

Enough, if something
from
our hands
have power to live,
and act,
and serve the future hour.
Wordsworth

Horatio : ..but this is wondrous strange.

Hamlet : There are more things in heaven

and earth, Horatio, than are
dreamt of in your philosophy.

It was John who always quoted these words of Hamlet to me as his life and the lives of others began to mesh with mine. But not just yet: they were all in the future, and nothing that followed would have happened if I had not taken the road over the Scottish Border in that sunny late May in 1982, to determine whether there was in reality '...something in my hands which would have the power to live and act and serve the future'.

The auguries had been consulted and it was indeed deemed auspicious that I should begin my apprenticeship with Bruce Macmanaway at his centre at Strathmiglo, and there I arrived near midday one Sunday to a kind welcome. I was placed in a flat in the village that I shared for a short while with a young student, Nicky, who, it turned out, originated from a place not fifteen miles from my own South Welsh home. We did not share for very long for she departed, ostensibly to stay with a sick friend.

I spent the Sunday evening taking stock of my surroundings and musing upon what might happen, though I was not in any way certain exactly what I would be doing, for I wasn't to get my 'induction' until the following morning. In a sense, though, I had company, for since my visit to my Uncle Gwyn it had been put into my mind that I was to have transferred to me his two 'guides' - 'Great Heart and Xiang'. I cannot remember how I reacted to this intimation, and had not speculated much upon what, if anything, it might mean, nor what might follow. I was still very wary of *any* form of intrusion or overt spiritual association, as I am right up to this present day, for I have never been without them, good and bad, as I shall write in detail later. In addition to the alleged African, Ibn Ubar, who, I assumed was still active and party to the developments, I had my new duo, and thus equipped, but not thinking specifically about any of 'them', I slept well and rose early to meet the day.

It was such a beautiful sunny morning, as indeed it was all week, and I walked the short distance to 'Westbank' - a sturdy former farm house with its buildings converted to a variety of other uses, though there were still horses. At the entrance and vying with the sun was a rosebush in full bloom, a rose that I have grown myself ever since. It is the first of any to show in spring, and although its flowers are single and just a couple of inches across, the whole bush presents such a joyous picture, truly living up to its name of *Canary Bird*.

How very much I regret that I can do no more than give you the merest inkling of the impact that this week, and particularly this first day, were to have on my life and development thereafter. At one level, there is a whole crowd of superlatives jostling to be used: at another, and so very potent, are the images that so easily return to my mind's eye. In every one of these images there was the sunshine that was all pervasive, especially in the part of the treatment area in which I was to work closely with Bruce. The sunlight poured in through a large area of glass, which

itself gave onto a beautiful and imaginative garden, the product of Patricia's mind and hands. It illuminated a long room divided by curtains into several consulting and treating areas, and shone onto Bruce and two young women, friends, who had arrived together, each needing help.

Both were professional violinists and, as with many of their calling, had upper back problems. Bruce used to declare that he could muster at least one full orchestra from among his clients! Permission for my being there having been sought and willingly given, I sat to one side, watched, and listened. A decision having been made as to which would go first, Bruce sat and chatted to her, pendulum in hand. I already knew what he would be seeking in his mind, but it soon became apparent that he could work simultaneously on two levels. A pendulum is used in these circumstances simply to indicate a definite "Yes" or "No", giving answers to the mental questions - "Can I help this person?" "Are there any problems in the spine?" And so on, following a sequence that had been established over years of practice, and through which an easy conversation could still proceed.

It was determined that this young woman's problems lay in the muscles controlling the shoulder blades, and these in turn were subjected to some subtle and skilful manipulation. She was next sat upon a high stool, I stood behind and responded to my instruction to "Put your hands there, Roy" - 'there' being parallel with her spine and between her shoulder blades. So simple, but such a seminal moment, especially as the response was almost immediate. "Phooooaaah!" was the ecstatic sound, followed by attempts to put the inner sensations produced into context, the nearest analogy being, I think, that they were the equivalent of being in a microwave oven. It was the response that I needed, for I had had no inkling of what to expect, as through my hands I felt nothing, no tingling, no excessive heat, nothing exceptional. And there I stayed, applying 'hot hands', as my mentors used to phrase it, while the second violinist received the equivalent from Bruce. I know that this was commonplace to the workers at Westbank, but to me that ecstatic sound had told me all that I needed to know, just as I knew that my life would never be quite the same again.

If I needed further demonstration and confirmation, it came with the next client of the morning, a Russian Orthodox priest who had arrived with his interpreter. A diminutive man, bent and hobbling with a stick, he looked very un-Russian, and more like an ancient Chinese intellectual. He was riddled with arthritis in knees, hips and shoulders, and kneeling for prayer or his beloved gardening was impossible. The conversation, travelling as it did via the woman interpreter, who also had an input, was fascinating, but all the while the pendulum was reacting. Following a series of manipulations, Bruce sat with his hands in place on hip and knee, while I was placed to stand so that I could have my hands at the back and front of a shoulder. The animated conversation continued, while I felt the crabbed little rounded shoulder between my hands. But what was this? My hands were slowly coming together, and between them it felt as if the intervening shoulder was melting. From

time to time a hand came up and stroked the one of mine that was at the front, and again, occasionally, the head turned and bright bird-like eyes shone up at me from above a beatific smile, which itself emerged from a wispy oriental beard. I have no real idea how long we stayed thus, but magic moments always end too soon, and there he was, being escorted out by Bruce, while his interpreter sat holding herself with laughter. What amused her so was that the little priest no longer hobbled and had gone off without his stick, totally oblivious to the extent of his now upright stature, while it was being slowly explained to him that Bruce never took payment from the ministers of any religion.

It would be inappropriate for me to give, and I am sure that you would not want, a recital of all the problems brought by such a wide variety of people, who had variously come from Northern Ireland, the Outer Hebrides, parts of Scotland, as well as from the local village. My week was so full, so very, very full, and full still is my mind of many memories. Right up until the last session, when the contrast could not have been greater, between an ox-like Jock from the Black Watch who had done his back a mischief as he had helped to retrieve a gun from a ditch, and a petite and elegant former ballerina, one, it turned out, with whom I, like many, had fallen in love a number of years before when she had entranced us all, as she had danced and acted through her films. What a finale to an incredible week.

But that wasn't all, for additional things happened during some of the other activities at the Centre; events which in themselves were equally memorable. Each Monday evening a number of people gathered at Westbank for a general group meditation. Formed into a horseshoe we sat, positioned relative to each other by Bruce. He conducted the spoken meditation theme in a way that I had experienced at the earlier course. By my own determination, I did not let myself drift, but there were obviously a number of this group of about twelve or fifteen who were 'away with the fairies'. When the meditation had ended and everyone had returned to the planet, Bruce asked each in turn what, if anything, he or she had experienced. The replies were obviously quite diverse, but my ears pricked up when one lady said that she had been involved with black people in some sort of lion hunt. My ears positively waggled when another lady said that she had been presented in her mind's eye with the head of a North American Indian in full feathered head-dress.

Bruce left me until last in this catechism, when I had to confess that, whereas I had no personal experiences to report, I believed that I was responsible for the lion hunt, for reasons which I explained, and that also the Indian was one of 'mine'. But where, I said, was the representative from China whom by now, I thought, must also be present? "Well," said the lady who had seen the Indian "part way through the meditation the head changed into that of a Chinaman, but I rationalised

that this could not be possible, whereupon it had returned to its previous Indian form".

