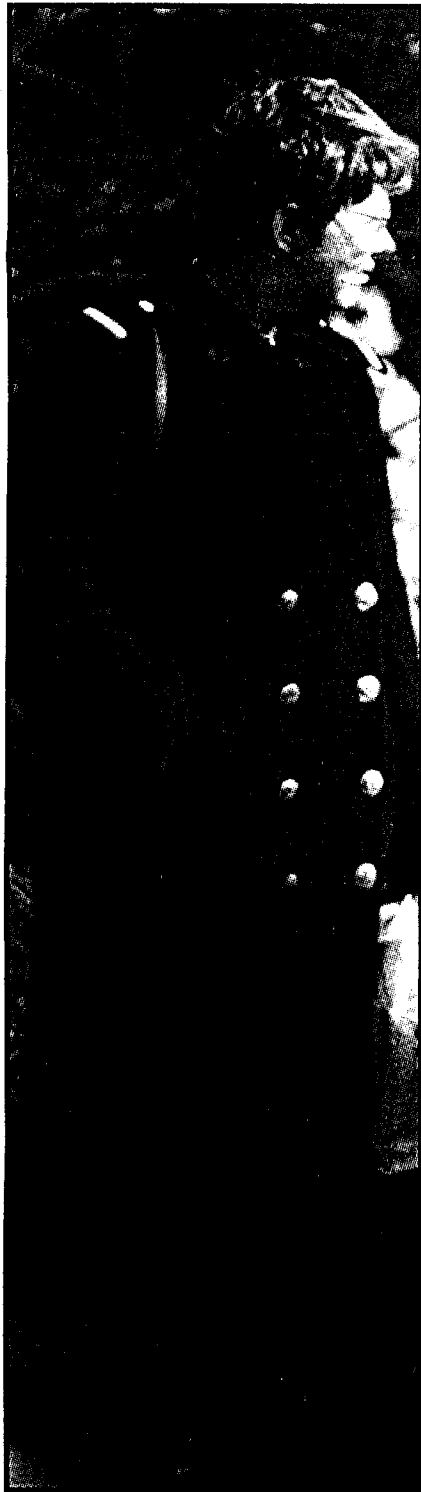


SECRETS OF SAINT HILL

Special investigation by chief reporter PAUL BRACCHI



A Scientologist out on liberty time in a military-style greatcoat

THEY dress like naval officers.

But the uniforms, complete with epaulettes and brass buttons, are not what they seem.

These men and women do not belong to the armed services...they are Scientologists.

Most of us have only one view of cult members: Religious fanatics who pester shoppers in the street.

But behind the smiling face with a clipboard is the other side of Scientology: A cold, calculating, 300-strong military-style machine.

Few people in Britain outside East Grinstead, where the cult has its UK headquarters at Saint Hill, have seen or heard of the Sea Organisation.

Yet its leaders, and their counterparts in America, control the thousands of "civilian" Scientologists all over the world. Letters sent out to potential recruits who want to graduate through the ranks of Scientology to join this ruling elite promise: "Becoming a member of the Sea Organisation is the best thing that you could do in your life."

But make no mistake: Dabble with these people and you will be entering a world:

- Where many of your rights can be stripped away.
- Where you can be punished for stepping out of line.
- Where confiding in your family can be seen as violating the security of the regime.

And it is a world where you will eventually be taught that the spirits of extra terrestrials, who ruled the earth 75 million years ago, still inhabit the bodies of contemporary human beings and must be exorcised.

You could then spend years trying to achieve that goal.

The late L. Ron Hubbard, who founded the "religion" in the Fifties, claimed his theories, called Dianetics, could increase spiritual freedom, intelligence and ability.

In 1984, High Court Judge Mr Justice Latey used three different words to describe his philosophy: "Corrupt, sinister and dangerous."

But Peter Mansell, director of public affairs at Saint Hill, hit back.

He said: "We've been here in East Grinstead for something like 30 years. If there was something sinister or illegal going on, don't you think the police would have done something?"

