

# DOWSING FOR BEGINNERS

## SO FAR SO GOOD

*by Maj-Gen. J. Scott Elliot*

This Society has been in existence for forty years. We have grown from a few enthusiasts to some eight hundred and fifty throughout the world. People *do* listen to what we say — sometimes! But we ought to be leaders in the field of ESP, because most of our work is demonstrable and covers a very wide range.

Three things worry me.

1. *Are* we the leaders in ESP? Do we get known as such, because of our basic and very practical approach? I wonder.

2. We are still not being accepted by officialdom, although we know we could be extremely useful.

3. If we were accepted, we have nothing like enough qualified dowsters to do the work which would arise.

If we face the facts, there are only a very limited number of water finders in this country to whom we could with confidence allot a job which was to cost the owner, say, £1,000. I know of no-one properly qualified to work in minerals or oil, although a number of us have done some work on these. Apart from myself, I know of only one person who is interested in archaeological dowsing and has had some experience of it.

I should like to see the Society very much more energetic, doing much more practical work and publishing the results. I should like to see much more training of young dowsters, particularly those young in age.

The attitude towards dowsing in the United Kingdom and in the U.S.A. is changing. A large number of people are interested in ESP, and dowsing, as part of the ESP spectrum, is accepted as a useful ability by many more people than was the case a short while ago. The generation to which I belong is sceptical and always asks for proof that dowsing works. On the other hand, the young are open and prepared to “have a try” and use it.

It is essential that we overcome the barrier of officialdom, and I believe we can only do this by successful results, and these must be publicised. To achieve this I suggest that we cut out inefficient dowsing as far as possible, and demonstrate by the accurate work of qualified people that dowsing not only works but can be useful and, in a money-mad world, a saver of time, labour and money. It is with this in mind that I speak to you today. What I shall say will be my own views. Some may agree with them, others may not.

I want first to get the fundamentals clear.

*What is dowsing?* My own (not very good) definition is this: “The

ability to use a natural sensitivity, which enables us to know (by some means we do not understand) things which we cannot know by the use of the day-to-day brain, by experience or by the five senses."

It is, I believe, a matter of the mind. When I use the word "mind" I am thinking of the areas known as the unconscious, the superconscious and the various levels of consciousness, about which I know very little. I do not believe there is much that cannot be found (or found out) by means of dowsing. Distant dowsing enables us to work at any distance round the world, and distance seems to make no difference.

This ability has, I believe, been in Man from the beginning. I suggest it enabled him in early days to find his water, food and minerals. It enabled him to know about and communicate with the other members of his tribe at a distance. It also enabled him to find his way when travelling. There are so-called primitive tribes in a few places who have these abilities today. This natural sensitivity was much in use in early days and in consequence kept being developed. Then, as Man went on through the centuries, the ability was not needed so much and so tended to become atrophied.

In many religious sects through the ages this ability to "know" was understood by the priesthood and usually kept jealously guarded from the ordinary people. I think it was in the background of the Christian religion but has got lost. The Oracle at Delphi probably started this way. In more recent centuries Western religions ostracised dowsing practices and preached against them. In consequence, the ability in Man has further atrophied through lack of use.

*Who can dowse?* From experience in testing and trying to help people, I think about 10 per cent could be good dowsers and 10 per cent haven't a hope, because their sensitivity is too much atrophied. Of the remaining 80 per cent I am sure that many could be reasonably good dowsers if they wanted to be, and if they found a use they could practise and train upon. These two factors are essential.

There are many people who are quite keen and interested, but have never found a use for their ability, so have never developed their sensitivity. It is from the ranks of these untrained semi-sensitives that I am sorry to say much of the harm to the reputation of dowsing comes, for, although untrained and unpractised, they take on jobs and fail, and so bring dowsing into disrepute. I say to these folk — either go on, find an outlet, practise and train seriously, or put the pendulum and rod away and just remain interested — and, of course, pay your subscriptions!