Wednesday noon produced a gathering with a different purpose. Every one of the Centre's many clients, and all the people for whom requests had been sent, were to be made the focus of a combined direction of absent healing. Into the assembled names I had put that of Sandy, my GP friend who was slowly dying from a strange wasting illness (motor neurone disease, as it turned out). Neither I, nor anyone else, expect miracles, but one has to try. Again, there was a led meditation and prayer for each of the named individuals, at which point, for Sandy, I felt intense internal emotion, but no, sadly, no miracle. At times one feels let down when something dramatic does not occur, but I was very much a beginner in this ancient 'craft' of healing, and it was only later, when I became closely involved with the so-called 'gentle approach' to cancer, that I was to learn that there are many different ways in which individuals can be 'healed'.

As on the Monday, at the end, Bruce asked each to relate any experiences. Mine had been obvious to all, and others had been internally involved with thoughts of the many unnecessary deaths resulting from the sinking the previous day of the Argentinean cruiser *Belgrano*. Nothing of particular note came forward, and I might easily have forgotten the laughing comments of one young woman, who said that she had been presented in her mind with what looked like a peculiar cage of filigree gold, shaped, as best she could describe, like a pumpkin with a handle on the top; though I had to wait until I subsequently arrived home to realise the significance to me of her 'vision'.

After lunch on my final day, I was sped on my way, still in the bright sunshine that had blessed the whole week, by a collection of such memorable people, and with a mind brim full of a vast range of experiences and phenomena. It was not all that far to the Kinross service station, but I pulled into it simply to let myself descend slowly and a little closer to the planet. I don't know what my thoughts would have been had I known then that Westbank would figure even more significantly later in my new and burgeoning life, or that, in spite of the apparent total benevolence of all that I had experienced, there was a trap laid by the 'Auld Enemy' (that's his name in Scotland), in which Nicky innocently figured, and which would not be sprung for another eight years. The context and happening are not truly relevant to my ongoing tale, and so I'll have to leave you speculating on that one (though don't go too wild in your ideas), but the events subsequent to the trap being sprung served to show me, in my naïveté, just how two-faced even the nicest people can be at times. No, entirely unaware of a whole variety of impending developments, I took to the road again, somewhat more focussed than I had been on the first part of my journey. At Carlisle, I staged myself at the home of a cousin and her companion and shared some of my experiences, and then on again, wanting to get home and yet not wanting

to. My final diversion was to visit the farmstead of Peter and Tricci, which was very close to my route, and as I walked across the yard, Tricci came out to greet me saying, "Where have you *been*? You're positively *shining*!"

The final event that closed this particular sequence materialised when I had collected and sorted my mail. Enclosed with a letter from Marie or Joy, I forget which, was a prayer card issued by the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa, and on it was a picture of the statue to Our Lady of Africa, which stands in Algiers, the founding home base of the missionary order of White Fathers and Sisters. Surmounting the head of the statue was a crown – a filigree gold construction, which did, in fact, resemble 'a cage shaped like a pumpkin' while the cross at the top did, actually look like a handle. (On the wall opposite me now as I write is a larger version, painted in blue and gold on brown bark cloth by one of the White Sisters in Africa, and the gold crown with its surmounted cross totally fits that description).

What a range of memories and consequences there are to recall and put in some sort of order and sequence, as each of the strands of my life unwound and wove again one with the other. One of the principal ones, undoubtedly, was that concerned with an understanding of many of the factors involved in my own health and that of other people, which had been made all the more relevant with my direct opening into the field of 'healing'. As my body and mind had cleared themselves of all the residues of my unfortunate sixteen years of being polluted by the drugs that I had taken, I found that, in many ways, I had been going through a process of rebirth and of rediscovery. What was coming back to life, and what I was rediscovering, were normal body functions and reactions that had been suppressed by all the invasive medications, whose prime function had been, after all, to suppress or alter the body's natural functions and reactions via their effect upon the central nervous system. Even now, nearly forty years after my initial encounter with Librium, I am still trying to re-educate my centre of reaction that I would call the solar plexus, which went into a sort of rebound after so many years of being suppressed, and has never truly regained a stable and natural function.

After having been subjected to a sort of medical 'rape' of my mind and body, my one overriding approach to anything to do with my health was that which also governed my burgeoning activities in the home - Do-It-Yourself. My encounter with Richard Mackarness' book, *Not All in the Mind*, and Sandy's realistic attitude to medical intervention, prompted me to start learning in earnest, and from all sources, and at every juncture. As I encountered anything to do with health, I read and read and asked questions. One learning leap occurred following my hearing of a broadcast of the radio programme 'You and Yours'. The name 'myalgic encephalomyelitis' has thankfully been shortened to M.E. At the time, i.e. 1981, and when also known as the 'Royal Free disease', it was not commonly recognised nor talked about. As the broadcast progressed, I found myself recognising in myself so much of what was being described,

sufficiently for me to write to an address given for further information. With the information package came a very detailed and wide-ranging questionnaire, which I duly completed fully and honestly. The answers were assessed by a group of doctors who had volunteered their services, but, inevitably, it was a procedure that took some time. The reply, when it came, said that there was a distinct probability that I could be suffering from M.E., and offered several suggestions about how next to proceed. In the time between sending my questionnaire and receiving the reply, I had decided that whatever the outcome I had no intention of being saddled with *any* illness, and had moved on, with a determination that I should take as much responsibility for my own well-being as I possibly could.

In spite of this decision of mine to disassociate myself from any personal connection with an illness, it is worth looking briefly at those of my own reactions that I had felt matched the ones that had been used to define M.E. The reason why I do so is that they appear severally or alone in a setting that will emerge shortly. The effects that I thought that I recognised, or with which I identified, were: intermittent difficulty in sleeping; unexplained and unpredictable mood swings, particularly to 'lows' that went as inexplicably as they had arrived; periodic difficulty in achieving coherent thought; physical sensations that were hard to identify or specify, as they incorporated aspects of tingling, twitching, numbness and aches, which were worse in bed and cumulative through the night, and so on.

One positive and fruitful area of study derived from my increasing use of herbs, and was stimulated by a delightful and remarkably informative book *Grandmother's Secrets* by Jean Palaiseul. Over the years, I have acquired other herbals, but this is always my reference book of first choice. From it, and allied with the information disseminated by the Henry Doubleday Association, I learned of the properties of one herb that, in particular, has become both efficacious and influential in my life. Comfrey, or knit bone, or any of the many other country names by which it is known, has a prolific life in my garden, where it provides the core of my composting activities. But it is the remarkable healing properties that it possesses that have kept it to the fore ever since I learned of them, and it was these that were to have a major influence in my continuing contact with Marie and her dispensary.

Sometime in 1982-3, she had written describing the even worse economic situation that was enveloping Uganda. In particular, they were desperately short of medicines; could I help? I did the first two things that came to my mind, and through which I believed that I could achieve *something*. I contacted the Medical Department of my former employers, who most willingly and generously provided a quantity of materials and drugs, which I sent. Secondly, I sent a copy of *Grandmother's Secrets*; a book by Lawrence Hills called simply *Comfrey*, and all my available supply of comfrey ointment. This may appear to some as naïve, but many of the ailments being treated in the bush were on the surface of the body, where I believed that the direct healing promoted by comfrey would be effective. Anyway, I did what I could, and

invited other agencies to help as well. The ointment duly arrived, on a Friday, and was immediately applied to an ulcer that was on the leg of an old man who had walked for three days to reach the dispensary. Marie wrote that such an ulcer would normally take a fortnight to heal using the standard treatments available to them. However, by the following Monday new pink skin started to appear, and within a very few days the healing was complete. The old man departed joyfully, calling down blessings on Our Lady, while everyone else who was there at the time was most impressed!

After such an auspicious start there had to be a follow up, and that came through the assistance of a remarkable man, Lawrence Hills of the Henry Doubleday Organisation. He could not have been more helpful, for he obtained seeds of comfrey for me to send, and also supplied me with several kilograms of ointment, having himself sent an equivalent amount directly. My contribution went to Uganda courtesy of Marie's sister, who was about to depart for a holiday there and who carried it with her. The ointment was so valued and applied so freely to all manner of skin complaints that it disappeared like the proverbial snow off a dyke, so that when Marie returned to work following her own break, there was not much left. This remainder was applied to a varicose ulcer that had defied all other remedies, and yes, that soon healed as well.

