

File 11 p. 115 • Morgawr

People who believe in mysterious lake monsters, such as the Loch Ness Monster, can also look toward the ocean for some legendary deep-sea creatures. In and around Falmouth Bay, which is off the coast of Cornwall, England, people have been claiming for centuries that they have seen the sea monster called Morgawr. The beast eludes scientists, but excites locals and tourists alike, who have managed to photograph Morgawr, and even capture video footage of the monster!

Creature features:

Name: Means “sea giant” in the Cornish language

Body parts: Humped back, serpentine neck, massive body

Where? Usually near Falmouth Bay off Cornwall, England

Legendary origin: British Folklore

Humpback: The most commonly described features from witnesses are three humps on the beast’s back and a long, snake-like neck. The creature is also said to have stubby horns above its eyes and bristles or spikes down its neck.

Seal of approval: Witnesses have said that Morgawr looks more like a mammal than a serpent, leading to a new theory of the beast’s origins. Some think it may be a giant, long-necked seal that hasn’t yet been discovered by scientists. Others say it might be an ancient aquatic reptile known as elasmosaurus.



Dragged under the waves, Robinson gasps for breath.



A wave carries him onto the sand...



...but before he can get away to safety, an even bigger wave pulls him back into the sea.



Robinson finally drags himself up the beach and out of danger.



There is no sign of the crew.



How is it possible that I could reach the shore alive?



He manages to find some fresh water to drink.



Fearing that he might be eaten by animals while he sleeps, he spends the night in a tree.

File 11 p. 117 • The real story of Anne Bonny

Numerous versions of the story of Anne Bonny and Mary Read have been told over the past three centuries, but few have considered them from an actual historical perspective. Most of them simply play up¹ to the sensational and titillating aspects of women serving aboard an eighteenth century pirate ship. [...]

Defying her father, Anne Cormac elopes² with James Bonny and the two of them run away to Nassau. [...] While in Nassau, Anne meets Calico Jack Rackham, captain of the pirate ship *Ranger*. She disguises herself in men's clothing and serves on board ship as a pirate. One of the ships they plunder is a Dutch vessel bound for the West Indies and Jack recruits an English soldier by the name of Mark (Mary) Read, who put up a good fight, into the *Ranger's* crew. [...]

The origin of these stories comes from the source document, *A General History of the Pyrates* by Captain Charles Johnson, 1724. The parts about Anne Bonny and Mary Read don't seem to follow any chronology and are really just a series of anecdotal tales that the author admits that he picked up from the witnesses at their trial³. These reports were, essentially, nothing more than gossip which had most likely been heavily embellished as they were passed around before Johnson even heard the versions of them that he penned⁴.

annebonnyandmaryread.com

1. focus on
2. run away to marry
3. *procès* (they avoided hanging by claiming to be pregnant)
4. wrote

File 11 p. 118 • The mystery of Smugglers Cove

Will launched into his story. “A long time ago, smuggling was a roaring trade¹ around here. Ships used to anchor² off the coast and smugglers would transport the goods to the beach and into the caves, where, as legend says, there were a maze³ of tunnels [...] but to this day, only a few have been found.”

“Why didn’t the police discover where the tunnels came out?” Amy asked.

“Well, apparently the smugglers made the exits to the tunnels underneath the houses,” Will replied. “That way, they could slip down to the cove⁴, get the goods, transport them to the tunnels, and be back in bed by sunrise, all without going out the front door.” [...] Will glanced around. Apparently satisfied that no one was listening, he looked back at the others. “Can you keep a secret?”

As the others nodded, Will continued talking. “Last week we had a massive storm that washed away a huge amount of sand and opened up a number of caves. I know the previous ones didn’t have anything in them, but if you believe the rumours, there’s a chest of gold hidden somewhere underneath Smugglers Cove.”

Joe’s eyes gleamed with excitement. “A chest of gold?”

“Yes,” Will replied. But even if that isn’t true, I’m sure there would be something valuable in one of the caves.”

“Let’s get moving then,” Joe said, getting up from his seat.

Paul Moxham, *The Mystery of Smugglers Cove*, 2012

1. *une affaire en or* **2.** *jeter l’ancre* **3.** *labyrinth* **4.** *baie*

File 11 p. 119 • British storms unbury an ancient Welsh forest

Are the petrified trees of Borth part of the mythical kingdom of Cantre'r Gwaelod?

Storms lashing¹ the British coast last month revealed a strange new sight off the west coast of Wales, near the village of Borth: the stumps² of hundreds of tree trunks, rising out of the sand, like broken teeth.

