

Space Gods of Ancient Britain

By W. R. Drake

Our contributor needs no introduction to readers of FLYING SAUCER REVIEW. Works from his pen, like SPACEMEN IN THE MIDDLE AGES, UFOs FOUGHT FOR CHARLEMAGNE, and other speculative examinations of history and mythology, have appeared at regular intervals in the REVIEW. Mr. Drake points out that the literature of the ancient Britons is so scanty that it is impossible to quote many firm details, and he leaves it for the readers to decide for themselves whether or not his arguments carry conviction.

THE islands of Britain appeared to the peoples of antiquity to be a realm of faery enchantment, populated by Giants: the land of the Gods. Traditions that the earliest Britons descended from the skies have been perpetuated in the old Gaelic chant from the Hebridean island of Barra:

*"Not of the Seed of Adam are we,
Nor is Abraham our Father,
But of the Seed of the Proud Angel
Driven forth from Heaven."*

Conventional belief that Britons were barbarians daubed with woad rests mainly on brief descriptions by a Julius Caesar smarting from defeats. Pytheas, the Greek mariner who circumnavigated Britain in B.C. 380, found a flourishing country. The poet Martial sang: "For mountains and fair women, Britain is beyond compare." Boadicea was a wealthy and talented woman, and both Tacitus and Dio Cassius applauded her cultured mind. Strabo and Ammianus Marcellinus marvelled at the wisdom of the Druids, who were believed to have been the teachers of Pythagoras. The Druids claimed descent from the god Dis, (Jupiter), and also worshipped Mercury, Apollo and Minerva (probably Space Beings), the identical deities of Greece and Rome. The historians, Nennius, Geoffrey of Monmouth and Polydore Vergil, all agreed that the Bronze Age Kings of Britain were descended from Brut, grandson of Aeneas, and from the goddess Venus. Such lineage, literally from the skies, may have originated belief in the divine right of Kings.

A patient unravelment of the old legends seems to retore to the islands of Britain a proud ancestry ascending to the gods, when these ancient shores were assaulted from Space. Tacitus claimed that Cronus (Saturn), Ruler of the Golden Age, was deposed by Zeus (Jupiter) and then sent bound in chains to Britain; Plutarch added that many lesser gods accompanied him, all guarded by Briareus with a hundred hands. The Etruscans believed

that the Saturnians had blessed our Earth with a wonderful civilisation which was in turn overthrown by more virile invaders from Jupiter or its moons. Worship of Bel and Alan, identified with Cronus (Saturn), is said to be perpetuated in place-names and folk-dances to this very day; the great circle at Avebury is considered to be an astronomical temple sacred to Saturn. Since Cronus and his defeated allies were imprisoned in Britain, these islands probably formed an important base for the Space Beings, confirming worldwide superstitions that Britain was the abode of the gods. The Book of Enoch described how that patriarch flew to the West, possibly to Britain, on a whirlwind which translated him to the skies.

Irish manuscripts describe the giant race of Formorii, a great maritime nation before the Flood. Were these giants—the sons of Space Beings and the Daughters of Men chronicled in Genesis, who fought the Gods for thirteen years until the war was ended by Hercules—believed to have visited Britain? The giants are said to have used fantastic weapons, piling mountain on mountain to storm the skies. Hesiod tells how the Gods launched the "Arrow of Apollo" to destroy the Hyperboreans, the peoples of Western Europe. The hero Bellerophon, on the flying horse Pegasus slew the Chimera, a fire-breathing monster which laid waste the lands of the West, possibly symbolising conflict between Spacemen and Britain. Comyns Beaumont vividly describes how the Scottish Highlands are pitted with the ruins of prehistoric fortresses vitrified by titanic electric blasts, thunderbolts of Zeus which fused the solid rock. Lewis Spence states that in Snowdonia there exist remains of the British city of Emrys, with cyclopean fortifications, known as the ambrosial city of Dinas Afferaon or the Higher Powers. Tradition asserts that it was here, in the ancient days of sun worship, that dragons were concealed which were frequently harnessed by the children of the Welsh Goddess Keridwen, suggesting visitations by Space Beings. Could the famous Welsh Dragons be symbolism for Spaceships?

