

**Feasibility Study:
The “Hooker Light” Reported Phenomenon,
New Jersey, and Reported Light Phenomena
Near Pine Bush, New York (Plus Additional Material)**

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International Research Consciousness Laboratories



**INTERNATIONAL
CONSCIOUSNESS RESEARCH
LABORATORIES**

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FEASIBILITY STUDY

The "Hooker Light" Reported Phenomenon, New Jersey and Reported Light Phenomena near Pine Bush, New York (Plus Additional Material)

Fieldwork Conducted During June, 1993
Report Compiled in July 1993

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With regard to the Pine Bush reported light phenomena, I wish to thank Phyllis Atwater of Charlottesville, VA., for being the first to provide me with information on light phenomena at the location, for giving me her own reliable eyewitness accounts of the phenomena and for making the necessary connections for me with people who could identify key viewing places; Jean Munser of New Jersey for providing a highly objective report of her visit to Pine Bush, and for eliciting further specific location information at Pine Bush; Eleanor Motichka, New Jersey, for likewise helping with similar information, and Linda J. Shedd of Windy Hill Farm, Pine Bush, for providing invaluable information both on her personally-witnessed examples of the light phenomena and detailed locational advice.

Last but certainly not least, I want to acknowledge the role of Charla Devereux, who handled most of the on-the-ground logistics of the study, including all the driving, and shared the literature and field research with me, thus forming a key element in this feasibility study.

Paul Devereux
July 31, 1993

INTRODUCTION

"Earth lights" are seriously under-researched phenomena that current evidence suggests are an unknown form of geophysically-produced energy, possibly related to ball lightning and earthquake lights but not requiring electrical storm or earthquake conditions to cause their manifestation.

Research reveals that these lights appear in highly localised regions -- they are terrain-related. In some places, locals have seen them for generations. These zones have so far been found to contain recurring geological characteristics, such as significant faulting, seismic history, mineral deposits or bodies of water (which can cause micro-quakes). Detailed work in certain zones has shown an overwhelming correlation between lights incidence and surface faulting. In some zones, lights have greater incidence after a weather front has passed -- this may be due to variable atmospheric pressure in the geology in the area, in addition to possible atmospheric factors. The apparent geological connection is highlighted by eighteenth-century mining texts which tell of the use of lightballs emerging from the ground in prospecting for mineral seams, especially copper veins. (Recent findings show that this method of prospecting was being used at at least one English copper mine up until the early years of this century.) Recent research by John Derr suggests that earth light zones can also be produced artificially, in the vicinity of works where liquids are being injected into the Earth's crust, such as liquid waste disposal, or pressurised water after drilling operations, etc. (Queensland Aborigines claim that their "min min" lights were first seen after the white man came, in the region of the Boulia borehole.)

Prime amongst current theories concerning the phenomena is Michael Persinger's hypothesis (Tectonic Stress Theory) that a strain field is produced during tectonic flexing of the Earth's crust in suitable zones, not necessarily leading to earthquake or tremor, and that this generalised field can move through an area, causing electrical and geomagnetic changes and focusing in certain topographical and geological configurations, producing light phenomena.

Ethnology reveals that earth lights have been seen by many cultures around the world, and are usually interpreted as spirits of one form or another. In West Africa the lights are called "aku", devil; the Penobscot Indians of Maine thought they were the spirits of shamans flying through the night or else "fire creatures" ("eskuda'hit"); the Wintu of California called them "spirit eaters"; the Lapps also see the lights as flying shamans in fireball-spirit form engaged in nocturnal battles with one another; native Malaysians call them "pennangal", the spectral heads of women who have died in childbirth; Hawaiian islanders call the lights "akualele", spirits. In Brazil, globes of light are called "Mae de Ouro", Mother of Gold, as they are thought to lead to buried treasure; around Darjeeling, India, the lights are thought to

be the lanterns of the Little Men, "chota admis", to go near which is to court illness or death. Celtic tradition in parts of Ireland and other Celtic lands sees the lights as fairies -- literally "fairy lights". The Aymara Indians of the Andes have a detailed knowledge and lore concerning meteorology, and they single out curious light effects, "sullaje", which they insist are not lightning or other known meteorological phenomena.

Sullaje seems associated with mountain peaks, and light phenomena has been associated with many "holy" mountains and hills, such as Mnt. Taishan, China; Mnt Athos, Greece; Glastonbury Tor, England; Mnt. Omberg, Sweden; Mnt Sorte, Venezuela; Mnt Shasta, USA, and many more.

It is clear that the lights have been seen as manifestations of deity in some cultures, for temples have been built dedicated to them. A tower in a temple complex on a peak of Mnt. Taishan, for instance, was built specifically to observe the "Bodhisattva lights". A temple at Purnigiri, India, is dedicated to the lights that habitually appear around the site (the temple is built over a fault). There is even a Christian chapel dedicated to "St Mary of the Lights" in the Swiss Alps, referring to the lightballs that travellers there report from time to time, and which are seen as being helpful, if somewhat mysterious, guides in bad weather. It may be that prehistoric standing stones in western Europe were likewise raised in honour of places haunted by light phenomena, and which were perceived as being spirits or deific manifestations: a long list is developing of historical accounts and modern eyewitness reports of lights at such megalithic sites. The stones at Carnac, Brittany, France, for instance, where there are occasional reports of flame-like lights above the stones, and many sites in England, such as Castlerigg circle, Cumbria, where 6-foot-wide balls of light were reported in 1919; the Twelve Apostles circle in Yorkshire; the Fairy Stone, Shropshire; the Dyffryn Ardudwy chambered cairn, Wales, and many more. Indeed, there is a Viking (Norse) tradition that explains lights seen over stone cairns as being the souls of the old heroes interred there.

There have been many interpretations of the lights in Western Europe over the centuries, in fact. Perhaps the most common was that they were the fiery breath of dragons flying through the sky -- indeed, recent translation of Latin texts, together with other archive discoveries, shows that the matter was a subject of scholarly debate for some centuries in the late Middle Ages. A later scholar, Thomas Hill, said in 1590 that the lights were some kind of "a fume kindled" and only looked like dragon's breath. Other interpretations down the years have included "signs from God", "omens", "meteors", etc. In old Denmark and Germany, particularly, strange lights were known as "treasure lights", and were thought to hover over buried treasure. In recent times they have been seen as enemy airships and, in World War Two, "foo fighters". Now, they have been caught up in the "UFO" interpretation, though in some areas where they recur they

are sometimes seen as ghosts or "spooklights".