The seeds grew into plants, and when they reached maturity and their form could be seen, the nuns found that there was comfrey growing in their own garden already! But having the plants available led on to other things, for one of the sisters took note of a photograph in the book *Comfrey*. This pictured a woman who used to buy at her local cattle market, calves that no one else wanted because they were scouring i.e. had diarrhoea. She took them home and fed them milk in which was chopped comfrey, and the property which the herb has of being an internal vulnary, helped heal the calves' guts, and they went on to thrive. You may be aware that one of the prime causes of infant death in tropical regions is dehydration following prolonged diarrhoea, and by feeding the infants in a similar way to that of the calves, many of them recovered and likewise began to thrive. Marie moved on to a different location soon afterwards, and so, eventually, I lost touch with this fascinating development.

However, this was not to be the end of the train of events set in motion by the comfrey saga, far from it. I had asked Marie's sister, Wilma, to take some photographs during her visit, so that I could appreciate more fully the work of the dispensary, and its location. Following her return, Wilma and husband Tony, together with their three daughters, came for a week-end visit, bringing with them a large collection of slides, which were all-encompassing in the way they in which brought the Ugandan bush to life. I, in turn, was invited to visit them in Dundee, which I elected to do in the coming September. I broke my journey with a friend at Livingston, and set off northward again early-ish one morning. I planned my journey so that I could call at Westbank, principally to renew acquaintances. I had hardly crossed the Forth Bridge

than I found myself subjected to heavy intrusions and obsessive thoughts as to whether I would have enough petrol to cover the motorway part of my journey. Having learned that the safest course during such disturbances is to stop and take stock, I left the motorway at the first opportunity, bought petrol, and sat awhile to compose myself before continuing north, feeling rather more secure and focussed.

When I arrived at Westbank, I found that the reception arrangements had changed since my previous visit, and that the people whom I had expected to see were no longer there. So I stood composing in my mind what I was going to say to introduce myself to the new secretary. She, meanwhile, was attending to a woman who had just emerged from treatment. Also waiting patiently nearby was a clergyman. The lady having departed, the secretary turned to my neighbour and addressed him "And now, Mr Grieve"... I stepped back and looked at him, and thirty-seven years fell away, to the sea off Corfu, and my friend David standing at the foot of the accommodation ladder of the aircraft carrier, HMS *Ocean*, down which he had helped me and into the pinnacle that was to transport me to the nearby hospital ship. "David, Shepherd, Alan Grieve?" I said, and I treasure to this day his look of mixed surprise and consternation, while I hastened to identify myself. I will not even begin to try to describe the encounter; words just would not do it justice. Patricia, alerted, came out to take in the spectacle, and, when all was reasonably composed again, I went in to assist with David's treatment, which seemed fair, as the last time we had met he had been tending me.

My visit to Dundee was most enjoyable as Tony and Wilma went out of their way to make me welcome. Theirs was a lovely warm and *caring* household, caring manifested in virtually every one of their many activities and work. My visit was broken in the middle to respond to an urgent invitation to travel to David's home a short distance to the north, where I was to meet his wife Marjorie, and their youngest daughter, Margaret, the only one of their four children still at home. Additionally, I was to renew another friendship, and how delightful that was. During our training, and when we had been comparatively close to London, David and I had hitched to the north of the city and to Brookmans Park, where there was a Free Polish Radio, and where, helping to man it, was David's new brother-in-law, Bruno, who had married his elder sister Rae. The epic of Bruno's escape from Poland when it was overrun is well worth the hearing, but here he was and Rae also, so welcoming, and such warmth. And here it was, the other family that I wrote about earlier, which I hadn't know that I had, but which absorbed me as if I had always been a part of it, as did David and Marjorie's other children, Allison, Michael and John and their partners, when I was to meet them subsequently. But I have to warn you: Bruno's Polish generosity with a tumbler and whisky bottle exceeds even that of a generous Scot - and you get one nationality *added* to the other, and you need a strong head!

It is interesting to pause and reflect for a moment that if I had not responded to the intense intrusions in the way that I had, and left the motorway to compose myself, my arrival at Westbank would not have coincided with that of David. This pause for reflection really acknowledges the fact that the spiritual intrusions, good and bad, were a feature of my every waking moment. That I had coped thus far, and continued to cope satisfactorily, says a lot for the strategies that I was developing, which in turn owed everything to the fact that I was fully aware of how the voice hearing and physical intrusions first began. I write in analytical detail later describing exactly the variety of forms that the intrusions can take, and how they can exert their influence, but for the moment please accept that *anyone* can be imitated, or any situation conjured up within one's imaginative mind, and the skill with which this is done is considerable. A 'voice' resembling that of Inspector Clousseau, or the subtle effects of a sensual female presence, can be generated so easily - and all the while I was trying to cope within and through this barrage, and wondering whether, indeed, there *were* these three individual 'guides', as had been represented. Fortunately the issue was to be resolved, and soon.

Still reeling from all the amazement and excitement generated at Westbank by my encounter with David, I had, nevertheless, remembered to ask Patricia whether I could come with my friends to the absent healing meeting during the coming week. She had agreed and so we duly arrived. All the gatherings took place in a spacious and light upstairs lounge, and while I haven't consciously tried to copy it in the arrangement of my own room, there is, nevertheless, a similarity of ambience and outlook, which makes it easy for me to recall this particular day, and sequence of events.

We were a small gathering, for, apart from myself, Tony and Wilma, there was just Patricia and a woman who normally assisted with her healing work. Patricia began a gentle led meditation, and, virtually as she started, and always conscious of my intention never to lose control of my own thoughts, I was strongly aware of the presence of my supposed quartet of 'guides' - four, because my father was sometimes represented as being present. It is difficult to describe one's awareness of 'manifestations', but, by whatever means, I was conscious of four 'individuals' close to me, and almost as soon as this fact registered, they moved rapidly to my rear. Suddenly, I became aware of a huge body of available resource, support and power. It was as if I had become the spear point of a huge phalanx of infinite size; my back was ramrodded, and with that came the knowledge that there would be unlimited support and assistance available in all my endeavours, but - and this is the most crucial element of the whole event - everything would be delivered *anonymously*. Simultaneously my view out of the window opposite ceased to be that of the garden, and instead I was presented with the concept of my far distant goal from which I was separated by a varied and difficult terrain. I knew that if I was to arrive there, it would only be through my own efforts in walking every step of the way, but, provided that this goal was the *right* one, the available support would be immense.

Through it all, I had not lost the thread of Patricia's narrative. Symbolically, she was taking us to the ultimate centre of healing and the ultimate 'healer', as we journeyed steadily up the abstract mountain to the divine temple at the top. "But", she said, "you may not feel it necessary to go fully to the top, you may decide to pause". That, I thought, is for me, and immediately there was fed into my mind a view looking down on the small plateau on which my house sits, and I was indeed looking *down* onto my own house. Patricia continued upward to arrive at the temple at the top of the mountain in which would be the person, source of all healing, but essentially unseen, the 'ineffable'. "Hold on" I thought, "this is not my understanding" - all my recent experiences following on from recovery from the initial spiritual trauma, had been of a growing *openness* in what I was trying to do, and in respect of relationship with the 'Holy Family' of my prayer and response. So where did that leave me? Stuck on a mountain with nowhere to go? No, for again I was looking down at my house, only this time the 'lid' was off, and I was looking down into my kitchen and there at the table, the arrangement of which was still in the planning stage, sat my 'ultimate healer', talking animatedly with some children.

