

“ETIDORHPA”

AND

“THE SMOKY GOD”

**An Evaluation of the Relevance of These
Books to Hollow Earth Theory**

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Preface

This evaluation is written by way of an answer to a recent irate response to my having been foolhardy enough to remark that *some* Hollow Earthers appear to regard these two antiquated books as genuinely *true accounts* of the adventures of the central characters. As if they were factually narrated to their respective authors, **John Uri Lloyd** and **Willis Emerson**, who then wrote them down. Consequently, the idea is being disseminated among newcomers to the Hollow Earth theory that these books are to be regarded as some kind of “*Hollow Earth Bibles*” or “*Holy Writ*” and should be therefore treated with much the same sort of respect as is accorded by Christians or Muslims to the Bible or the Koran.

Whilst I don’t object to the books themselves as being interesting stories about the sort of thing one might conceivably encounter within the Inner Earth, I give them no more credence than I do to Jules Verne’s “*Journey to the Center of the Earth*” or to Edgar Rice Burroughs “*Pellucidar*” and “*At The Earth’s Core*” novels. In my view, they are all equally entertaining as science-fiction adventure yarns but I accept them as nothing more. However, having said that, I do feel that they may be of some help to the newly-initiated into this Inner Earth concept in grasping some sense of what a Hollow Earth might perhaps be like.

Previous Writings

The actual historic legend and literature on the concept of a hollow Earth, dates back certainly to the time of the ancient Greeks. But I suspect that, in actual fact, it goes much further back than that, even beyond the time of the founding of dynastic Egypt to the era of legendary Mu and Atlantis and Hyperborean Thule. In most of the world’s mythical cultures there is invariably some reference to an **Underworld** which is

comprised of a **Hell** or **Hades** and a **Paradise!** Even **Jesus Christ** speaks of them in the Bible Gospels, when he refers to the poor man, **Lazarus**, who lay starving to death at the gate of a wealthy merchant, until he finally gave up the ghost and was taken down to dwell forever in “**Abraham’s Bosom**”. This was the ancient **Paradise** of the Hebrews, and it was separated from **Hell** by a *deep and uncrossable gulf*.

Christ’s story relates how the rich man also died soon after, but went to **Hell**. And it was from there that he was able, in his agony of suffering, to call across the gulf to the poor man in **Paradise**, asking him to bring him just one single drop of water to relieve his torment of heat and thirst. The ex-“poor man”, who was now spiritually rich in God’s blessings, had to reply sadly that he could not help since there was no possibility of him being able to cross the great gulf or **pit** between them.

Egypt and Greece

Thus we find Scriptural support for an **Underworld** or an **Inner Earth**, which may be a stronger substantiation for Christians than all the others. The existence of such an **Inner World** is well documented in the legends of the mythologies and religions of most peoples of the ancient world. The **Egyptians** had their invisible **Underworld of the Dead**, which was ruled over by the **Osiris**, after his murder and dismemberment by **Set**, and the subsequent rejoining of his scattered body parts by **Isis and Nephthys**.

The Greeks also had a dark **Underworld of the Dead** ruled over by **Hades** (or **Pluto**). The fare of a dead person was a coin placed in the corpse’s hand in order for the person’s spirit to pay a ferryman, **Charon**, to take them across the **Styx** to this gloomy world of death. Charon then poled the spirit in a punt across the black subterranean river which divided the land of the living from that of the dead.

Scandinavia

The **Norsemen, Teutons** and **Vikings** had their **Underworld**, a place called **Nilfheim** – a cheerless world of ice and darkness that was their **Land of the Dead**. The deepest root of **Yggdrasil**, the **World Tree** of Norse myth, reached down into **Nilfheim**, where a hideous dragon, monster, **Nidhogg**, gnawed at the root in an effort to kill the Tree and thus destroy the living world. **Nidhogg** also fed himself upon the corpses of evil-doers. Nilfheim was ruled over by the grisly goddess, **Hel**. (*A strange coincidence, or the actual origin of the anglo-Saxon term, Hell?*)

The Slavs

The **Slavic** peoples, and their migrant descendants, the **Celts**, however, believed in the **Otherworld**. This was a magical place of perpetual peace and contentment, where reincarnated, immortal souls could feast and enjoy music for all time. It could only be reached by *traversing deep caverns, subterranean lakes, and tunnels*, or by being *invited and taken or guided there* by one of its many “angelic” representatives who mingled unnoticed with the people upon the surface.

Similar in some respects to the Christian **Heaven**, this “**Otherworld**” was an underground pagan **Paradise**. It was variously called “**The Plain of the Two Mists**”, “**The Land of The Young**” or “**The Living**”, as well as “**The Promised Land to The West**” (*perhaps an early reference to the British Isles?*). In some references, however, it was the **Land Of The Dead**, the **Underworld**.

Here we begin to gain some real feeling of the legendary **Inner Earth!**

North America

The Red Indian people, such as the natives of North America, believe that their Creator God, **The Great Spirit**, also known as **Gitche Manitou**, **Maheo**, **Tirawa** or **Waka Tanka**, lives in the sky, but that he is thought to have led the first human beings up from inside the Earth out upon the surface, which he had already prepared for them. This inner region is known as the realm of the Creator Goddess, **Shipap**, the **Womb of the Earth**, out of whom humanity was born. She is known by different names among the various Indian nations. However, we see here the belief that our forerunners may have originally emerged from an **Interior World** *within* the Earth. Their Paradise was **The Happy Hunting Ground**, a place of pleasure and plenty, not unlike the Norse concept of **Valhalla**. The **Pueblo Indians** of New Mexico, are also said to have crawled up out of the **Inner Underworld**, after the Creation.

Meso-America

In **Mesoamerican** legend however, special compartmented underworlds were set aside specifically for unworthy spirits. **Xibalba**, the **Mayan** underworld, for example, contained several deadly places, such as “**The House of Gloom**”, “**The House of Cold**”, “**The House of the Jaguars**” and “**The House of Fire**”, etc. There was also a “**House of Bats**”! (*Here one can be forgiven for being reminded of Count Dracula’s Carpathian castle!*) The lowest of the nine-levelled Underworld of the **Aztecs** was **Mictlan**, the **Land of the Dead**, a dark, gloomy place of eternal boredom and depression, *situated at the Earth’s center!* Its ruler was **Michlantechupi**, the Aztec **Death God**.

South America

Strangely, in **Inca** legend there seems to be no clear reference to an Underworld as such - except for the belief that the first of the Inca race were **four brothers** and **four sisters** who were said to have *emerged from a cavern* close to **Cusco** in Peru. One of these brothers is said to have been **Manco Capac**, who became the first Inca ruler. However, the **Incas** seem to have held basically similar concepts of Heaven and Hell to those of the Christian belief.

Africa and Oceania

The **African** peoples also seem not to have had any concept of an Underworld or Inner Earth. Their people either emerged from a **Cosmic Egg** or fell from a heavenly realm in the sky. Nor do the **Australian** aboriginal people appear to possess any definitive concept of an underworld. For them, the **sky** is the final repose of the dead. In **Oceania**, however, we find several mentions of an **Underworld** ruled by a **Goddess of Darkness and Death**. The Polynesians had such a goddess in **Hine-Nui-Te-Po**.

