one attraction and then a little on another, he could steer a course somewhere between the two. It was rather like tacking the old fishing scow that he had enjoyed as a boy.

The mastering of new skills is always a good way of putting mental shocks behind oneself and Mark soon forgot his brush with the airliner.

With the accomplishment of control came a welcome confidence and just a little of the re-awakening of the spirit of adventure. Mark became fascinated by the question of who should be thinking of him, and why? So he lazily drifted towards the strongest influence.

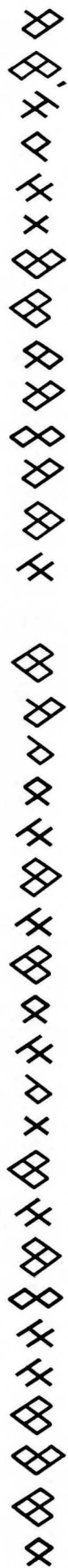
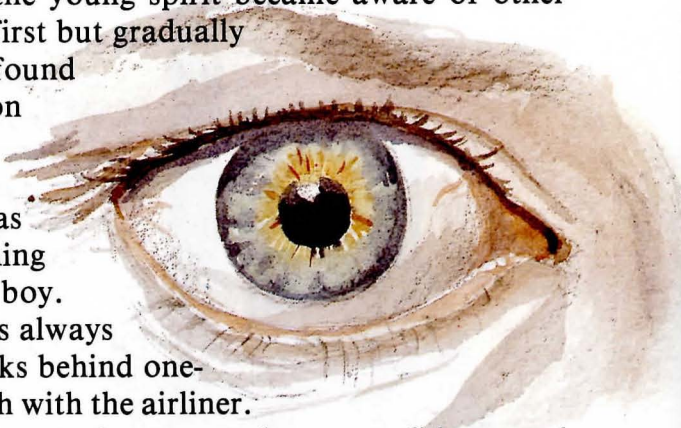
Standing on a brick bridge over a gurgling stream was the body that contained the mind that conjured the invisible spirit. The emanating thought was the 'polishing of the lamp' that releases the Genie.

Mark was now strong enough to resist and he merely withdrew to hover in the branches of a nearby chestnut, where he observed with interest this puzzling person. There again was a book and a crumpled chart. The look of consternation upon the face gradually changed to that of the dawning of some new understanding and the wide awesome eyes turned to look straight through Mark and into the fruitfull boughs.

This was enough for Mark. He was sure that he had not been seen but he did feel a powerful surge of the force that might cause him to unwillingly materialize. Hurriedly leaving his refuge, he thought little of the prickly fruits which scratched against the rough texture of canvas.

The mortal puzzler below felt a soft chill upon his brow as the remaining long leaves whispered and the first of the great tree's Siamese seeds fell amongst the damp mould of winter's promised bed.

Through the ripe afternoon air away from the woods and headlong for another rendez-vous. Skimming, skidding crests and thickets rolling down dusty, throat dry, stubbled, spent, forgotten fields. Carelessly drawn upon a thousand shifting, nudging, coaxing, windless breezes to another mind, another call. Another seeker restlessly peering into piles



of cornered leaves, tugging at tired old, insect ridden, horny nests, probing whole catacombes of ancient burrows and all to no avail. That is, to no avail as yet!

With a brave approach, Mark closed upon his next quarry. His subject was leaning against a metal gate, the division between field and woodland way. An open book was being contemplated. This time there was no buzzing, no tingling, only the distant hum of a busy highway and the toll of a far away bell. No cause for alarm. Even the mind clicks had settled to a steady, unworrying pulse.

Looking deep into the reader's mind's eye, the spirit saw his own image. At his feet, a diamond, presumably fallen from the pouch. So, that was it! This the game that the players so eagerly played. These people were all seekers . . . their imaginative powers willing him to manifest and reveal

his secrets. The book open at this page confirmed his thoughts. Suddenly he was being torn in every direction. All time was, — is as THIS MOMENT.

The shadow of his ghostly gaze falls over countless shoulders and now over one in particular.



MARK READS THESE WORDS.

The relapse was sudden and severe. In a mere moment, of lost concentration, the coaxing zephyrs that had filled the spirit's wandering sails had turned into an inexorable tornado which threatened to suck the helpless ghost ever backwards.