The Irish tell of the flashing, cyclopean Eye of Balor, which annihilated all who were fixed by its gaze, rather like the Gods (Spacemen) of ancient Mexico, who used malignant rays to paralyse their enemies. One remembers too, how Perseus, using Medusa's Head, turned people to stone.

The Druids in Britain worshipped Hermes (Mercury), the god associated with Moses and his magic rod; Hermes bore a caduceus or wand of power and was believed to have taught the Druids magic, music and medicine. The serpent rod of Hermes was described as controlling some sidereal force unknown to our twentieth century: the Druids are said to have used Dis Lanach (Lightning of the Gods) and Druis Lanach (Lightning of the Druids) with which they shrivelled their enemies. The alleged use of magic in ages past becomes credible if we accept that the Initiates of antiquity may have inherited from the Space Beings a science based on different principles from our own, just as the UFOs transcend our own technology.

The Druids of Ireland claimed to be descendants of the Tuatha De Danaan, god-like beings who taught them the secrets of heaven; they possessed the Slat-na-davithta or magic wand. Mog Ruth, the famous Druid of Munster, wore a blue and white speckled headpiece to assist his magic flight through the air. He defeated an opposing Druid, Ciothmode, in aerial combat, and aided Simon Magus in the construction of the magical wheel, Roth Fail, in this he flew to Rome accompanied by his daughter, Tlachtga, to dispute with St. Paul; unfortunately they crashed before the Emperor Nero. St. Columba is said to have described a flying vessel carrying thousands of men. Flying is common in Irish tradition; the legend, Lia Fail, narrates how King Conn used to mount the battlements of the royal fortress of Tara so that no hostile beings from the air could land unobserved.

Nennius records that long after Brut's arrival in Britain, the Scots landed in Ireland from Spain, a reference to the well-established migration to Britain of the "Beaker" peoples from the Iberian peninsula. A Spanish fleet of thirty ships brought people to Ireland when a "Tower of glass" appeared, the summit of which was crowded with men. Eventually the ships attacked the "Tower", which destroyed them. Could this be some garbled reference to a Spaceship? Ships of glass appear to have been greatly esteemed by the Druids. The *Caer Wydr* mentioned in "The Spoils of Anwyn" was a vessel of glass in which King Arthur is said to have explored the underworld region of Anwyn. It appears identical with the boat of glass in Irish myth in which Condlá the Red was spirited away to the Land of the Ever Living by a fairy princess.

The resemblance between these ships of glass and the solar boats in Egyptian tombs is strengthened by the Celtic religion myths of the Sky Father and Earth Mother which had many elements of the Egyptian religion. These myths may refer to the Sons of God (Spacemen) who mated with the Daughters of Men, and the ships of glass may well represent the Spaceships. The magician, Merlin, popularly endowed with the accomplishments we attribute to Spacemen, escaped from the Saxons to Vortigern in a ship of glass; King Arthur himself is believed by some to have come from the skies. About A.D. 1510, Ariosto, the Renaissance poet, wrote about glass ships in *Orlando Furioso*, Canto 1, Stanza 8.

*"Portate alcune in gran navi di vetro
Da i fier Demonii, cento volte e cento
Con mantici soffiare lor faccian dietro,
Che mai non fur per l'aria il maggior vento."*

*"Bear Ye some (Spirits) in great ships of glass,
For the proud Demons, a hundred times and a hundred,
Impel them from the rear with puffs from bellows,
So that never was there greater wind."*

To the unscientific soul might not a spaceship appear like a ship of glass, and a Spaceman like a Spirit from Heaven?

References in the Hindu Vedas and in the Bible, support the Greek, Scandinavian and Mexican legends that Spacemen visited our Earth. Comyns Beaumont remarks that on Callenish in the Hebrides, a great circle of stone might have been a winged Temple, and that Skye also bore the Gaelic name of "Sgiathanach" meaning a "winged island" or "giant wing".