Typically, the lights appear as "basketball-sized" globes, but smaller and larger ones (up to several metres across) have also been reliably reported. Also, the lights can take on many shapes -- strips, triangles, amorphous forms, etc. Close eyewitnesses frequently report that though the outlines of the lightforms are steady, there is an inner, "teeming" activity. The lights have been seen emerging from the ground (during a seismic survey by Quebec University, for instance, observers witnessed at close quarters lightballs metres across emerge from the ground and rise hundreds of metres into the air). They can hover, travel rapidly through the air, perform aerobatic manoeuvres, merge together, shapeshift, etc. Close encounter witnesses also report a buzzing or pressure felt in the ears.

The lights have been photographed, by individual witnesses and by teams, such as the group which studied an outbreak of lights in the Hessdalen valley, Norway, in the early-mid 1980s, and the university group that studied the Piedmont lights outbreak in southern Missouri in the late 1970s.

The nature of the light energy is not known, but it seems to have electromagnetic aspects: the lights seem to favour the vicinity of charge collectors like TV masts, isolated buildings on or near faulting, high tension cables and mountain peaks.

There are, however, characteristics of these phenomena, too widely reported to be safely ignored, which suggest that they represent a form of physics currently unknown to us. The ability of the lights to assume coherent shapes, as well as to reform themselves into other shapes, is not understood (as is indeed the case with ball lightning). A particularly recurring observation, over this century and from around the world, is that the lights can sometimes be seen from one direction, but not from another -- there are even reported cases where one group of witnesses were able to clearly see a lightform in front of them, while another group of witness on the other side of the light could see nothing. A light witnessed (and photographed) by an American physicist in California exhibited evidence of having mass (it created shock waves in the air ahead of it as it travelled) then of having no mass (stopping without deceleration). The lights can also sometimes leave burn marks on vegetation and people, while on other occasions no physical damage seems to follow from close encounter.

It is against this overall background that the current study was carried out.

AIMS OF THE STUDY
AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO ICRL
AND THE ACADEMY OF CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES

Despite the above intriguing reported properties of earth lights, there are two even more bizarre reported characteristics of the lights that specifically tie the aims of this feasibility study with the interests of both the Academy of Consciousness Studies and the International Consciousness Research Laboratories.

The first of these characteristics (as reported in the literature) is that in certain circumstances people who get close to these lights seem to experience mental effects such as confusion, blackout, amnesia and altered states of consciousness in which visual and auditory hallucinatory material is released into consciousness, sometimes accompanied with sensations like out-of-body experience. It is hypothesised that electromagnetic fields associated with the manifestation of the lights, or actually emitted from them, affect brain function. It is known, for instance, that certain areas of the brain, such as the temporal lobes which are associated with dreams, vision, memory and language, are sensitive to EM fields. (It could even be speculated that it was this property of the lights that might have attracted those shamans and priests of old who had the temples and megalithic sites built in earth light zones.)

Such EM fields may be responsible for the occasionally-reported "poltergeist" effects in the vicinity of earth lights outbreaks. These effects include not only disembodied voices, but a crunching sound on the ground, metal doorlatches moving of their own accord, objects flying about, and even cases of metal utensils twisting and warping.

The second reported bizarre characteristic is the strangest, and most disturbing, of all, and passes beyond the pale of current scientific acceptability, yet is possibly the most significant factor concerning earth light phenomena. It is repeatedly reported (even by members of teams such as those who operated at Hessdalen and Piedmont) that earth lights sometimes show sentient characteristics, particularly in the form of a rudimentary intelligence in which the lights appear to act inquisitively and playfully, somewhat like a kitten or, say, a dolphin.

The idea of intelligent energy is obviously anathema to any current scientific worldview, and sceptical scientists are right to point out that false meaning can be all too easily read into random movements of a light, which science sees as being, at best, an unknown natural phenomenon (and many scientists deny even that). Nevertheless, the most experienced people with regard to observing and photographing earth lights, the Hessdalen team, have strenuously maintained to the present author that perhaps ten percent of the lights clearly reacted to team members' movements, and that a

"reading into random motions" did not explain the reactions they saw. The Piedmont team came up with almost the same percentage of lights that they felt interacted with them.

Some claims are, in fact, more unambiguous than even this. For example, Yorkshire policemen doing night duty on the moors near Grassington have reported that when they switch on their police-car flashing beacons, light phenomena "appear" and circle the vehicles as if attracted by the beacon lights, and playfully approach and then recede from the police vehicles. Again, author John Keel has not only had purple lightballs in the Ohio Valley hop out of the way of his flashlight beam, but had witnesses observing the whole situation. There are many other examples of reported apparent sentience on the part of such lightforms, and the present author has even seen a light phenomenon that changed its shape meaningfully as he and over a dozen other witnesses observed it. Very recent research has uncovered earth light "lair" in the valleys of the rivers Pentecost and Ord in the remote Kimberley region of northern Australia: here bush workers are reporting light phenomena appearing virtually nightly that come down to them from the hillsides and follow them, seemingly observing them (current investigation).

It is these possible relationships the lights have to questions of consciousness that bring them within the sphere of interest of the ICRL and the Academy. At the least, it seems we may have in earth lights an energy with some very unusual geophysical properties that may have much to teach science. The lights may even be some form of "macro-quantum" effect that nature somehow produces in that greatest of all laboratories, Earth. Such an energy could have undreamt-of applications. At best, earth lights may represent an entirely new species of phenomenon that may revolutionise our whole understanding of the relationship between consciousness and physical reality. In either case, it clearly is well worth investigating, and a natural target for ICRL interest.

The present author has long been appealing generally to the scientific community to make the effort to study these light phenomena in their "natural habitat" -- they most definitely require a high-standard of scientific observation. At the April, 1993, ICRL/Dunwalke meeting, Dr Hal Puthoff confirmed that he would be prepared to make at least preliminary instrumental study of light phenomena "in the field", if a localised area could be found where such lights occurred with tolerable frequency and reliability. The present author agreed to undertake a search for such a zone.

At the same time, it was noted that the first session of the Academy of Consciousness Studies is to be at Princeton University in the summer of 1994, so it was felt that it would be useful if an earth lights location could be found within reasonable distance of the university, to allow the possibility of a field study as part of the activities of that session's activities.

As it happens, there is a light phenomena locale reported for

New Jersey, near Long Valley, about 60m miles from Princeton, and it was agreed that the feasibility study should look at that.

The next two sections deal with such studies of the New Jersey locale and another in New York State. That is followed by an Appendix in which the implications to the Academy of what was uncovered are discussed, and suggestions as to what the next most useful move from an ICRL standpoint would be with regard to earth light phenomena research in general.