South-East Asia and India

In **South-East Asia**, the people had many mythical **underworlds** of varying degrees of horror, and many of them were the haunts of demonic **Serpent** or **Dragon** gods. **Naga Padoha**, is such a one in Sumatra, as is **Aso** in Borneo. There were also the **Hantu Kubor**, horrible underworld **Demons of The Grave** in Malaysia. In India,

the Vedic realm of the dead was ruled by the god **Yama**, and the Hindu Underworld of **Patala** is said to be submerged under water!

The Shintoist Japanese have an underworld “**Land of Darkness**” named **Yomo no Kumi**, although **Buddhist Japanese** believe in an *afterlife* called **Emma-o**.

The Middle East

Other such beliefs are found in various places. **Irkalla** was the **Babylonian** underworld of gloomy shadows, whilst the ancient **Canaanites** had a netherworld underneath a mountain range named **The House of Corruption**. And in **Persia**, the Land of the Dead, **Vara**, was contained in a huge cavern under the earth.. Of course, the Heavenly **Paradise** and **Hell** of the Hebrews and Moslems needs no elucidation here.

Having then established that there have been many many precedents in ancient myths, legends and traditions from all parts of the world for the strong belief in an Underworld inside the Earth since time immemorial, let us now return to our previous discussion regarding a brief review of the relevance of the two books in question, which are, by comparison, quite modern works on the subject of the Inner Earth or Underworld!

“Etidorhpa”

Whilst I don’t wish to take up the reader’s time with a lengthy summary of these books, I shall endeavour to give the reader at least the bare bones of them. The book “*Etidorhpa*” (which the alert reader will immediately notice is the name “*Aphrodite*” spelled backwards) is a rather deep tome, written in the 1890s, that goes into a some extremely interesting realms of philosophy, and also has a convincingly scientific ring to it regarding the underground realms beneath the Kentucky Hills and beyond.

It takes the reader along through some hair-raising encounters and adventures before reaching its final goal in the inner hollow Earth. The only problem is that one doesn’t actually get to this more intriguing part of the story until one meets the strange underworld guide, a good quarter of the way through the book, and even then the really exciting content doesn’t begin to kick in until at least halfway through the book.

The first section of the book mainly concerns the central character who mysteriously names himself “*I Am The Man*”, and his previous difficulties with the Masonic Brotherhood, whom he had somehow wronged. (*You must read the book to find out how*). However, he has much more to impart of a scientific nature, which eventually he does to the man he has chosen to be the writer of his story, one “**Llewellyn Drury**”, who in turn, finally hands the whole manuscript over to **John Uri Lloyd** to be made public by having it published. I can’t go too far into the plot of the book without spoiling it for would-be readers, so I shall avoid doing so. Bruce Walton (*who believes he has identified the “Man”, and thereby claims to have set the seal of factual truth upon its contents*) has written an interesting preamble regarding the book’s Masonic references which may help the reader to establish certain possible truths as to its initial veracity.

Why This Particular Name?

Someone recently remarked that “**Etidorhpa**” doesn’t seem to sound **verbally** correct when pronounced as it is written. They’re quite right of course, except that the stress in the original remark (*page 257 of “Etidorhpa”*) is placed on “*I Am The Man*”

correctly **interpreting** the backward-spelled name!

This he could easily do by simply writing it down the right way round, or even by mentally visualizing the word. One must ask oneself whether the entity who claims in the tale to be "**Etidorhpa**" pronounced it with an **F** or a **P**?

However, as far as I am concerned, the thing that I find difficult to comprehend in all this, is exactly **WHAT** actual relationship the goddess "**Aphrodite**" (or "Venus") could possibly have with a story about the Inner Earth? And why would an entity purporting itself to be the Grecian "**Goddess of Love**" choose to **reverse** her name? We soon learn that she is actually a demonic temptress, and, in accordance with occult tradition, Satanic rituals often involve the *reversal* of "Holy names" as a sign of Satan's rebellious opposition to all things of a Godly nature. (Much as "*reverse-speech*" is often claimed to be used by some of the more un-Godly rock-singers). But since when has the pagan "**Aphrodite**" been holy to Christians?

And how can we relate Aphrodite to the **Christian** concept of **Love**? Yet, according to Chapter 51, of the book itself, the Land of Etidorhpa – that is, The Inner Earth - was essentially the "**Unknown Country**" - ("*the undiscover'd country from whose bourn no traveller returns*" as the Bard of Avon puts it). By plain implication in the story it is meant to be "**Heaven**" or "**Paradise**" - the Domain of Utter Peace and Tranquillity - free from all misery, distress, hatred, envy, jealousy and unholy passions of our mortal world! The inference is, of course, that "*I Am The Man*" has passed over from this earthly realm. He is dead, and so it is his spirit or ghost which has haunted Lewellyn Drury and has dictated the story to him.

(It is of some passing interest to notice that **John Uri Lloyd** is a typically Welsh name - as is that of the tale's "narrator" – **Llewellyn Drury** - and that the Welsh are widely renowned - certainly in Britain - as being both a highly religious and psychically-gifted, mystic people). I should also add, before I forget, that the book can be compared to some degree in its overall intention to **John Bunyan's** classic "*Pilgrim's Progress*", with perhaps even more than a touch of **Dante's** "*Inferno*" about it! It certainly strikes me as containing some sort of barely-concealed religious message or meaning, and there is no doubt as to the intellectual and literary abilities of its writer. (I would be interested to hear the readers' views regarding this "*hidden message or meaning*")

But there is some kind of oddly *obsessive* aspect to this book which convinces me that it really *is* a science-fantasy-mystery yarn, and that John Uri Lloyd has striven to combine together several of his pet-subjects and concepts into it. These include a curious blending of general physics, natural science, religion and occult mysticism. Not to mention much deeply-brooding philosophy, a close knowledge of both geology and speleology, a sound comprehension of the **HE** concept (*of his day*), and his own personal vendetta of hatred toward the Masons - which shines like a beacon through his book. (Perhaps **he himself** might have been cast out of their Movement and even threatened with death for some major infringement of their then deeply arcane rules?)

There can be no doubt that Lloyd possessed an encyclopaedic knowledge of these subjects, and must have been a very brilliant scholar, with an excellent command

of written English. I would have greatly enjoyed reading any real works of a genuinely scientific or philosophical nature that Lloyd might also have written.

However, regardless of Lloyd's motives in writing this quite mind-boggling "story within a story", the net result is a long-winded and often utterly confounding book, which ends up leaving both Llewellyn Drury and the reader, too, staring into a mirror in total bewilderment. (Again we see the inference of Satanic "reversal" as well as a hint of "Alice Through the Looking Glass"!)

There may well be some great, fundamental hidden "message" concealed in the book. But if there **IS** one, it gets completely lost in the labyrinthine maze of its quite divergent events, as well as all the long rambling discussions and dissertations which pass between the main protagonists.

I know that I haven't covered *all* the intriguing aspects of this book here. But that was not my intent, since to do so would simply spoil the book for prospective readers, and I strongly encourage everyone who has a literary turn of mind to take up its powerful challenge, and see what *they* can deduce from its "story-within-a-story". A task in which I unhesitatingly wish them "Happy and Instructive Reading"!