Could this be part of Cantre'r Gwaelod, a mythical kingdom believed to have disappeared beneath the waves thousands of years ago? Has Wales's very own Atlantis been found?

It's like an episode of *Game of Thrones*: a mysterious, submerged forest; an ancient kingdom that was home to a priestess and her magic well.³ [...]

A walkway made of sticks and branches was also discovered. It's 3,000 to 4,000 years old and was built, it is believed, to cope with⁴ rising sea levels back then. The submerged forest at Borth was not the only ancient site to have been uncovered by recent storms. Another submerged forest appeared at Mount's Bay, Cornwall. [...] But it's the mythical kingdom of Cantre'r Gwaelod that has captured people's imaginations. Also known as the Lowland Hundred, the kingdom was first mentioned in the Black Book of Carmarthen, the earliest surviving manuscript written in Welsh, created around 1250 A.D. The kingdom was believed to have been flooded when a maiden named Mererid allowed a well in her care to overflow. [...]

There is no scientific evidence for any of this. Signs of physical habitation have never been found near Borth. Sarn Badrig is actually a reef⁵ formed by the remains of a glacial moraine⁶. But in a land that has given the world many folk tales and myths, facts have never been allowed to stand in the way of a good legend. And who knows, perhaps one day Cantre'r Gwaelod really will rise from the sea.

Simon Worrall, *National Geographic*, 2014

1. strike

2. *souches*

3. *puits*

4. manage

5. *récif*

6. pile of rock debris

File 11 p. 120 • The raising of the *Lady Lovibond*

The Goodwin Sands is a graveyard¹ for ships that have sunk in its foreboding² waters. It is said that 50,000 people have lost their lives on the sandbank. This stretch of water is the home of one gruesome manifestation, the phantom ghost ship of the *Lady Lovibond*. Legend has it that the vessel was bound for Oporto, Portugal, with a cargo of flour, meat, wine and gold. The Captain, Simon Peel, was celebrating on his honeymoon with his new wife, when Rivers, the shipmate deliberately ran the ship around in a jealous rage. All hands³ were lost to the dark sea. The *Lady Lovibond* is said to appear every 50 years as a ghost ship.

During the early evening of 29 March, children and parents from six schools across Dover District gathered on the harbour beach, outside Dover Rowing Club's boat house, to take part in an interactive street theatre event to search for, and rescue, the ghost ship, by calling to the Captain and his bride to entice⁴ them back to land.

[...] Out in the harbour, Dover Rowing Club enacted the raising and rescue of *Lady Lovibond*, [...]

Once on shore, the ghoulish⁵ bride and groom walked up the beach, followed by excited children holding lanterns, and accompanied by haunting violin music.

dadonline.eu, 2016

1. *cimetière*

2. menacing

3. sailors

4. attract

5. macabre

File 11 p. 120 • Do sea monsters really exist?

For centuries they've been a part of maritime legend, inspiring curiosity and terror in equal measure. Lurking in the depths of the oceans, shocking in size and appearance, gigantic serpents and prehistoric monsters are as much a source of fascination as ever. In the past two or three years alone, attacks by huge undersea beasts have provided the centrepiece battles at the ends of blockbusters such as *Pirates Of The Caribbean*, *Clash Of The Titans* and *The Voyage Of The Dawn Treader*.

But are such tales of strange sea beasts more than mythology? Is there any evidence to suggest that some of these monsters [...] might actually exist?

Certainly, the study of the possible existence of seamonsters and other creatures of legend—known as cryptozoology—remains an area that captures the imagination of scientists and laymen¹ alike.

Last week I took part in a major debate at the Zoological Society in London at which I and my colleagues wondered whether there might be more to these stories than mere myth.

Only this week, photographs emerged of the large carcass of an unidentified sea creature washed up on the beach near Aberdeen. It is the subject of fevered speculation, with some claiming it is a sea monster and others (more sensibly) saying it's a plain old pilot whale². [...]

Given that previously unknown large marine animals continue to be discovered, the idea is far from outlandish. It's perfectly plausible that species of shark, ray and whale still wait to be identified. Indeed, according to some estimates, there could be as many as 50 species of large seagoing animals awaiting discovery.

Despite advances in sonar equipment, remotely operated cameras and deep-sea submersibles, only a fraction of the vast oceans that cover so much of the Earth have been examined.

Dr Darren Naish, www.dailymail.co.uk, 2011

1. *amateur* 2. large member of the dolphin family