

THE PAINFUL
TRUTH ABOUT PAUL
MCCARTNEY

Liam Steen



Prelude

Note that this book is officially labelled as a work of historical fiction.

Exactly 50 years prior to this release, the first publishing of the "Paul is dead" rumour was made. It came from a university in Iowa and would spread like a fire across America and the rest of the world. It's one of the greatest phenomenons in the world of conspiracy theories. The width of the rumour has only kept on expanding and it's still extremely popular to this day. But is there any truth to it? That is what I am going to sort out in this book.

Before I'm going to tell what I'm about to tell, I feel obliged to introduce myself. I was born in London in 1940. My father was a rather successful businessman who wanted me to follow his footsteps. Well, I kind of did. Once I finished university, I was a fully educated business manager. I never actually started any business of my own, but thanks to splendid connections, I managed to get a dream job. In late 1964, I got a job for the Beatles management, not too far away from where I still lived with my parents. I could just casually ride my bicycle to work and occasionally get to meet the biggest stars in the world. That's right, I sometimes got to work physically closely to the band members. I got to know them through several business meetings, helped them with the business aspect of their breakup and kept on working for them all through their solo careers. We all ended up as friends of some sort. The boys with their cheeky attitudes all found entertainment in my dryness and stale sense of humour. They say that opposites attract, don't they?

It ought to be remembered that The Beatles wasn't just a band. In the time of raging Beatlemania, it was also one of the world's biggest trademarks. The money circling around them in the industry was extreme and so was the amount of people working for them, directly or indirectly, all over the world. So even if it was a lucky shot for me to get that job, I was far from alone. I was just a brick in an enormous industry wall. The unique part was my opportunity of actually getting to see The Beatles from the inside, beyond the hard shell of their image.

So why am I writing a non-profit book, telling the truth about Paul McCartney after all this time? Well, I've reached a certain age where I am ready to face the eventual consequences. I'm a sick 79 year old and if they want to take me down, I'm not really too against it. People have been harmed and even lost their lives over this. The risks are very big. However, I've had it with the

lies and the deception. It's simply disrespectful towards everyone. I see a lot of extended theories floating around that have extremely little to do with the truth. I also see a lot of people getting very close to figuring it all out. Therefore, it's time for me to attempt bringing some closure to this great mystery.

I am not in any way an educated author. Therefore, please don't expect this to be some kind of literary masterpiece. That is not my intention. Furthermore, this is not a biography and therefore I won't go through it all in chronological detail. I will report on what I find relevant for the PID subject. It might not always be perfectly structured, although I will try my best, but my biggest interest is getting the truth out there and that is just what I am going to do. I also want to make it clear that I don't know it all. Sometimes I'll base what I say on my personal speculation, having worked in the industry I have worked in. I will make it clear when I speculate. Other than that, I will only write what I know or what I have been told by others who know. The knowledge might not cover all of it, but at least it's purely truthful and honest. I have personal relations to The Beatles and their management as my direct source.

William, if you're reading this, I am begging you to come forward. The experience I have gathered from spreading the truth is that people generally do NOT hate you. They just want truthful answers. I know you are afraid of the consequences, but we both know you would feel much better being yourself and getting credited for the beautiful things you have done. God knows that those industry people are the villains. You've just been their puppet, just like all of the people involved have been. Please do tell the truth. Don't take it to your grave. People want to hear it from you.

There are many people I would like to thank, but I can not risk writing any names out due to the risks that could possibly bring. You all know who you are and I will thank you all personally.

I truly hope I'll be able to help wrapping your heads around this phenomenon called The Beatles. This book is, of course, dedicated to the very beloved and remembered man named James Paul McCartney.

All the best,

Mr. Liam Steen

Chapter 1: Ecce Cor Meum

For more than 50 years, the entire world has loved them. John, Paul, George and Ringo. The dream team. The perfect band. The talented, smart, charming, funny and witty boys that became spokesmen for an entire generation. Praised to the skies while remaining quite down to Earth; it was like idolising your very best mates. We all know the story and there's no point in summing it up one more time. But was it all such a pleasant journey behind the scenes? It certainly was not. The euphoria turned into misery for the lads from Liverpool. Many things went around, but the most tragic of these things was something that the industry has been trying to hide away very carefully for all too many years. Something was wrong with Beatle Paul.

James Paul McCartney was an ill man. He suffered from CAD; coronary artery disease. Even from his childhood days, it was known that something wasn't right with his heart. He wasn't like every other kid. He got tired quite easily, although being in exceptional physical shape. The blood vessels that provided his heart with blood, oxygen and nutrients were damaged all along and this became a problem for him. John would sometimes teasingly refer to him as "Mr. Blood Vessel", something that later would get referenced in the *Magical Mystery Tour* movie.