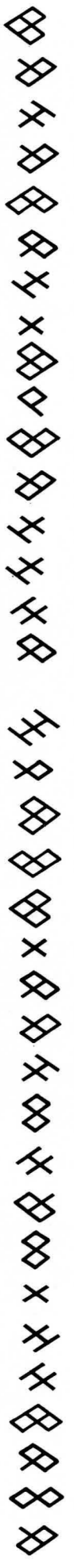
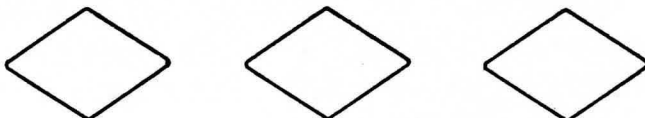
Leaning, striving against the force, Mark reverted to his old 'time' trick. He willed himself back to the 18th century.

As sudden as was his relapse then so too was his release. The binding chains broken, the squawking screech, Mark spiralled end over end through time and space. As he desperately tried to slow down he approached a small town church spire, its clock hands spinning in reverse and finally settling at seventeen minutes past one.

A sad congregation were gathered in the graveyard, mourning their own great loss, of which the passing years would leave no trace.

The slowing spiral ceased at last and Mark relaxed. It was fast approaching dusk and he could see but a little way ahead. The western golden glow was reflected in the calm waters before him. Distant sails like a giant 'A' transmitted their motion to the vessel they powered, its hoppers, holds laden with toil's reward.

To Mark, the moment was sweet, and now knowing the game, if not the rules, he decided to leave a small tribute to the occasion. At the water's edge he tossed in three small stones and watched their merry zig-zag dance to the sediments below.



One last look and Mark was faced with the prospect of another advancing night and his thoughts returned to the comforting visit of the clear eyed girl, the caller of his dreams.

That little thought, unguarded and pure, was the gateway to a whole new plane. The casting aside of material, child, toy notions and a step along the path of a garden of undiscovered delight.

The tornado returned. Now threefold it probed its hungry funnel through time and through space and Mark was caught. There was nowhere else to go. Only back. Only forward. Back over the old trodden ground and forward through time.

The girl was tall and silent. Alone she stood as though she had been waiting for this moment from the beginning of time. Her complexion had the same paleness that Mark remembered from his dreams and there was a serene stillness about her. Some people might describe her as a little plain but Mark could see that she had an inner beauty which was as worthy as it was steadfast. She was truly grace itself. As Mark approached he knew that she could see him but he felt no unease. Indeed, so strong was the attraction that there could be no denial and no retreat. This meeting at last was the culmination of the years of yearning and they both knew that it had to be.

No words were spoken. There could be none. It was the communion of two souls, a fusion of spirit and understanding that would be cemented together forever. The embrace lasted and it lingered. Mark felt her cool flat skin against his touch and he was at peace. He fully realised that soon he would have to continue his voyage and that he would be called to his other appointment but now the certainty of this child's love would be a guide to him wherever he went.

The night's warm blanket hid the two lovers and their fulfilment was complete. The time was all too short, the moments precious and private. From far away the moving, measured, tinkling notes of a piano concerto were borne upon the air. The romantic music of an untied gypsy traveller.

The approaching dawn painted its fiery messages relentlessly upon the eastern clouds and the sad, sad time for parting was nigh. How cruel it was that, now that there was so very much to say, there was so little time to say it. Hurriedly the lovers whispered their proclamations and vows, their promises of future contact and their pledge to correspond. No ordinary post could convey such love letters as theirs would be. It would be the seeding of the heavens with the warm thoughts of love and the letters would be there for the other's picking, like flowers flourishing in space.

Now, the only sound, the distant cockerel call of dawn on the new day's breeze.

A final soul-tearing wrench and a last backward longing look and Mark had to leave, for the insistent sun was at the threshold.

She remained there, standing as Mark had only so recently found her, smiling sadly back at him, her neat black skirt contrasting starkly in the twilight dawn. With her Mark had left nothing but his heart, perhaps his most valuable possession. With him he took but a simple snip of her hair. This to be the symbol and the seal of their union. A chorus of ballerina-like shrubs tip-toed the hillside where she stood.



who will discover the lost diamonds ?

Arrow-like to the region of his first night's refuge, an ideal place to commence his third day's mission. Mark tuned to the waking winds of countless questing minds. His courses planned, his progress patterned, he set his sails and his sheets he tightened. Cast off and with gathering speed he was on his way.

A bending brook near bells that peal, where puppy dogs are kept to heel. Beyond a bridge a horseshoe bay where current cuts the clay away. Cross one more made of single stone, that's two and one and two alone. Decide to turn and double back, two keys should fit a missing track. Each way there's now a choice to take, where highland paths a cross do make. From times most ancient are stones quite near, a channeled cutting deep and here, Mark slowed his rhythmic pace and in the dark forest pondered on what men here, so long ago had dwelt and worshipped and defended their territories.