"If Mr Justice Latey's statement was a true reflection of what really happens here, don't you think somebody over the past 30 years would have got a little bit of evidence?"

"If people didn't like it here, they can start walking and in ten minutes be somewhere else. It's a completely voluntary organisation."

Today Scientology claims a membership of millions worldwide and more than 300,000 in Britain.

In the United States, the cult was recently granted the tax exemption enjoyed by other churches.

It is now actively recruiting and expanding in Sussex.

Dianetic centres have opened up in London Road, Brighton, and in Station Approach, Chichester.

The self-styled church is also converting a former children's home in Walshes Road, Crowborough, into a hostel for staff.

Now turn to pages four and five to find out what could lie in store for your son, daughter, or friend if they say yes to the question: "Do you have time for a survey?"

SCIENTOLOGY: THE INSIDE STORY



4 **NEWS** CF

Behind the castle's walls



Saint Hill Manor near East Grinstead – the headquarters of the Sea Organisation, the Church of Scientology's civil service

The science
fiction writer
and founder of
Scientology, L.
Ron Hubbard.
He died in
1986 aged 74



SCIENTOLOGY: THE INSIDE STORY



A Church member in uniform while out on liberty time

"SAINT HILL, a place like no other on earth."

The words and photographs in the glossy cult brochure conjure up a picture of peace and tranquility.

The manicured lawns. The smiling faces. The rolling hills.

But this is not paradise. Step behind the walls of the castle retreat, set in 55-acres on the outskirts of East Grinstead, and you will get a shock.

Everyone who works here wears a military-style uniform and everyone is expected to obey orders.

This is the secret world of the Sea Organisation. The group, the civil service of Scientology, claims it is a "force for goodness and freedom."

But confidential cult documents obtained by the Evening Argus portray a different regime. They reveal in chilling detail how:

- One official was ordered to clean out the sewer system after being told she spent too much time preparing for her own wedding.
- Another woman was summoned before an internal tribunal for telling her parents about life inside the regime.
- Children have been criticised for wetting their beds.
- Staff work punishing hours for just a few pounds a week.
- Recruits can be deprived of their beds - called "pig berthing" - and some have been forced to eat just rice and beans for weeks on end.

Anyone who fills in a personality test on the streets of Sussex could end up here or in the U.S. section of the cult.

The regime:

The hierarchy mirrors the U.S. Navy: petty officers, midshipmen, warrant officers, ensigns, lieutenants, commanders and captains.

All The Crew are given military-style uniforms. Lower ranks wear peaked

caps, white shirts, black or grey trousers, jackets, tie, and double-breasted overcoats.

Officers' outfits can be more elaborate with gold epaulettes, campaign ribbons, braiding, and stitching.

They talk in jargon. Scientology has its own language which is incomprehensible to outsiders.

Staff can end up having little or no life of their own. They work an average 15-hours-a-day, sometimes 8am to 11pm, usually seven days a week, according to one cult publication.

Each member of The Crew has an administrative post at Saint Hill.

One former Scientologist, who spent part of his time working in a bookstall in the castle, told the

Argus his weekly allowance over two years ranged from £7.50 to £15.

Staff, as a cult application form points out, are motivated by religious commitment and conviction rather than "monetary gain, or other traditional commercial or financial motives or incentives".

Peter Mansell, director of public affairs at Saint Hill, said the average weekly wage was about £30 but some staff were on less.

He said: "Most of the people I know in England, except for maybe those in a high income bracket, wouldn't have much more than £30 spending money left over at the end of the week after all the bills had been paid."

The base:

Most crew live in hostels in and around East Grinstead. The biggest is Stonelands, a ramshackle country mansion in nearby West Hoathly.

Staff are bussed to Saint Hill each day. On Saturday morning, everyone is allowed into East Grinstead - liberty time.

Nearly 200 people were listed as living at Stonelands on September 18 last year, including at least 24 children sleeping in dormitories separate to their parents.

Once a week, there is a white-glove inspection of the premises. An official runs his gloved-hand over surfaces to check for traces of dust or dirt.