He spent quite some time hospitalised as a child. Many weeks, in fact. He needed medical treatment for heavy fevers that only led to more damage. It was only convenient that his mother, Mary, was a nurse who could treat him, as least as far as the knowledge went at the time. It wasn't really that big a problem and it wouldn't be until many years later, when the disease would make it awfully hard for him to keep up with life as a Beatle. Even small things could come in his way and it often depended on how his daily condition looked. For example, when the boys were shooting the opening scene for the *A Hard Day's Night* movie, Paul refused joining them to run that relatively short distance. Instead, he can be seen sitting on a bench. If he had felt better on that particular day, he would have ran more and even jumped around, ignoring his own tiredness. It was simply a matter of good and bad periods. Since even such small things could set him off, it's understandable that the extreme stress of the Beatle life in general

became way too much.

Heart complications wasn't Paul's only medical issue though. Various reports clearly suggest that he also suffered from problems with his bowels, presumably irritable bowel syndrome. Independent witnesses have claimed to notice him run to the bathroom, often followed by crying noises. He caught gastric flues and that would lead to difficulties as well, such as on the 12th of November of 1963 when he collapsed from a flu and their concert in Guildhall, Portsmouth had to be postponed.

Now, don't get me wrong, Paul was a hard fighter. Most of who you saw from 1963 - 1966 was indeed him. However, Brian Epstein was very concerned, knowing how much money was invested into the band's trademark. Paul's plan was actually to retire early, as he openly mentioned in his interview with David Frost in 1964. That very year, before I got the job as a business manager, imposters were set into preparation. It may sound like a very unrealistic thing, but a lot of famous people actually have doubles without the public knowing. Radical appearance modifications have been going on widely for longer than some may think. If you compare pictures of Paul at different occasions, you will notice that it's sometimes actually not the same man but different people. The doubles got to wear carefully developed, micro-detailed disguises.

They obviously needed people with musical capabilities and a sense of impression, although playback wasn't an impossible technology at the time either. There is, as far as I'm concerned, no documented concert featuring an impostor. If the gig was going to be taped, Paul had to be present for it. However, a majority of the gigs were not taped. It wasn't that difficult to fool an ecstatic crowd that saw the band from a distance and screamed so that nobody could hear them. The boys were often mighty impressed with the lookalikes, Paul included. It quickly became a bit of an inside joke within the band. For example, I remember the Ed Sullivan performance of 1965. After Paul had sung "Yesterday", John came with the sarcastic remark: "*Thank you, Paul! That was just like him!*".

The band would also drop clues about their situation already around these days. On the cover of their 1965 album *Rubber Soul* (a name that the boys used when referring to the doubles), the album name

was shaped as an upside down heart. From the perspective of the photo, one can argue that it appears as though the band is standing above a grave. Who would be in the grave? Well, the answer would be dropped on the second cover of the US album *Yesterday and Today*. It shows an open trunk, a "coffin", with Paul inside of it and the others over it. This kind of imagery is very obvious, but sometimes they also used subtle imagery that was intended to single Paul out from the others. On the cover of *Help!*, Paul is the only member not wearing a hat. On the cover of *Revolver*, Paul is the only depicted member facing away. It could be silly things like that, but it was a great way of making people subconsciously realise that something wasn't right with Paul.

The situation with doubles was most peculiar, but there was one double that made the band lose their minds in fascination. He was, by far, the most impressive one. His name was William Shears. William was born in London on September 18 1937. His mother, Georgia, was a typical housewife, arranging tea parties and so on, but she was also very musical. She played a lot on the piano in the hall and wrote songs of her own. Her background was in Scottish culture since her father had his roots there. The original theory stated that the double was named William Campbell, and although Campbell was not his last name, it was indeed a family name on his mother's side.

His father, Charles (Carl), was a behind-the-scenes music industry man. Already in the 30's, he would be working with music hall acts. He had a lot of contacts in the business. As William grew up, his talent would be very evident. He played piano perfectly and composed music hall numbers with his father's work as a major influence. Already in 1957, when he was 20 years old, his father managed to get him hired for Decca Records - the same label that ironically would turn The Beatles down five years later. The same year he could be heard playing on his first record, a Tommy Steele disc. He was hired as a ghost musician, meaning that he would play and sing on records and earn a lot of money without getting credited. In that way, he was flexible. He wasn't tied to a certain act. In the underground culture scene of London, he soon became known as "the man of a thousand voices". He had the capability of even singing other people's parts without anyone being able to tell the difference. He had developed a great deceiving skill that he would come to have great use of.

Brian Epstein, being prominent in the London culture scene, had

certainly found out about William and his talents. Therefore, he was hired already in early 1964 as a studio double for Paul. At the time, his physical resemblance to the "cute Beatle" wasn't pronounced. The major physical resemblance came later due to surgery, plastic body parts, latex, hair pieces, eyebrow extensions and make up.

Paul's father, Jim, was also classically trained and used to play the music from his own youth when he himself was a part of a band. However, Paul never had an interest in his father's type of music. He was into rock'n'roll and pop all the way. The same couldn't be said about William. His big passion was music hall and jazz; singers like Fred Astaire and Frank Sinatra. He loved the Broadway show tunes with large band arrangements. The Beatles never really had anything to do with that kind of music production. The use of strings on "Yesterday" was solely George Martin's idea and the classical influences you can hear on *Revolver* actually came from William. I am now going to explain how the transition to William's music happened with The Beatles, which is much more nuanced than some people imagine.