*What can be done by dowsing?* There is no need to talk to this Society about what can be done by dowsing, but there are one or two points. We are very ordinary men and women, who have developed our sensitivity for practical and demonstrable purposes. I should like to emphasise the word "demonstrable." This sensitivity that we work

with is a very tricky thing and it is easy to be misled by the imagination. Fortunately, most of us work for results which can be verified, so that we eventually know if our dowsing is correct or not. There are those, however, who work in fields where the results cannot be put to the test. How do they know whether their dowsing is correct or not? It is very important for beginners to practise and train on work which has demonstrable results: then they know whether they are right or wrong.

One further important factor: It is essential that the dowser knows the background of the type of work he is doing. I do not believe in the "universal dowser." He cannot know the background of more than a few of the subjects, and this causes him to make stupid mistakes born of ignorance. It is these mistakes and sometimes lack of know-how that earns dowsing a bad name. If we are to persuade officialdom that we can be of use we must cut down the number of mistakes. To do this we must be more professional and more skilled, which means that we must know the background of our work.

*How does dowsing work?* This is the million dollar question. Thirty years ago many people seemed to think that things emanated and that the dowser picked up the emanations. So strong was this belief that it was said that certain rods or pendulums had to be used for certain jobs. If, for instance, you were looking for lead and you carried a lead sample you would be actually attracted to the lead vein.

With the growing use of distant dowsing, or map dowsing as it is more often called, this theory was not enough and some other explanation had to be produced. So it was said to be a matter of the mind. For myself I think there is a physical element involved, because it starts with me and ends with the object sought, and we are both physical. But how the gap between me and that object is spanned I just don't know.

In practice the gap may be a few inches or many thousands of miles, but the feeling, the method and the result are exactly the same for me in every case, whether I am using a pendulum on a map or plan or am on the ground, using a rod. There is no doubt that it is a matter of the mind. Dowsing sensitivity stems not from the brain which I am now using, nor from the five senses that are all turned on now in this room, but from that difficult area variously called the subconscious and the five levels of consciousness. This sensitivity can be trained and developed, but only the owner can do the training and developing.

*Samples.* I believe it is essential to keep dowsing as simple as possible. Samples are, in fact, only mind focusers. I was brought up on the idea that they were necessary, but I found it impossible to get a true sample of a Roman ditch, so have done without ever since except in certain circumstances. I find it quite effective to write down on a piece of paper what I seek. A true sample of the object is not needed, but I do use samples when working with things that require identification because there are many of them the same or nearly so.

This applies to people, animals and to a certain extent to minerals. I also use them sometimes if I have to change quickly from one object to another, as it seems to help the mental process; also if I am beginning to get a bit tired.

I went to stay with a geologist whom I did not know. As I got to his house he left for a meeting, but he said there was a bed of alluvial tin in the field below the garden, if I would like to try my hand. I was new to mineral work then and had never seen alluvial tin before. I went to the field and found what I thought was the edge of the bed and marked it out in detail all round in about thirty minutes. When the geologist returned he went and looked and said I was correct. He knew, because he had pitted across the field and knew where the edges of the bed were.

Recently I was in Scotland, where I met a couple whom I know well. The wife asked me to see if I could find a brooch of hers that she had had for forty-four years and had lost. I was returning to London the next day, so asked her to let me have details of the loss in a letter. I duly had a letter telling me that she had been out in her large garden all morning and enclosing a plan of the garden, which I did not know. After that she had taken her son to Glasgow Airport, then gone on to a hospital, after which she had driven home and later noticed the brooch was missing. I had not seen the brooch, but it was described as being like an Argyll Regimental cap-badge.

In London I went through my usual routine, which is a mixture of question and answer and map dowsing. I felt that the brooch was in the extreme back left hand corner of the car. I telephoned and spoke to the husband, who said that the car had been thoroughly searched and was now in the garage for repairs. I urged another look. A few hours later I received a telegram to say that the brooch had been found just where I had indicated.