The place had an eerie atmosphere, even to the roving spirit, and so Mark continued, leaving his little thought behind.

For a while he was content to merely drift and contemplate. Reviewing the day's progress, he was amazed to see just how far he had travelled by rhyme and a little reason. He concluded that the poet's way was probably the best means of both covering and remembering the ground on which he had cast his fortunes. To this end then, Mark turned his mind to verse.

The words came readily and most fitted the pattern of his travels but he would have to polish the punctuation a little.

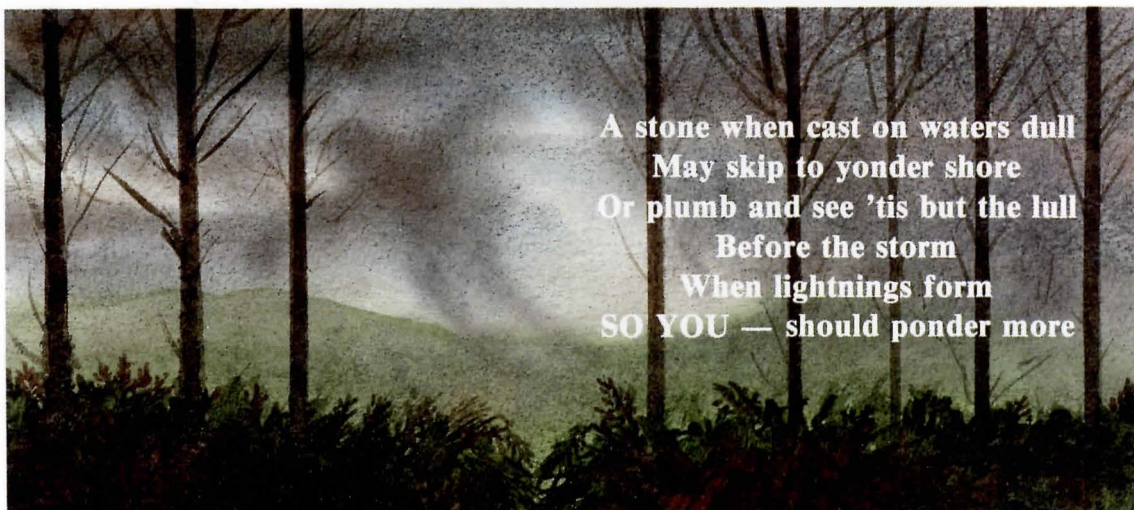
The distraction of composing his journal thus far caused Mark a minor time and space slip. Before he knew where he was (or indeed when) he found himself on a windswept clifftop and there confronting him was a reminder of his purpose, chiselled bold. 'Words-diamonds-words-diamonds', they whirled around in his head. He felt he must record them before these sudden relapses through time became too severe. It seemed that they were triggered by his lack of concentration or by some overpowering external skipping mind force.

As he was only a spirit, he would need a writer to commit his thoughts to paper. Mark resolved to watch out for a suitable person and to plant his seedling ideas one by one into the receptive soil of a living mind.

The fateful meeting came sooner than he expected, for there just ahead, wandering along another pathway, was an unsuspecting mortal, walking his dog in the afternoon sunshine. A suitable mind, open and innocent of the strange turn that life was about to take.

Mark applied his powers and but one tender seedling was planted and gradually its roots having gripped, it grew and was joined by many others until the jungle which you now see before you had taken charge.

Well satisfied, the spirit rested once again near his old haunt and waited for his last dawn.



A stone when cast on waters dull
May skip to yonder shore
Or plumb and see 'tis but the lull
Before the storm
When lightnings form
SO YOU — should ponder more

The night had brought a heavy rain and persistent lead grey clouds compressed the view through the outer pines in which Mark had spent his dark hours. The morning light seemed powerless to penetrate into the soggy bent-fern silence, a silence only relieved by the persistent doleful drip from damp hung boughs.

Mark's start towards his final day was late and his mood was low. He drifted unnoticed by the chilly campers who waded through the deep, wet, green grass, too concerned with their own moist miseries to heed but one more passing vapour.

'This was no way to spend his last day.' That thought was enough for Mark to shake off his listless attitude. The weather didn't really matter, after all the clouds must soon be gone. With a renewed optimism the spirit turned and directed his thoughts afresh towards a new path, a fairer climate.

Feeling considerably more cheerful now, Mark rejoiced at what beauty there could be even on a day so dank. The berries, fungi and the cool velvet moss, all were swollen with the relief that a damp and shady morning gives.

