

Chapter 30

The Flip of the Earth

Washington Post: (October 7, 1946) - "General George C. Kenney [Commander of Strategic Air Command]: 'Apparently the magnetic North Pole is about 200 miles closer to the North Pole than was previously believed.'"

In the previous chapter Frank N. Magill points out (1) that polar wander has occurred in the geologic past, (2) that polar wander is caused by the shifting of the earth's crust, (3) that the magnetic pole has wandered, (4) that polar wander is almost certainly a major cause of catastrophic geologic upheavals and ice ages; however, (5) the "mechanism" responsible for crustal shift remains unknown, and (6) the speed of crustal shift is not known but would determine the consequences to civilization and the world's flora and fauna.

Although contemporary science raises numerous questions, many of their answers may have been found by government scientists and geographers almost forty-five years ago. The data on terrestrial magnetism that the 46th/72nd Squadron obtained indicated that the magnetic pole was 125 to 200 miles north of where it was predicted to be according to projections from findings obtained on earlier expeditions. This indicated that the north magnetic pole had moved toward the geographic pole much faster than previously anticipated. Among the government scientists, the question arose as to what would happen when the magnetic and geographic poles coincided.

To answer this, under the project control of Dr. Paul A. Siple, the Remington Rand Corporation was contracted to conduct lab studies using models of the earth constructed of concentric spheres - an inner sphere representing the electromagnetically-charged molten iron core of the earth whose axis defined the "magnetic" poles; and an outer sphere representing the crust of the earth which rotated around a "geographic" polar axis. It was determined through repeated experimentation that as the "magnetic" pole approached the "geographic" pole, the "magnetic" pole would at some point accelerate its rate of convergence as though pulled toward the "geographic" pole by centrifugal force and jump to coincide; but instead of the poles coinciding, the "magnetic" pole would rapidly "flip" around the "geographic" pole, then spin off towards the equator as though by centripetal force, ending up at a position where the two axes assumed an approximate 89 degree divergence. After this polar "flip" occurred, the axes would then gradually begin to reconverge over a long period of time.

Using the experimental model as an indicator of what happened and could happen on our planet, we might better be able to understand the earth's geologic history. If indeed during the polar flip process not only is the magnetic pole displaced to some indeterminate point on the face of the earth, but the geomagnetic stress causes the crust to shift in some direction away from the static rotational axis of the earth, it could explain the apparent repositioning of the geographic pole. If, as Hapgood suggests, the previous position of the geographic pole was in the Hudson Bay area, it would explain the once-

warmer climates of Siberia and the Arctic Ocean, which were only interrupted by freezing conditions when the geographic pole assumed its present position, turning the northern steppes into arctic tundra and freezing the inhabitants.¹ Similar cataclysms have apparently happened throughout the geologic past, when the geographic North Pole was located not only in California, Hawaii, and off the coasts of Russia and Japan, but even in South Africa.²

The question of how fast this phenomenon might occur is an all-important one. A clue to this mystery may have been found at Fairbanks Creek, on the outskirts of Fairbanks, Alaska in 1948. During sluicing operations while mining for gold, a team was thawing and washing away the permafrost to get to the gold ore at bedrock level when they uncovered the frozen remains of a young (first year) mammoth. Unearthed were the remarkably well-preserved head, trunk and front leg of the animal which paleontologists soon named "Effie". Two interesting aspects of the frozen fauna were evident. The lush vegetation in its mouth and carbon-dating analysis indicated that the animal had died during the growing season in an apparently warm climate 20,000 to 22,600 years ago.³ And secondly, the animal had been frozen immediately after death, since its flesh was said to be edible. For some reason, a mammoth foraging in the summertime or early fall was almost instantaneously frozen and remained so for at least twenty millennia. More perplexing is how a freshly-killed and frozen animal could be found deep in the permafrost. Perhaps the most likely explanation is that Effie, like so many other prehistoric animals, was killed and buried by an unseasonal, subfreezing glacial loess- or silt-storm, accompanied by a major, permanent climatic change.