I must add that this sort of work is not my normal run and I only accepted the job because I wanted to help.

*Shibboleths.* One reads in books and hears of all sorts of pet ideas and habits of dowsters. Don't wear rubber boots or shoes. Keep both feet on the floor. Always face North or East when map dowsing. Always set the map. Don't dowse before ten in the morning or after ten at night. Some use white for good water, while others use black for the same purpose. These are a few of the shibboleths, as I call them. They are real and become essential to the operators who believe in them, but they are *not* necessary. Talking to young dowsters, I warn them about these things and urge them to avoid them and to keep their dowsing as simple as possible.

I was introduced to dowsing with all these beliefs, but I gradually abandoned the lot. I started to do so when I found while map dowsing that I couldn't face the way I had been told to, because of the shape of the room and it didn't make any difference! Then I found that the place on the map I wanted to work on was invariably near the far

edge, so I started turning the map round to suit myself and found there were no dire results.

*My way of working.* This is very similar to that used by many in this country. Most of my work is in archaeology, though I have worked a little in oil and minerals and in the search for lost people and things. When I have a problem to solve I like to get all possible information available and think it over. This is what I call the Brain appreciation. Then when I start to dowse I switch off the brain and the five senses and switch over to the Mind and allow that to do the work.

*Stage 1*, which I like to do at home, is the distant work on a map or plan or by question and answer. In this stage the bulk of the work is done and great detail can be achieved, in most cases much more detail than could be achieved on the ground.

*Stage 2* is on the ground and is to check the accuracy of the Stage 1 results. This is a necessary stage and one that I don't like having to omit, because funny things happen. Long ago, when I was a learner, I thought I had found a nice rectangular archaeological site when map dowsing; it was in the right sort of position, too. When I went there to do the Stage 2 work I found that there was a small town reservoir there and just the size I expected!

*Stage 3* is dig to prove, or whatever is the appropriate method to prove the dowsing.

There is a church next to my stepson's garden. He asked me to examine it by dowsing to see which were the old foundations. While doing this on a plan I found evidence to make me think there was an ancient site under his garden. In his orchard I thought the map dowsing indicated a curved ditch of considerable proportions. This was Stage 1. When next visiting I learned there was no tradition of anything there, nor did anything show on the surface. The Stage 2 dowsing appeared to confirm the fact of the curved ditch in the orchard. We carried out Stage 3 and dug to prove. The trial cut was planned to cross the ditch at right angles. Cutting a long story short, we found a fine big defensive ditch 5ft. 6in. deep and 12ft. wide and the cut was at right angles.

Another example, but of a different type: In my old home in Scotland the flue from the kitchen stove ran up to the chimney inside the thick sandstone outer wall. I knew it ran up in a dog-leg shape. It had recently been swept, so when it started to draw badly I suspected a blockage. I drew a plan of the wall with the flue in it, then map dowsed it. Towards the top there appeared to be a blockage. I got my friend the builder to come and told him which sandstone to take out of the wall. When he had done that he found he was accurately on the flue. He put his hand in and produced the very dead body of an owl!

*Tools.* There is no need to speak to you of the tools of the trade. I use a small pendulum for indoor work and a rod for outdoor work, both simple. I can use my hands alone and on occasion my mind alone.

My own view on tools is that a properly trained dowser "knows" the answer to the problem in his mind. But it is easier to convert this to something visual, so he uses rod or pendulum. It used to be thought by some that the rod in the dowser's hand was pulled down by the water or whatever he was seeking. In fact, it is the dowser's mind which knows when what is sought is under his feet or his pendulum, and it then operates the muscles which give the rod or pendulum the appropriate movement in accordance with his own code. It is this which makes it so essential for the question in the dowser's mind to be appropriate and clear.