There was also a welcome solitude this morning. Welcome after the clamour of his recent travels. Like a seaside town at the end of its season when the visitors have all gone, this part of the day to Mark was his own. There were no distant callers, no active imaginations willing him to manifest and reveal his secrets. Perhaps the dullness of the day had dulled the seekers' senses to the point of soaking themselves with hot coffee and cold newsprint.

Borne only by his eremitic thoughts, Mark found himself now high and airy, bound for a hillside haunt that was half windswept, half sheltered. A forgotten crumbling pinnacle of earth and stone where bell-clad country dancers once scraped their buckled boots and waved a carefree hanky.

After a brief pause Mark decided to continue on his way and, not looking where he was going, he stumbled against some hard and rigid object. Headlong he sprawled, face flat into the musty leaf-mould.

To regain his composure the young spirit leaned against some nearby masonry, its rough dry texture picking at the weave of his



clothing. How odd, he thought, that a spirit such as he could pass quite happily through certain objects, yet some others could support or even trip him up. How careless he was. As he left the spot, a small portion of the dry and aged mortar detached itself and fell, as much of it had already done throughout the passing years.

The sky was becoming brighter and a cool Autumn wind was breaking the reeling clouds. The communication lines from the treasure seekers were still quiet. There was no summons as yet. Although Mark's unseen follower still watched his ways, the once unpleasant mind pulse was now steady and heralded no problems.

Mark started to consider his adventure which would be ending all too soon and his mind began to dwell upon his little artist friend. It was time to water a few of the implanted notions. He found that his own influence, like his spirit form, could transcend time and here, on this September morning, by concentrating his thoughts, he was able to get within the half slumbering mind of his chosen scribe, to suggest all manner of ideas which would keep the poor man awake for many a long night.

The waves, the images flowed from spirit to mortal mind. Confused they were but gradually a pattern emerged and a plan was plotted. At this stage Mark had not made up his own mind as to how he would hide the cache but he did wish to place it where, with a little faith, like Spring sown seeds, its value would multiply with time. To this end then, he confided this essential message:

"Within the inner plane there is a magical alchemy, which makes most things possible but the way to the great stone of light is only found by seeking shards of wisdom or by . . ."

The interruption came loud and shocking. It jabbed the inner ear like a spike of laser light. Mark had to respond. The bright mind that demanded his presence was all too sharp, too close. It came from the direction in which the spirit was already heading and it burst upon him with the surprise of a sudden sea squall.

As Mark approached, the person was slowly walking through what appeared to be a vegetable allotment. So strong was the imaginative power of this individual that, had there not been the need to stop and question a passing local walker, Mark would have surely unwillingly materialised. As it was he was able to hover and invisibly await developments.

The conversation between the two mortals was brief and, although the directions requested were given, they set off together along the footpath. A stile or two, a white watered stream were crossed and then a climb to the crest of a curious long brush covered embankment. It was here that the companions parted company. There were polite thanks and the visitor paused. The parting local jokingly called back over a jaunty shoulder:

'Don't yer stop too long, NIPPER, this 'ere bit's HAUNTED!'

A cackling laugh mixed with the squeak of a long neglected hinge and the clang of a rusty gate latch.



‘NIPPER!’ The word to Mark was like the hard slap of a winter’s wave against the ill-fitting oil-skin jacket that he once wore. He could feel the icy brine trickling between his young shoulder-blades. Was this coincidence or did these people know of his presence?

The lone seeker also looked a little taken aback but gradually a familiar gleam came into those shrewd eyes.

This was enough for Mark. The quickest way to leave was through time, so back he willed and back he wheeled. Not too far though, just enough to be apart from that bright and powerful mind.

