

## NOTES for QUERIES

An Associated Press dispatch of January 4, 1970, reports that the famous "miracle staircase" in Santa Fe, N.M., may be up for sale. The Sisters of Loretto, the religious order which owns the staircase property, has been negotiating with the La Fonda Hotel for the sale of five acres for \$700,000. The staircase is in a chapel built in 1875. According to the legend associated with it, the nuns had built the chapel, neglecting to construct stairs to the choir loft. One day a "little old man" asked permission to put in stairs and built the special staircase which stands today. It makes two 360 degree turns and engineers supposedly cannot explain how it stands. The elderly builder thereafter completely disappeared and no one in the area could identify him. According to the proposed sale agreement the new owner cannot alter the chapel for a hundred years.

The first festival of the occult arts will be held in New York on Sunday, April 10, at the Fillmore East in the East Village. The festival will feature such personalities as psychics Marc Reymout and Chris Phelan and "Astral dancer" Bentley Rotan, with witch Sybil Leek and the late Edgar Cayce--presumably on film. Such topics as astrology, palmistry, tarot and telepathy will be discussed and demonstrated.

The March issues of both Esquire and McCall's carry sections with articles on the explosion of enthusiasm with regard to the occult:

Esquire focuses on "Evil in California," a subject stimulated by the bizarre Sharon Tate murders. Indeed, in "Charlie Manson's Home on the Range," Gay Talese discusses the movie ranch on which the Manson cult made its home and recounts the history of the group's occupancy. Esquire's treatment of the whole West Coast occult scene emphasizes the shivery, gothic aspects of it all, implying that the introduction of LSD and other hallucinogens has added a new and very terrifying element to the Alistair Crowley-like goings-on. "We must even face the possibility that California has allowed itself to become a principality of the Devil," comments Craig Karpel in his introduction to the series of articles. "Princess Leda's Castle in the Air," by Tom Burke, takes the reader on an incredible outing to the headquarters of a Hollywood witch and acid goddess ("Don't go there without a cross") and along with her followers as they steal a black swan from an L.A. County wildlife preserve ("Why, baby, should I fear the law? I mean, how can the fuzz hassle a god?"). William Kloman surveys the broader scene in "Banality of the New Evil," and photographic features survey "The Style of Evil" (crosses, amulets and other occult fashions), and "Light in the Heart of Darkness" (good witches and mediums fighting off the bad somewhere in the psychical realm). And "The Art of Evil" examines the work of Neke Carson, a Texas-born artist devoted to exorcising the devil by constructing artifacts with a component of blood. Carson apparently believes in a world-wide conspiracy of devil worshippers.

McCall's series of articles, "The Occult Explosion," is predictably different: calm, chatty, generally non-alarmist. In "Church of Satan" Judith Roscoe visits Anton La Vey's San Francisco establishment with its secret passages and ceremonies (just like a Baptist picnic), Jean Stafford casts yet another glance at the Manson family ("Love Among the Rattlesnakes") and the incomparable Hoosier Kurt Vonnegut Jr. writes

of "The Mysterious Madame Blavatsky." There are also articles on the tarot deck (scary) and "Seances in Suburbia" ("What happens when respectable matrons start dabbling in the spirit world?"). A photographic section covers various occult practitioners and workshops and British astrologer Maurice Woodruff is asked for his hottest predictions.

According to the Indiana Daily Student "Polish-Americans" are launching an offensive against Polack jokes. Leading the campaign is Chester Grabowski, editor of the Clifton, N.J., Post-Eagle, who claims the backing of such organizations as the Polish Veterans' Association, the Polish Paratroopers' Association ("What do you call Polish paratroopers?" "Air pollution.") and other groups. He plans to apply pressure to firms which sponsor TV shows on which the offensive jokes have been told. According to Grabowski, the Polish-Canadian Youth Association lodged a similar protest against the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation last year.

We recently received a letter from Darrell L. Gray, James Alton Whitley and Mark Wingate, organizers of the Union Grove, N. C., Old Time Fiddlers' Convention, noting that a rival convention has apparently been set up this year. At the time of writing they had no further facts, but we pass on this information to our readers who can write to 1431 East 7th Street, Apt. 2, Charlotte, N. C. 28204.

And just to prove that folklore is still alive, all pervasive and DANGEROUS, we pass along this latest bit of children's lore, overheard by one of our editors on a Bloomington street (chanted rhythmically, of course):

Marijuana, marijuana  
LSD, LSD  
Hippies take it, hippies take it  
Why can't we, why can't we?

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NEW KENNEDY LORE (continued from p. 65)

DUBLIN DISPATCH  
Irish Free World

GOD SAVES SENATOR KENNEDY  
AS CATHOLIC GIRL DROWNS

Devout Pair Believed to Be  
On Way To Midnight Mass

Ted Prays for Almost Nine  
Hours Before Leaving Scene

Irish Government Blasts Italian  
Builder of Faulty Bridge