*Healing and medical work.* I do not propose to say much on these subjects, because that would need a lecture in itself. In the U.K. there are a number of qualified doctors who use dowsing means to help with diagnosis and the selection of remedies. I believe there is a wide future in this and I wish the acceptance of these methods could be speeded. My own feeling is that there are many good doctors who are natural dowsers. They might admit that their "intuition" helps them, but I believe their intuition is what we call the dowsing sense at work.

Apart from this there are a number of members of the Society who, as amateurs, do work in the field of diagnosis and remedial treatment, using the Bach remedies and other things. In this country this sort of work is going ahead fast, and many members take up this work, or drift into it for want of a better or more readily available type of work to do. But members who wish to take it up should remember that the same strict rules apply there as in any other field of dowsing. They must know the background of their work, they must have at least a knowledge of the human body, and they must guard against letting the brain, the imagination or one of the five senses take control instead of the mind. It is usually difficult to get demonstrable results in medical work, so operators have to be specially careful to guard against the usual dowsing sources of error. There is *no* place for the untrained dabbler in this field.

*Some basic rules.* I am going to touch on some basic rules. If attention is paid to them I think they help to keep dowsers on the right path, and certainly they are most necessary for young dowsers to know and understand. You will know these rules, but I believe they are worth emphasising and I know of no book that codifies them.

1. *Virtually all dowsing is seeking.* This must be appreciated and the mind focused in this direction.

2. *Develop the dowsing sensitivity.* Before a dowser is any use he must develop this sensitivity. He must learn how to use the mind as opposed to the brain and the five senses.

3. *Practise and test on demonstrable results.* If the results are not demonstrable the dowser will not know if he is correct and hence may, in practice, be using the brain or imagination and not the mind.

4. *It is essential for the dowser to know the background of the field*

*in which he is working.* I have emphasised this already. Many errors stem from ignorance of background.

5. *There must be a need to know.* With this, the mind does seem to work with more precision. I think the reason why dowsters so often fail in tests set them to demonstrate that dowsing works is that the need to know is missing. Under test conditions there is seldom a need to know, only a need to show that dowsing works, and the mind machinery gets confused.

6. *Have confidence that dowsing works for you.* So many folk say to me, "Oh it works for me, but I don't think I should be any good, I don't really trust it." My reply to them is, "O ye of little faith!"

7. *Be bold in application.* As we say in this country, "You have to be prepared to chuck your hat over the windmill."

When I was a very "young" dowser I had spent half an hour telling a group of eminent archaeologists that they ought to use dowsing means in their work. Of course, I had got nowhere. As I was about to go, one of them asked me if a dowser could find a piece of metal in a man's body. I replied that he should be able to if he was trained in that work. He promptly took off his jacket, laid himself on a table and challenged me to find a piece of metal that he said he had had in his back since the First World War. I was horrified, as I had never done anything like that before, but with five grinning faces looking at me I had no alternative but to try. So I got going, and in three seconds flat I had put my finger on a part of his back, and he said, "By God, you've got it."

8. *The question asked must be correct, clear and appropriate.* Surprisingly, this is not always easy and care must be taken in framing the question. The wider one's dowsing interests, the more necessary I find this care in wording.

9. *Time.* If there is any question of time in a dowsing problem this must be remembered and taken into account, otherwise remanence and other factors may affect the answer. If, for example, oil is being sought, it is necessary to ask if oil is in the strata *now*, because, although the strata may be right and oil may have been there, it may not be there now.

10. *Identification.* If the object sought belongs to a large species there must be some form of identification in order to differentiate it from similar objects. Examples of this are Humans and Animals. If, of course, the object is well known to the dowser it is not so necessary to use means of identifying it. The best means of identification, as most of you will know, is a blood spot or hair or a bit of garment that has been handled exclusively by the person. I do not find photographs very helpful.

11. *Preconceived ideas.* This is the biggest menace in dowsing and it is allied to wishful thinking. I believe it is the reason for many failures. It comes about when the brain or one of the five senses is allowed to do the work and not the mind.