Summation

In summary, despite its intriguing references to our own common interest - the Hollow Earth - "**Etidorhpa**" is very much on a par with Lewis Carroll's "Alice In Wonderland" - which was actually a *political satire*, told as a nonsensical child's story in order to avoid repercussions - as also were the "Gulliver" tales by Jonathan Swift - and it makes about as little coherent sense. My own personal reaction to reading this frustrating book is that of finally being left "*in the lurch*" right upon the literal brink of some long-anticipated and momentous discovery - after I had invested a great amount of lengthy mental effort in trying to discover its concealed inferences. In short, I can only view "*Etidorhpa*" as the convoluted product of an extremely intellectual, but curiously-distorted mind. I must confess that plowing through this baffling book left me both mentally exhausted and completely thwarted.

But let me make one thing clear. None of this comparatively mild criticism should be regarded as *any* suggestion that the book isn't worth reading. Indeed, I would recommend it as a *most intriguing read* to anyone - whether interested in the "Hollow Earth" subject or not. It is very well and eruditely written and there is much to learn therein, both from a scientific and a philosophical point of view - not to mention its background revelations regarding the early Masonic secret society! However, I don't think it really gives as much information about the physical interior of the Earth, or its inhabitants, as might be imagined or expected from a Hollow Earther's standpoint.

Call me overly-pragmatic if you like (even though I myself have often been described as a mystic and a dreamer), but I certainly couldn't, and *wouldn't*, base my own preconception of the interior surface of the hollow Earth, as an inhabitable and, hopefully, hospitable sphere, upon such a mentally-confusing and obscurely-contrived book. Nor upon its verbal depictions thereof. However, as I have noted previously; this comment is purely my own personal opinion. Others will obviously differ on this point.

They might extract something of educational, inspirational or even spiritual value from it. Many certainly *appear* to have done so, but unfortunately I myself just could not find what I'd really expected, and very much hoped, to find within its covers.

Archaeo-Fiction of The Day....

I shall next turn my attention to the second book in this evaluation, **Willis George Emerson's** famous book: "*The Smoky God*". But first, let's take a look at the author. Emerson, who although originally a writer of Westerns, apparently tired of his genre, and turned his pen instead to a subject that was all the rage around the turn of the 1900s, the fad for lost empires, mysterious tunnel and cavern worlds and hidden cities.

At that time, **Sir Henry Rider Haggard** more or less had the world by the throat with his ripping yarns about Allan Quartermain and friends discovering caves full of gold, as in "*King Solomon's Mines*", or stumbling upon old civilizations, as in "*Allan Quartermain*", that somehow had managed to avoid the modern-day world, with their wondrously-built marble cities tucked away in the hidden seclusion of inaccessible African mountain valleys whilst the world passed them by.

Haggard's book, "*She*", was typical of such yarns, being the story of an ageless and beautiful goddess, **Ayesha**, or "*She-Who-Must-Be obeyed*". She ruled over a desolate ancient kingdom of dead, but wonderfully-preserved people, who lay in their thousands in eternal rest inside her mysterious cavern-city of Kor. In this tale the hero was an elderly English scholar, **Horace Holly**, who with his ward, **Leo**, went in search of this city, following certain clues and fragments left to Holly by Leo's dying father. Leo's father had apparently discovered the city during his archaeological ramblings in Africa.... But I won't follow the story through here in any detail. The reader will get the general gist of it if I add that there was some reincarnation-connection between the heroic young Leo and Ayesha's centuries-lost husband, **Kallikrates**....and that in a huge subterranean realm of great caverns below Kor, there burned an eternal flame of pink fire which could confer immortality upon those who dared enter and bathe in it ...

Others such as **Herbert George Wells** were writing of similar mysterious places – including the Hollow Moon! Who can forget "*The First Men In The Moon*", or his famed "*The War Of The Worlds*" ? However, **Jules Verne** had already laid down the ground-rules for these incredibly prophetic "science-fiction" stories way back in 1872 with his "*Journey To The Center Of The Earth*", soon followed by his "*Twenty thousand Leagues Under The Sea*". (Not, of course, called "*science-fiction*" then!)

But even earlier than Verne, **Edgar Allan Poe** in 1830 had written, a strange tale entitled "*MS Found In A Bottle*" which hinted darkly at the existence of a giant maelstrom in the Indian Ocean, and how a sailing ship had been dragged down into it – possibly into a distantly-placed Southern Polar opening? While the tale is inconclusive – since the last survivor found time to scribble the curiously long message, and insert it into a bottle prior to being sucked down with the ship – his general description of curious phenomena, such as a pallid watery sun by day and a red moon by night, an ancient Swedish crew-member - *reminiscent of the Ancient Mariner* - all tends to point toward Emerson's "*The Smoky God*". The tailpiece of this story however, written by Poe, is most revealing, and I quote it here in full:

“NOTE. –The “MS Found In A Bottle” was originally published in 1831 (1833), and it was not until many years afterwards that I became acquainted with the maps of Mercator, in which the ocean is represented as rushing, by four mouths into the Northern Polar Gulf, to be absorbed into the bowels of the earth; the Pole itself being represented by a black rock, towering to a prodigious height. –The End-”

However, a later story by Poe “*The Narrative Of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket*”, written in **1850**, enlarges somewhat upon this in a very similar theme, insofar it involves another sea-disaster, this time in the South Pacific Ocean, where Pym eventually arrives aboard a trading schooner after surviving many incredible adventures, accidents, mutinies and shipwrecks. Soon they are in the pack-ice where (woefully, due to Poe’s poor knowledge of South Polar fauna) they encounter a 15-foot **polar bear!**

Strangely, although still heading south, they encounter warm weather and land upon a well-wooded island, inhabited by a treacherous tribe of negro savages clad in furs. They trade with the natives in a friendly manner, but they soon discover that their trust is misplaced. They are subsequently led inland to a great chasm which descends deep into the bowels of the earth....but our hero and his friends somehow escape back to sea, but....well... read it for yourself! However, as always with Poe’s tales, the last chapters are mysteriously missing, so we wind up again with the inevitable lengthy concluding “NOTE” which hints at all sorts of “**Polar Hole**” possibilities!

As a final offering in this selection of antique polar mystery tales, I now direct the reader’s attention to **James De Mille’s** “*A Strange Manuscript Found In A Copper Cylinder*” published in 1888. It is couched in much the same style as Poe’s “Arthur Gordon Pym” story, but at least it takes the reader upon a much more coherent adventure. The tale unfolds with the discovery of a sealed copper cylinder afloat in the sea near the Canaries by a group of rich American youths who are enjoying a casual sailing-boat cruise across the Atlantic. The cylinder is fished aboard and is found to contain a rolled up manuscript, written by one Adam More.

This is almost a sequel to Poe’s “**Pym**” tale - even including the hero and his chum becoming lost in an open dingy and landing upon a volcanic island close to the Antartic continent. They also encounter a tribe of almost subhumanly primitive inhabitants on this island, and soon fall out with them. The hero’s companion is killed but he escapes in the boat along a grim coastline until it is eventually swept into an inland channel, that leads eventually into a great chasm down which the channel falls like a Niagran cataract. The boat and Adam somehow survive this plummet into the depths, and as it floats aimlessly upon a subterranean stream he falls asleep.