I could not have had plainer answers to my inner questions and to questions that I had yet to ask. I would know that in future *every* voice would be suspect, and that, as I further found out, everything that came from a desirable source would be entirely by deep 'subliminal transfer', and without being represented as coming from *any* nominated 'person' - the origin should be obvious and clear. That, unfortunately, did not mean that henceforth there would be absolute certainty about the source of anything that came into my head. I wish that this could be so, but it is not to be, and constantly one must be on one's guard: constantly. There were many gifts that came via the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and one of these, perhaps the most important, is Discernment. It has become customary in certain political circles to say everything in triplicate, so I must do the same. Discernment. Discernment. Discernment. There is no other option; constant alertness and never drop one's guard. Intelligent people become familiar with the ploys of the advertising industry, from the full frontal assault, to the subtle, low-key, almost subliminal insinuation. The supermarket does not have to advertise its bread; it lets the smell of freshly baked loaves diffuse through the air-conditioning. Coffee shops used to let the smell of roasting coffee beans drift down the High Street. Who can resist? (Just mention a bacon butty, or the smell of frying onions, and I am sure that in some mouths the saliva will start to run).

In a similar manner, thoughts, concepts, perceptions of taste or smell even, can be subtly drifted into the mind in such a way that one does not realise that they have come from anywhere but one's own intellect. It is hard to write of these situations without going into an immense amount of detail, and obviously, the perception and reaction will

differ from person to person. If possible, I shall try to describe typical scenarios later in my writing as I enlarge other concepts, although I cannot guarantee that I shall succeed. But I must try, for in addition to the direct voice hearing experience, there can be created in susceptible individuals obsessions, cravings and addictions, self-image fixations and eating disorders.

For my immediate purpose, the additional statements and answers that emerged during the course of the meditation could not have been more plain, either. There would be no ethereal, unreachable 'temple of healing' in my predictable future other than here in my own home. Neither need I look further than these four walls for my rôle model; he would be here, both inside me as I attempt to emulate him and at my side or in my hands when I ask for help for others. I am sorry that I cannot comment further, but my spiritual life and thoughts are very private to me, as are the dedications of my self and my domestic resources to the needs and care of others here or where they are reachable.

When I had returned from my first visit to Westbank, I found myself essentially on the edge of a void. Full of thoughts of my new found talents, having no point of reference, no one with like experiences to consult or with whom to explore ideas, I felt as a painter must when faced with a blank canvas. But whereas the painter has been there before, has had tuition and had tutorial experience, and has a whole tradition of painting deriving from early times from which to draw inspiration, I was looking at my own canvas, but finding that there was no living tradition of healing there to guide me, nor practitioners to consult. It might have been said that I had my rôle model, and that his healing exploits have been fully written about in the New Testament. Quite so, but at times this association with Biblical healings turned out to be a major disadvantage in addressing the expectations that many individuals have. Some people preface the word 'healing' with 'spiritual' or 'faith', and from those two words many things flow. Firstly, the word 'spiritual' has, for some, a connotation of 'spiritualism' that they find unacceptable; for others it betokens an interaction with spiritual beings, which they are not prepared to experience. Yet again, there can be the unspoken expectation of a 'Jesus'-type miracle, a concept that an individual could find overwhelming. Secondly, 'faith' also releases a whole gamut of reactions; is it the faith of the practitioner or the faith of the patient that is implied? If it is the faith of the patient, does that mean that he or she has to take on board any *religious* beliefs or practices, and if there is no cure or improvement, does that mean that the person did not have enough faith, or that past 'sin' was an impediment?

I found all these reactions, either expressed openly or implied, as I started to offer to individuals what I thought would be of benefit to them. Gradually, as these responses started to become apparent, and as my own predilections came to the fore, my approach, technique and strategy started to develop.

It may be asked why I did not follow exactly the methods and techniques that I had witnessed and assisted with during my time at Westbank. That would be a fair point. There are two reasons why I did not do so: the first is that, as you may recall, I no longer used a pendulum: the second is that I never felt myself to be sufficiently competent to perform any physical manipulations upon a person. In the event, and as will emerge, I adopted, and gradually developed, a practice based upon and more suited to the analytical engineering method that governs my approach to most situations. You may remember that in my work with measuring devices in the nuclear plants, if any piece of equipment failed it was not sufficient simply to repair it, but the *reason* for its failure had to be known and eliminated before a repair could be considered complete. Similarly, with any illness there must be a cause or causes, which if found could be addressed and hopefully eliminated, although I did not reach a sufficient degree of competence to follow this investigative path for some time. Initially, and continuing while my understanding and experience increased, I simply applied my hands where and for how long seemed appropriate.

The simple and the practical - that sums up both my original and continuing approaches. As I have written several times before, I am embarrassed by the showy, the exaggerated, and I did not want to inflict anything of that nature upon the people whom I was trying to help. Thus, there were no elaborate manual 'passes', no 'aura stroking', no adjuncts such as crystals or essences, no overt 'religious' or mystical ceremony. Just the simplicity of my hands and intellect - and who? Without going into detail, I had committed myself completely to my own *intent* when trying to help someone, and had committed myself unequivocally to the spiritual association in which I totally believed. Having made that commitment privately there was no need to produce it on show; I simply carried it with me into every healing encounter, in the absolute and certain belief that, as and when needed, help would be forthcoming from an ethereal source. So far, I have never been disappointed.

In mentioning or discussing such interventions I am always conscious of the danger of presenting myself as one of the 'chosen', or of appearing to be a sanctimonious prig: neither, I hope, is the case. In mentioning or describing any overt spiritual or ethereal participation, I do so simply to affirm that such *does* happen. I also do so to balance what may appear to be the solely *terrestrial* and pragmatic approach that was developing as my response to the individual ailments that were being presented to me. The fact that, as I continue writing, I shall give much more space to this latter approach, reflects the nature of the process of exploration with which I found myself involved. In addition, I find it necessary to readdress the issue of continuing adverse spiritual intervention and intrusion. Like you, I would have supposed that with such powerful and benevolent spiritual allies, all aggressive opposition would be swept away. Not so. In real life, no matter how powerful the civil law enforcement and protection agencies, there are thieves, muggers,

delinquents of all kinds, and violent and 'road-raging' individuals. Equally, within a life of developing spiritual openness, and throughout one's attempts to put the results of one's spiritual awareness into practice, increasingly one meets the equivalent from the adverse spiritual world. Direct mental aggression, traps and trip-wires are all there for the unwary, as are the 'con-artist' and deviant.

As events moved on, I began to recognise more and more of the ways in which one can be taken over, demoralised, undermined and tricked, and sometimes dominated. Different 'ploys' began to emerge, as did an awareness of the times, circumstances or occasions when certain attacks were made and were effective. Increasingly, I began to observe and recognise these for what they were, and to record the various ones as they happened. Some will emerge as I write, but in the main, I will describe and analyse the modes of attack all together in a later section.

Somewhat fancifully, and without being specific, I imagined the great and the good being carried on their palliases to my home to be made whole. Such imaginings, which I do not think that I took very seriously, were soon dispersed as I found my 'great and good' amongst the farmer, the coal man and the housewife. Again, a catalogue of people and their ailments would be inappropriate and frankly boring. There are, however, a few encounters within which pointers can be seen, indicating the way in which my thought and practice were developing, and that are worth describing. In some, I perceived strong evidence of 'ethereal' involvement; and there were others within which I was permitted to see the inner resource and heroism of individuals, as they confronted a potentially fatal illness.