1966 was a very critical year for Paul's health. His disease was obvious just by looking at him. In the promo video for "Paperback Writer", you can easily notice his pale skin and thin, dry hair. He looked low and around this time he had also very noticeably gained weight due to physical inactivity. In fact, the speculation was going wild since people had noticed he was looking ill. Mama Cass Elliot remarked: "*Didn't Paul McCartney look ill on TV?*" in NME (New Musical Express), after seeing the promo video. Paul went out only a week later to deny the rumour, claiming that he was in great condition and that his sickly attributes were a result of a lack of sleep and hard studio work. However, he had definitely not been working hard in the studio.

For most of the year, he would just take it easy and rest a lot. He wrote a lot of songs but he didn't have much energy to make it to the *Revolver* sessions. So who was more perfect to do the job than William? Paul sent him demo tapes from his Cavendish home and gave him artistic freedom to do whatever he wanted with the arrangements. This made *Revolver* the turning point that would lead to the *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* breakthrough. John once told me that William's voice can be heard on *Revolver*. The classical arrangements of "For No One" and "Eleanor Rigby" also came from his input. Paul originally composed them as pure pop tunes, but they

turned out much differently. However, this transformation came to matter to Paul, who absolutely loved what William had done with the songs. Not only was he impressed with the sound; the vocal impressions stunned him. While he recognised that it wasn't his style, he found it refreshing to hear what directions the band could take. By then, classical influences were near unheard of in pop music. This hidden collaboration was truly groundbreaking.

An interesting side note is that Paul and William would send letters to each other at this point. In fact, they got along quite well. I strongly suspect that William, having Scottish roots, was the one recommending Paul to buy a sheepdog and a farm in Scotland to use as a resting place. I can't see any other explanation for these purchases.

While Paul's private doctor strongly advised him to take it easy with the touring, he contradicted the advice. He always had a strong will and never liked adjusting his life after early warnings. After resting quite a bit through spring, he had new-found energy and badly wanted to go out with the band on tour. He didn't play every gig since he was exhausted (yes, doubles did follow on the tours but they travelled separately in disguised privacy and kept a certain distance to the band). However, he joined plenty of gigs and also a few press conferences. They went home at the 29th of August and at this time, he had thought of something that was about to turn things around heavily for the band and a lot of people.

In the beginning of September, he called a big meeting. The band and plenty of management workers, including myself, were invited. So was his dad Jim and his brother Mike, although Mike for some reason chose not to show up. We sat around a long, round table. Paul was the only one standing up. He announced that he had decided to sign a legally binding contract, promising lots of his possessions to William in case of his death. His testimony also promised a lot to his family, being the family man that he was, but he had a big plan in mind. To understand what I am about to reveal, which is crucial to setting the "Paul is dead" controversy right, something must be known about Paul; he was terrified of vanishing and being forgotten. He wanted his legacy to be continued and due to his new-found love of William as his collaborator and impersonator, he wanted his eventual empty place to be filled in secrecy. In sum, he wanted the Paul McCartney name and legacy to stay alive through William.

As you might expect, the atmosphere at that meeting was extremely intense. Only his father Jim really knew what to say at the time. He was upset, and began arguing with Paul about signing such a contract. He was deeply offended by the thought of some stranger cashing in on his dead son. As always, Paul stood his ground, stating that his death wish already had been made and that it wouldn't get changed under any circumstances. Ringo was awfully skeptical as I remember it. John was quiet, seemingly thinking a lot. George had this great, spiritual view about the afterlife, so he didn't seem to mind the thought of life flowing on through another body. I personally found it insanity, but I knew that the management was bound to like it. A lot of people involved in carrying out Paul's decision were as greedy as could be. I genuinely believe that the extreme quest for money is the root of all evil. The industry people could as well have dug his grave open for more of The Beatles cash.

Paul was victorious in his quest for a posthumous global presence through William Shears getting promised the role; a spot in the biggest band on the planet. Only about a week after this historical meeting, the McCartney produced an official statement, stating their acceptance of the death wish due to their respect of Paul. I can't remember the band saying much about what was going on. Ringo was pissed off but John and George seemed quite laid back. It seemed that they just needed the time to think things over, for it wasn't long after the meeting that both of them went abroad. George took a holiday to India and John began a movie project in Spain. Ringo also went out travelling eventually but I seem to recall that he stayed with Paul a bit longer, trying to convince him to get out of the deal. He obviously failed.

Towards mid-September, Paul and Ringo accepted a Melody Maker Award together. This was Paul's last big public appearance. Early in the morning of Wednesday the 5th of October, his heart couldn't bear him any longer. At the time, he was in the bathroom at Cavendish. His girlfriend Jane Asher described how she woke up from hearing a forced scream and a bang. She located the sound and rushed into the bathroom. She found Paul laying there, all still on the floor. Blood was running down the basin and he was bleeding through his famous mop of hair due to a minor fracture on his skull. Jane panicked. Her dad, Dr. Richard Asher who was staying there for medical support, ran in and tried to resurrect him.