**THE "HOOKER LIGHT",
New Jersey**

Background

References to a strange light nicknamed "the Hooker Light" occurring on a particular stretch of disused railroad track in Morris County, New Jersey, have appeared from time to time in the popular "ghost" and "UFO" literature during and since the 1970s (eg. Coleman, 1985), and even, occasionally, in the semi-popular scientific press (eg. Science Digest, July, 1982).

The site where the light is said to occur is, specifically, two miles due north of the community of Long Valley, within Washington Township district, Morris County, New Jersey.

Interestingly, there seem to be no references to the phenomenon prior to the 1970s -- even one of the rare books dedicated to the subject of anomalous light phenomena (Gaddis, 1967) makes no mention of the Hooker Light. A survey of the local folklore literature similarly revealed no long-standing mention of the light; in fact, only one reference at all was found that could in any way be considered folklore, and that in a locally-published book of local tales of 1977.

The folktale associated with the light says that a railroad brakeman, called "Hooker" because he had a hook replacing an amputated hand, had an accident on the stretch of track in which his arm with the hook hand clasping a lantern was severed. The light is supposed to be the lantern on the spectral arm, weaving back and forth along the track. A variation on the theme is that the lantern is held by the ghost of old man Hooker who haunts the track looking for his severed arm. Records show no mention of an accident along that stretch of track, and the basic theme in any case occurs in association with other "spooklight" haunts (eg. the Maco Station light, North Carolina).

The light's greatest popularity ran from about 1974 to the end of that decade. At its height, up to 60 vehicles belonging mainly to local people, principally young folk out for scary nighttime fun, would cluster at the viewing site. It became something of a problem for the local police, who discouraged the practice and tried to downplay the significance of the light.

A supposedly more serious attempt to study the phenomenon was mounted by an informal group, some of them IBM engineers apparently, which called itself "Vestigia" (see below).

The Field Investigation

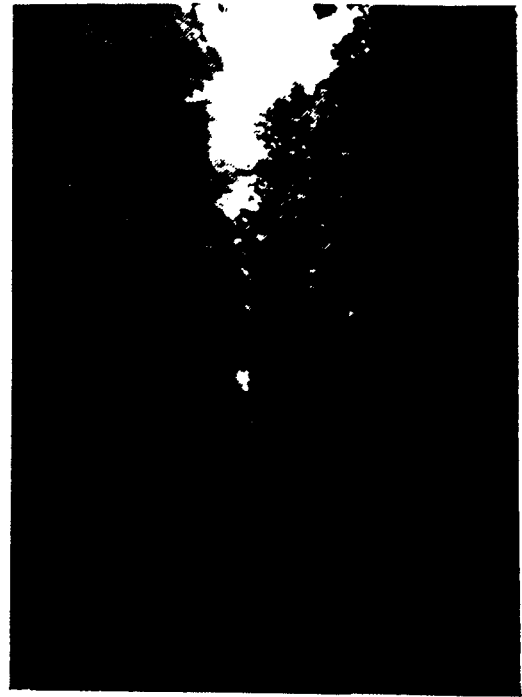
After establishing base at Clinton, New Jersey, the nearest hotel to the site, on June 4, a pre-arranged evening meeting was held with Scott Willoughby, a businessman who in his youth had been one of the youngsters who had regularly gone out to look at the light. He still lives locally (219 County Rte. 513, High Bridge, New Jersey). He had not been deliberately "out looking" for the light since 1983.

Willoughby (and local police) informed that the railroad track had been taken up around 1980, but that the light had still appeared, and the course of the railroad was still extant as a straight strip or "corridor" of cleared ground running through wooded country. The corridor was now owned by a gas company (Columbia Gas System) and a gas pipeline had been laid beneath ground level along it. A second, larger pipeline had been similarly laid around 1989/90. Willoughby said he had seen lights as flashes or distant gleams on every occasion he had visited the viewing position, but on two occasions he claimed he had seen a sphere of red light, about three feet across, at close quarters.

Willoughby and his friend Kathleen Kotarsky then took Charla Devereux and the author to the precise viewing location to allow a preliminary observation of the site. Arrival was at approximately 11.30 pm, thus it was completely dark -- it is a highly rural location. The viewing spot turned out to be a point on Naughtright Road between Bartley Road on the east and Fairview Road on the west where the course of the old railroad crosses (Columbia Gas location and line no. 10346-20). Access to the pipeline corridor is officially discouraged, and barrier bars are erected. The viewing point on Naughtright Road is at the southern end of the relevant stretch of the corridor, which runs perfectly straight through the trees for almost two miles northwards (as highlighted on the map).

Because of the darkness it was not possible at that time to observe the situation of the surroundings. We all stared northwards into the pitch darkness along the corridor, staying until 12.45 am. During the period, a number of lights were observed by all members of the party: yellowish flares, red moving lights, dim, briefly stationary red lights. These all were occasional and intermittent and were initially very impressive, but in questioning Willoughby it transpired that the view along the corridor was crossed by two or three roads. This news immediately lessened the impact of the lights from this investigator's perspective, and it also disappointed and alarmed, because in no literature this author has read on the phenomenon has this crucial fact been noted. Binoculars were used more dedicatedly as a result of this revelation, and it was soon possible to separate out most of the lights as probable car headlights briefly flitting across the line of sight between the darkness-invisible trees. At the end of the session, only two irregular flares and two dull, stationary lights were marginally less easily explained as cars on one or other of the roads. Willoughby had initially identified the lights as the kind he had seen at a distance when he used to visit the spot, but by the end of the session he, too, was less sure about the provenance of what we had seen.

Now the exact viewing location for the Hooker Light was known, map study and a daylight visit to the corridor the next day was able to confirm the presence of three roads crossing the line of sight (see map). Two crossed at right



LEFT: Eyewitness-view from Naughtright Road viewing spot, looking north along pipeline corridor.

ABOVE: Telephoto view of same, showing small area at 'end' of corridor in which lights appear.

BELOW: Looking south along corridor from northern end of corridor stretch where Bartley Road cuts obliquely.



angles (Elizabeth Avenue and Four Bridges Road) while a third, Bartley Road, crossed obliquely at the far point of visibility from the viewing spot. Elizabeth Avenue is little more than a private track and carries little or no traffic. Four Bridges Road is a quiet country road carrying only very occasional traffic. Bartley Road is a main road carrying sporadic moderate traffic. Heavy or continuous traffic was never observed along this road, though, as the area is rural.