Another curious observation occurred during an archaeological dig at the remains of a "sunken" prehistoric tropical lake community between Nome and Kotzebue, Alaska. While digging in the permafrost among the remains of the lake community, an archaeologist unearthed a mosquito in a piece of ice from the 10,000 year old strata, and set it in the sunlight to thaw. Shortly after the ice had melted, the mosquito stretched its wings and then flew away.⁴ Apocryphal as it may sound, this event corroborates our previous observation. Modern cryogenic studies have indicated that in order for a living creature to be successfully revived after being frozen for such a long period of time, it would have to have been frozen instantaneously! Normal climatic freezing would have caused ice crystals to grow within the creatures cells and tissues, rupturing the membranes and causing the animal's destruction. Therefore, the conclusion would seem inescapable that something cataclysmic caused these instantaneous freezings of temperate or tropical regions and their inhabitants. A rapid crustal shift of lower-latitude land masses into the Arctic would explain these observations.

The polar-flip phenomenon may indeed be the triggering "mechanism" of polar or crustal shift, and explain how the magnetic pole has been displaced so radically and rapidly in the past. It could also provide some explanation for the tremendous geomagnetic forces that cause the crustal shift itself. If the geomagnetic field of the earth is created by the motion of its charged molten nickel and iron core, its revolving electromagnetic force may possibly produce a dynamic effect when interacting with the earth's rotational axis. Needless to say, further study in this area might lead to a better understanding of the dynamics involved.

Crustal shift, as an explanation for the geologic upheavals of the past, would also account for the fantastic tectonic stresses that are the probable causative factors in the formation of new mountain ranges. During a scientific meeting at the Pentagon, it was discussed how the flip phenomenon

would cause a "cooling effect", followed by a bilateral "contraction" of the earth and the formation of another "ring of mountain ranges around the planet". Counting the existing chains of mountain ranges of this type on land and within the oceans, they concluded that at least five major polar "flips" had occurred in fairly recent geologic history.

Polar shift could have other dramatic geologic consequences. In the previous chapter, Frank Magill says, "shifting of the earth's surface relative to its axis of rotation is almost certainly a major cause of so-called ice ages...". It is known that there is a narrow margin between the temperatures of glacial and interglacial ages, usually considered not more than 6 degrees Centigrade. If the polar caps and arctic air masses were to be transported to lower latitudes due to crustal shift, not only would the new polar areas rapidly cool, receiving less solar radiation, but the phenomenon could set into motion (or "trigger") a progressive cooling effect. Some experts believe that under these circumstances "positive feedback" would take place as the increased snow and ice-covered terrain reflected more and more of the sun's warming rays, with "a little cold begetting more of the same", until the planet was locked into another ice age.⁶

There have been many attempts to determine if ice ages occur in cycles, and if so, when the next one could be expected to begin, namely the astronomical theory, Croll's Theory, Milankovich's approach, and core samplings, to name a few.⁷ If crustal shift is interrelated with the onset of ice ages, then the recurring patterns of ice ages should help us predict crustal shifts. For example, one ice age theory based on earth strata studies indicates that following each ice age, broad-leafed deciduous trees cover the earth, followed after many thousands of years by conifers, later by grasslands, and finally by wind-blown silt of the next glacial age. Repeated layers of this soil strata combination suggests a predictable cyclical pattern. "On the basis of this definition the present interglacial age - the Holocene Epoch - began about 10,000 years ago...and can be expected to end within the next 2,000 years."⁸ This estimate correlates very closely with that of the government scientists, who predicted that the next "flip" of the earth could occur any time between 17 and 1,000 years of the date of their study, which was conducted in 1947. The scientists could not further narrow the time parameters for occurrence because they knew of no feasible way, in 1947, to accurately calculate the mass of the earth relative to the mass of its crust.

Just as a toy top or a gyroscope will occasionally wobble under certain circumstances, apparently the earth too has periodically "toppled" when its poles sought to converge, causing its crust to make dramatic shifts off the polar axis. It is possible that along with accompanying violent weather changes and massive tidal waves that could inundate land masses, there would undoubtedly also be earthquakes and volcanic activity along the tectonic plates and within new mountain range formations. Sufficient volcanic activity could cloud the atmosphere, further reducing the global temperatures and accelerating the onset of glacial conditions. Needless to say, a post-flip environment would undoubtedly be a hostile one.

It is possible that the polar-flip theory could also explain other observations. It could indeed be the predominant natural phenomenon responsible for the reshaping of our planet. Not only would the theory explain mass extinctions, but it may provide a basis for understanding the stages of evolutionary progression. It is fairly well recognized that there is no scientific evidence to indicate smooth evolutionary transitions from more primitive species to more advanced ones. In fact, studies

indicate that each new species seems to have come into existence all of a sudden, almost as though they were created.