Private nurses were alarmed and they showed up shortly after but there was nothing to do to save his life. His heart wasn't beating any longer. He had suffered from a heart attack and had a great fall, head first into the basin. All the King's horses and all the King's men couldn't put him together again. The Ashers had also alarmed private police, so now there was also lots of undercover police men all across the block. They knew very well what was going on, being specifically hired by EMI management. Their job was to protect Paul's residence from any possible intruders. Nobody was allowed to come near what was going on.

The management had been having a dialogue with William for a while and he was prepared to step in as Paul and did so already a few days after the death, although heavily disguised with Arab clothing. His own family fully supported this new life as Paul McCartney. He didn't really have any regular friends as it was, only some underground connections. He actually grew up as a very shy and unpopular person, not even wanting people to look his way. He wasn't this social rock star at all, but remember that he was a great actor, as well as a musical prodigy. He saw this as his great opportunity for a musical breakthrough.

In his song "You Never Give Me Your Money", he would describe the experience:

*"One sweet dream
Pick up the bags and get in the limousine
Soon we'll be away from here
Step on the gas and wipe that tear away
One sweet dream came true today"*

Or to make an even more recent example from his song "New":

*"Don't look at me
It's way too soon to see what's gonna be
Don't look at me
All my life
I didn't know what I could be
What I could do
Then we were new
You came along and made my life a song
One lucky day you came along"*

*Just in time
When I was searching for a rhyme
You came along
Then we were new"*

He was referring to the way he was affected by getting his full time job with The Beatles. It really boosted the way he thought of himself, which would later lead to great problems, but I won't get into the details just yet.

An interesting anecdote is that there was a journalist who in some way had gotten to know that something had happened to Paul. She tried to write about it in the morning paper she wrote for, but the paper mystically failed to get delivered. All the copies were probably destroyed. That's how big the power of the industry was. October 5th was a Wednesday, so this is the background to the line: "*Wednesday morning papers didn't come*" from "Lady Madonna", and I believe it also inspired the line "*you and me chasing paper*" from "Two Of Us". The first line in "She's Leaving Home" also provides a crucial indicator of the time of death. Clues and significant lines is a subject that I sporadically will return to.

It has been officially reported that Ringo and his wife Maureen went to visit John in Spain on the 4th of October. However, as I recall it, the correct date was in fact the 5th. They flew to Spain to break the news for John. Of course this caused a lot of distress, and the couple would stay with him for several days in order to prevent him from loneliness. Here's a quote from Ringo about this event:

"I went and hung out with him because he was lonely. We really supported each other a lot."

John knew he had to work but he was majorly depressed at the loss. He's told me that he was on the edge of suicide. Around this time, he focused a lot on his writing. He wrote what would eventually become known as "Strawberry Fields Forever" about his emotional situation. One thing that he had an extremely hard time dealing with was the fact that just the previous day, he had argued with Paul over the phone. It was a rather nasty argument about their past with Stu Sutcliffe. John recalled saying cruel things that he didn't mean and it's safe to assume that Paul was hurt from it. They did make up in the end. They knew they were like brothers and they acknowledged this.

However, John regretted it for the rest of his life. He would go on hating Tuesdays in general because of it, which later became inspiration for the line: "*stupid bloody Tuesday*" from "I Am The Walrus".

While Ringo and John were depressed, I believe that George took the news with more ease. He and Pattie were still in India at the time, surrounded by spiritualism. George always took death news quite easily since he strongly believed that life was eternal; that it could only end on the physical level. He has been recorded talking about the deaths of various people and he always displayed this very mentality. I will return to this. The McCartney family was, as one may imagine, completely shattered. The days of horror had just begun and the world was all black.

Some time after his death, the world's great rock icon was buried at a big cemetery in England, under a different name that he had made up for himself. It had to be done in a secret way in order to not draw any attention. A small funeral was later held, with the McCartney and Asher families present in disguise. Some of Paul's friends came, including Ringo and George, heavily disguised. John was still in Spain at the time and even if he would have been in England, I don't think he would have went. He was way too distressed to handle it. I have visited the grave and the ones who were near Paul visit it very regularly. It's very well taken care of to this day. I always find the most gorgeous flowers and messages there. I have decided to never reveal where it is, simply out of respect for Paul and the ones closest to him.

Everyone who was involved in the plan was sent a contract to sign, regarding details of keeping quiet and the consequences of talking about it. The consequences of breaking this contract are still handed out by industry associates, which means that I am taking a huge risk here. A risk that relatively few people have taken before me. Not only the insiders knew about what was going on, a lot of outsiders did too. The fact that there was more than one Paul had been known since 1964 as an industry inside joke. William was very well known in those circuits anyway. Nobody said a word, and the silence surrounding Paul's death reflected that those people who already knew about his double weren't really shocked at it. Paul's death was of course extremely saddening, but since the preparation had been going on for so long, William's sudden appearance on the scene only seemed natural. He was now ready to take on the world for real. Everyone was ready to

fulfil Paul's last wish, and the business people were ready to earn even more money. Everyone had their personal motives to commit to Paul's plan.