I happily adopted the word 'ethereal' from Patricia Macmanaway. I had discussed with her the situation that was created by the fact that I did not dowse nor manipulate people's bodies in the ways that were practiced at Westbank. She told me of others who did neither, yet were able to achieve results, as their clients could be manipulated 'ethereally'. I saw no problem with this approach since my body had been physically 'restructured' by such means during the earlier events of my spiritual encounters, and in this manner I proceeded, initially simply placing my hands where seemed appropriate. I did not dispute or question the fact that I believed what I had had demonstrated to me, namely that there was immense resource available, and that I was participating in a 'combined operation'. I did not find it necessary to keep voicing a disclaimer to the effect that "I am but a channel", but proceeded as simply as I could, and explained to people as well as I could what it was I was trying to do.

On some occasions, I felt that my rôle was to act as an 'anaesthetist' while others went about the *real* work. For example, I was once asked to help a woman who had mental trauma following a difficult breech birth and episiotomy. Beginning with my hands covering her upper back and shoulder, which itself is very tranquillising, I ended with a hand each on her lower back and abdomen. It was then that I became 'aware'

(again the difficulty of describing awareness in these circumstances) of two 'individuals' close by, and of her 'ethereal' legs being placed in the birth posture, while that which was required was done. On many other occasions, I recognised my personal inadequacy in the face of very serious illness, and appealed directly to 'higher authority'. I did so for Esther. She had an inoperable brain tumour at the base of her skull, and had had much exploratory surgical intervention. Now she was about to have radiation therapy along her spine. One evening as she lay reclining, I placed my hands adjacent to her head and asked fervently for help for her. Soon we were enveloped within a cocoon of love so strong that I felt that I could reach out and touch it. All Esther's treatments and therapies produced favourable results and she lived actively for another year, when unfortunately she succumbed to meningitis. She was one of many individuals from whom I learned of the determination and inner resources that can reside within a person when faced with the fatal potential of their condition. But this was only a part of the learning process through which I was going at the time, because within Esther's flat I came to realise the insidiousness of geopathic stress, for where she slept was awful. This was also the situation that I found when I visited John's house, for where he had slept, I could not. But I jump ahead of myself, for I have not yet arrived at the time when I became a supporter of the so-called 'gentle approach' to cancer, and I have so much to observe and to learn about many things.

Returning to events in their sequential order, I must describe the outcome of *another* broadcast from the B.B.C. Radio 4, 'You and Yours' programme. This particular one was about SAD - the so-called 'seasonal affect disorder' - and described experiments that were in train at the Maudsley Hospital, which were trying to confirm the hoped-for beneficial effect upon sufferers of exposure to high intensity light during the winter months. As with the previous M.E. broadcast that I had heard, I thought that I recognised in myself a broad swathe of the symptoms and reactions that were described. I can almost hear you thinking, "We've got a right one here, a paranoid hypochondriac, no less". My attendance at my local surgery should give the lie to that, for apart from annual flu injections and a visit to become acquainted with a G.P. on whose list I chose to go, in well over five years I have only consulted about a minor fungal infection and nothing more. No, there are specific reasons for my apparent over-sensitivity that began to emerge, and which have prompted me to engage in a study that has been continuous since about 1981.

Certain aspects of my home and its location have emerged as my narrative has developed, but nothing has been written directly about its tranquillity and freedom from pollution. There is no source of industrial pollution within twenty-five miles; traffic along my adjacent (very) minor roads is so minimal that each passing vehicle is almost an event to be remarked. Apart from occasional gunfire from a nearby M.O.D. gun-range, noise, other than from tractors working nearby fields and the bleating of sheep, is non-existent. The only electrical pollution comes

from the two low voltage wires bringing the supply to the house, while the effects of microwave transmissions are diminished by mountains to the south and east, and the sea two miles to the west. Added to all of this, I have my own private water supply, originally from streams running off the nearby fell-side and, since 1996, from a 50 metre bore hole in one of my fields, so the only additions to the water are solely what nature puts in - no chlorine, no fluoride. Thus, compared with most urban living, industrial working individuals, I can and do live with several layers of protective 'shell' removed, and that is why my urban visits are curtailed, and my last visit to London was in about 1989. It also means that I, as with many individuals in similar locations, have developed an awareness of extremely subtle variations in my ambient environment and of my responses to them. Thus, I have a very suitable 'laboratory' in which to observe myself and what are, it transpired, very sensitive reactions to subtle, and mainly electrical, phenomena. I am not alone in this sensitivity, for about forty percent of individuals are similarly sensitive, but their reactions are often masked by the gross effects of the polluted environment in which many have to live.

None of these many facets were visible to me when, following the programme broadcast, I wrote asking whether it was possible to obtain for domestic use the type of light that the experimenters described. The response when it came was a surprise, for it materialised as a phone call from a doctor actually at the Maudsley Hospital. He was one of the research team and quizzed me for some considerable time. He judged that I was of the type that was being studied, and invited me to the hospital for a fuller discussion and examination. We spent the greater part of a morning together, taking my history and analysing my reactions in particular circumstances. Although I could have stayed nearby with my brother while participating in tests through a winter, I knew that my reactions would be distorted by the urban environment, and even though the researcher concluded from his observations that indeed I could be considered as suffering from SAD, we opted, in the circumstances, for a different strategy. We agreed that I would study my reactions through the coming winter, keep a diary and ultimately report.

Thus began my close observation, and the study expanded as I started to identify reactions, but also, and increasingly, began to identify *causes*. However, before I launch into a description of what and how I studied, let me make what I consider to be a significant observation. I had responded thoroughly and honestly to all the questions from the M.E. team, who had concluded that in all probability I had M.E., and now a researcher from the Maudsley Hospital, to whom, again, I had responded completely and truthfully, had concluded that I was one of those who succumbed to SAD. In both cases, what had prompted me to contact the radio programme had been a set of virtually identical symptoms or reactions.

Slowly, as I began to observe and record, but definitely, I became aware, as I never had before, of the natural world, the world in

which we evolved and continue to have our being, and became aware, also, of some of our reactions to its variables. As time went by, I realised that SAD-type reactions could occur at any time of the year, but, as they might not coincide with the dark, drear days of winter, and because they were transient, they passed almost unnoticed, having possibly affected me for a day or two. My acquisition of the book, *The Ion Effect* by Soyka and Edmunds, provided me with an understanding of the electrical nature of our surrounding world and atmosphere, and gave me insights into some of the causes of my reactions. And so began an observation of weather *systems* - not 'hot or cold', 'wet or dry', 'windy or still' - but an attempt by me, through seeing the entire system, to be able to judge from *where* the current ambient air had come, and thus to form some conclusion about its electrical qualities.

One by one, other variables came to light, and were included amongst the subjects for study. One such became apparent from the unlikely event of having a new pair of glasses. I had chosen the then comparatively new variable-focus lenses. Because they need to be positioned precisely, and because I was very active out of doors, I had decided upon close fitting frames with curled, springy loops over the ears. It took a little while to get used to the accurate positioning of the head that viewing required, (Little Noddy is the appropriate name as the head is moved slightly up or down to achieve focus), but when I had done so, I enjoyed the freedom that the lenses gave me. However, from time to time I found myself getting irritated with my new acquisition, for the frames became tight on my head, and they needed frequent adjustment to restore them to the proper viewing position. The irritation lasted for three or four days at a time, and then things returned to normal. It took approximately six months for the penny to drop. The periods of irritation coincided with the new and full moons.

"...but this is wondrous strange!", quoth Horatio. Not so, when one considers that our body has within itself such a high percentage of fluid. I can still hear the voice of my then GP as she shot me down - "*With respect!!! Roy...*" - never having allowed herself a moment for reflection. Consider this: if you take a bowl of water to the equator and pull the plug, the water goes straight down, without a swirl: take it one bowl-width either way, north or south, pull the plug and the water swirls, anti-clockwise in the north and the reverse in the south. Fluids are *remarkably sensitive* to the forces acting upon them, and 'the moon, mistress of the floods' exerts a significant pull. So, I had another factor to observe and insert in my human reaction equation, and a greater awareness of the moon and its movements developed. And not only the moon, for, over time, the involvement of the whole planetary menagerie emerged. *But* - before you have time even to form the thought - there is nothing of *astrology* in this. What emerged, and what I will write about fully in an appropriate place later, is that the moon, alone or in conjunction with other planets, or these planets together in significant groups, can have an actual *physical* effect upon people, their well-being

and interactions. The effects are engineered through subtle gravitational changes and variations in the natural electrical/magnetic environment, which, in turn, have an impact upon the solar wind and its components.