When he wakes, he finds himself entering a strange new world, sunny and warm and luxuriant with tropical vegetation. He sees a great galley approaching and encounters the civilized locals of this lovely land, who welcome him aboard. As they make for a nearby quay, beyond which lies a vista of great houses and palaces built in terraces up the surrounding mountainsides. Adam sees many great cavern portals in the cliffs and it is into one of these that he is taken.... But this is only the *beginning* of the tale!

So from here on, I’ll leave my inquiring readers to follow it up themselves, as this book, like most of the others mentioned above, are available for free download

from the Internet. (This one is courtesy of Gaslight Etexts). **De Mille's** story however, is quite relevant to "*The Smoky God*" since it has several similar features. Its inhabitants are also of some curious Indo-Hebrew racial mixture, and are ruled by a High Priest called the **Kohen** - and "Kohen" is Hebrew for "**High Priest**"!

"The Smoky God"

This then establishes that this book so highly venerated by Hollow Earthers, is but one of a *long line* of similar books which reach back to the 1830s, if not further. What we have to ponder is just how much of it was actually the result of the influence of those previous tales, to which Emerson must have had ready access, especially since he was one of the leading lights in the *Iowa Authors Society*! Or did he **really** meet up with **Olaf Jansen**, and later sit beside his death-bed taking notes, in Glendale, Cal?

The big problem is that both of these "*discovered-manuscript*" or "*deathbed-revelation*" tricks are such well-used ploys by writers of that particular era that one is hard put to it in accepting yet another such tale at its face-value. "*I Am The Man*" in Lloyd's "*Etidorhpa*" handed Edwin Drury a sheaf of handwritten manuscript, and "*The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*" was allegedly handed to Edgar Allan Poe for editing and publication. Even James De Mille's "*Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder*" was found floating in the Atlantic, as was Poe's "*MS Found In A Bottle*". Similarly, even Rider Haggard's story of "*She*" began with an ancient shard of Egyptian pottery covered on the outside with a block of *ancient Greek text*, and *further* inscribed on its inner side in Latin and mediaeval English - *as well as* bearing an Egyptian cartouche for good measure! Why shouldn't we also accept these *other* writings on *their* face-value?

God forbid that I should be a "Party Pooper" regarding such literary "Sacred Cows", but where **does** one draw the line? I confess to being a Christian, but I don't necessarily accept **everything** I've read in the Bible as "**Gospel**". Why? Because the men who wrote them were only human and therefore fallible - as well as inclined to embroider and expand upon things. Thus I simply can't accept everything I read! My old Granddaddy used to tell me when I was a small boy: "*Son, believe only a half of what you hear and only a quarter of what you read. That way you won't be too disappointed later on!*" I've always remembered his words of wisdom - and applied them, too. (Maybe just as **you** should also with what **I've** written **here!**)

"Well," someone might ask, "*if you don't believe everything you read, how come you believe that the Earth is hollow? Surely you must have read about it somewhere, and that got you interested?*" This is quite true. I *did* read about it, and it *did* set me thinking, and - *Yes!* I *do* believe that the Earth is hollow! However, note what I said. I *read something that started me thinking* about the hollow earth. (Actually it was an article about Byrd's *alleged* "secret and long-lost Diaries" concerning his mysterious polar flight in 1927). I didn't believe what I read, holus-bolus. I let the idea roll around in my mind for quite some time. It seemed to strike a distant chord somewhere inside me, so I finally decided that it was worth following up a little.

I didn't come to the Hollow Earth theory directly. I'd already read about places like **Shamballah** and **Agartha**, long before I ever heard about **that** possibility. I was always a keen student of world mysteries and lost civilizations, and I have a stack of

books a mile high to prove that interest. I daresay that I have *lost* more books on old mysteries and the occult than many of my readers have got round to reading yet! In my early years, I read several books by **T. Lobsang Rampa** about the mysteries associated with **Tibet** and its **lamas**, and *almost* became a Buddhist as a result. *But not quite!*

No, I came to believe in the Hollow Earth *by degrees*, because even before I taught myself to use a computer, I'd read so many books by maverick adventurer-archaeologists like **Colonel Percy Fawcett** in his South American adventures, and **David Hatcher Childress** in his worldwide travels. They both gave so many "eye-witness" accounts of strange underground cities and vast tunnel systems under mountain chains like the Andes and the Himalayas, that I was "roped in" on the spot.

A "Young Shaver" Mystery

Also I should mention that my interest in things of this kind had been fired ever since, as an artistic child, I studied the fantastic line-engravings and wash-drawings in my first "**Boy's Own Annual**" at the tender age of five or six, then subsequently read the hair-raising stories that accompanied them a few years later. By then I was an 11-year old kid in 1939 pre-WWII Britain, but thanks to a youthful uncle, some seven years my senior, who shared the same interests, and could afford to buy books, I grew up on a basic diet of "**Wide World**", "**Amazing Stories**" and "**Weird Tales**" pulp magazines.

There was one particularly memorable short piece in one of the "pulp" which spoke of the *interior of the Earth* being inhabited by a *race of strange giants* - or some such. How I have **wished** I could find that magazine today! It left me totally mind-boggled to contemplate that there *could* be another, *upside-down world* right under my feet! So you could say that it was really at that point when I became pre-conditioned regarding the concept of a Hollow Earth!

When I eventually acquired a clapped-out computer, fumbled my way around it, then graduated to the Internet (some fifty-seven years later!) I was able to pick up that old mental thread again. After reading about **Byrd's** so-called "flight into the Inner World" via the North Pole, I next read **Dr. Raymond Bernard's** "*The Hollow Earth*", which, because it was so eruditely written, I was gladly prepared to accept - till some fool told me that his real name was **Walter Seigsmiester** and that he was considered a fraud! After that let-down, I guess I trod very cautiously around the whole subject. Then along came **Jan Lamprecht**, who struck me as being a pretty stand-up guy, and I think the fact that he was South African or Rhodesian, helped a lot, since I felt he would be neutral toward American ideas. Most of the writers I'd read thus far on the subject were Americans - from **Poe, Symmes, Teed, Reed** and **Gardner** through to **Rice Burroughs** and onwards. **Jan Lamprecht**, I'm happy to say, has since gone on to write **the** most completely definitive book yet about (*and entitled*) "*Hollow Planets*"!

Strangely, I never recalled hearing of **Richard Shaver** - although I now believe that **he** was the author of that first short article I read in "**Amazing Stories**"! But was he **old** enough? How old *was* Shaver in 1939? I since learned that he was born in **1907**, as **Richard Sharpe Shaver**, and that his brother, **Taylor**, wrote adventure stories for boys' papers. **Richard** was also a born writer, and established an association with **Ray Palmer**, editor of **Amazing Stories**, among other pulp-fiction mags, in the early 1930s. So it was probably one of his very first published pieces that turned me on!