I'm particularly impressed by Jane's strength in the early stages of implementation. She met up with William just a few days after Paul's passing and set the record straight. She told him that she would keep up with the charade, only for Paul's sake, but that she didn't want any intimacy whatsoever in private. William gladly accepted that. He had just ended a long-term relationship with a woman named Sally Clive and soon he would have other women in his heart and mind. He wasn't really fond of Jane anyway, so the deal fit him well. The relationship had to continue in the eyes of the public in order to not add to any possible suspicion.

One thing that must be remembered about William is that his personality is very different from Paul's. He is a workaholic, a constantly productive from the upper class who takes pride in being an intellectual. He would often come around with long reasonings regarding the developing society or something like that. I personally found him a bit of pseudo-intellectual, but the point is that Paul wasn't like that. He would never pretentiously pretend to know more than he in fact did. It was clear to me that the man who appeared in the end of 1966 was five years older than Paul in terms of experience. At that point, the concern was making sure that the world couldn't notice the aging. In the most obvious example of the cover-up, the industry made sure that all the band members grew prominent facial hair in order to remove focus from "Paul" changing. For some reason, William refused to grow a moustache at the time and instead got to use a fake one. Plastic ears were developed for him and as were latex masks which reproduced Paul's every little freckle and wrinkle. Even the scar Paul had on his upper lip from his 1965 accident was to be emulated. The switch could not, under any circumstances, get called out.

While William spent most of the autumn getting used to the role as Paul, management was focused on the new album, introducing the new band in a more or less subtle way. This is how the concept album was invented. The clue dropping about Paul's death was John's idea to honour his friend while staying in touch with the fans. As outspoken as he was, he loathed the deception, so he came up with a subtle idea of telling the truth. In time, this would cause massive problems, as I will

examine later.

Beside plastic surgery, a lot of different disguises and accessories were tried on William. The industry wanted to know how to simulate Paul's looks as good as possible. He got to try different kinds of plastic, latex, hair pieces and glasses. The infamous single picture of William that later would be released through the *White Album* collage of 1968 comes from a series of test pictures taken in early October of 1966, as they wanted to choose between the various alternatives. He doesn't look very pleased in the snapshot; a result of him never having liked to wear those disguises.

By the end of October, the first stage of William's total makeover was complete. He brazenly took a road trip to France with his silly disguise - fake moustache, glasses, a hair piece, plastic ears and latex on his face. He hated wearing all that but he was sure he would at least get recognised as the great Beatle. However, he didn't, since he obviously wasn't one. Even though The Beatles, as always, was the name on everybody's lips after the scandalous year of 1966 and the breakup rumours, the common people didn't really see William as Paul in that early stage. The rude awakening came when he was denied entry into a club that he was supposed to visit together with The Beatles roadie, Mal Evans, who had gotten the role as William's assistant and bodyguard. This management decision was obvious, considering how much time the two of them spent together; Mal literally hung over William's shoulder in his first recorded interview in the role. So, when William was denied entry by a common gatekeeper, he took some of the silly disguises off and decided to, in his own words: "*come as him*". He often refers to "himself" in third person when referring to Paul. Anyway, William was finally let into the club but the experience was a waking call that he perhaps wasn't as similar to Paul on the outside as he thought he was on the inside.

The vacation would later be continued in Kenya and people have speculated that this was the place where he got his plastic surgery done. However, at the time of travelling through Kenya, he had already had the primary surgery done in another location. Plastic surgery was not really common in the 60's and the people with access to proper appearance modification had none of it to find in Kenya.

Chapter 2: So let me introduce you...

As soon as Mal and William returned to London, Mal made sure to fire some of the workers that Paul had hired to Cavendish. This was a method of getting rid of unnecessary people that could notice the early cover-up. By this time, they were both well informed about the *Sgt. Pepper* concept. They went together to Paul's old music room and started to write a few songs together. Mal actually wrote a great deal of the title track and "Fixing A Hole", something that would later lead to a dispute as William refused to give him credit for it.

Around this time, William had several lessons booked with hired professionals. He needed to learn to emulate Paul's handwriting as best he could, as well as his technique in singing and playing. Learning to play left-handed was a big challenge but since he was a brilliant musician, it wasn't all too difficult. He also received some media training since he had a lot to learn about how to behave himself before the reporters and the cameras constantly pursuing the band.