If I had any doubts about the electrical functioning of our bodies, they were dispelled when I got to know someone who practices the electrical form of acupuncture. In traditional Chinese acupuncture, imbalances within the body and between the various meridians are detected by feeling for variations in subtle pulses at the wrists. The electrical version uses a measuring instrument to detect similar imbalances - measurements being made at the meridian ends on feet or hands. Naturally, I wanted to know more, and went to experience this particular therapy. Correction of imbalances is effected either by using a traditional needle as in normal acupuncture, or by feeding into an appropriate acupuncture point a small electric current through a moist conducting pad. The input to the pad can be varied, and is usually under the control of the clients in order that they can decide upon their own discomfort level. My friend was frequently surprised that I reached my discomfort threshold at such a low level of input, a fact that reinforced my developing knowledge of the vastly different electrical sensitivities of various individuals.

Any further encouragement that I needed to explore these phenomena came from the growing realisation that part of my own personal contribution to the healing process came from what I began to see as a subtle body electricity. This realisation, in its turn, proved to be a deciding factor in the way in which my approach to healing developed then and subsequently. Marrying the concept of body electricity with the understanding of the electrical nature of the acupuncture points and meridians, led me to experiment by directing my healing 'energy' through appropriate points, simply by touching them with my fingertips for a suitable length of time. Over a period of time, I acquired a number of texts and atlases of acupuncture, covering both the traditional Chinese methods and the newer electrical methods, in which Dr Julian Kenyon has been a prolific author, sources of reference that are never far from my side. My choice of this approach was further strengthened by the realisation that I could practice on myself, which I do either for my own benefit or for experiment.

A series of programmes on television initiated my next quantum leap. The so-called 'Bristol Approach to Cancer' was featured in six weekly stages in which the nature of the approach was described, and in which the progress of a number of individuals with cancer was observed and monitored. So strongly did I admire the pluck and resource of these people that I determined to add my own support if the opportunity arose. I did not have long to wait, for a friend told me that one of the original 'Bristol' founders had started another base within reach of my home. I made contact and after several months found myself spending one day a month trying to help. I drove for about an hour and a half to a school

that, on this day each month, was transformed - transformed into what? The concentration of supporters and helpers providing organisation, superb food and therapies galore, was intense. If a therapy was available and was thought to be of value, it was added to the galaxy - reflexology, music and movement, art, nutrition, healing, counselling - *anything* that it was felt would enhance the prospects and quality of life of the individuals who came seeking help.

But there was another sort of 'concentration' which was quite indefinable, and which was voiced by a lady who came to my 'pitch'. She was near to tears. "I can't take it" she said, "I can't take it. For years I have cared totally for my parents to the exclusion of myself, and now, coming here, I find so many people wanting to do the same for me...so much *love*...". When our period together was ending, she looked beyond me and said, "Who is that man? How I wish I could find just what it is that he has got". I looked behind me to see John standing and patiently waiting, for we had overrun our scheduled time. "That's John", I said. "He has leukaemia". But he didn't just 'stand', for he walked and stood inside a smile.

John and Vanessa. It is impossible even now, several years after John's death, to separate them in my thoughts; and speaking on the phone to Vanessa, as I do from time to time, it is still as easy to talk *about* him as it was *to* him when he was alive. Together they exemplified the whole concept of the 'Bristol' approach that encourages partners to work as one against the cancerous intrusion. ("We have cancer", Arnold used to say when speaking of his wife Muriel). But more than that, John and Vanessa studied and followed-up every conceivable remedy or therapy that might help to improve John's condition. They were very rigorous followers of the 'macrobiotic' diet, a practice that benefited me considerably whenever they came to stay, for they brought all the wide ranging and delicious ingredients with them, and while I gave John his healing 'fix' in a quiet part of the house, Vanessa was busy preparing the most appetising and visually delightful food. "Love on a plate" I used to think, as I gorged on exquisitely prepared and cooked vegetables, with perhaps a 'Swiss-roll' of grains rolled in seaweed. ("Sea *vegetables!*" I was constantly reminded).

It was in their home that I began to take seriously the actuality of geopathic stress. On my first visit, I was put in a double bed in a room that John had used in a previous marriage, but had almost no sleep because I was constantly beset by aches, twitches, tinglings and numbnesses the whole night through. On a second visit, I asked if I could turn the bed at right angles in case it was the orientation that was causing these effects, but experienced little improvement. On my *next* visit, I was put in a different room and slept very well. Several of us had gone to stay with Vanessa and John to take part in a series of workshops that were particularly aimed at exploring the so-called 'muscle testing' method of identifying a person's allergies, opening yet another avenue, to which I will return later. Participating with us, and returning later to join in the evening meal, was a man who took his dowsing talents wherever he went.

A great enthusiast, it was natural that he should make a full survey of the house, where he detected two earth currents. One current occupied a narrow strip about 30cm wide that went the length of the house, while another, equally narrow, crossed it diagonally towards one end. The first ran down what had been John's side of the bed, the side where I had been unable to sleep; the other crossed the first, exactly under the location of his relaxation chair.

The whole visit was highly educational, and not only with respect to the information that it revealed to me, but also because it helped me to see aspects of human nature and behaviour that I had never experienced before. One interesting consequence came later from the man who did the dowsing. He carried out a survey of the gypsies who regularly attended the Appleby horse fair, quizzing them about their lifestyle, diet, domicile, smoking and other habits. He found that the genuine *travelling* gypsies had an extremely low incidence of cancers and heart conditions, irrespective of diet and other factors, compared with those who had stopped travelling and had settled into permanent housing. His deduction was that the traditional sites used by the travellers had been assessed for their safety through the fundamental, unsuppressed instincts of these 'natural' people, and, furthermore, by never spending long at any one place, their exposure to anything adverse was greatly diminished.

I do not think that I had returned home for more than a day when I had a phone call from the friend who practiced electrical acupuncture. She had been to a very interesting talk and demonstration on the subject of muscle testing for allergies! Floored by the proverbial feather, I picked myself up and asked for more. It transpired that the practitioner was well known to me. Graham had first come into my orbit as a young graduate electrical engineer whom I was instrumental in engaging during my stint in charge of Training at Sellafield. Now, about sixteen later, our paths were converging again. Much has resulted from this convergence, some of which will emerge as I continue, but in the immediate time it was such a relief to have another electrical engineering mind with which to share ideas, experience and information, and one that also thinks highly of Nikola Tesla! Graham was himself completely committed to exploring the concepts of geopathic stress and the consequences of the electrical phenomena that I had been discovering and studying. He was impelled by a very strong motive, for his wife has multiple sclerosis, and he was convinced that her sensitivity to electrical interference was a major contributory factor. In a similar manner to John and Vanessa, and the way in which they had set about studying leukaemia in all its aspects, Graham and his wife were equally zealous in doing the same with regard to M.S. Some of their investigations and what they have found will emerge fully later.

If I needed any *further* convincing about the existence and effect of geopathic stress, I received ample confirmation in two separate locations. Esther had lived with her partner in a particular flat, which I

visited. Standing at the bed head, I experienced a feeling of acute nausea, which subsided as I moved down the length of the bed towards the foot. One of the pair used to experience heavy, disturbing, teeth-grinding nightmares, and morning depression, while the other regularly awoke feeling the equivalent of a heavy weight on the chest, following very disturbed sleep. Houseplants, of which they had many, would deteriorate rapidly if placed on the bedside tables, but regained full health when moved to other locations. Esther had returned to her parents' home, but her partner, alerted to the unhealthy siting of the bed, moved it within the room and experienced normal sleep.