Over following days, daylight assessment and photography of key locations along the pipeline corridor was taken (see selection of site photos accompanying text). It was noted that the corridor was occasionally used by trail bike enthusiasts, which might account for some perceptions of lone, bobbing and weaving lights (these bikes had their lights on even in daylight, and when viewed from a distance appeared to be detached, silent lights). Local libraries and bookshops were combed for any pre-1970 folkloric references to light phenomena in the Long Valley area. None were found (though long-standing accounts collected by academic folklorists relating to the Ringwood-Wanaque areas were uncovered -- see Appendix). Rutgers University was consulted regarding the detailed geology of the Long valley area and the surrounding general region of northern New Jersey (see below). Inquiries with local police and newspapers confirmed that they had received no reports regarding the Hooker light for "at least ten years" (police), "at least five years, and probably longer" (newspapers -- "Hunterdon County Democrat", Clinton, and "Morris Daily Record", Parsippany); neither police nor newspapers had had any more generalised UFO reports from the area, either. Willoughby and others who had witnessed the lights in their heyday were further interviewed.

During following nights, further observations were made at the site. Session lengths ranged between 1-3 hours, always bracketing midnight. A range of weather conditions were encountered -- overcast; cloudy immediately after rain; clear starlit sky; clear sky with moon. Charla Devereux and the present writer were accompanied by Willoughby on all occasions, and sometimes with up to four others, some of whom had shared nightwatches at the site with Willoughby in the earlier days. Viewing took place at the Naughtright Road position and at all the other road positions where they crossed the pipeline corridor. People were placed along various of these locations, and viewing was maintained both ways along the corridor simultaneously, northwards and southwards. The only lights that were seen were when looking northwards, primarily from the Naughtright Road position. (On one occasion, after rain, the trees lining the corridor were scintillating with lightning bugs, making assessment of obscure smallscale lights difficult. It was only on this occasion that lights were seen when viewing southwards down the corridor. These were certainly due to lightning bug flashes.) Nothing obviously unusual was seen, and binoculars revealed that the occasional flashes of white-yellow light were car headlights on the oblique section of Bartley Road at the far (northern) end of the pipeline corridor. These

*RIGHT: View south
along corridor from
Elizabeth Avenue.*

*BELOW: View north
along corridor from
Four Bridges Road.
Careful inspection may
reveal the light of a
trail bike far along
the corridor.*



sometimes appeared distorted, as they cast reflection on a visible section of the road prior to the oblique passage of the car across the end of the corridor as seen from the Naughtright Road viewing location. Also, cars moving "away" along Bartley road displayed red tail-lights and sometimes a soft yellow-white glow of their not-directly-visible headlights due to such reflection off the road. Only one light of any questionable nature was seen -- a soft yellow-white glow that was not followed by any visible tail-lights. Considering the certainty that the other lights were vehicle lights, it would be unwise to place much significance on this particular effect. Flashes of light diminished in the early morning hours, as one might expect from local traffic.

The lights occurred in a tiny area (the visible gap at the far end of the corridor as viewed from Naughtright Road viewing spot) that has no other point of reference around it at night -- it is in a large area of virtually total darkness.

Geology

The relevant length of the pipeline corridor runs over hard red sandstone and soft red shale immediately to the east of the Raritan River (which it crosses just south of Elizabeth Avenue; further north crossing Drakes Brook almost where it joins the Raritan).

It has been implied in some written and verbal accounts of the Hooker Light that Long Valley lies on the Ramapo Fault. In fact, this fault is not immediately local to the area, lying some 9 miles to the east at its nearest point to Long Valley (at its apparent southern terminus in the Gladstone area; LSM Map G3810 1950.N4 Sheet 40 C.1., Rutgers Univ.). Nevertheless, there is a local surface fault that runs parallel to the western side of the relevant stretch of the pipeline corridor, the distance between the two varying from about half a kilometre to 100 metres.

The region is minerally rich, and there are the remains of mines around, including on nearby Schooleys Mountain: indeed, the area's industrial base was mining. Minerals include magnetite and iron.

Vestigia

For a number of years in the 1970s from the Fall of 1976, the Hooker Light phenomenon was reportedly studied by an informal local group of interested people, most of whom supposedly possessed technical abilities. The group called itself "Vestigia", and its co-ordinator seems to have been one Robert E. Jones. Author John Keel of New York City was asked to check out the current status of the group (nothing seems to have been mentioned in the literature about them for about a decade).

After field and literature research was completed in New Jersey, the present author checked in with Keel in New York.



*ABOVE: Infrared photo taken by Vestigia on April 22, 1977. Light is seen at north 'end' of corridor as viewed from Naughtright Road viewing position.
[Robert Jones / Vestigia]*

*BELOW: Infrared photo taken on September 27, 1977. Light behind figures was not seen (or noticed) by people present.
[Robert Jones / Vestigia]*



Keel had not been able to find out very much on the group, but he had ascertained that Jones had died about two years previously. It seems the group had disbanded (some of its members had apparently been IBM engineers, and with the local closure or staff reductions in IBM these people are now widely scattered).

The Vestigia files seem to have been lost, and Keel had been unable to uncover any archive material, but two of Vestigia's photographs are reproduced here. These pictures are infrared photographs. There is no information regarding any filtering of the camera lens.

Conclusions

If there ever was a truly unexplained geophysical light phenomenon haunting the Long Valley railroad/pipeline corridor, it seems it no longer appears, judging from the paucity of any reports to police or press over the last decade. It seems most likely that the whole Hooker Light issue was a "fad", principally amongst bored local teenagers, that lasted for a number of years during the 1970s, revolving around the somewhat uncritical observation of slightly distorted vehicular lights as viewed down the railroad/pipeline corridor, which itself creates a circumstance that greatly increases the possibility of misperception of such lights at night. Further, the local witnesses who accompanied the author on this study confirmed that most of the lights they had seen during the heyday of their Hooker Light interest were similar to those witnessed during this study, which were confidently identified as vehicular lights.

However, it has to be admitted that the geology of the area is very much in keeping with the kind commonly associated with earth light zones, and if a genuine geophysical lightball did flit between the trees at some distance from the Naughtright Road observation point, it would appear to be on the same visual level as the vehicular lights crossing at the north end of the corridor, and, to the naked eye, probably indistinguishable from them. It is also fair to note that had there been incidence of a genuine geophysical light phenomenon in the 1970s, it might have been curtailed by the land disturbance involved with the removal of the railroad tracks and the laying of gas pipelines in subsequent years.