At the same time, George Martin was concerned that people would get suspicious if the man known as Paul McCartney would stay away from the public for too long. After all, Paul was probably the most covered person on the planet. Therefore, a "McCartney" solo project was arranged. This was a new role as the composer of the soundtrack for the soon-to-be-award-winning *Family Way* soundtrack. However, William only did the minimal work required. He composed a brief piano piece that George Martin would later extend and arrange. Although "Paul's" solo project was devised to divert any suspicion of his death, it must have fueled the rumours of the band breaking up, which Brian Epstein had officially denied already two days prior to Paul's death. The band was not breaking up. They were starting over. And what was yet to come was the most ambitious recording anyone has ever made in the history of music.

The name "Sgt. Pepper", that has been speculated upon by theorists, was explained by William as a mishearing of "salt and pepper" during a

meal onboard the airplane returning home from vacation with Mal. That is false. William had nothing to do with it and what "Sgt. Pepper" means is actually not known, although some believe it's a play with the band Billy Pepper and the Pepperpots that used to play Beatles covers. That would itself be a clue, making "Sgt. Pepper" another way of mentioning the name of the replacement, as well as a symbolic way of saying that The Beatles had ceased to be and that the remains were nothing but a Beatles tribute band. Without Paul, no Beatles, but only a band that could honour the memory of what had been. However, William Shears had nothing to do with William Shepherd of the Billy Pepper band, and the "Paul is dead" community interchanging the two names only adds to the confusion.

The original concept was an invention by a group of managers that was veiled in secrecy. However, it was awfully transparent to me. The album cover featured a big grave with grieving mop tops beside it and a completely new band above it. Paul's bass guitar was the only instrument that was also buried and William had his back turned to the camera on the back cover to signal that he actually wasn't an original part of the group. I was mostly baffled when I turned the record on for the first time and much too soon was met with the line:

"So let me introduce to you; the one and only Billy Shears"

I couldn't believe my ears. They name dropped the replacement in the very first track, thereby drawing the world's attention to the secret. The temptation to name drop William hands us a big key to what the concept was all about, since it must have originated from "Sgt. Pepper" being a reference to Billy Pepper. This big revelation would make it so easy for the whole plan to fall, I thought, but there were no reactions to it. In fact, they pulled off the hidden switch in the blinding light of the Beatles' unprecedented global fame by making it seem like Ringo was the one carrying the Billy Shears alter ego. Therefore, they ingeniously created a symbolic link between Ringo, the last member to join the original group, and the newest member. It was a way of making a heralded public announcement that "the last member to join the group = Billy Shears". This was the truth that enabled the formally last member of the band to officially welcome the newest member by singing "With A Little Help From My Friends", expressing William's situation. They were very lucky that their obvious symbolism went by fairly unnoticed while the first concept album shook up the music

industry. Now, let me rewind a bit and talk about the whole recording of *Sgt. Pepper* for it's truly an interesting piece of history.

When the boys returned to the studio in late November, they were on a new course as professional studio musicians. William is an extreme perfectionist and workaholic. He wanted effectivity to be the key word. Paul was always a bit more fond of fooling around and having fun while making music, whereas William always wanted a rather sharp tempo of achievement in the sessions. There simply couldn't have been too much fun to be had in the beginning of this new arrangement; not only was their beloved Paul missing, the remaining band members were still quite unfamiliar with William as a person, so the sessions were definitely more tense than it seemed.

There was an official band policy of always referring to William as Paul during recording sessions, in case they were recorded or overheard. This created an unreal situation in which William always imitated Paul in the studio, no matter what. Moreover, the others also had to refer to him as Paul in the general public, as well as any correspondence. In interviews, the situation boarded on farce; they understood the reason for the pretense but it made them angry since they weren't interacting with Paul at all. At the time, the remaining Beatles didn't think that William deserved to be treated like a friend of theirs. I personally don't think that he should carry too much blame. He did what he could in a given situation and the industry is the big villain here. William was as much of a puppet as anyone else. However, I do understand the initial anger, frustration and sadness. It was a bizarre and cruel situation to say the least, for the boys having to pretend that a stranger was their recently deceased best friend.

They started off recording "Strawberry Fields Forever", John's masterpiece about the entire situation. Through that song, he told the fans: "*living is easy with eyes closed*", meaning that it was easy for them to go on without knowing what was happening. He also made it clear that "*nothing is real*". You can really hear his pain through that song, although the lyrics don't make that much sense if you don't think twice about them. I see it as a contrast between sweet nostalgia and current pain. This is later confirmed through the infamous: "*Cranberry sauce*", also heard as: "*I buried Paul*". Once again, a conscious contrast between memories of Thanksgiving celebrations with American acquaintances and sorrow regarding having to let go of Paul. It's genius

and it makes it clear that The Beatles was becoming a tribute to Paul - a "Paul Is Dead" art project.

Around the same time, they recorded William's first original song for the band: "When I'm Sixty-Four". The story about Paul writing that when he was a teenager is pure fabrication. Paul wasn't too keen on this type of showtime. William's preferred style became apparent over the years through songs like "Honey Pie", "Your Mother Should Know", "You Gave Me The Answer", "Suicide" and "Single Pigeon". John didn't like it one bit; he referred to it as "*granny shit music*", which says a lot about how he thought about William's musical input from time to time. It is important to remember that not all of the William tunes originated as William tunes. Most are written by himself, but some are ghost written or taken from the demos found in Cavendish. They needed all the material they could get.