This means that I *really* owe my present considerable interest in the Hollow Earth and Planets theory initially to **Richard Shaver** – and I only wish I could send him an email to thank him today! Sadly, however, I learned that he died back in 1975 – about the same time as his mentor, **Ray Palmer**.

“The Smoky God” Story

Anyhow all this isn’t really explaining my doubts about “**The Smoky God**” as being a genuinely credible account! The actual story itself starts off conventionally enough, but in a very familiar style. The author writes an introductory foreword to “set the stage” as it were for what he knows is going to be an incredible tale to swallow, by remarking in advance upon its very incredibility in the very first line. To an old and experienced reader such as myself, this immediately set the hackles rising. Then my disbelief is aroused even further when I encounter the old “*woken in the wee hours of the morning by a messenger bearing an almost indecypherable note*” line, summoning the great writer to the deathbed of an aged Norseman, named **Olaf Jansen**, and furthermore, one who still adheres to the old pagan Norse gods, Odin and Thor.

It is then revealed that the author had been attracted to Jansen’s Glendale home near L.A. in California, by the homelike appeal of his bungalow and well-tended garden. But he “*can hardly say*” what exactly had motivated him to pause in his constitutional stroll and stand chatting to a 90–odd year old Norwegian ex-fisherman. However, they establish a relationship and the old man more or less prophesies that the author will pay him a return visit one day, and that he will then be shown the old man’s library and be told unbelievable things. The author assures him that he *will* return and that he *will believe whatever he cares to tell him* about his travels and adventures.

This hardly seems to be the way to begin writing what one hopes will be a *convincing* yarn, does it? But are we perhaps being sucked into some sort of clever “double-bluff”? I can only say that by this time, my hackles are fairly crackling with suspicion and distrust! However, on with this potted version of the introduction.

Old Olaf is rather impatient at the tardiness of the author’s arrival and tells him that he won’t last the night, so he must hasten to relate his strange tale before he gets whisked off to Valhalla. Then after two hours or so of rapid-fire talking, Olaf gives the author a bundle of drawings, data and maps, to substantiate his story. “*These I leave in your hands.*” he says. “*If I can have your promise to give them to the world, I shall die happy,*” he says, “*because I desire that people may know the truth, for then all mystery concerning the Northland will be explained.*”

But before relating Olaf’s tale, Emerson reflects to himself upon the influence other writers have had upon him regarding the hollow mysteries of the Frozen north – specifically that of **William F. Warren**, who wrote “*Paradise Found*”, (1885) and suggested that the North Pole was once the site of the original *Garden of Eden*! He then goes on to mention various polar myths about this Arctic Eden and how, according to Olaf Jansen, the Four Rivers of that famed Garden, the Euphrates, the Pison, the Gihon and the Hiddekel, flow around the inner surface of the Earth from the top of a high internal plateau, the Edenic “Navel of the World”.

He also goes on to mention that the Inner Earth’s diameter is 600 miles less than the external diameter, and that in the “*center of this vast internal vacuum is a mammoth*

ball of dull red fire – surrounded by a white, mild, luminous cloud, giving out uniform warmth and held in place by the immutable law of gravity. This electrical cloud is known to people as the abode of “The Smoky God”. They believe it to be the Throne of “The Most High”.” The Lord God of all Creation - **Jehovah** Himself!

Here, we strike a considerable paradox, especially since Olaf was a pagan who worshiped *Odin* and *Thor*. Why then would he refer to *Jehovah* as the *Most High God*?

But that’s not the only paradox. Emerson goes on to say that “*Olaf reminded him of how, in the old college days, we were all familiar with the laboratory demonstrations of centrifugal motion, which clearly proved that if the earth were a solid, the rapidity of its revolution upon its axis would tear it into a thousand pieces.*”

Here one feels compelled to wonder from which American Ivy League college Olaf graduated? Also one can’t help but be amazed at the marvellous way that Olaf, during his *truly incredible* sea-voyage with his father, Jens, had been able to even *guess* at the diameter of the Polar Hole, or that there *even was one*, let alone estimate it at “*about 1400 miles across*”! According to the alleged dying narrative he dictated to Emerson, he recalled so much minute detail about the start of their voyage. How they’d sailed through mysteriously ice-free seas up past Franz Josef Land, then how en route northward they came upon a small island covered with giant washed-up tree trunks, after examining which, they had set sail again. And how, after a hearty meal, he and his father fell asleep, only to be aroused in the night by a dreadful storm. During this, their sloop somehow was caught in the undertow of a great maelstrom, and they were surrounded by white spraying waves and mountainous seas, that whirled the ship around for some three hours or so. For a dying man, Olaf’s memory, was pretty astonishing!

Then, upon finding themselves suddenly in a calm-water channel, 10 to 15 miles wide, they discover that the seawater is now fresh. They at once refill their water-kegs with it. Eleven days later, after setting their sails again and being born along north by northeast, they discover that the sea had once again become salty. They sail on, carefully rationing the remainder of their precious fresh water, and sleeping much of the time. Soon after this Jens rouses Olaf to look at a giant red sun which has now appeared before them, and which he claims to be a mirage which he has heard of before from other Arctic sailors, and that “*it will soon pass away*”.

However, instead of this red sun fading away, it gets stronger instead of dimmer, and once again we hear of Olaf being *woken vigorously* by his father, Jens, telling him that “*there is LAND in sight!*” (*I have to remark here that, for a pair of hardy experienced Arctic fishermen, this father and son duo spent an awful lot of their time asleep in dangerous waters!*) However, apparently there really is land, covered with trees and vegetation, and the two are elated at the discovery – so much so that Jens prays in thanksgiving to his ancient Norse Gods. Here, too, we find one of Olaf’s constantly recurrent references to their *compass* and in which direction it is pointing – this time *due north* – even though they are sailing *due south*!

This harping on about the *compass* is one of the really irritating aspects of the tale – especially when Emerson himself keeps on interjecting with italicised paragraphs about the famous and real Arctic explorers like Nansen and Peary and others, regarding *their* experiences with aberrant compasses. Quite frankly, I find these feeble attempts to

prop up the credibility of the rambling tale not only pathetic, but quite destructive to its integrity as a coherent whole. However, to return to the story.

The two Jansens continue sailing along this coastline for several more days, only putting ashore here and there to collect nuts from the trees, until they find a river-mouth and turn their vessel into it. Before long, they hear the sound of many people singing, accompanied by harps, and soon a large and strange ship glides downriver toward them.

Here, I think we really need to “*Cut to the Chase*” or I’ll be repeating the whole story, verbatim! A boat is lowered and six gigantic men row out to their sloop. We learn that they stand around twelve feet tall, wear full, but carefully trimmed beards, and speak in a curious tongue. However, they appear kindly disposed and take the Jansens on board their huge craft, and even hoist their sloop aboard it, too. They are all fair-skinned but with ruddy complexions and vary in their hair-coloring, between black and blond. It appears that there are also a number females on board also.

Anyhow, they are so impressed with the two midget Norsemen, that the captain - who is a good head taller than any of the rest - orders that the ship, which is a highly-powered motor-driven vessel, be turned around and headed back upstream. The pair are shown every kindness by their hosts – whom they now notice are strangely clad in lavishly embroidered silk and satin tunics, with knee-breeches and gold buckled sandals.