Also there is the question of the reports by Willoughby and others of large balls of light a few feet across seen at fairly close quarters. It is possible, given the local geology, that these may have been authentic earth light phenomena. They were clearly rare. It is only to be expected that given the perceptual cover supplied by the regular attendance of certain individuals and of occasional large groups of observers at a suitable geological locale that actual earth lights would occasionally be glimpsed. This would be true of any such zone, and does not suggest any particular focus of earth light activity at the Hooker Light site.

Then there is the enigmatic question concerning the work of Vestigia. Without full recourse to its detailed reports, no detailed assessment of the group's findings can be made. Vestigia's infrared photographs shown here, however, should not be over-endowed with significance. They are very out-of-focus (they needn't have been: standard SLR cameras have a red dot on their lenses to indicate focusing for infrared film). This does not indicate a great deal of technical competence on the part of Vestigia photographers. In such "soft" photographs, all high tone points tend to visual roundness (see the flashlights in the hands of the figures in the 1977 picture, and, indeed, any tonal highlight). There is simply no doubt that one of the vehicular lights photographed in such a manner would appear as the round light sources shown in the photographs. That might explain why one of the pictures shows a light the participants at the time did not notice! And technical experts outside their fields of expertise can be just as capable of choosing to misperceive as anyone else.

All in all, there seems little reason for thinking that any recurring specific phenomena at the Hooker Light site were other than passing vehicular lights seen in a visually-isolating situation. (On a more general level, this might indicate a need for exceptional caution when considering other "spooklight" places in the USA where alleged lights appear over long stretches of road or railtrack. For instance, Chicago-based researcher Dale Kaczmarek was able to identify the "Watersmeet Lights", Michigan, as refractive distortion of car headlights along a road. To balance that, though, Kaczmarek claimed that another road-based light near Joplin and Hornet close to the Missouri state line, did seem authentic, as he had close-up views of it and also through binoculars.)

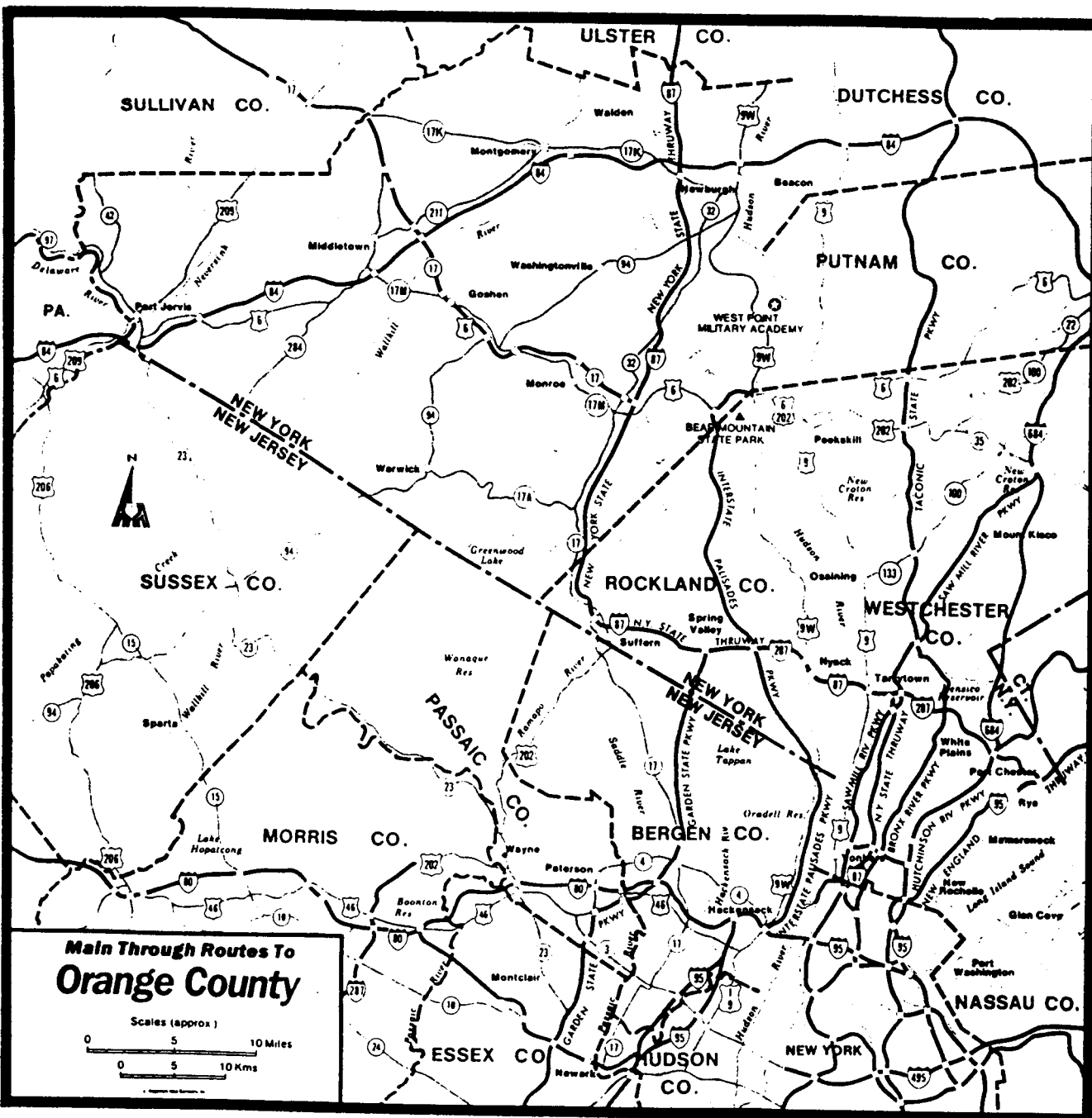
On any of the three grounds,

- *there never were any earth lights at the Long Valley site, or
- *there were earth lights there once but no longer due to ground disturbance, or
- *there was only occasional, random incidence of earth lights,

it is clearly unsafe to recommend the reported Hooker Light phenomenon as suitable either for a fieldwork exercise for the 1994 Princeton-based summer Academy of Consciousness Studies, or for any future on-site instrumental and other research.

[NOTE: For other possible sites within theoretical reach of Princeton for the 1994 Academy of Consciousness fieldwork study, and for a recommended reliable earth lights zone regarding the more general question of future ICRL on-site observation and research, see Appendix.]

THE PINE BUSH LIGHTS
New York State



Introduction

As the New Jersey investigations proved shorter than was originally anticipated, the opportunity was taken to use what was left of the available time to make a preliminary study of another earth light zone for which some literature existed and which was the next nearest such reported site to the Princeton area: namely, the immediate neighbourhood of Pine Bush, situated in Orange County, New York State, about 12 miles NNE of Middletown, and about 60 miles NW of New York City.