The second location was inside the home of my cousin Carlisle. Calling there as I returned from Westbank, I had been concerned to see how she was deteriorating from a condition that was developing in her spine, which, it turned out, was the consequence of treatment that she was receiving for severe muscular rheumatism. She was on a 'diet' of steroids, and her spine was disintegrating slowly. Ivy had been a nurse, a late entrant to the profession, having nursed a crippled mother until the latter's death. She had been a gold medal winner at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, and her compassion and caring shaped her every activity. However, her training had also given her a misplaced acceptance of the authority, nay, *majesty*, of Consultants, and even though she knew the dangers of continued ingestion of steroids, nevertheless would not override the advice of someone so revered. And so she continued taking the tablets, until, bent nearly double and unable to breathe, she died in her sleep.

Ivy had moved into this particular house a few years earlier, joining forces with a nursing friend who also had never married. Visiting them one day, and sitting in a particular seat, I was concerned to find an intolerable ache developing in my back. I rearranged cushions, but the ache persisted and got worse. Then suddenly it dawned - geopathic stress. I excused myself, ostensibly to the loo, and on returning took a different seat. Instant relief. I came home and pondered, and then raised the question with the two. Ivy's condition had only developed since moving to the house - she normally sat in this horrible area, and slept immediately above it. Her friend, sleeping in a second bedroom that was in an area of lesser stress, had, nevertheless, developed the most atrocious teeth grinding, of which she was unaware. Importantly, however, the friend's dog would not remain within that particular downstairs room, solely entering it if called, but immediately retreating. I tried to give Ivy a device called a 'Raditech', that I shall describe in detail later, which, using the natural resonance of its inbuilt electrical coils, can significantly diminish the effects of the earth currents. Unable to be convinced, and worried about incurring any expense, which I assured her was non-existent, she carried on as prescribed, and sadly died.

Teeth grinding, nightmares, night-time depression, unexplained aches, cancers, psychological problems, incessant crying of infants, are all listed in two books that I own, as consequences of

remaining in stressed areas. I have mentioned earlier the book by Gustav von Pohl; the other is called *Are You Sleeping in a Safe Place?* Written by Rolf Gordon, it provides clear information about the sources of geopathic stress, and its effects upon people. There are clear instructions on how to dowse for earth currents, and also descriptions of the sensitivity to them of plants and animals. The responses of the dog belonging to my cousin's friend, and of Esther's plants, should help to convince sceptics that the *human* reactions are neither subjective nor psychosomatic. Rolf had a son who died of a cancer that he is convinced owed much in its origin to geopathic stress. He has since become a zealot in the promotion of knowledge about the phenomenon, and about devices such as the 'Raditech', which he sells, the beneficial effects of which have often been demonstrated. Anyone who is interested in keeping up to date with current knowledge and experience will find a considerable amount of information on the Internet, as they will about most of the other topics that I introduce.

My own reasons for including so much about a diverse range of phenomena are two fold. First, there is the appreciation of the way in which my knowledge and awareness were expanding, and, in doing so, were affecting the direction in which my life was moving. Second, many of the phenomena affect sensitive and vulnerable individuals in ways that make them even more susceptible to adverse spiritual intrusion. The circumstances in which this can happen, and the methods used, will be revealed later when I write the appropriate section.

Many people refer to the 'Swinging Sixties' as having been so very influential upon the subsequent development of their lives. If asked, I would cite the 'Enlightening Eighties' as the years during which many aspects of my life came together as a coherent whole. I do not know if you sense it, but I am having something of a struggle in riding the verbal flow. I feel somewhat as if I am rafting down a fast flowing, boisterous river that is being joined at unpredictable intervals by equally turbulent confluences, as all the new sources of information and experience pour their contribution into the main flow, and to which I have to adjust in order to continue to stay in control without losing a sense of direction. One of the counsels given to mariners in charge of vessels at sea when things appear to be getting out of control is "Ease her, stop her, go astern". Well, I certainly cannot slow the river, nor go astern, so let us steer into an eddy and pause to take stock.

Reflect, I would not have been in this particular flow, nor in this actual channel, except for the events of 1979-80, and the spiritual traumas and awakening that occurred then. Coincidentally with that time, I had been discovering unexplored talents in artistic craftwork, and in particular in the field of leather carving, which I hoped and planned to take it to an advanced level. The lady who introduced me to this craft, someone who herself has much skill and artistry in many directions, subsequently has become a very good friend. It was she who effected my

introduction to the retired art professor, carver and sculptor who gave me many insights, and who effectively taught me how to *look*, that essential prerequisite of any artistic or skilled craftwork. Many times since then, and currently, even, I have regretted that I did not commit myself entirely to *that* particular channel, for I recognise that I could have been competent in several fields, and would have gained much satisfaction from my achievements.

But with my spiritual awakening and the discovery of my healing talents, my eyes of compassion had been opened and I could not shut them again, no matter how hard I tried. My compulsion grew and grew as I realised what could be achieved. I have never been so egotistic as to believe that, alone, I could effect significant change, but nevertheless have persisted in learning, learning, and experimenting, in order to achieve the maximum of which I, myself, was capable, and to maintain myself as an effective partner in this human/spiritual exchange. One outcome of my study was that I learned or developed combinations of acupuncture points through which much could be caused to happen. This was especially so in the relief of pain. What a joy it was to be able to give even just temporary ease. George certainly stands out in my memory. He came and sat on my stool at the cancer centre, looking entirely robust, as robust as his attitude was to the death that he said was inevitable from the asbestos induced cancer that was destroying his pleura. Using chosen acupuncture points, I had developed a strategy that I could use to good effect in the all too short time that one had with each person. My first move was to use points called 'Spleen 21', which are at the side of the rib cage. I put my hands there on George, and was startled to find close to the surface the cut ends of ribs, the result of his most recent operation. But what surprised me more when it came, was his gasp and exclamation as, almost with a whip crack, the constant and intense pain went. The down side was, of course, that the pain would come back, for one could not achieve much that was permanent in half an hour, once a month, and George had come from a distance, as I had, and we could not meet.

What did persist within me and for some time was the combined effect of everybody's contributions made throughout the day. Undoubtedly there was much input from spiritual sources, and one tried to play one's own part. On my windowsill, there is an object that constantly reminds me of these particular days, and the many people who came to the school. It is a small, conical glass bowl, into the surface of which is engraved the image of a pair of hands that are seemingly holding the empty bowl. The hands were fashioned for me by a Scottish lady, who has exquisite artistry in the art of glass engraving. The bowl and the hands represent what I saw as my rôle in some circumstances - effectively to hold a person in tranquillity while their inner 'bowl' was filled. How I wished that the allotted times were longer, for some were so *transported*, were so obviously 'elsewhere', that it often required a touch and the sound of their name to bring them back to awareness. How memorable

and moving were the deep hugs and kisses of unspoken shared experience that sometimes accompanied these returns.