Rooms with unmade beds, full wastepaper bins, or smells are singled out for criticism. The worst examples are photographed. No-one, least of all children, is spared any embarrassment.

The comment next to one girl's name on an inspection sheet: "Smell of wet beds needs to be handled." A boy on the list was also subjected to the same treatment.

Copies of the report were sent to the Watchdog Committee, the most senior management committee in Scientology, in Los Angeles and sent to at least 13 other officials and branches of the organisation.

This is acceptable in Scientology. In the eyes of L. Ron Hubbard:



Stonelands, a ramshackle mansion in West Hoathly, used as the Church's main hostel

Saint Hill Manor near East Grinstead - the headquarters of the Sea Organisation, the Church of Scientology's civil service

"Cleanliness and neatness are the primary building blocks to respect in most societies."

The quotation is printed in bold on the front page of the inspection results.

Mr Mansell said: "It's a bit like when you're a kid and your mother comes in and says 'hey, tidy up your socks.' Is that a massive infringement of your civil rights?"

Discipline:

Orders must be obeyed. This is spelt out in contracts in which recruits promise to "fully and without reservation subscribe to the discipline, mores and conditions" of the group.

The penalties for stepping put of line can be severe.

Punished: One official was suspended from her post at Saint Hill when she returned from her honeymoon last year.

The woman was put on MEST work, the name for physical labour. One of her crimes was spending too much time preparing for her own wedding to a fellow Scientologist.

This was deemed to have interfered with production, in other words her job in the cult hierarchy.

She was later allowed back to her post but she turned up late and was put on another gruelling work schedule from 8.30am to 11.30pm.

And she was warned any violations would result in her duties being extended to 4am, a total of 19-and-a-



By chief reporter
PAUL BRACCHI
and photographer
SIMON DACK



half-hours. One of her new tasks was to clean the sewer system.

Mr Mansell said: "It's a fact of life that if your sewers need cleaning somebody has to clean them."

"This is a big property and there are a lot of storm drains."

Punished: The official in charge of the newly-wed was also suspended and sentenced to a spell of physical labour.

She fled to her parents home and a delegation from Saint Hill was dispatched to recover her. The woman did eventually come back but her behaviour was viewed as "suppressive".

A report on her conduct ruled she: "Violated security of the base by going out to see her parents and telling them what was going on with her in regards to the Sea Organisation. They are not SO members and thus should not know what is going on in the Sea Org."

Mr Mansell said: "You have a certain advantage over me because I don't have the report in front of me."

But he stressed: "I tell my parents what I am doing here all the time."

The penalties:

Some of the penalties for staff "who

are not actively contributing" were listed in an executive directive issued in California in 1986.

Under this system they could lose the right to sleep in a bed - pig berthing - take a regular allowance and take part in social events or even eat proper meals... "the most the staff member would get is plain rice and beans."

That was the fate of one U.S. recruit in 1990, even though this spartan diet made him physically ill. A fellow cult member wrote to the Ethics Mission, the body responsible for discipline, to try to get the order lifted.

The reply: "Get him to make money and he will be out of rice and beans. Simple, Eh?" It was signed Love EM.

Mr Mansell said: It's such a rare occurrence it's hard for me to respond to. The last time I had rice and beans was years ago."

Asked about pig berthing, he replied: "It's just a nickname. I honestly don't know when it's ever happened. I've been in Scientology for 15 years. I'm sure it has."

Rehabilitation Project Force:

The RPF has been described as the

Scientology equivalent of being in prison.

People here have to wear black overalls and do hard labour. One woman was sent there on July 23 last year for crimes which included being discourteous to colleagues and turning up for work late.

She was also accused of stealing food from the canteen. A report on her conduct ruled: "It is hoped she will take this opportunity to redeem herself on the RPF."

The plight of another woman was highlighted in a High Court judgment in the Eighties. The document reveals how she had to do 12-hours physical work a day, shifting bricks and emptying bins, even though she had a chronic back condition.