Background

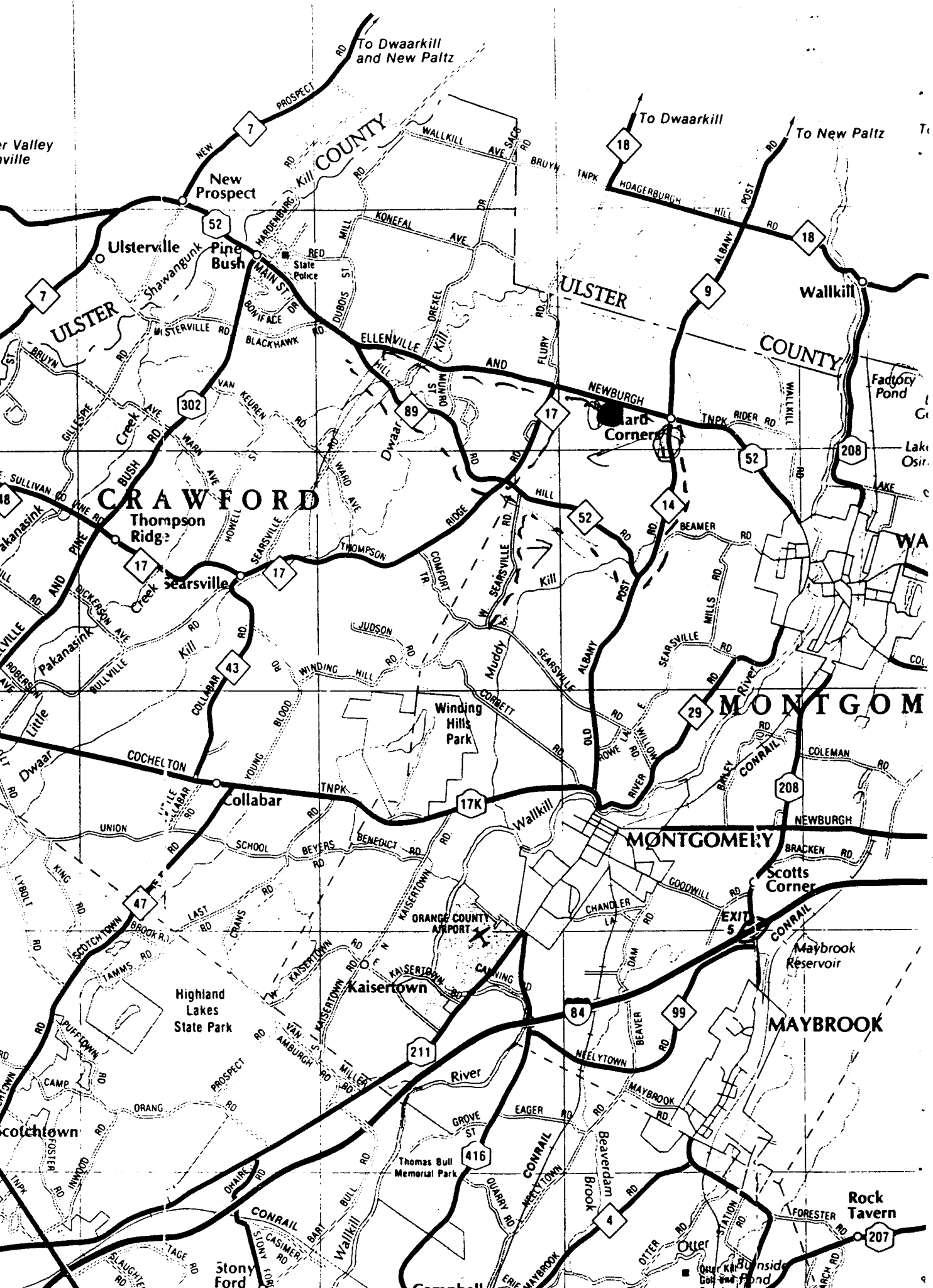
The existence of reported light phenomena in the Pine Bush area apparently goes back several years, but was first drawn to this author's attention in 1987 by author Phyllis M.H. Atwater. She was taken to the area on October 5, 1986, by Ellen Crystal, who was studying the phenomena. Viewing a clump of trees from the side of a country road, Atwater reported:

"Globes [of light] would 'bubble' up... from behind trees, then glide sideways at treetop height... then either continue rising... or change direction and glide back... All globes or lightballs were large and seemed in no hurry. They would first appear as pure white, until such time as they 'cut loose' from the treetops, then they would turn blood red. Colors were pure. The lights were steady. After attaining some height in the sky, and moving closer to us, the globes would again change color, this time to green, which allowed them to almost disappear in the black sky. I heard a high-pitched whirring sound as they got closer to us, but no regular aircraft sound was made... There were dozens of them." (Atwater, 1987.)

The display lasted for about 45 minutes. Atwater is known personally to the present author, and has been questioned directly, in correspondence and on the telephone about her sighting. There seems little doubt that she is reporting what she saw honestly and with objectivity. In addition, she is married to a pilot, and is very familiar with aircraft lights. The Pine Bush phenomena are not aircraft lights, of that she has not the slightest doubt.

Study of the Pine Bush lights is somewhat compromised by the activities of Ellen Crystal. In the late 1980s, she wrote a book on the Pine Bush lights (Crystal, exact date not known) in which she interprets them as being alien spacecraft. She is very insistent on this, and further propagates her message in lectures and on popular TV. What attention the lights get, therefore, tends to be of a "ufological" and sensational nature, and this makes neutral study more difficult.

The Preliminary Investigation



Crystal nevertheless has the key knowledge as to the best viewing positions for the Pine Bush lights, as she spends much time seeking and observing them. Time was spent in New York planning a brief visit to the area, though contact with Crystal proved impossible, as she had developed a hostile attitude to the present author on the grounds of comments in one of his books (Devereux, 1989, p.136) which she took as a personal sleight. Even though her name was not mentioned and no overt criticism was made, Crystal was steadfastly unco-operative.

Considerable telephone investigation did result in finding another useful witness however. This was Jean Munser, of New Jersey. She knew Crystal and had been to Pine Bush with her, and was able to pass on the information relating to the key viewing locations. Munser had also seen a phenomenon herself during her trip to the area: it took the form of a light which flashed over a small body of water near one of the sighting locations. The light emitted a humming sound. Munser is a mature woman and appears from telephone questioning to be a clear, objective witness. She advised ignoring Crystal's interpretations, but stressed that from her experience there was nevertheless an anomalous phenomenon in the area and Crystal did know its most likely haunts.