They recorded "Penny Lane" around this time and that song was actually written by Paul before his death. Already when John had written "In My Life", Paul fancied writing a song about his childhood, and so he did. William finished it up, arrangement wise, and performed it. The others were upset about William altering the original arrangement, but another single was required to get released together with "Strawberry Fields Forever" and only the new arrangement held the standard for that position. The single failed to reach the top though, which was extremely rare for The Beatles. I think that was just a sign of the time. People did notice that something was wrong with the group and that their entire appearance was off. They just had no clue about what it possibly could be and expressed their dismay through their purchasing power.

Skipping forward a few months, to January of 1967, there was a rumour going around the streets that Paul was dead. Car crash rumours regarding The Beatles weren't too uncommon. Since they all had flashy cars that were widely recognised, all that was required for such a rumour to spark was a similar car being involved in an accident in England. However, this particular rumour really freaked the entire management out. The last thing they wished for in that period of time was unnecessary attention drawn to William - and especially in relation to death. The rumour stated that Paul had been involved in a car crash in London and that he had passed away. William had not been involved in any car accident, but his (formerly Paul's) car had been so as he had

loaned it to a drug pusher.

The story was quickly debunked, but the entire idea made John's head spin even more. Ever since his mother died from being ran over, he had seen the car as a symbol of death. The band started planting car-related clues as a way of confirming that the death rumour was true, although it didn't happen through an actual car accident. The reason for this was purely symbolic. John found it much easier to plant cars here and there than to plant references to heart disease (although such clues were also planted, which I will return to). Unlike all the cars represented in his clues, none of Paul's cars were white. John told me that his choice of colour was a result of the colour white representing mourning and burial in Eastern cultures.

He wrote the verses about the car accident in "A Day In The Life". Although loosely based on the fatal accident of Paul's mate Tara Browne, one couldn't help but noticing a pattern that went beyond that. The white car appears everywhere. There is a miniature of a white car on the *Sgt. Pepper* cover. In the videos to "Strawberry Fields Forever" and "I Am The Walrus", you can see white cars driving through William's head. In the video to "Penny Lane", a white car reflection can be seen upon John's devastated face. A white car can be seen on the *White Album* collage. Also on the *Abbey Road* cover, there is the infamous white Beetle car (5 Beatle symbolism, the white Beetle representing post burial Paul).

On top of this, there are many references to car crashes. "A Day In The Life" is obvious but it goes far beyond that. The most straight forward reference surprisingly came from Ringo with the line: "*You were in a car crash and you lost your hair*" from "Don't Pass Me By". In the *Magical Mystery Tour* title track, you can hear the sound of a car crash. George sang about "*casualties at dawn*" in "When We Was Fab". It goes on and on. Post '66 Beatles can be seen as an art project, a tribute to Paul where the members chose to display their artistic perceptions of death in relation to their lost friend. A lot of the clues have to be interpreted symbolically. The signs point in different ways to several different scenarios but they leave one thing for granted - Paul is very much dead.

Regarding "A Day In The Life"; a clue that I feel a lot of people are missing out on is the 24 bars in the middle section. You can hear Mal

Evans loudly counting to 24. Paul died at 24 years old, so he's really counting Paul's life and then it abruptly ends and William's part begins. It's a representation of what truly happened.

This transference of personality became real in the music when William found Paul's tape recorder in Cavendish, along with several demo tapes that could later be used to gain original McCartney material for the sessions. In that way, his music could live on posthumously. Two and a half songs from the demo collection ended up on *Sgt. Pepper*: "Getting Better", "Lovely Rita" and the middle section of "A Day In The Life". The challenge of recording William to optimally simulate Paul forced a level of experimentation in the Beatles recording sessions. For example, The Beatles' engineer Geoff Emerick would suggest things like recording William in a different key and then speeding up or slowing down the tape. This varispeed technique was usually used to alter John's voice since he couldn't stand his own natural voice, and now the auditory altering definitely came to use.

Since William's voice was naturally deeper than Paul's, the main technique was to record him in low keys, where he felt the best singing, and then speeding the tapes up. This had already been done on his vocal impressions on *Revolver*, and it did work out very well. "When I'm Sixty-Four", "She's Leaving Home" and "Lovely Rita" are examples of songs where this technique was used. They listened back to the songs in various different keys and settled for the most suitable one. For "She's Leaving Home", they concluded that William managed to capture Paul's tone in both the natural and the sped up version, releasing both versions on the mono and stereo discs respectively. In sum, William did a remarkable job. It takes quite a bit of training to tell the voices apart, to know what to look for. William's natural voice was always much deeper and a bit more nasal. Paul's tone was much sweeter and when singing the letter "s", he had a special pronunciation that William always failed to recreate.