She was not allowed to talk to anyone, except to receive orders, and her time with her children was limited to 30 minutes a day. Among her crimes: disagreeing with an order.

Mr Mansell said: "How many people are in the RPF in England at the moment? Maybe six out of 8 million Scientologists around the world. How many people are in jail?"

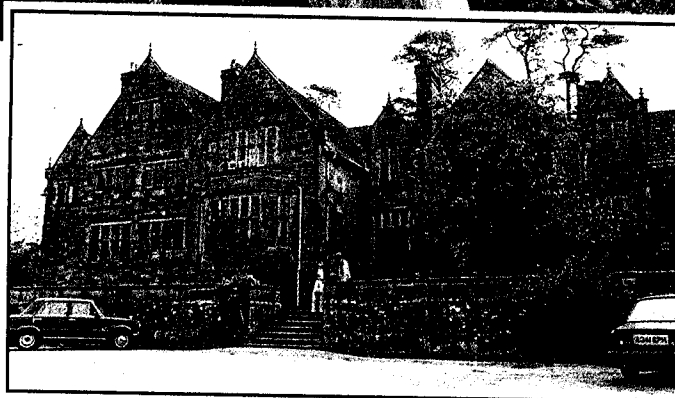
Robert Vaughn Young, who spent 20 years handling public relations for Hubbard, now sees things differently.

In an article published last year, he compared the cult to George Orwell's 1984. "Just substitute 'Sea Organisation' for 'Party' and the chilling parallel may be evident."

SCIENTOLOGY: THE INSIDE STORY



LEFT: The cramped conditions in a dorm at Stonelands and, below left, Stonelands itself



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9244

Ken Brown: Help for escapers from the cult

Just the worst two years of my life



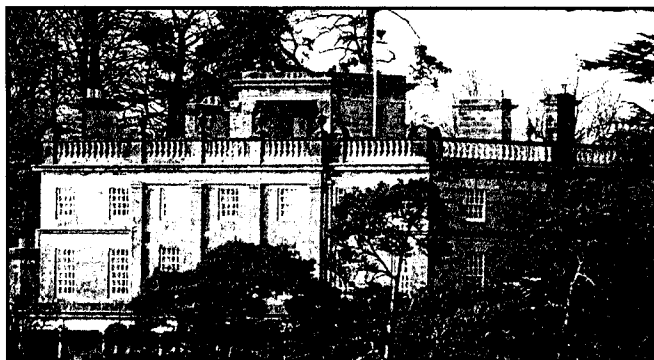
IN THE second part of his special investigation into the Church of Scientology, Argus chief reporter

PAUL BRACCHI talks to a man who travelled 3,000 miles to join the Sussex-based cult.



ABOVE:
Nowell
Matandirotya.
"I feel I was
exploited"

RIGHT: Saint
Hill Manor,
near East
Grinstead, HQ
of the Sea
Organisation,
the church's
civil service



THIS man left his family, his job, and his country to take up a scholarship in Britain.

He lived to regret his decision.

Nowell Matandirotya says coming to study Scientology in Sussex turned out to be the worst two years of his life.

His 3,000-mile trip from Zimbabwe, on an air ticket paid for by the cult, eventually ended in a room like the one pictured on the opposite page.

The photograph taken two years ago but published for the first time today, speaks for itself. It shows the cramped conditions inside Stonelands, Scientology's biggest hostel in Sussex.

This is where members of the Sea Organisation, the military-style wing of the cult, live and sleep.

L. Ron Hubbard, the science fiction writer who founded the alternative religion, called the group the "aristocracy of Scientology."

But new recruits have to carry out menial tasks like cleaning toilets, clearing paths, and emptying bins.

Nowell, 27, said: "I feel I was exploited. If I had only known. If I had been enlightened in Zimbabwe about Scientology as a cult I wouldn't have come."

He is not alone.

Three of his countrymen, who do not wish to be identified, also came to "study" at Saint Hill, the UK headquarters of the cult.

They tell a similar story.