Another telephone interviewee was Eleanor Motichka, also of New Jersey. She too had witnessed lights around Pine Bush she was convinced were anomalous phenomena. Motichka also used her good offices with Crystal to elicit further information about viewing locations.

Only the day and night of June 12 could be allowed for visiting and observing at Pine Bush.

The sighting locations are primarily along roads to the immediate SE of Pine Bush - see highlights on map. A point location is also claimed to be the Jewish cemetery (see photo) set back alongside Route 52 on the way to Montgomery (marked with black dot on map). None of the locations require viewing along a road, railtrack or "corridor" as in the Hooker Light case. Views are from roadsides across fields to distant trees (as in the example in the photograph).

The entire set of roads and locations was visited during daylight hours. The opportunity was taken to interview one local person, in effect randomly chosen, in some depth. This was Linda J. Shedd of Windy Hill Farm, about three miles south of Pine Bush. She had lived many years in the area, and was used to all the normal sights of the area, both on land and in the sky, day and night. She was not familiar with any of the literature on the subject of the Pine Bush lights, and did not know the area had any fame for such happenings. However, she had on two occasions seen unusual lights from the farmhouse, the most recent being only about a month prior to the interview: a large light had descended from the sky and hovered below treetop height in a nearby field. It had suddenly shot off horizontally and disappeared from view. Shedd was also able to provide specific and more detailed



*ABOVE: A typical viewing spot on Searsville Road.
Lights reportedly appear from out of trees.*

*BELOW: The Jewish cemetery off Route 52, linking Pine Bush
and Montgomery. Lights have been reported within and above
this area.*



information regarding locations that we sought. In addition, she gave guidance as to locals that ought to be interviewed on any further trip: these individuals had all locally discussed seeing strange lights in the area. Time restrictions prevented these people being spoken with during this trip.

The period between 10.20 pm and 1.50 am was used for night observations from various viewing locations, particularly West Searsville Road and the Jewish cemetery, though the whole circuit of relevant roads was patrolled twice. No unusual light phenomena were witnessed. Other "skywatchers" were encountered and questioned, and none of them had seen any lights that evening either. One fellow who had come on a number of occasions had never seen any lights. He loaned advanced night-vision binoculars to supplement standard binoculars during the observations from West Searsville Road.

The sky was clear and starlit; the weather warm. The skywatcher referred to above claimed he had questioned locals who had told him the lights most often appeared in totally overcast conditions.

It is understood that the Middletown newspaper has kept a good record of lights reports, but checking their files was not possible for this preliminary study.

Geology

The brief, preliminary nature of this study also precluded any geological study, but it is generally reported that the area is rich in certain minerals, some of them rare.

Stewart Airport

John Keel informed the present author that there had been a considerable number of reports of "UFOs" around former Stewart A.F.B. in the ufological literature. He wasn't sure whether or not the airfield was near the Pine Bush area. In fact, the (now civilian) airport is on the outskirts of Newburgh, about 12 miles to the east of Pine Bush, so is within the general area.

Conclusions

The extremely preliminary nature of this additional study necessarily makes any conclusions tentative.

The proximity of an airport does raise the question as to whether reported light phenomena are related to aircraft taking off or landing. However, against this is the adamant insistence of both local and visiting witnesses that what they saw bore no relationship to aircraft lights, and their descriptions bear this out. The present author saw aircraft lights in the Pine Bush vicinity during the June 12/13 skywatch and can report that they would be difficult to mistake for anything else.

The visual isolation/tunnel distortion characteristic does not apply in this case as it does at Long Valley and various other spooklight locations.

In the opinion of the present investigator, the area is worth further study, both archival -- standard folklore as well as newspapers -- and field to assess its status as an area of reliable earth light incidence. It would not be wise at this stage to recommend a full instrumental presence, but field investigation as part of the 1994 Academy of Consciousness Studies might prove profitable, other factors being equal. [See Appendix for another recommended alternative, however.]

APPENDIX

Where Do We Go From Here?

It is clear from the foregoing report that the Hooker Light does not warrant further investigation. We are therefore left with two general questions:

- (i) is there a recommended earth light zone suitable for the purposes of a field study by students of the Academy of Consciousness Studies in 1994, and, perhaps more importantly,
- (ii) is there a reliable earth light zone for further research in general, and what form should such research take?

These questions are taken in turn following.

Possibilities for the 1994 Academy of Consciousness Studies.

(a) During literature research for the Hooker Light, a genuine folklore source for a New Jersey-based light phenomenon was uncovered (Cohen, 1974, pp. 194-195). According to this, "mysterious lights are seen in the Ramapos" (ie. the Ramapo Mountains stretching south-north across the NJ/NY state line). Folkloric reports of odd light phenomena were collected around Hillburn and Ringwood particularly. This whole area is on the Ramapo Fault.

The folklore source cites an old-timer, Wally Morgan, from the Ramapos, who says in interview with regard to strange lights: "Well, I'll tell you. There's a modern one. I hear a lot of people seen it. Down around the reservoir [Wanaque] you look around [garbled] -- you can look across the water, because it's the same road. And you'll see headlights coming at you. You'll never pass that car."

Son John Morgan said: "I've seen it. The car will never come to you."

Wally confides to the interviewer that he has actually seen it himself, too. He first of all thought it was the moon "right off towards Ringwood there", but it was seven or eight times the size of the moon. White at first, it turned green then red [NOTE: a similar colour sequence as that claimed by Phyllis Atwater regarding the Pine Bush lights], then "all of a sudden, it just dropped right down off the side of the hill... And it just disappeared".

The Wanaque reservoir was completed in 1928. Situated as it is over major faulting and an area rich in mineral deposits (especially iron), it is to be expected that additional tectonic stress and strain is caused by the body of water -- a factor often found, for many reservoirs cause microquake activity (see Devereux, 1989, p. 164) and seem to attract light phenomena.

John Keel confirmed that there had been much excitement in the ufological literature about "UFOs" at the Wanaque reservoir, and so many people went to see that the locals stopped mentioning them.

This may, therefore, be an opportune occasion for a neutral,

non-sensational academic study of the area and its reported phenomena to be conducted. There is scope for direct observational work, interviews with local people, and archive research into folklore and newspaper records.

(b) The Pine Bush preliminary report (above) suggests that the area may indeed experience incidence of authentic earth lights events, and thus be suitable for field study, both observational and local interviewing.