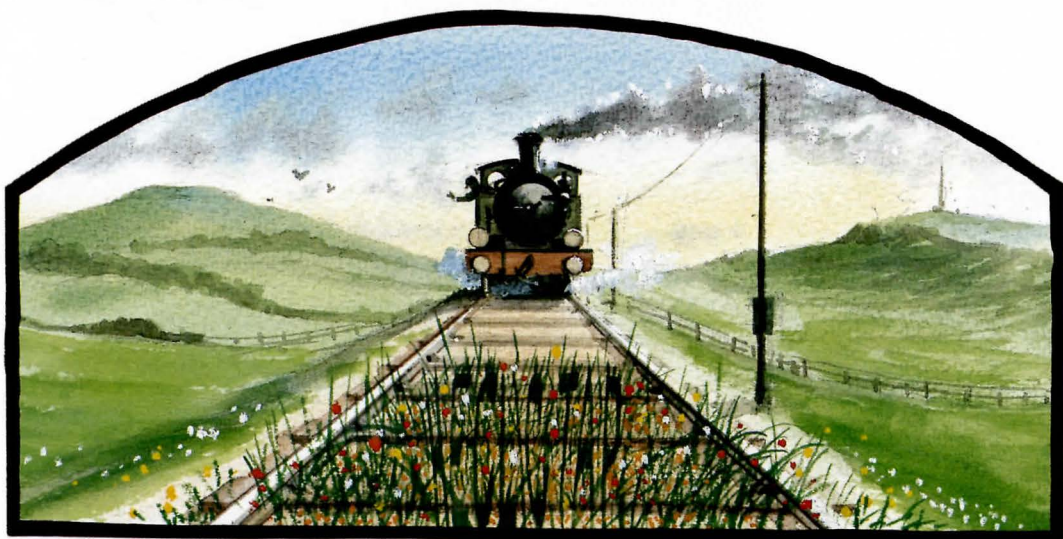
The backward spiral slowly ceased but the now expected screech continued for a few seconds and gradually faded like the sound of a bullet’s ricochet. The surrounding scene gradually took shape and Mark felt strangely alone.

Still high on the embankment was he but gone were the brush and the scrub. At Mark’s feet were silver ribbons stretching before and behind him resting on a bed of neat laid coarse gravel. He knelt and closely examined the shining surface of the polished metal. It seemed to live. It trembled and it throbbed with a rhythmic beat which, as the puzzled spirit gazed, grew and grew in its intensity. The whole ground beneath Mark’s feet began to shake in sympathy with this song of shining steel. Too late the bemused and perplexed ghost realised what danger it heralded.

So sudden did the boy appear, that the poor driver had no chance to halt his massive laden engine. The gradient, though slight, favoured only its forward progress and all that could be done was to blast a useless warning.

Mark turned to see the fiery monster thundering down upon him, its steaming pressured shriek more like a scream of triumph than the warning that was intended. Straight through the buffeting battering chain of engine and carriages the spirit went; he was rolled, bounced and whirled along the shaking sleepers and finally left numbed at the side of the track to witlessly witness the anxious but pointless search for his remains.

There, ever after, engine drivers were extra careful to sound their approach to that particular crossing and always felt relieved at its passing, until the old rails were finally torn up forever.



Mark was again stricken with the sickening double time vision that first attacked him after his encounter with the aircraft. He fully intended to complete his mission but now felt that he was trapped within a maze of his own making. He groped blindly from corner to corner. It was a maze of walls and no walls. He was lost. He felt sure that he had been to this place before but he knew that it could not, or indeed must not, be. Endeavouring to be certain he decided to leave a marker where he could check, should it be necessary. A single stone would do; he had already lost so many, it surely would not matter.

The ghost's dizzy staggering steps soon brought him once more to an all too similar place but there was no marker. Again he sacrificed a precious stone, placing it secretly but logically where it could be checked. Another stumbling step or two and the giddiness became too much. Mark slumped against a wooden gate where he decided to wait for the unpleasant effects to subside.

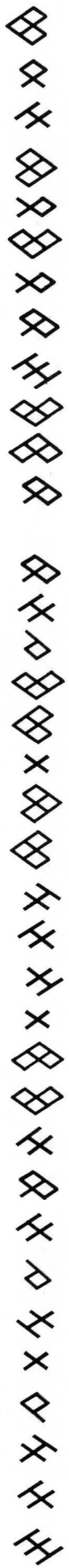
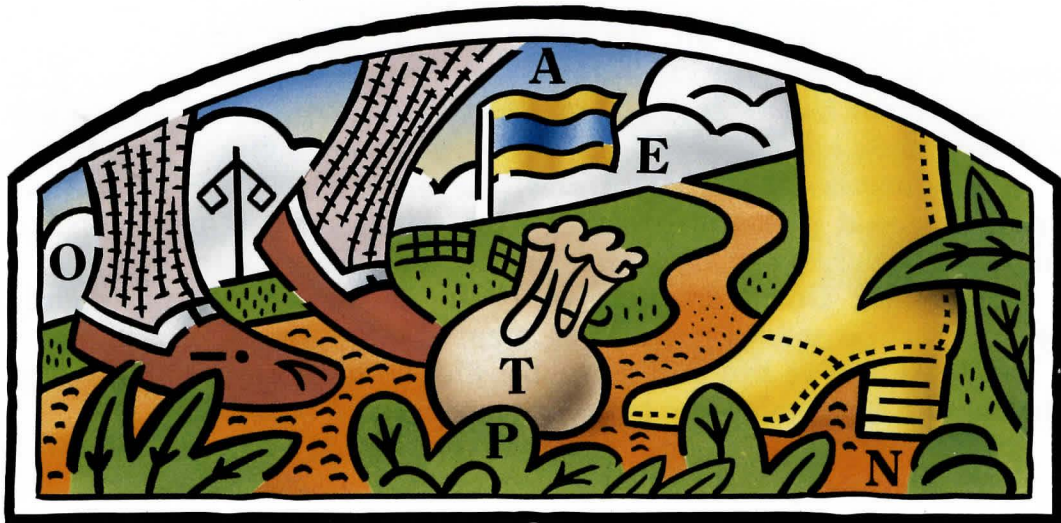
As the feeling wore off and Mark's vision became a little better, he was able to appreciate his surroundings: the nearby beech grove and the view to the bay and downs beyond.

