

MISKATONIC



UNIVERSITY

ENGLISH LITERATURE
PROF. ALBERT WILMARTH

FARNSWORTH COLLEGE
OF THE LIBERAL SCIENCES

Mr. Henry W. Akeley
Townshend, Whindam Co.,
Vermont

May 10, 1928

Dear Mr. Akeley,

Thank you very much for your letter of May 5. I read it with no small degree of interest and, as you indeed anticipate, surprise. You will understand, I am sure, and not take it amiss, that I must retain a position of skepticism with regards to the proposition that the folk tales and superstitions of your region have a real, material correlative.

That being said, I do acknowledge your point that I am an outlander. As much as the folk customs of your state fascinate me and have contributed to my research, I have never visited the region. You have the advantage over me when it comes to work in the field. I am impressed by the investigations you have done, and am most intrigued by the data you have collected. That my own conclusions would differ from yours does not reflect at all on the respect I have for your endeavour.

I would, therefore, be interested to see the evidence you mention. Do please feel free to send it to my attention, along with any further explanatory material you deem fit.

Yours sincerely,
Albert N. Wilmarth, PhD

Albert N. Wilmarth, Esq.,
118 Saltonstall St.,
Arkham, Massachusetts

Note: This letter does not
appear in Wilmarth's
correspondence — possibly it
was never received at all?

June 25, 1928

Dear Wilmarth,

I've come across something that has given me cause for concern. I hope you'll be able to dispel my fears, and convince me that I am letting my imagination play havoc with my peace of mind. It is easy for that to happen out here, especially at night, when I feel my solitude most intently. Or, if I am honest, when I feel (or fear) the deeper truth that I am not alone.

Forgive me, I'm already avoiding the point of this letter. To my purpose, then, I wanted to find more evidence of the overlap between the tales of the Mi-Go in the Himalayas, and my experiences here. I came across an anecdote that Davenport's monograph only mentions in passing, and vaguely at that. It appears, with considerably more detail, in Veidt's edition of translated facsimiles.

The upshot of the tale, and this is what has given me some sleepless nights, is the implication that, while these beings have been known to engage in abduction, they have also resorted to imposture. When I think of the voices on the phonograph, and some of my own uncertainties concerning some of the people I have noticed observing me, I become prey to the most frightful conjectures. I am already increasingly wary of my neighbours, especially Walter Brown. We know from the phonograph that there are humans in league with these creatures. (And what an abyss of soul-harrowing meaning there must be behind those words, in league.)

But, Wilmarth, what if the truth is worse yet? What if it is not just that there are human beings with malign agendas about me, but things that only appear to be human? I find myself thinking of our letters that have gone awry, and I imagine other, more insidious scenarios. There are, after all, other forms of imposture.

In the most urgent hope that you will, by force of inconvertible logic, allay these fears, I remain,

Yrs.,

Akeley

Albert N. Wilmarth, Esq.,
118 Saltonstall St.,
Arkham, Massachusetts

*This is the letter apparently sent on June 25th.
Mr. Akeley's switch from pen to typewritten
correspondence gives me doubts regarding its
authenticity—did the farmer even own a
typewriter?*

June 25, 1928

Dear Wilmarth,

Two points to cover with this letter. The first concerns our research, the second a triviality over which I nevertheless hope you will set my mind at ease.

Firstly, then, with regards to our recent discussion about the Himalayan traditions and their possible connections to events here, I'm afraid I have some disappointing news. I have tracked down a copy of Veidt's text and, against our expectations, its more detailed accountings only underscore the differences between the two contexts. This is not to completely discount the similarities we have noted, but the more details I find, the less they seem applicable here. It is possible that we are guilty of the same reductionism as those who draw unwarranted and exaggerated conclusions from such recurring, cross-cultural mythic elements as the sacrificed god-king.

My readings have put rather a check on some of my more enthusiastic speculations. However, in the cold light of day, I am forced to admit that while this result lacks in exciting possibilities, it makes up for in salutary lessons. We must be careful not to let our conclusions race ahead of our evidence. That there are, on these slopes and forests, beings hitherto unknown to the official record of humanity's knowledge is beyond doubt. But what we have not established, as opposed to merely surmising, is their intent.

Well. So much for my lesson!

As to the other matter, I had a mishap in my improvised dark room yesterday, resulting in the complete loss of the latest photographs. I had hopes that they would provide the clearest record yet of the footprints. I dare say that some of the marks at the edge of my property, thanks to rain during the night, were of a detail I had not seen to date. I am reacting to this loss as if it were an insurmountable tragedy.

Please, Wilmarth, do me the kindness of reassuring me that I am losing sleep over trivialities!

Yrs.,

Akeley

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Mr. Henry W. Akeley
Townshend, Whindam Co.,
Vermont

June 28

My dear Akeley,

A quick note in reply to your last, as I am about to head off to the library (a few points I need to reconfirm for myself). But I want you to rest easy. In fact, I want you to rest, in the very literal sense! I speak as your friend, for you do seem somewhat overwrought over a trifle. Cheer up! Our research progresses well and the rational approach, on all fronts, remains our greatest ally.

Anon!

Yrs.,
Wilmarth

Albert N. Wilmarth, Esq.,
118 Saltonstall St.,
Arkham, Massachusetts

No trace whatsoever of this letter in
Wilmarth's papers, and its emotional tone
only adds weight to the notion that some
nefarious agency meddled in these matters.

Thursday

W—

I write this in darkness of night and of my soul. Will this reach you? I do not know. I do not even know if I will ever set foot outside my house again, or if I will ever witness the blessing of a new dawn.

I write because if I do not, I will surely go mad. They are all about the house again. The dogs are furious in their barking. The dogs that remain. I have my gun at my side, and I will use it, for all the good it will do. I ~~Am~~

Interrupted. They are on the roof once more, and there was hellish scratching at the outside walls. I fired into the darkness. No idea if I hit anything. The scratching has stopped, for the moment. But that feels like false reassurance. The hard, clicking blows of their footsteps resound still on the roof.

If only I can hold out a few more hours. Just a few. If morning comes, I will do more than mail this. I will leave this house. I was a fool to stay this long. The generations of family history and a lifetime in one place seem so unimportant right now. I wish I had listened to you while there was still time.

There are so many things I need to tell you. So much I regret not having thought to say in my last letter, fear-filled though it was.

I rescind everything I said about destroying the phonograph and the photographic evidence I sent you. Things have progressed too far for such an expediency to be your salvation. Spread the word. Make duplicates of all our correspondence. Show it to whomever you deem fit. Take it all to the newspapers. Sound the warning! Secrecy is the ally of these horrors. We have lost enough letters to know that, to say nothing of the theft of the black stone.

There is something else. My fears about imposture have all come flooding back. Our knowledge has greatly advanced, to our cost, since you proffered your reassurances about my anxieties. I am terrified for both of us. If they take me tonight, that will not mark an end to their interest in you. I am sure of it. I am so sorry, Wilmarth, for having dragged you into this horror. I pray we both escape, though I do not think I will. I pray, then, that I do not meet my fate with your doom on my conscience.

Again, spread the word, and above all else, do not come to Vermont! Beware imposture. I tell you this, and you must believe it as the greatest certainty of your life: if you should hear anything from me that contradicts what I have written here, then you will know the worst. I am lost, and your correspondent is nothing human.

I must go.

They are at the walls again.

In dread — Akeley