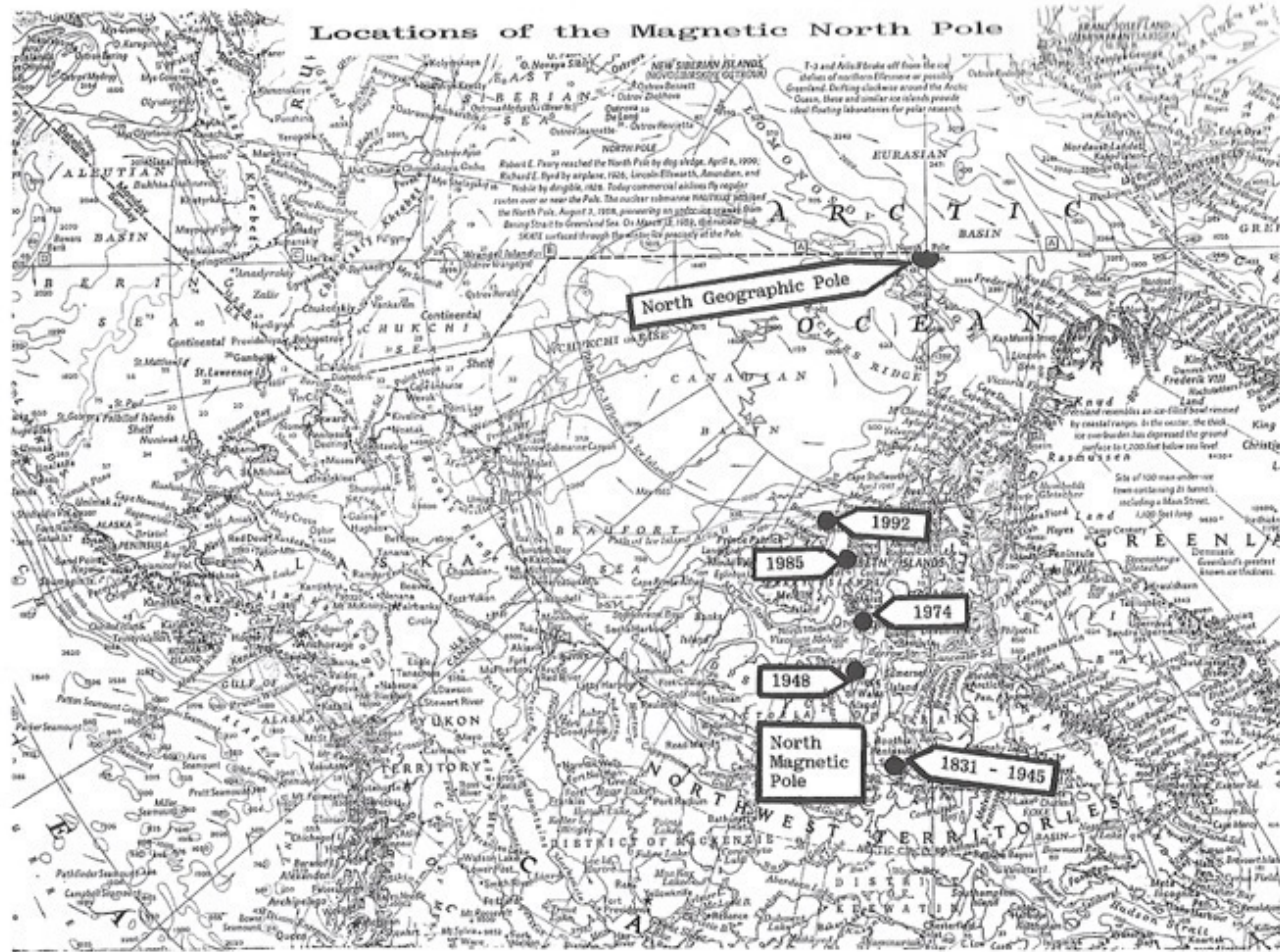
Hostile conditions following a flip might produce an environment in which only the most adaptable species would survive. It is easy to speculate that such conditions may have brought about the extinction of Neanderthal Man, who may have been faced with a more difficult and complex survival situation than his reasoning skills could cope with.