(c) The third option is that neither (a) nor (b) be followed up for the 1994 summer Academy, and that work should be in general and more academic terms, minus any fieldtrip component.

Recommendations for the next stage in general earth lights research with regard to ICRL.

There are probably several reliable earth lights zones in the USA, but one that is known about is the Marfa region of Texas.

The Marfa Lights are backed by a century of folklore testimony, with indications of further such testimony stretching back into Native American lore. Secondly, a large range of people have witnessed the lights, ranging from locals to countless visiting witnesses; a significant number of such witnesses have included scientific observers, from geologists in 1973 to Dr Ohtsuki and team from Waseda University, Japan in 1987. Third, the lights have been photographed on numerous occasions by still, movie and video cameras.

The present writer has conducted preliminary day and night observations in the area, and interviewed local people who have reportedly witnessed the lights. More importantly, there is current instrumental and photographic monitoring being conducted by Edson Hendricks. Hendrick's involvement commenced as a result of his reading the present author's book on earth lights (Devereux, 1989). As a computer expert and an adviser to NASA, he couldn't believe that scientists were not out in the field studying such phenomena. He asked the present writer what zone he could study, and the Marfa area was recommended. This has resulted in a dedicated effort by Hendricks in his own time and at his own expense. He makes periodic visits to the area from his home base in Los Angeles, and has succeeded (1992) in taking some 30 photographs at dusk of a few Marfa Lights, with sufficient ambient detail to allow estimations of size of lights. (These were shown by John Derr at the 1992 SSE conference at Princeton.) Hendricks is using ELF receivers and other instrumentation. Local retired academic, Judith Brueske, and (the present writer understands), Hal Puthoff, have helped Hendricks to locate his investigations in specific areas of the prairie around Marfa, Alpine and the Chinati Mountains.

There are a few dedicated researchers in Marfa and that general area of Texas, such as Brueske and Dennis Stacy. They

period of about seven days has to be allowed to ensure a sighting of the lights, though it is often the case that they are seen in a shorter period of dedicated observation.

Given all the above factors, it seems safe to recommend the Marfa region as a reliable earth light zone, and one moreover with an already established preliminary research base, in which further earth light research might profitably be conducted.

Bearing in mind the observation at the beginning of this report, that earth lights have suffered serious under-research, this writer strongly urges that the circumstances of the new ICRL situation should be used to correct this scientific failure to some extent. From the point of view of ICRL, it is the potential of such light phenomena to illuminate connections between consciousness and the physical world that needs exploring. Research into these lights could result in rapid results of significance to both physics and consciousness studies, unleashing untold implications. A two-phase investigation is therefore recommended, with the second phase dependent on a positive outcome of the first, as follows.

PHASE ONE: ESTABLISHMENT OF ANY CONSCIOUSNESS-SIGNIFICANT FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH EARTH LIGHTS.

(a) Tests to see if the lights can respond to human interaction. It was noted earlier in this report that various witnesses of the lights (including two research teams), at different times and places around the world, have claimed that light phenomena on some occasions seemed to interact with them. And this has been reported with regard to the Marfa lights themselves: in March, 1973, two geologists chased a light in a jeep around Mitchell Flat, the prairie near Marfa, and the way it interacted with them caused them to conclude "it was intelligent, definitely" (Kenney & Wright, 1979, and Hanners, 1982).

The tests could be very simple -- for example, using a flashing beacon to see if the lights could be attracted, in the manner claimed by the Yorkshire policemen described earlier in this report. Tests employing gestures, sounds and words could also be used, again drawing on actual reported cases. It is suggested that one or two key locations in the Marfa prairie be used to test these claims out. Any responses would need to be recorded by still and video cameras.

This is the most challenging or "way out" experiment concerned with earth lights, yet, ironically, is one of the most simple and perhaps the most significant one to attempt. If there was a positive outcome, then it would have extraordinary paradigm repercussions. It is suggested that it is these daring experiments that would suit some of ICRL's activities, especially if the possible prize is the identification of a consciousness-interactive energy produced by nature. Michael Persinger has admitted such a thing might

be possible:

"There is much more to the basic premise of the Tectonic Strain Theory than we have acknowledged. When one realises the multitude of geological formations and geochemical combinations through which the energy contained within tectonic stress can be manifested, the range of possibilities enters the domain of imagination... Metaphorically the structure of the earth would be analogous to an extraordinary number of electronic circuits through which a singular entity -- an electric field -- moves. Because geophysical and solar forces are powerful and universal processes, one must expect phenomena to be created whose characteristics are beyond contemporary explanations.

"... Considering the extreme focal nature of each... event compared to the immense field from which it originates, one would expect properties that are as yet undefined. Our concept of the geopsyche (Persinger and Lafreniere, 1975) complements the idea of Devereux that there could be an interaction between cognitive processes and earth forces." (Persinger, 1990.)

Moreover, this experiment would not be a particularly expensive one to conduct. Essentially, it would require travel and subsistence for a small number of observers to be in the Marfa area for up to three weeks (to ensure contact with the lights), plus modest equipment such as a flashing light beacon and cameras, and the hire of video facilities and a 4-wheel drive vehicle.

(b) Tests to see if close proximity to the lights can produce altered states of consciousness. This would need to be a separate experiment to (a). Persinger has itemised a range of effects, both physiological and psychological, that could be expected with increasing proximity to a light phenomenon (Persinger, 1983). Again, one or two of the most active areas of the Marfa prairie should be selected for close contact with the lights (Brueske has knowledge of these areas). This work would have to be conducted in the company of a neurological expert, such as Persinger, who could advise on instrumentation, such as portable EEGs, etc.

PHASE TWO: FIELD INVESTIGATION OF THE NATURE OF THE ENERGY COMPRISING THE LIGHTS.

If either or both of the above sets of tests in Phase One produced positive results, then it would be imperative to attempt to find out more about the nature of the energy comprising the lights. Hal Puthoff might be persuaded to bring equipment onto site, carefully complementing anything that Hendricks might already be doing. Indeed, Marfa is closer to Puthoff's base than any other earth light zone. The nature of the work conducted in the field would, of course, require Puthoff's expertise to determine.

It is therefore suggested that, as the first stage in further ICRL earth lights research, approaching it from a consciousness-related angle, Phase One (a) be conducted at Marfa. It is further suggested that immediately prior to commencement, an on-site gathering of researchers who would be interested in the experiment meet on site for initial discussions. Such people would probably include Edson Hendricks, Judith Brueske, Dennis Stacy, Hal Puthoff plus the present writer who would be prepared to co-ordinate as well as design and participate in the experiment.

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