Considerably revived, the spirit closed the gate. The wait had certainly worked but just in case there should be another relapse, Mark left his mark before he left.

Straightforward now was the spirit's passage. Clear skies and a south-easterly breeze promised a pleasant afternoon for his last day.

The clamour of the seekers' calls could still be heard but only faintly, as they were from the recent future. Soon Mark would have to return fully through the years to his final appointment. Now he intended to enjoy his remaining hours as a free spirit. Carried only by his own willing, he carelessly drifted with the thistledown until, spotting that he would soon be hemmed in by his future movements, he altered course and reflected on the day's progress.

On again until the gorgeous prospect of the sea stopped him mid-step. His old love, the sea, in all her sparkling glory. Her waving welcoming liquid immensity shattered the sun's long light and multiplied its intoxicating rays. It warmed Mark's brow, it dazzled his eyes. He ran headlong down to the scoured whispering beach and plunged his feet into the foaming spume. So long ago this act had been one of Mark's



greatest joys. To touch the summer sea was to touch a living thing which, in its turn, stretched to touch the very ends of the earth.

Mark ran along the beach; it was like a virgin matrix stretching before him. Now he splashed in the tide, now out and, when out of his depth entirely, he swam the long swim back to a point where weariness overtook him. Of course he was in no danger but here the day's play must end, for the mellow mists of evening were already filling the lower valleys of the land.

It was at this point that Mark noticed a passing trading ketch. She made a splendid sight from his viewpoint, so low on the water. Her sails set full against the thick end of season light gave the impression of delicate but rich translucent petals. The vessel appeared modern enough to the floating boy but, in fact, for her day, she was one of the last of her line. She was the 'Leptophyes of Cowes' homeward bound and well-laden.

In an instant Mark was aboard her, happy to feel a moving deck beneath his feet once more. The fair breeze and the change of tide carried the old boat and her ghostly passenger to a point where Mark, having regained his reserves of energy, slipped quietly away over the side, not to swim this time but to skim the molten surface like a swallow chasing a fly.

Mark's thoughts were now totally concerned with the culmination of his quest. He must return. Back plummeting, back through time, he fell, and as he did, he strove to contact his restless scribe. The link was made and so engrossed was the spirit with his intercourse that, like a high diver plunging into the ocean, he overshot his point of regression and, on finally slowing to a halt, he found himself a full five days' earlier than he had planned. Indeed, he was again at the start of his adventure, for there he saw himself, sitting on his bunk aboard the 'Rose', about to embark on his great journey.

This proved to be more than just interesting to Mark, as by coming forward again through time, with a little care, he could now be a silent spectator to recap on his movements. The unpleasant episodes he could speed through, the pleasing parts he could savour and, above all else, he could recite his story and deposit the treasure.

Yet Mark had no power over the events. 'Ne'er half a line could he cancel'!

The final nature of the cache and its hiding place had been determined . . . the way to find it outlined. The last line was drawn, a plan plotted. Meanwhile the course of the spirit's travels passed before him like a flickering picture. Closer and closer Mark got to his advent.

But one last appreciation now, the meter changing. The minute and the second passed — regained. The spinning hands resolved, and then — the blurred and friendly figure of Stan wobbled into focus.

"evening Good, are how you?" he enquired as Mark, slightly reeling from his sudden re-surfacing, popped into view.

"I see you've had a little trouble with your calibration" remarked the angel. "Never mind, we have a moment or two in hand."

"Is everything alright?" asked Mark. "I got here as fast as I could."

“Oh, yes. The paperwork is all in order now. Apparently your mortal remains have been taken in a state of coma to the local doctor’s home. The poor man has done a grand job in caring for you but to no avail. But it will look good on his own final report.”