At the same time, the budding strain of Cro-Magnon man, with a greater cranial capacity and more adaptability, may have much more easily adjusted to the demands of a hostile environment and thus emerged as Modern Man. Possibly stimulated and challenged to overcome the conditions caused by a flip, he became the most fitting creature to dominate the earth. In past history, when competitors or biological pressures were eliminated by catastrophic change, oftentimes those species more suited to adaptation underwent a form of explosive evolution to fill the biological gaps.⁹

Perhaps, with another geological upheaval facing us, we are now once again on the verge of a new quantum leap in what we might call "creative evolution", or transitioning to the next higher stage in human development. With a more developed intelligence, potential to learn and capacity for invention, we may be even better suited to manage our survival and direct our destiny than any creature that has faced catastrophic change in the past. Although, while we have the capacity to survive, the issue is whether we have the will and the wisdom to plan and prepare for what the future may bring. Not only does the viability of our civilization hang in the balance, but so does the very future of our species.

Practically all of the experiences of the 46th/72nd Recon Squadron would be duplicated in major portions of the world in the event of a geological cataclysm. Knowledge of how to build or rebuild a home with scarce materials would be useful. In addition, finding available natural food sources would also be beneficial, as would the ability to conduct successful search and rescue efforts, though on a larger scale. Training in arctic survival would be critical for certain, as of yet undetermined, areas of the globe, as well as an understanding of transportation maintenance in subfreezing climates. Our education systems clearly need to foster not only the natural curiosity needed to solve complex survival and reconstruction problems, but also the dedication to accomplish difficult tasks under adverse circumstances. Wouldn't survival of catastrophic change make a sound national or global objective?

The apparent prerequisite for polar shift is the movement of the magnetic pole toward the geographic pole, and according to the U. S. Geological Survey, this prerequisite is being met. From 1831 until 1945, the magnetic north pole remained almost static on Boothia Peninsula in the Northwest Territory of Canada, moving only 24 miles in 114 years. However, in 1947, Frank Klein's plottings revealed that the magnetic pole had begun a dramatic northward progression. All told, from 1945 to 1992, the magnetic pole has moved 468 miles northward toward the geographic pole with an average closure rate of approximately 10 miles per year. Today, only 700 miles separate the two poles.¹⁰ Until further research is conducted, exactly when the break and rapid acceleration of the magnetic pole toward the geographic pole will occur is unknown.



At one of the scientific meetings that Major White attended in the Pentagon in early 1948, the scientists discussed the advisability of alerting the public to the pending polar-flip phenomenon. None of the scientists would agree to withhold the information from the public; but, on the other hand, neither could they agree on how to release it. The knowledge of this phenomenon, some felt, could in itself destroy the moral fiber of society. Their fears were apparently unfounded when, in the early 1950s, information about the flip phenomenon was released in both a newspaper column and a magazine article, but surprisingly generated no responses from an apparently stunned, parochial or incredulous public. It would seem that today's society, however, with its access to vast amounts of information and technological capability, should be better equipped to offer the sophisticated, profuse and innovative reactions that the situation would seem to require.

Only by making the facts known can we begin to mobilize the resources and brainpower necessary to overcome the obstacles. Clearly, a society that can deal responsibly with the concept of catastrophic change has the best chance of preparing for and surviving the change itself. What we do to prepare for the upcoming polar flip and its aftermath will amount to nothing less than a safeguard against total disaster. The difference between human beings and other creatures is that our destiny is not carved in stone. With purpose, ingenuity and fortitude, we can change it if we so endeavor.

Of possible interest is the curious choice of words of the early psalmists:

God is our refuge and strength,
A very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear,
Though the earth should change,
And though the mountains
slip into the heart of the sea;
Though its waters roar and foam,
Though the mountains quake
at its swelling pride.
(Psalm 46, vv. 1-4)

Bless the Lord, O my soul!...

...He established the earth
upon its foundations,
So that it will not totter
forever and ever.
Thou didst cover it with
the deep as with a garment;
The waters were standing
above the mountains.
At Thy rebuke they fled;

At the sound of Thy thunder
they hurried away.
The mountains rose;
the valleys sank down
To the place which Thou
established for them.
Thou didst set a boundary
that they may not pass over;
That they may not return
to cover the earth...

...Let the glory of the Lord
endure forever;
Let the Lord be glad in
His works.
He looks at the earth,
and it trembles;
He touches the mountains,
and they smoke.
I will sing to the Lord as
long as I live;
I will sing praise to my
God while I have my
being...

(Psalm 104, vv. 5-9, 31-33)