The Zimbabwean government has now condemned Scientology, the Evening Argus has learned. It warned people not to get involved with the church after the plight of the trio was highlighted in the local Press.

The statement, issued by the Ministry of Information, Posts, and Telecommunications, was faxed to us by the The Chronicle newspaper in Bulawayo.

It said the cult, which has offices in the city and the capital Harare, was nothing more than a "profitable global racket".

Peter Mansell, director of public affairs at Saint Hill, said he knew nothing of the criticisms.

And he denied people like Nowell were being exploited.

He said: "We are about the least discriminatory of any organisation I have ever encountered. We have woman ministers and woman executives. One of our fairly senior executives is an African woman."

Back home in Zimbabwe, Nowell had a job working for a private security firm in the capital Harare.

The ticket:

But his life was to change after a friend told him about Scientology.

Nowell said: "He described it as a training institute."

On January 22, 1990, he went to find out more about the alternative religion at an office in the State Lottery Building at the corner of Julius Nyrere and Speke Avenue.

He read a book. He took a course. And eventually he became a full-time staff member.

Later, he says, he was approached by two officials from Saint Hill who invited him to come to Britain.

The cult paid for his ticket and arranged his visa.

"This is one of the letters of introduction for people coming to study Scientology here."

"Mr... is hereby granted a scholarship to study at the Hubbard College of Scientology, Saint Hill Manor. The scholarship covers course fees, room and board, and a basic allowance."

Nowell said: "To me it sounded really exciting." But his excitement was short-lived.

The hostel:

He ended up sleeping first at Brook House on the outskirts of East Grinstead, which burned down in December 1991, then Stonelands in West Hoathly in a room with about 30 others.

One man who has been inside Stonelands is Ken Brown who runs a night shelter in Crawley.

Ken, who befriended one of the other Zimbabwans after he left the cult, said: "The place had a feeling, not just of squalor, but of despair about it. So much so that I wanted to shed tears, and still do whenever I think about it."

He told of peeling walls, cheap and shabby furniture, and iron bunk beds three tiers high "packed in as close as possible." A stark contrast to the splendour of Saint Hill.

Mr Mansell said: "Go to the Vatican and see the opulence that exists there and compare that with the conditions in a nunnery. They are two totally different things."

The cult has now spent £671,000 for a new staff hostel in Crowborough.

Mr Mansell said: "We are really happy with the new building. It will give all of us more space and more room in much better conditions."

The contract:

On his arrival, Nowell had to sign a bizarre "billion year" contract with the Sea Organisation. Then he was handed a set of overalls and assigned to the Estate Project Force (EPF).

His "studies" were about to begin.

Those in the EPF, the lowest rung of the Sea Organisation, carry out menial tasks at Saint Hill like cleaning the toilets, emptying the bins, and raking leaves off the lawn, according to former cult members.

Those duties, Nowell said, lasted six weeks. He was eventually given a naval-style uniform and a job in the bookstore at Saint Hill.

At night Nowell would return to his bed and think about the life he had left behind in Zimbabwe.

He said: "I had to find my way out."

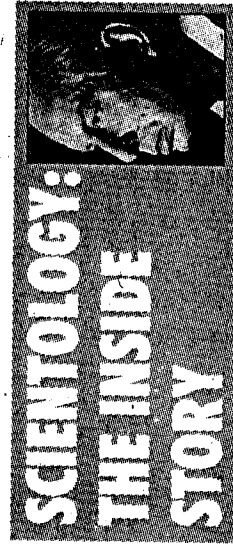
The statement:

"To escape from the clutches of Scientology calls for great courage and resolution."

These are the words of High Court Judge Mr Justice Latey in 1984.

On May 8, 1992, one year before he left the cult, Nowell was asked to make a statement by Saint Hill officials.

It followed inquiries by a national newspaper into the way he and



others were being treated. The document, bearing his signature and painting a rosy picture of Scientology, was made available to the Press. The story never appeared.

That same statement was faxed to the Evening Argus after we approached the church. Asked whether any pressure was put on him, Mr Mansell replied: "Absolutely not at all."