It was then that Mark saw the ominous devilish form of the evil Revenue Officer, from which he had so narrowly escaped, lurking in the black undergrowth.

The angel, perceiving the youth’s distress, immediately calmed him.

“Ah yes”, he said, “the Captain of the Excise. Not the officer that I expected to pick up this night, I’m bound to say. Please don’t be afraid, he has already started his penance. See how he hangs his head. The avarice of the man is now the shame of his spirit. But, fortunately for him, the Great Gates are closed to no-one. There is hope, even for the vilest of the vile and as for damnation, well, in the end it is all a question of degree. This sad, wasted creature will, no doubt, have yet another chance and I’m sure that redemption will one day be his”.

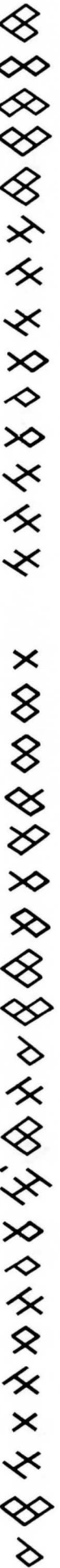
A shining robe was handed to the sad youth and a little later the trees once more rustled in the stillness of the night.



Many, many years later; but time, of course, means but nought, a boy child was re-born and he grew to love the sea and he had about him a wistful wisdom.

There too, was shortly after, a girl of grace and innocence. She was joy.

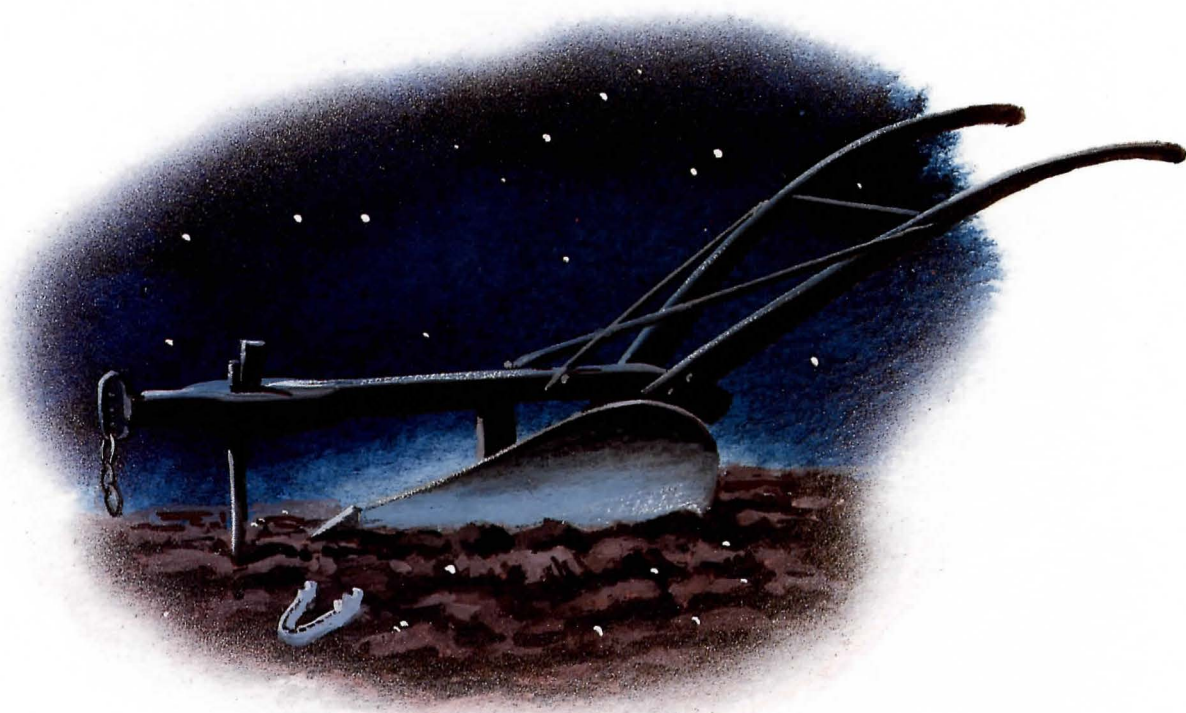
now start a gain...



Come all who seek an answer
To where and what and how
Of treasures to discover there are five
To see the Island's beauties
The wisdom stone itself
Are each a goal for which it's worth to strive.

The hidden cache and diamonds lost
are yet another two
These wrought from faith, desire and toil
By Alchemy a fusion
Their nature is refined
And they await as seeds upon the living soil

A share of dues amounting
The final words will show
That all is understood and thereby yours
But seeker please be wary
The Talisman you should hold
A ward from scary spectres and their lores.