I said earlier that my own system (and we all have our own system) was to get all the information that I could and size it up. Then, when starting to dowse, I switch off the brain and the five senses and switch over to the mind and allow that to do the listening, or the feeling, or whatever you feel happens. It is very easy for preconceived ideas or wishful thinking to creep in unless one has a strict drill of some sort.

*To sum up. The future: Where are we dowsers going?* We are able to make use of a Force we don't understand. But we know that the proper use of dowsing has immense possibilities for good in many fields. How are we to change the views of officialdom? How are we to provide enough qualified dowsers to meet the need when officialdom accepts that we can be useful?

*I think we must be more professional* in our approach to our work. I am not talking of money. If we are professionals we must deliver the goods. Gone are the days when we could feel we had been "lucky" to find water, or minerals, or an archaeological site. We must expect to do so and be upset if things go wrong. When they do, we must want to know why and how the mistake happened. I am not saying that we shall never make mistakes, from time to time we all shall, but they must be guarded against, so that they are rare. Unless we are more professional about our work officialdom will not accept us. Of course, the best way to gain acceptance is by a record of *no* failures. From talking to good water finders here, in America and in Rhodesia I discover they expect to work to an accuracy of about 98 per cent and are very worried indeed if they have a failure. This must be the aim of all of us. In fact, *no* failures must be the aim, whatever work we are doing. I believe if the basic rules are observed this can be achieved.

*We must change our image.* We must get away from the picture of the old man with a twig from the hedge, on foot, dealing with water at 50 gallons per hour at 20 feet. We must get away from the parlour tricks and the "magic pendulum" concept.

*We must interest the young.* My generation will not accept dowsing without demonstration that it works. They are sceptical. But the thirty year olds and younger are interested and prepared to accept that it works. Their attitude is much more, "Let me see if I can work it." I believe that in their time dowsing will be accepted and therefore feel it is essential to prepare them as far as we can. They may not have time to do much about it at first, but once interested they will tend to keep in touch and may in time make use of it.

*Tests.* Ideally we should have tests or a judgment by results before awarding the Society's "approval" of a dowser's ability. But at present I am not for more than a simple judgment by results. I don't think tests work and I have no faith in them, as in my experience dowsers invariably fail under test conditions.

*Press.* I think we must change our attitude to the Press. In the past we have been shy and afraid of bad reporting. The Americans have taken the line that they have nothing to be ashamed about, and have



gone over to using the Press. Before their recent Convention they sent out a large number of notifications to the Press.

So, finally, may I urge that we expect from the qualified dowser an outlook that expects nothing short of success — not boastfully but humbly — based on the quiet acceptance of an ability, gifted to us but developed by hard work, and trained in the harsh field of reality and experience, where success or failure mean much to one's professional integrity.

*(This talk was originally given at the Congress in Peebles in September 1973 and I feel it is still valuable for those who are in the early stages of their dowsing activities. Editor.)*

## ANCIENT PRINCIPLES AND MODERN PRACTICE IN UNDERSTANDING CAUSES OF STRESS

*A talk given at the Congress in Bournemouth in September 1989  
by Mary Ison, B.A., Cert.Ed., C.Q.S.W.*

*(continued)*

Lists are nearly always useful for dowsers and so in Figure 2 I have listed twelve stress factors which, if any are found to be positive, could be used as part of a counselling dialogue. For example, how we feel about our personal appearance — whether or not we feel ourselves to be worthwhile and attractive — can greatly affect how we cope with the world.

### Figure 2.

#### ATTACHMENTS (MATERIAL)

The dowser might consider checking through the following factors as contributors to stress:—

1. Money
2. Accommodation
3. Hobbies
4. Educational/intellectual achievement
5. Job
6. Country/region
7. Personal appearance
8. Food
9. Pets
10. Temperature — hot/cold
11. Atmosphere
12. Relatives