Here are some of the points of difference between what he was alleged to have said THEN and what he says NOW:

1992: "I wasn't recruited by anyone."

1994: "I was approached by two recruiting officers from Saint Hill."

1992: "I had full understanding of the aims of the Church of Scientology."

1994: "If I had been enlightened in Zimbabwe about Scientology as a cult I wouldn't have come."

1992: "I didn't have any difficulties

with the food. I found it Okay."

1994: "I had a running tummy all the time. I couldn't stand it."

1992: "I don't regard Ron (Hubbard) as Jesus. I don't pray to him."

1994: "I didn't like the idea of worshipping L. Ron Hubbard... people were asked to clap hands facing his photos or his statues."

1992: "I have a sense of direction of where my life is leading, as compared to the wasted days of before I came into Scientology."

1994: "It was a period of great depression."

Asked whether Scientology uses unscrupulous methods to silence critics, Mr Mansell replied: "It is completely and totally not the church policy to do that. If there ever was, or had been an instance, we would be first ones to take action."

That was not the view of Mr Justice Latey.

He concluded: "If a person seeks to escape from Scientology his files are taken by the intelligence bureau and used, if wished, to pressure him into silence."

"They are often so used and uncontravened evidence of this has been given at this hearing."

The final chapter:

On May 3 1993, exactly one year after he signed his statement, Nowell did finally leave.

He was helped by Bonnie and Richard Woods who run ESCAPE, the East Grinstead-based Christian support group.

Nowell was to return to Saint Hill with the couple just once more to collect his passport.

But cult officials accused him of stealing £1,000 and making unauthorised phone calls and refused to hand it over.

The police were called. Nowell was taken to East Grinstead for questioning but was released without charge. His passport was returned at the request of the police.

For the past year Nowell has been living in a safe house somewhere in Sussex. Earlier this month, he returned to Zimbabwe to see his mother and sister.

Friends gave him the money for his air fare. He is okay.

Tomorrow: The hard sell

How a church aimed to sell itself



The Dianetics Centre in London Road, Brighton

HARD SELL . . . two words synonymous with door-to-door salesman, second hand car dealers, and estate agents.

Two words you would definitely not expect to find in the vocabulary of any religion.

But this is not any religion. It is Scientology.

Today, we expose the hard sell tactics which have helped turn the organisation into a thriving business – and resulted in one impressionable young man handing over £22,000 in ONE MONTH.

Science fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard was once quoted as saying in the Forties: "Writing for a penny a word is ridiculous."

"The best way to make a million would be to start a religion."

He did.

Scientology, which has its UK headquarters in East Grinstead, has claimed a membership of more than 300,000 in Britain.

In Sussex, there are Dianetics centres – the first step on the path to Scientology – in London Road, Brighton, and in Station Approach, Chichester.



DURING our investigation into Scientology, a number of its representatives called at our head office yesterday demanding to meet the editor for a second time that day. When he refused, one man, pictured below, had to be escorted from our premises.

Sheila Chaleff, the organisation's public affairs

director, pictured above, left a note for the editor saying: "I must say I was surprised to find three security guards posted to keep me out of your building as I felt that by the tenor of your conversation earlier that you were interested in giving public a chance to have input into a story and also right of reply."



In the third part of his special investigation into the Church of Scientology, chief reporter PAUL BRACCHI reveals the true cost of one man's involvement with the cult

They sell books and offer a range of "life-improvement" courses.

The aim: to get the public inside.

Staff with clipboards target people in the street with a "Be-Do-Have" survey.

The questions are always the same:

● "If you could be anything what would you most like to be?"

● "If you could change or improve anything about yourself what would you most like to change or improve?"

● "If you could have anything what would you most like to have?"

Then you will be invited to "come this way." Most people say no. But some say yes.

Documents obtained by the Evening Argus show just why the people asking the questions should not be underestimated.

They reveal how staff have been:

Extensively drilled in high-pressure sales techniques.

Given cash bonuses to sell more.

Sent a reference pack called The Hard Sell.