There is more to a rose than the cutting.

What to do if you find a talisman

Finders of the lost talismans should keep them in a secure place, for with their individual secret messages they are each a unique token by which a person may claim a share of the Royalty Fund when it is eventually divided. A discovery may be registered with the publishers at any time should the finder so wish. Details are to be found within each talisman's sealed recess.

If you are the lucky one who finds the Great Wight Eye talisman, you should first decipher its final riddle which will show that you have found it by the correct means, then contact the publishers of this book, who will attend to your claim and broadcast via the news media for all other claimants to come forward for their shares.

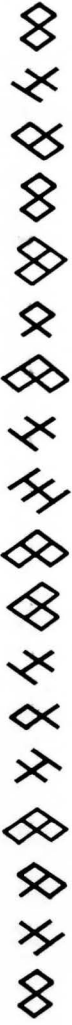
The Royalty Fund will steadily grow with the sales of the book until its value reaches a ceiling of £1,000,000 – or until December 1993 – or until all of the talismans have been accounted for. Should either of these factors be reached and the Great Wight Eye's final riddle remain unsolved, the fund will be equally divided between the finders of the talismans so far discovered. A full solution to the riddles will be published when the Royalty fund is finally closed.

**Remember when you're tired of trying
That soon again you're wonder-whying
So put me on the shelf 'til later
For ideas do, from out the blue
Arrive to make your vision greater.**

Possession of this book secures
(upon receipt of a S.A.E.)
details of replica talismans, large
scale treasure maps ...

..... YOU COULD LEARN MORE





The nature of this book demands that it is not a definitive travelogue of the Isle of Wight. There are already many such publications available. However, it should be said that one of the great treasures to be discovered is the Island with its rich variety of scenery and places of interest. There are probably more well signposted footpaths and bridleways per square mile on this Island than in any other part of the British Isles.

My original intention was to re-bury the "Golden Hare" somewhere here (so convinced was I that we had found it . . . but that is another tale) and that is why certain similarities with 'another book' may appear to be evident. The solution to SPIRIT OF THE STONES is different and as far as I know, original. It is written for no particular age group but I would say that it would be hard going for those younger than 14 (unless they have shown marked signs of prodigy).

The symbols and the runes are the starting point and it would be better for the seeker to find the key rather than to use laborious trial and error methods for they tell more than is written! The Wight Eye talismans are only a minor part of the story but they do carry a message which is essentially, the spirit of the book. It is not black magic, but perhaps the reverse.

I would like to emphasize that none of the talismans nor the Great Wight Eye are buried, they are only concealed in a certain way. Although some landmarks referred to in the text are on private land, there is no need for anyone to trespass.

If there is such a thing as coincidence, I have come to believe that it has no bounds, for in the course of preparing the illustrations and text, there have been so many items (their inclusion, at first, only whims) which I have later learned to have an incredible significance. I look forward to the time when I can divulge all.

In fairness to everyone, neither the Publishers nor I can enter into personal correspondence. However, information will be released through the media from time to time.

My answer to critics shall be: 'Judge only with solution'.

My apologies are offered to those who bear certain names as no offence is intended beyond a minor leg-pull.

My dedications go to my patient wife and daughter, to my long suffering friends, to Pam, a goodly type and to C/S, a source of inspiration and to all who seek a treasure, whatever it may be, for surely some will be lucky . . .

DEAR READER, IT COULD BE
YOU

John Worley



**Where Stone of Light now stands
The whispering ash tree bends
Its sooth sign 'ever ands'
The circle never ends.**

This stone is but a symbol of
the Spirit's message.
It stands on public view at
Bennet's Bluff,
Robin Hill Adventure Park.
The Great Wight Eye of course,
lies somewhere else!



Pavilions

1 $\diamond\diamond\times\diamond\times\diamond\times\times$
 $\diamond\times\diamond\diamond\times\times\times\times$

Girdle

2 $\diamond\diamond\times\diamond\times\times\times\times\diamond\times\diamond\times\times\times$
 $\diamond\times\diamond\diamond\times$

Upper Girdles

3 $\times\times\diamond\diamond\times\times\times\times\times\times$

4 $\times\diamond\diamond\diamond\diamond\times\diamond\times\diamond\times\times$

5 $\diamond\times\times\diamond\times\times$

Bezel

6 $\diamond\times\times\diamond\times\times$

Stars

7 $\diamond\times\times\diamond\diamond\times\times$