What was perhaps remarkable was that of five of us who offered this type of healing, three had been 'inducted' by Bruce Macmanaway! What an input that man had into this field, for within a small number of years, I had encountered yet three more, all within fifty miles of my home, as I shall relate. Yet, in spite of the high endeavours and dedicated motivation of most of whom I met, there were, nevertheless, individuals who seemed to have their own personal agenda directing what they did. I seem to be particularly naïve in not recognising soon enough the female of this species. No purpose is served by revisiting such occasions of disillusion, but, with one such, when there seemed to be a friendship, I fell in with a suggestion that I should go and talk to a woman, who lived some distance away, and who gave so-called 'readings' or 'channelled'. Green as grass I went, always expecting the best from a situation. Certainly the person in question could not have been more attractive or 'wholesome', to use an old fashioned word. Within the family home we sat, while she talked for some considerable time, with a break for a snack. Her intentions were of the highest, and she believed implicitly in what she was doing and in the veracity of whatever it was that she was saying, while her demeanour was purity itself as she blessed each 'spirit' that she could apparently 'see' in her ambit. However, after I had listened for some time, I began to think, "This is a pointless load of twaddle" - and much more pungent thoughts. What surprised me was that these 'irreverent' thoughts were not intercepted by the, one assumed, spiritual source of her 'channelling', but that she went on talking in similar vein.

I did not, as had been suggested, record her delivery, and on reflection, I am glad that I did not, for, of what I remembered, enough remained to have a long-term effect. There is a problem with being the object of such attempts at prescience, of 'divination' or supposed spiritual analysis, for no matter how much one is saying to oneself, "This is a load of cobblers", inevitably some of what is said sticks in one's mind and memory, always to be on hand in an appropriate situation. For example when, having been told "I give you X and Y", these being names of people, but without any actual context, inevitably, no matter how hard one tries not to, when one meets an X or a Y, one thinks "Is this the one who was meant?" - and one starts endless speculation in spite of oneself. Or, "You will write a book in collaboration with someone who already has a reputation in your field" (not naming the field). Thinking that it was most likely that what I would want to write would be of a medical nature deriving from my work in healing, I said something about 'a doctor'. "I didn't say 'doctor', but meant a professional person". So again, in spite of oneself, the speculation starts rolling whenever an apparently 'suitable' individual crosses one's path, and even more confusing, as there were other topics on which I knew that I could go into print. I did not speak subsequently of this encounter to the person who had suggested that I

should go, and kept my thoughts to myself. Whether this aggravated her, or what, I do not know; what I do know is that she began a vindictive undermining campaign against me among certain people at the cancer centre, which was most unpleasant to experience, particularly in what it revealed about the way in which *others* so easily allowed themselves to be influenced. However, fortunately, she was detected in her malice, and was hoist by her own petard. (I've always wanted to write that!)

Unpleasant though it is to recall, I have done so in order to introduce the topic as a means of exploring the dangers of implicit belief in one's self as a 'channeller' of 'wisdom' or advice from an apparently etheric source. And also to explore the equally great danger of accepting from others the product of their activities, whether as channellers, clairvoyants, Tarot card readers, astrologers or practitioners of other forms of divination. It is important to consider this topic and all that is implied within it in great detail, for concealed in such seemingly innocent attempts at divination are other 'channels', channels through which malevolent intrusions can enter people's lives and minds. This may appear to be a melodramatic concept, but I hope to demonstrate the truth of what I write when I discuss the topic in detail at a later stage.

The turbulent and rapid passage of the river of the nineteen-eighties has whirled me past a number of topics so quickly that I have been able only to give them a brief mention - diet, acupuncture, geopathic interference, ion imbalance, electromagnetic fields - and some that I have been too 'breathless' even to mention in passing, such as hypnotherapy and Alexander technique. To all these I shall return, and explore, and, hopefully, explain why I believe them to be important within all that I am trying to convey to those whose problem is within the mind, or with the spirit. Yes, inevitably, one cannot separate them - body, mind and spirit - and acceptance of that inevitability would be of immense benefit to anyone trying to regain control of a disturbed mind.

In case you think that I have left behind my own struggle with spiritual intrusions, let me reiterate, as I do from time to time, they are always there in some shape or form. The actuality of these intrusions will emerge when later I present my records and analysis of these times. However, before I leave the comparative tranquillity of this eddy where we have been regrouping, and before I thrust out into the last brief turbulent flow of the decade, let me leave you to ponder one particular incident that was perfectly unique in the midst of the whole collection of the experiences of those ten years...

I have written earlier of how I read and came under the spell of *The Old Straight Track* by Alfred Watkins. In his book, and briefly, he describes how he became aware of the concept that, long before the days of roads, wheeled traffic, large towns and enclosures as we know them, in fact, considerably before even Roman times, people communicated and travelled along straight-line routes. When one considers that all traffic would be on foot or by pony, with goods carried by porters or slaves, this

would have been the most logical way to journey. However, the routes were not haphazard, but were predetermined by surveying, and, from my own analysis of routes in this area where I live, the surveying was remarkably precise. Watkins found that the routes passed through many places with 'ley' in their name e.g. Hartley, Bentley, and from this observation, he named the alignments 'ley lines'.

Identifying and walking some of these alignments in my own area soon became a key hobby, as I could, in fine weather, explore routes that I had identified from my maps in the long dark evenings of winter. It was for such an exploration that I went one evening in summer to take some compass bearings along a particular route that I wanted to explore later in some detail. It was a brilliant, sunny evening, and I clambered up an old peat track to reach a broad plateau, disturbing a feeding roebuck that quickly clattered away over rocks. The plateau is most interesting in itself, as it contains the site of an ancient Bronze-age settlement, although this was not my goal. It was an evening for just sitting and looking. Anyone familiar with the watercolours of W. Heaton Cooper will recognise the type of light that flooded the whole land - so lucid and transparent. I was totally alone and intent on observing the scene. A fox trotted leisurely across my view about 100 yards distant, only to turn away suddenly at right angles and run off at high speed, tail and ears low, escape imperative. Such breeze as there was drifted from me to the fox and, picking up my scent, it lost no time in putting as much distance between us as it could.

However, I had come to take some bearings, and took out my compass. I had bought the best that I could afford, and took pleasure in it, a modern version of the much respected military prismatic marching and surveying instrument. I identified my distant point and put the compass to my eye, getting the sights truly on my objective, and then, totally to my amazement, the compass card, of its own volition, moved slowly and deliberately through ten or twelve degrees, and stayed there for a while, before slowly returning to the required bearing. You will recollect that in my profession I was an instrument engineer, and familiar with most aspects of measurement and measuring devices. I had already made sure that my spectacle frames were non-magnetic, even to the extent of having some minute screws replaced. I did a recheck on my jacket to ensure that there were no zips or metal buttons that could interfere, and that I had nothing in my pockets of a magnetic nature. I looked around to confirm that there were no wire fences nearby which could exert any influences. Satisfied with my checks, I put the compass to my eye again and settled on the distant peak. Once again the card moved, this time through fifteen degrees, and stayed there steadily for a significant time before returning slowly to the bearing of my desired objective.

I pondered long as I packed up and came home, and have often done so since. I have used the compass many times in subsequent years with no repetition, and no, I do not drink, nor ingest any drugs or

hallucinogenic substances. Having had the experiences of spiritual intrusion and body manipulation that I have described, I have no illusions about the 'physical' power and actual presence of a spiritual domain paralleling and interacting with our own, and personally have no doubt that I was being given another demonstration of this ever-presence.

So, there it is. As I ease the raft into the last turbulent flow that carries us into the broad river of the nineties, I'll just leave you with your own thoughts to ponder, and while you do so, perhaps you would like to read some verse that David's son-in-law Barry Applin wrote following a visit during which we wandered the hills, and I explained to him just what it was that I was seeking...

A PATIENT EYE

Tracing paths
on the hillsides,
lingering shadows,
straight as arrows,
crisscrossing the land.

Visible only to a patient eye,
their meaning determined
by what we want the world to be.
Some wrap them in their dreams
of a new renaissance
of the ancient gods.
Other eyes,
less misty,
see age-old trails
of trade and tribal messages
picked out by the autumn sun.

Who knows? Who cares?
Few are prepared
to venture
from their pre-planned courses.
Locked behind the screens
of shiny new machines,
the detail of the land
blurred,
the lines of God or Man
lost,
to all but a patient eye.

Barry Applin