Peter Mansell, director of public affairs at Saint Hill, said: "Let's just assume, hypothetically, that Scientology is not a bad thing. Let's say it's quite a useful subject."

"Let's say in a world where people don't understand themselves, don't understand each other, and don't understand spirituality. In a world like that, if you have something that offers a way out, wouldn't you want to tell people?"

"And if it's not the best thing in the world, all you have to do is – don't do it."

Perhaps Mr Mansell should read one of his own sales manuals.

One of the things which has been drummed into sales staff is: "You should never ask the public individual to decide."

"YOU DECIDE FOR HIM."

The Wallet:

Jon (not his real name) knows only too well what that means today.

But he didn't two years ago.

The date was January 28,

1992, the day he "decided" to visit the Dianetics centre in Poole, Dorset.

Jon, then 24, had already read one of Hubbard's books and now he wanted to find out more.

The smiling faces inside were only too happy to oblige.

He was given a chair and a pen to fill in the cult's standard 200-question personality test.

Jon, who had just split up with his girlfriend, did badly. He needed help. He needed Dianetics counselling. And he also needed something else – his wallet. The young farmer's son promptly paid £196 in cash for a 12-hour programme which began immediately.

That was just the beginning.

Over the next 36 days his building society account was drained to pay for more courses. He even handed over his passbook and gave written permission for a member of staff at the centre to draw cheques on his behalf.

Jon said: "It is hard to believe now that I did this. But at the time I would have done anything she asked."

These are the gaping holes which appeared in his building society book:

Jan 30 — £2,139.

Feb 10 — £5,365.

Feb 20 — £8,000.

Feb 26 — £2,820.

The final payment of £2,600 was made on March 5, just 36 days after he had set foot inside the Dianetics centre.

The grand total: £21,120.

The bulk of that money was a family inheritance, which Jon had set aside for the deposit on a house purchase.

The last three withdrawals, totalling £13,240, were made by one of the women who worked in the cult office.

Jon said: "I was becoming totally dependent on the centre. I felt I could trust nobody outside, even my family. Every time I saw something at the centre I did not like, I just ignored it. I would not question it."

In 1984, High Court judge Mr Justice Lane had this to say:

"Scientology . . . is dangerous because it is out to capture people, especially children and

TO PAGE 5

date	customer	office	details	withdrawals	deposits	balance
1 10FEB92	JS	242/D2		BROUGHT	FORWARD	22073.43
2 10FEB92	JS	242/D2	REPAID	5345.50		16728.13
3 20FEB92	DH	242/D2	REPAID	8000.00		8728.13
4 24FEB92	AMB	409/F3	REPAID	2870.00		5858.13
5 3MAR92		242	BANK CREDIT		500.00	6358.13
6 3MAR92	SO	423/G3	NET INT	40.74	40.74	6398.13
7 3MAR92	SO	423/G3	REPAID	2600.00		3798.13
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						

Withdrawals from Jon's building society account book

NEWS

How a church aimed to sell itself

FROM PAGE 4

impressionable young people, and indoctrinate and brainwash them so that they become the unquestioning captives and tools of the cult withdrawn from ordinary thought, living, and relationships with others.

Finally, with the love and support of his family, Jon did leave.

Then he took legal action to try to recover his money.

In a letter to the cult's solicitors, his barrister wrote: "By parting with his money, he lost the opportunity to buy a property. By succumbing to the teaching of Scientology he almost lost his mind."

The cult offered to pay up in monthly installments. Jon was not satisfied. He finally received a cheque for nearly the full amount in an out-of-court settlement eight months later.

Mr Mansell admitted: "I don't really know the full details but to be honest I think it sounds like somebody didn't exactly deal with him the way they should have or something like that."

But he added: "I've talked to people who have been in Scientology for ten years who have spent X number of thousands of dollars or pounds and they say 'If you were to say to me I can have it all back right now in gold bullion and I have to revert to how I was when I started in Scientology, there is no way the money even compares with the value of what they have received.'"