Geoffrey of Monmouth records that in the second millennium B.C. the Bronze Age King, Bladud, "a right cunning artifer" taught astronomy and necromancy throughout Britain, fashioned wings and tried to "go upon the top of the air" when he crashed upon the Temple of Apollo on Lud's hill in the city of Trinovantum (London) and was dashed to pieces, the first aerial accident! This story has affinities with the legend of Daedalus and Icarus.

Britain's two patron Saints, St. Michael and St. George, are sometimes identified with Castor and Pollux, the Heavenly Twins, who were credited with teaching men civilisation. Theologians venerate St. Michael as a Warrior of God leading the Hosts of Heaven. Students of UFOs may read in this description a "Commodore of Spaceships." Various headlands and hilltops in Britain related to St. Michael may suggest ancient traditions of visitations from space.

In his "Histories of the Kings of Britain", Geoffrey of Monmouth recalls that when Uther Pendragon was fighting the Saxons at Winchester "there appeared a star of marvellous bigness and

brightness stretching forth only one ray whereon was a ball of fire spreading forth in the likeness of a dragon, and from the mouth of the dragon issued ten rays whereof the one was of such length as that it did seem to reach beyond the regions of Gaul and the other verging towards the Irish sea did end in lesser rays." Is this the earliest British sighting of a UFO? Geoffrey also describes how Cadwallader, King of the Britons, whilst fighting the Saxons, was fitting out his fleet, when an "Angel" spoke to him in thunder and bade him go to the Pope Sergius at Rome, where he later did penance and renounced worldly affairs.

Irish mythology extols the power of Cuchulain who fought aerial battles in flying chariots and annihilated his enemies with flashing lightning like Zeus on Olympus and the celestial Rama in old India. All these are suggestive of Overlords from Space. The magic powers of Cuchulain were said to be known to St. Patrick, who dispelled snowstorms and darkness raised by the Druids, evoked celestial light, practised levitation and used healing stones. For those feats he received help from "Angels" (Spacemen). Nennius, who lived within two or three centuries of St. Patrick, wrote that the Saint was warned by an "Angel" before crossing the Irish Sea; he fasted forty days on a mountain and spoke to "God". In a way he resembled Abraham, for an "Angel" spoke to him from a burning bush (UFO?). No one knows his sepulchre, and this causes speculation as to whether, like Enoch, he was translated to the skies.

The old Irish believed that the spaces of the air were closely crowded with a disordered crew of rebel satellites, held invisible lest men should become infected by their evil curses. Nennius records that St. Germanus told someone that "Angels" were waiting in the air to take him away.

On several occasions he called down fire from heaven to blast Vortigern, who was fighting Hengist and Horsa. The Saint prayed to the "Lord" three days and nights. On the third night at the third hour fire fell suddenly from heaven and totally burned the castle. Vortigern, the daughter of Hengist, his other wives, and all the inhabitants, both men and women, perished miserably in the blast. This brings to mind the story of Sodom and Gomorrah.

King Arthur is said by Nennius to have received the assistance of the "Lord" in his twelve great battles against the Saxons, presumably with the aid of Merlin, who according to Geoffrey of Monmouth "never had a father".

Conn, King of Ireland, described that when he entered a mysterious mound he beheld the Sun God, Lugh, seated beside a woman of great beauty, which recalls to us the case of "Our Lady of Fátima", seen in Portugal in 1917 with associated phenomena suggestive of Spaceships. The alleged materialisations of "fairies", both male and female, with human proportions, throughout hundreds of years in Britain, have much in common with sightings of Spacemen today. The intriguing "fairy ring" marks on grass recall the strange tracks of a possible UFO near Capua in B.C. 82, as recorded by Julius Obsequens. There also spring to mind the numerous scorched earth markings discovered during the last decade. Both Ovid and Lewis Spence state that "fairies" were former "Gods": could they have been Spacemen?

The scanty records of the past, confusing though they be, seem to extend the proud history of Britain by thousands of years, evoking those glorious days when our ancient country was ruled by the "Gods" themselves.

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