There were a few heavy points of conflicts during the sessions. I was present during a session where John and William began to fight quite hard. John asked William about whether his main goal when writing the songs was to honour Paul and drop clues about the truth, and William just replied by stating an obvious "no". This upset John a lot, accusing William of being egocentric. I specifically remember him saying something similar to: "*We're all in here trying to put our situation out*

there by making a tribute for Paul, and you're just here trying to show yourself off to some Pink fucking Floyd" (At the time, Pink Floyd was a relatively new band recording in Studio Three of Abbey Road Studios; William knew Syd Barrett from the underground London scene and was keen to impress him).

I also remember that William's parents, Charles and Georgia, were visiting a few sessions. I've heard reports suggesting that both of them might have changed their names to their other Christian names later on to obscure their old selves from the people who used to know the family. However, at this early point, there was a lot of talk about "Charles and Georgia" from William's side. He was awfully fond of his parents. His parents weren't at all fond of John, though. They had backgrounds in jazz and music hall and didn't much appreciate the psychedelic sound. During a session for "Being For The Benefit Of Mr. Kite!" in early 1967, John overheard them calling the song "*the most awful fever dream*". This resulted in him trying to kick the both of them out of the studio while William fought for their right to stay. It was an extremely tense situation and George walked out of the session at that point, ignoring that he had to play his part. It seemed awfully clear to me that this was a new beginning; the beginning of the end.

I don't want to make it seem like it was all dark though. This was the period when John, George and Ringo got to know William and they all did get along from time to time. It was just obvious that new constellations were being created. There was no Lennon/McCartney anymore. John and William didn't write a single song together, they only went as far as combining their separate songs from time to time and giving a bit of advice to one another. John and Paul would always write together, face to face. That time was over. John and William wouldn't associate much with each other and they wouldn't be seen together much apart from band business. John and George was now the tighter pair and Ringo would also join them quite frequently. William was on his very own. He was the one who got to think of new ideas since the others tended to drop their inspiration and disassociate with the band.

It was obvious that although it wasn't always bad, they were in great need of team building. Brian Epstein had a key role in that. He would arrange events and parties that would make them closer to one another. They all had a role model in Brian and that would in a way

unify them. They all also got along very well with George Martin. The fact that they had common friends and inspirations meant that they didn't make each other complete enemies. However, it was a long way left until they could call each other friends. On the picture where John and William shake hands over the finished *Sgt. Pepper* product, they're both just putting on faces. By that time, it was all a game. A game that would get even darker.

John's fascination with Aleister Crowley was also very evident by this time. He's the only historical person featured twice on the cover. Don't get the wrong idea though; I don't believe that The Beatles were into black magic and witchcraft. They believed in light forces and everybody who tells differently is much probably wrong. I don't deny that a way too big part of the industry people is into very evil and wicked things, but I never saw a sign of the boys themselves practicing it. I am sure that they were fully aware about certain religious sects, especially William who has been a Freemason since 1958. The others were not into such things, they were all anti-establishment, although Paul had actually learned about the Freemasons early on in his life due to his father having been part of it. Because of that knowledge, The Beatles did know that some of their associates demanded them to use obvious Masonic imagery. They had no say in it; they were forced by contract.

However, this doesn't change the fact that there was a mutual hate between The Beatles and the elite. My conclusion is that The Beatles were not involved in any form of dark teachings. They were all involved in teachings of brightness, love and peacefulness. George even strongly believed in the Lord, which has been made obvious from "Long, Long, Long" and "My Sweet Lord", among other songs. John was just very fascinated with the art of backmasking that was taught by Crowley. He and Paul began experimenting with it already in 1966, and he would later come to use it for coded messages as early as *Sgt. Pepper*. The little run out groove saying: "*Never could see any other way*" became, when reversed: "*We'll all be magick supermen*", referring to Crowley's teachings. They just found it fascinating that it could be done like that. In the end of the reversed version, you can also hear a voice saying: "*Aleister*".

Shortly before the release of the album, a release party was held in Brian Epstein's house. The very same evening, William met Linda

Eastman, American photographer who was out to photograph some Swinging London people at a gig. He was immediately attracted to her and asked her to come out partying with him, completely ignoring his deal with Jane. He loved the attention he received in the culture scene from people believing he was Paul. He would frequently go out at parties and gigs to enjoy himself, and on this particular night he would enjoy himself particularly much. This was something that I felt the need to establish since Linda will play a bigger role in this later on.

Sgt. Pepper received amazing criticism. The reception was really beyond belief. The only negative feedback came from certain groups of fans and critics, especially in the United States, that found the new approach way too weird. However, it would soon be clear that The Beatles were leading the new way for the entire world. The psychedelic outburst of the underground scene would now expand to include the entire globe. The band was very excited, especially William. They had gotten through it successfully. Paul's plan wasn't spoiled. No attention had been drawn to the replacement. However, it wouldn't be long until the press would be knocking on William's door. The new, psychedelic sound had made them wonder whether this youth leader had in fact been under the influence of acid. It was now time for him to face his first scandal.