Very soon, travelling at railroad-express speed, they notice that the outer sun’s rays have ceased to shine down (*presumably through the 1400 mile Polar hole – though if so - How? The sun can never be directly overhead in the Arctic region!*) but there is still a soft radiance emanating from the “dull-red sun” and its inexplicably “white light”. We are then told that in twelve hours, this cloud of white light would pass out of sight, and that the following twelve hours would correspond to the external hours of darkness.

Fortunately, the ship is illuminated by what Olaf later realizes is electricity, but which was at that time (in 1829) unknown to them. But, to continue. Two days later, they arrive at a large city called “*Jehu*”, which he says signified “*a seaport town*”. It has large and varied, beautiful houses, uniform in appearance but without “sameness”. It is also judged by Jens that this city must be *directly underneath* London or Stockholm. (But they haven’t yet been informed that they’re actually *inside the Inner Earth!*)

The principal occupation of the population seems to be viniculture and grain-growing, to which the surrounding hillsides and valleys attest. The grapes however, are as large as oranges, and apples the size of a *man’s head* demonstrate the wonderful growing conditions that apply here. The trees surrounding the area are far taller than even the giant California redwoods - which would look like mere underbrush by comparison. And the hills are thronged with vast herds of dairy cattle.

As things turn out, the Jansens are kept at **Jehu** (a very Hebrew-sounding name) under the care and instruction of one **Jules Galdea** and his wife, who are charged to teach them the local tongue. (This language is later revealed by Olaf to closely resemble “*Sanskrit*”! *How would he know?*) Emissaries arrive from the Inner Earth government to learn all they can from Olaf and Jens, who have to draw the rough maps of the outer world, including naming all its features. Then at last, they are conveyed on a sort of high-speed gyroscopic monorail transport system to the city of “**Eden**” where they are conducted into the presence of the **High Priest** who rules all the land.

(I couldn't help noticing the odd comparison between *this* aspect of the tale and that of the rulership of the inner world of **James De Mille's** "*Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder*" where a **High Priest** called the *Kohen* ruled the nation!

De Mille's story was published in 1888, so Emerson would have had ample opportunity to consciously or subconsciously absorb its plot, setting, and characters over the intervening twenty years! Unfortunately, *his* High Priest is given no Jewish title, but we can see that there *is some* curious kinship between the two. One appears to have sprung from the other; in subconscious memory, at least!) However, to continue.

The High Priest's temple is situated in the heart of **Eden**, which, as we learned earlier, sits upon the loftiest mountain plateau of the main Inner Continent, and is surrounded by a very beautiful garden – *Edenic*, in fact! Four rivers share their source here in a huge artesian fountain and they run off in the four directions of the compass. This place they are told, is the "**Navel of the Earth**", the "**Cradle of the Human Race**" and the rivers are those in mentioned in the Bible – **Euphrates, Pison, Gihon** and **Hiddekel**! Thus we must conclude that the population are Hebrews – and quite probably represent the long-missing **Tribes of Israel**!

Olaf and his father are surprised to find that even their **sloop** has been transported up to this garden for the High Priest's inspection! Their audience with this fifteen-foot tall dignitary him lasts for some two hours, during which he questions them politely and considerately. At the conclusion of the talk, he asks them whether they would like to remain there, or return to their own outer world, if it were at all possible to re-cross the ice-barrier, which he tells them encloses both Polar openings..

Old Jens then requests that they be allowed to remain a while to learn something more of the land, its people, colleges and palaces of music and art, as well as its fields and forests, and then be allowed to return home to their kinfolks. The High Priest says that he fears that they will never manage to return home, as the way is too hazardous. But they can certainly stay on with **Jules Galdea** and that he will be appointed to escort them around the different countries. And that, when they are ready to leave, their sloop will be replaced in the river, and made ready for them – "*and we will bid you Jehovah-speed!*" Thus ends their one and only interview with the high Priest.

After this, there follows a lengthy description of all the aspects of life and the land of this amazing land. People get married at between 75 to 100 years old, and they generally live for up to between 600 and 800 years, and in some cases even more.

This of course, tallies very well with the ages of the antediluvian patriarchs from Adam to Noah, so it comes as no great surprise, especially given their Edenic surroundings, and that Jehovah Himself allegedly resides in the vicinity of the haze-surrounded Red Sun – (*hence His title of "The Smoky God"!*) At least, having founded his tale upon such an Hebraic-Biblical plot, Emerson is nothing if not *consistent*!

I shall avoid reiterating *all* the imaginative details which are set forth in Emerson's tale, regarding the nature of this world, apart from some passing mention of the presence of many *surface-type animals and birds*, and even the hint of an *amphibious dinosaur*, much like the *plesiosaurus* – plus the vast herds of *mammoths*

which roam across the plains and forests! I must add here, however, that I would expect nothing less than the odd **Behemoth** and **Leviathan** in such an Edenic setting!

Suffice to say that it was filled with a great many such wonders - as well as a great deal of *pure gold* in nugget-form that lay strewn around like pebbles everywhere!

The father-and-son team were shown many incredible things, especially how the inner landmasses and oceans were opposed to those on the outer crust. Where there was fourth fifths of ocean and only one of dry land above, so was the opposite true below. The ocean of the Inner World only occupied a fifth of the inner surface, so that the actual land mass was vastly greater than that of the exterior! (This, however, is not such a new idea, and has been proposed many times in previous literary and theoretical concepts of the interior of our globe. Not that it necessarily makes any valid scientifically orthodox geological sense, but it certainly *sounds* pretty convincing – which is all that really matters in a novel!)

Sadly, it is precisely *because* Emerson elected to incorporate so many *seemingly convincing* features into his story, that so many easily-persuaded Hollow Earthers tend to believe it to be a true and factual account! One might as well believe “*The first Men In The Moon*” to be true, for exactly the same reason! “**Cavorite**” definitely *seems* to work! As I’ve mentioned before, this trick of introducing elements of pseudo-science into these old stories was a very commonly-used ploy in most tales of this genre. And it was what made these old-fangled books so much more intriguing than much of our modern Hi-Tech science-fiction! If you don’t believe me, try reading a few more! (*To aid the doubting reader in this, I’ll add the URL of a site where other Hollow Earth and Lost Races book-titles can be found at the end of this article*).

Farewell to The Smoky God

Anyhow, let us now move right along, and try to conclude our “not-so-brief” dip into “*The Smoky God*”!

Eventually, however, Olaf and Jens begin to weary of their travels around this enchanting land, despite its “intoxicating, electrically-surcharged air” and the constant sweet “fragrance of bud and blossom” and pine to be on their way Home to wife and mother regardless of the risks. Their wishes are reluctantly but promptly followed, but not before their hosts have presented Jens with various maps and charts of the entire Inner Earth – in addition to a load of bags of gold nuggets the size of goose-eggs!

