

Atlantis—Lost or Found?



Somewhere in the world is said to be the remains of the fabulous lost continent of Atlantis. According to legend, Atlantis existed about 50 000 years ago, in the *Atlantic* Ocean, somewhere 'beyond the Pillars of Hercules'. The people of Atlantis (the Atlanteans) were supposed to be very advanced in science and engineering—even more advanced than we are today. They were said to have found the secret of unlimited energy and power, using 'crystals' to harness their energy.

Gradually, the stories about Atlanteans grew and grew: they could fly in 'anti-gravity' machines or spaceships; they had weapons like lasers, and talking 'computers'; they could communicate telepathically. When Hollywood got hold of the legend, some films even had the Atlanteans still alive today, living in huge domed cities beneath the sea!

Then, so the original legend goes, something happened, and Atlantis was destroyed, along with all its people. Just what happened, we are not sure. One story is that it was a natural disaster, like an earthquake or volcano (or both together), that sank Atlantis without trace. Another story says that the Atlanteans discovered powers they couldn't control, which eventually broke loose and destroyed them.

At the start of this century, scientists discovered, buried under the earth of Greece, the remains of an entire civilisation, unlike anything they had seen before. They began to think they may have 'discovered' Atlantis. To add to their beliefs, the neighbouring island of Thera seemed to have been responsible for a giant volcanic eruption that destroyed 'Atlantis'.

Despite this 'proof', many people still did not believe Atlantis had been found. Thanks to films, television and writers with terrific imaginations, the favourite spot for finding Atlantis was not Greece but—the Bermuda Triangle! And in 1968, that looked to be coming true, when divers discovered steps, pathways, walls and even 'pyramids' under the water off the coast of Bimini, in the Bermuda Triangle. There was huge excitement! It looked as if Atlantis had finally been discovered. What's more, if Atlantis was beneath the Bermuda Triangle, it could help to explain some of the strange things that happened there! Perhaps some of those Atlantean machines, with powers we can't even understand, were still working under the ocean.

But, as usually happens, the next lot of divers to investigate the area said the whole thing was a load of rubbish! All they could find were natural rock formations that looked a *little* bit like walls and roads, but certainly no cities or pyramids or strange machines.

But people still keep looking. Perhaps they are wasting their time, perhaps Atlantis never existed at all. Or maybe they just haven't looked in the right places—like under the snow and ice at the Poles! Maybe it's just that people *need* stories like Atlantis to give them something to imagine—and dream about.