The Hard Sell:

The centre in Poole, which accepted Jon's money, was singled out for praise in the cult, the Evening Argus has learned.

It was a "supreme" example of how to get "floods of new people into your mission".

The office also covers the Chichester area.

An internal report, dated April 1 1993, tells how each week the sales team:

Sells between 200 and 300 Hubbard books.

Starts 40 to 50 new people on courses.

Distributes 200,000 "pieces of promo" in the area.

And any member of staff who sold 15 books one day got a "large cash bonus".

The sales team was thoroughly drilled on ways of getting the public to part with its money.

Example: Staff were told: "One thing that works is to have the person read the information given on the back cover of the Dianetics book... the person is then gotten to purchase the book on the spot, paying either by cash or credit card."

The customer's name, address, and telephone number were taken and a date fixed for another appointment.

One of the main recommendations in the 12-page report is straight from the mouth of L. Ron Hubbard himself: "Make sure that lots of bodies move through the shop, no matter whether they're spending or not."

"Just work all the time to move lots of bodies through the place."

Other training drills were listed in a document from the Hubbard Communications Office at Saint Hill in the Eighties.

Drill: "To train the student to get the prospect (public) in a receptive, positive frame of mind so he will further agree with what he is told."

Drill: "To train the student to handle sales resistance in the home with more than one person present."

Drill: "To Train a registrar (sales staff) to completely handle the prospect (public) so he will pay for a service now."

Drill: "To train the student, after having stripped the prospect (public) of initial sales resistance, to put the prospect (public) in a position of deciding to buy."

Practical exercises to help staff achieve all these aims are detailed in the report.

This is what Jon was not told when he stepped through the door of the Dianetics centre.

Nor was he told about the final drill on the last page of the final.

Here the student is taught to set up a microphone or another 'bugging' device secretly to record sales interviews.

Tapes are then played to the "supervisor" who decides whether his "pupil" needs further training.

It is a technique used widely in marketing and selling.

But there is one difference.

Scientists are not selling adverts or double glazing.

The Verdict:

Mr Mansell said: "I've seen people literally have their lives completely and totally dragged out of the depths of degradation by Scientology."

Jon was not one of them.

Now happily married, he said: "I went from being a reasonably happy, open sort of person to an almost suicide case. Mentally and emotionally, I was a complete wreck after it."

He had just one message: "Don't get involved. Don't even talk to them. Learn by mistakes."



Top: Ron Hubbard, pictured by the Evening Argus at East Grinstead in December, 1959

Left: A demonstration of the cult's healing technique, as it appears in the handbook, above

WE SAY

The true story

FOR THREE days now we have been featuring the activities of the Church of Scientology, whose national headquarters is at East Grinstead.

We showed that behind the image of the religious followers hovering on street corners with the ever-present clipboard is a regime run on quasi-military lines with a system of punishment that hardly befits its boast that it is a church, just like any other.

And we have told the story of one former recruit who tells a vastly different story from those featured in the organisation's glossy literature.

Predictably, the Scientologists have got pretty hot under the collar about what we have had to say.

Their solicitors have accused us of defamation, misrepresentation, distortion and aiding and abetting theft.

And in a letter to the paper the cult's Director of Public Affairs attacks us for not explaining what Scientology actually means.

Fair enough. Here is a quotation from the founder himself, L. Ron Hubbard, in the pamphlet, *Description of the Scientology Religion*, October 1993:

The basic tenet of Scientology is that man is an immortal spirit who has lived through a great many lifetimes and who has the potential of infinite survival. Although one has a mind and a body, he or she is a spiritual being called a "thetan" in Scientology. A thetan is basically good but has become enmeshed with the material universe through the ages until he has lost his true spiritual beingness.

Or, alternatively, how about this from the official *Scientology Handbook*, published this year:

Every single physical illness stems from a failure of the being to communicate with the thing or area that is ill. Prolongation of a chronic injury occurs in the absence of physical communication with the affected area or with the location of the spot of injury in the physical universe.

So now you know . . . it's garbage.

Cliff Fowler

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