The day finally arrives when the giants launch their sloop into the river, and there is a sad farewell scene as they prepare to get under weigh. Old Jens swears by Odin and Thor to their large friends that he will try to return in a year or two to pay them another visit.. and so they bid their fond adieus and hoist sail. However, there is a minor hiccup in their departure since the wind, which constantly blows from the north polar opening to the south, holds them back for three days. Finally, Jens resolves that the only answer is to head for the southern Polar aperture. (But not without some further confusion and rigmarole over the compass which points steadfastly “North” despite the fact they are heading due south!) The first intimation of their approach to the south opening, is when they land upon a small island and discover penguins upon it.- except that *these penguins stand nine feet tall!*

As one might have anticipated, their next hundred days are a living hell of uncertainty in an open and iceless sea, as their ship is driven before a terrific warm wind

that issues from the polar opening, and they fear the hull being smashed upon hidden rocks. But soon, they find themselves among the Antarctic ice-packs which threaten to crush their little sloop to matchwood, and again their compass behaves in a drunken and erratic fashion as they ascend the vast curvature out from the vicinity of the opening.

Grimly they battle their way onwards through a seemingly endless narrow channel, narrowly avoiding being crushed between the vast icebergs which loom on either hand. The bergs grind noisily together cracking great slabs off each other, with reverberating cracks like artillery, and they fear the slabs falling upon their ship.

But eventually to their immense joy, and relief, the channel steadily widens and soon they can hoist their full sails to a favoring breeze, and set forth like an ocean racehorse. And so they go for the next month and a half, dodging icebergs and seeking channels.

However, Fate hasn't freed them yet! Just as they are congratulating each other on the fact that they'll soon be heading home to Stockholm - especially with their hold full of gold nuggets - they hear a deafening roar like the firing of a thousand cannon. It comes from a giant iceberg that they are just passing, which has just split in two, and now it is rolling over, and lifting their little boat up on a great jutting spur of what had been submerged ice! Their boat is thrown into the air like a football as the spur lifts up from the sea, but luckily it falls back upon the iceberg. In the event, Olaf has been thrown clear of the sloop but his father is snarled up in the rigging. Then, before they can even think, the berg completes its roll and Olaf swoons away as the icy waters envelope him.

When he awakes from his faint, Olaf finds himself lying wet, stiff and frozen upon the iceberg, but his father has completely vanished, together with their fishing-sloop. It's then that Olaf realizes he is a castaway, and is overtaken by grief and horror. Grief for his beloved father, and horror at the hopelessness of his situation. Thus he crouches back against the ice, resigned to an awful lonely death by freezing. He awaits the inevitable in total, black despair.

Of course, no self-respecting novelist would leave his hero in such a plight for long, and this holds true for Emerson, too. Suddenly Olaf is aroused by the firing of a signal-gun! And, lo! There, only half a mile away he sees a Scottish whaling-ship bearing down upon him with all sails set! He is delivered!

In due course he is tucked up in a warm bunk under the supervision of the ship's surgeon. His efforts to explain that he had come with his father from the Earth's interior are simply regarded as the ramblings of a man who has survived a great ordeal. Some days later, when he Olaf climbs out of his bunk and goes up on deck, the skipper again quizzes him about where he had come from, but when Olaf sticks to his tale, he is dismissed as being "Mad as a March Hare". It takes him some time to convince the captain that he is sane and will never mention the Inner Earth again, and after that he is allowed to join the crew, and work his way to Scotland and thence to Stockholm.

When he finally arrives there, it is to discover that his mother has been dead for a year. He then makes the mistake of entrusting his tale to a relative, and this lands him in the madhouse, where he remains for the next twenty-eight years! Subsequently, upon his release at the age of around fifty-one, Olaf returns to his life as a fisherman,

and after working hard and saving his money sedulously, for a further twenty-seven years, he at last has the means to go to America, and to finally settle in quiet retirement in Los Angeles. However, despite his amazing adventures, he still regarded the climax of his life as being when the Scottish whaler took him off that iceberg in the Antarctic.

There is a “**Conclusion**” to his tale, to the effect that he “*firmly believed science was still in its infancy regarding the cosmology (or should that be “cosmogony”?) of the Earth. There is still so much unaccounted for by the world’s accepted knowledge of today! (how true!) and it will remain so until the land of “The Smoky God” is known and recognized by our geographers.*”

“It is the land from whence came the great logs of cedar that have been found by explorers in open waters far over the northern edge of the Earth’s crust, and also the bodies of the mammoths whose bones are found in vast beds on the Siberian coast.”

“Northern explorers have done much . Sir John Franklin, De Haven Grinnell, Sir John Murray, Kane, Melville, Hall, Nansen, Schwatka, Greely, Peary, Ross, Gerlache, Bernacchi, Andree, Amsden, Amundsen and others have all been striving to storm the frozen citadel of mystery.”

Olaf (or Emerson) then ends by remarking: “*I firmly believe that Andree and two brave companions, Strindberg and Fraenkell, who sailed away in the balloon “Oroen” from the northwest coast of Spitzbergen on that Sunday afternoon of July 11, 1897, are now in the “within” world, and doubtless, are being entertained as my father and I were entertained by the kind-hearted giant race inhabiting the inner Atlantic Continent.*”

(There’s another page or so, but I won’t include them here as they concerns scientific matters)

Summation

Thus we also arrive at the point where we must arrive at our *own* conclusions as to the veracity or otherwise of Emerson’s tale of the Inner Earth. First we must decide who *really* told this story. Was it Olaf Jansen, or was it Willis George Emerson? To try to cast some light upon this question of true authorship, we have to go right back to the beginning of the story. Let us begin by considering Emerson’s account of how he first became acquainted with Olaf Jansen. Was it in the flesh or was it in his imagination?

By his own words, Emerson tends to betray himself regarding the credulity of the whole thing. I feel that right on the opening page in his Foreword, Emerson vacillates upon his own actual belief in its veracity. He ponders his own credulity in accepting Olaf’s tale as true fact, *several times* within the span of a single page. If he was really *that* uncertain as to the narrative’s veracity, he should never have put pen to paper in the first place! This, as I have remarked earlier, immediately raised the hackles of my own belief. When an author begins a story by patently *disowning* it, I know instinctively that he is about to stretch my credulity to snapping point! Nor were my literary suspicions proven wrong!

During his introduction of Olaf Jansen, Emerson was clearly upon “shaky ground” - and not just because he was in Southern California! He backed and filled

more often than any of the subsequent winds and gales his heroes were to encounter in the polar fiction that followed ! his account of first meeting Olaf is clearly an invention. And I must admit that I find it hard to credit that such an elderly Swedish fisherman in that day and age, could have raised sufficient funds to pay his fare from Stockholm to America, *as well as* purchase a neat little bungalow in **Glendale**, Los Angeles, whether or not unpretentious. Not to mention an extensive library of fine books! **Glendale**, (*next door to Beverly Hills*) was, by Emerson's own admission close to the Los Angeles **business district**, and must therefore have cost Olaf more than a pretty penny to acquire to acquire a home there! Then we have the question of Olaf's age when he emigrated to America. By simple arithmetic, since he was a boy of only 18 or 19 when he set out on the fateful voyage with his father, then the outward voyage may have taken anywhere up to six months - after which he claimed to have spent two years inside the earth - he must have been 21 when he left Eden.

Allow another twelve months for the period between leaving the south Polar hole and arriving back in Sweden, since the whaler would not have gone directly back to Scotland - and even when it did, he would also have had to get from Dundee to Stockholm - and we have him at the age of around 22 to 23. Then, presuming he was at liberty in Stockholm for say some six months before his uncle had him committed to the asylum, he would surely have been over 23 at the time of his incarceration. Now add the 28 years of his confinement in the madhouse, and we see that he must have been at least fifty-one at the time of his release. But then he became a fisherman again (and we can only assume an ordinary deck-hand at that), since his uncle had no doubt sold his mother's house whilst he was inside the asylum. As nefarious a motive as any for having him committed!

Thus working as a common deckhand for a further 5 years, he saved every last dime, and steadily accrued enough capital to buy his own fishing-brig. Then he worked 22 years for himself, fishing around the Lofoden (*actually "Lofoten"*) islands, and gradually, over the long years, increasing his fleet of boats. In **1889** Olaf sold out his fleet, and acquired what was to him, a fortune, sufficient to last him for life. He must have been around **78 years old** when he decided to go to America .

There, he lived in the state of **Illinois**, near Batavia, for **twelve years**, where he gathered most of his extensive library, although he had brought many choice volumes with him from Stockholm. Then he retired to **Glendale, Los Angeles** at the age of **90** where he bought a comfortable bungalow. He had lived in it, surrounded by books, for another **5** years before he met Emerson.. So here we find this old man of **95** years of age, who after a tough lifetime of extremely hard work at sea – not to mention of also suffering in a madhouse, who is now a dedicated intellectual scholar surrounded by his own magnificent library! How did he become a scholar?

The final closing tailpiece of the story which follows Olaf's conclusion to his tale, depicts a man of very high intellect who has obviously had access to higher learning. This is reinforced in *Part Two* of Olaf's story, where he explains that he was a bookish, studious child, who attended a **private school** in Stockholm until he was 14.

If Olaf ever **really** existed, Emerson *might* conceivably have "*bought*" that story, but **I** don't! No, I guess, I have to say rather sadly, that the clues still just **don't add up** in my mind. There are far too many weird and unexplained things involved.

For example. Does anyone who is a Christian *really* buy into the concept of the **Lord God of all Creation** having **His Heavenly Throne** and **all of Paradise** hidden away inside the crust of the humble little **planet Earth**?

Not only that, but we are given the idea that the population of that Inner World were **Hebrews** - one can't help but assume this. Especially taking into account their general appearance, priesthood and the names of themselves and their cities and rivers, as well as their apparent relationship to the ancient Biblical patriarchs, in both size and lifespan). Not to mention that they were living in **Paradise** – in the Presence of **God**!

Why, then, I ask, in the name of all that's holy, did they **speak** in **Sanskrit**? Surely that was the ancient language of the **Hindus** of India, who worshiped a *totally different Vedic pantheon* of gods?

Then, of course, we have that strange matter of coincidence concerning other such tales as **James De Mille's** "*A Strange Manuscript Found in a Copper Cylinder*"! Could it be that Emerson was simply a *plagiarist* who culled other old adventure books for material to include in his complicated story? There were certainly hundreds of them around in his time! It's also easily possible that Emerson *did* encounter an old Scandinavian who had some sort of tale to tell – I myself have personally met many ex-seamen who could tell some wonderful tall stories about their travels - and the amazing adventures they had encountered on them!

Thus, I find that there is too much room for doubt, and too many paradoxes and conflicting aspects in the story to see it as anything other than simple sensational fiction and not all that well put together, either! As one reviewer wrote: "*It's a long way from deathless prose, but it seems to have been lost in time. People who like to read the old stuff – the science-fiction that pre-dates even the term "science-fiction" - may find the story of more than passing interest*". I guess that he neatly sums up my own view, too!

Olaf's Last-Page "Evidence"

Let me conclude this evaluation with a few final observations on the "*scientific evidence*" presented by Olaf Jansen in the "**Conclusion**" of "**The Smoky God**".

As to Olaf's talk of cedar tree-trunks washed up on Arctic islands, and of vast beds of mammoth remains along the Siberian coast being from inside the Earth. These are *known* facts, but they are easily attributable to such earth-shaking events as ancient meteor-impacts in the Pacific (*or even to pole-shifts and tilts*) that sent enormous tidal waves sweeping northwards in a swirling, sluicing curve across the Asian plains. These repetitive waves carried with them the remains of the huge herds of mammoths that used to graze there, as well as whole forests of trees of all kinds - including cedars.

All of these were smashed and frozen among the floes and ridges of the Arctic icefields or deposited upon the coastal tundra of Northern Siberia. Topsoil was also carried by subsequently-rebounding tidal waves and dumped over the remains and detritus already deposited, and was snap-frozen by the intense Arctic cold. Hence the phenomenon of "fresh" mammoth carcasses lying buried under the permanently frozen earth (*now known as "permafrost"*), as well as those which lie frozen inside permanent ice-sheets on the Siberian-Arctic islands. Fresh tree-trunks and even *green-leaved* boughs and other ancient vegetation have also been found "snap-frozen fresh" in these same locations.

They are therefore *not* conclusive evidence of “Polar Holes”. In any event, according to my understanding of a Hollow Earth scenario, since such polar holes would be in the ocean floors and therefore submerged, the Northern polar hole would be an *inflowing* maelström, often surrounded by a revolving, atmospheric hurricane-like storm, into which ships, and even aircraft can be *sucked down*, whilst the Southern aperture would be an *outflowing upthrusting* maelström, from which Inner Earth detritus would be disgorged. It too would be hidden by a rotating atmospheric storm.

Thus it follows that any “Inner-Earth” ejecta would only be found near the Antarctic! So in this regard, it would appear that either **Olaf Jansen** or **Willis Emerson** had “done their homework” pretty thoroughly! Incidentally, as a matter of further interest, these enormous “**maelströms**” (*or oceanic whirlpools*) have been recorded for millennia in the Earth’s oceans, both in fact, as *temporary but recurring* phenomena, and in the legends and myths of not only circumpolar lands, but of Greece and Asia. Curiously enough, there is a relatively minor but permanent maelström, caused by conflicting North Atlantic and Arctic Ocean currents, which revolves just off the coast near the isle of **Moskensby**, one of the southernmost of the Norwegian **Lofoten Islands** on which Olaf’s father, **Jens Jansen**, is reported to have been born!

I think it extremely likely that, since this is the best-known permanent maelström in northern oceans, **Emerson** chose it as his primary model, and also included its surroundings as a good location for some of the early action in his story. This would also account for his choice of *Scandinavian fishermen* as his principal characters. There was no shortage of such ex-Swedish and Norwegian seamen who jumped ship in America in his time, and they were renowned as notorious tellers of uncanny sea stories! Even **Edgar Allan Poe** was a sucker for such tales some 70 years earlier! One should read his story “*A Descent Into The Maelström*” - and his “*Ms Found in a Bottle*” (1833) shows the same “*whirlpool*” influence upon his story-telling – even including an old Swedish companion! It is quite possible that **Emerson** was also heavily influenced by **Poe**, as well as by **James De Mille**.

However, be that as it may, I remain convinced that both “*The Smoky God*” and “*Etidorhpa*” are simply cleverly-conceived *works of pure fiction* - and nothing more!

The End

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