



NEWSLETTER

NOW WEEKLY!

With art by Vera!

from the Astrology Center of America / AstroAmerica.com

August 20, 2013

ARCHIVE — [Subscribe/Unsubscribe](#)

Email Dave@astroamerica.com

Support the Newsletter: Become a Sponsor! [Donate](#), or make a monthly contribution: \$10.00 / \$20.00 / \$50.00 [Click to help!](#)

Vettius Valens Update

TWO or three years ago I promised I would publish Mark Riley's excellent translation of the Anthologies of Vettius Valens. So what happened? Why the delay?

The primary problem was that a book of that size, some 600 pages, with charts and critical notes, takes a great deal of time to prepare. While I was in the process, the mail order book biz slumped to such an alarming extent that I found it to be a better use of my time to reprint lesser books. With an anticipated street price of \$60 and without a lot of sales, time spent on Valens could be better spent elsewhere.

While this is still true, it seems as if I should get busy and finish the work, as it was very nearly done when I stopped. I am frankly fearful of my Saturn transits this coming December.

In the interim I have learned a great many things about Valens and his book.

First, that Vettius Valens "of Antioch," Rhetorius "The Egyptian," Dorotheus "of Sidon," and other such titles, do not refer to where these people lived, but rather, *where they studied*. These were the ancient equivalents of *he's a Yalie*, or Vivian Robson, *B.Sc.*, etc. They tell us of his school, they give us his qualifications.

Next, until the practice died out a few centuries ago, ancient books were customarily cursed, that they not be stolen and passed off as the work of others. These curses were two-fold. On the one hand, a simple ritual was performed on the final manuscript. On the other, the actual words of the curse were incorporated into the texts themselves. These were admonition to encourage the reader in his studies and to caution him to behave himself once the book had trained him. The slick part is that in copying the book, one would accidentally copy and renew and strengthen the curse, thus prolonging its life.

William Lilly's **Christian Astrology** was cursed in this fashion, which is why, from its first publication, up to 1998, his *continued, pg. 7*

ALMANACK

for the week (all times GMT)

[Notes](#)

20	18:18	☾♂♀	
21	01:45	☉♁♂♂11	Full Moon/Void
	04:44	☾♁	
	07:15	♃☐♁	
22	19:45	☉♁♁	
	23:02	☉♁	
23	01:39	☾♁♂♂	Void
	07:13	☾♁	
	22:37	♀♁	
24	10:00	♀☐♁♁	
	20:56	♀♂☉	
25	02:50	☾♁☉	
	06:52	☉♁♁	
	10:02	☾☐♂♂	Void
	13:14	☾♁	
	18:17	☾♁☉	
	19:47	♀♁♁	
	23:13	♀♂♁	
26	00:59	♀♁♁	
	17:56	♀♂♁	

Extracted & adapted from **AstroAmerica's Daily Ephemeris, 2000-2020**. [Buy](#).

ASTRO MED

A to Z

Tonsils. Trouble with these occurs most often when Taurus is on the 8th or 6th houses, or under Taurus or Scorpio rising. Mars in Taurus, the Moon or Venus in Scorpio are almost sure indications of trouble of this kind. Scorpionic afflictions often cause nasal obstructions, especially when the mutable element is prominent in the horoscope, and throat-trouble commonly results in this way.

As in the case of adenoids 25° Taurus-Scorpio seems the main area of trouble.

Travel (Love of) is a manifestation of the Jovian love of expansion in all forms. Nearly all persons with Jupiter or Sagittarius prominent have a desire to wander about and often to explore (although this usually connotes an element of Scorpio as well).

In so far as curiosity and the desire to *see things* is concerned, we shall find the Moon and Cancer strong, whilst Mars gives the *love of adventure*.

—from **Encyclopaedia of Psychological Astrology**, by Charles Carter. [Buy](#).

Vivian Robson's STAR OF THE WEEK

★★★☆☆

REGULUS *alpha Leonis* 0 ♁ 01

Notes: It was one of the four Royal Stars of the Persians in 3000 BC when, as Watcher of the North, it marked the summer solstice.

Influence: According to Ptolemy it is of the nature of Mars and Jupiter, but most later authors liken it to Mars only. It gives violence, destructiveness, military honours of short duration, with ultimate failure, imprisonment, violent death, success, high and lofty ideals and strength of spirit, and makes its natives magnanimous, grandly liberal, generous, ambitious, fond of power, desirous of command, high-spirited and independent.

If Rising: Great honour and wealth, but violence and trouble, sickness, fevers, acute diseases, benefits seldom last, favour of the great, victory over enemies and scandal.

If Culminating: Honour, preferment, good fortune, high office under Government, military success. If with Sun, honour and fortune.—from **Fixed Stars**, by Vivian Robson. [Buy](#).



Ivy M. Goldstein-Jacobson
1893-1990



IVY'S GEM OF THE WEEK

The Exact Time of Conception

IT is widely believed by even the medical profession that the exact moment of conception cannot be ascertained either before or after birth, which is only half true: we astrologers find it easily after birth because from the birth chart we take the Moon backward to the Epoch chart that will automatically reveal by the Sun's house position the approximate time of conception, to be corrected for exactitude. The Sun is the only indicator of Local Mean Time on this planet Earth for all events taking place here.

In our example conception (epoch) chart opposite, the Sun in the 7th House immediately fixes the time as between the 4:00 & 6:00 pm cusps, by LMT which the cusps always designate. It will be around 5:00 pm because the Sun sets earlier in winter so that in January & at this latitude the cusp is earlier by an hour, thus the epoch will be around 5:00 pm. See Raphael's Ephemeris p. 41 for this information.

The natal Moon's position is the Ascendant in the conception (epoch) chart. Find it in the Table of Houses under the birth latitude & take its accompanying Midheaven & cusps for the conception chart.

Going backwards 9 lunar returns (not solar months) regressed to January 21st, 1938 for the epoch chart, Sun & planets, which we take unworked as at noon.

The Sun uses even-hour cusps, moving forward FROM the one he is nearest, or TO the one he is nearest: if midway he uses the cusp he is moving forward TO & the TIME will be according to LMT.

— *Astrological Essays*, 1979. **Buy.**

In Memoriam

JAMES HERSCHEL HOLDEN

October 22, 1926 — August 14, 2013

JAMES Holden, who passed on Wednesday, was the long-time Research Director at the American Federation of Astrologers. He was 86 years of age.

From information which he supplied in his last published work, *The Biographical Dictionary of Western Astrologers*, James Holden was born on October 22, 1926, at 4:00 am in **Texon, Texas**. Which at the time was a brand-new boom-town, oil having been discovered there on May 23, 1923. Which means that Mr. Holden's parents at the time were wildcatters. At its peak in 1933, Texon had 1200 inhabitants. It was never big.

Like many young couples, Albert and Ena Holden, James's parents, quickly got away from small boom towns and settled in Fort Worth, where Holden grew up and where he attended Texas Christian University, graduating in 1953 with a Masters in English (his thesis was on William Lilly), and a second Bachelor's, in Mathematics, in 1960.

Holden reports he became interested in astronomy at age 11, and astrology the next year. Which must have been an all-consuming passion to have made William Lilly his thesis project as a grad student.

At some point in 1963 or later, Holden came under the influence of Gerhard Angel Houwing (1923-2009), who settled in Dallas that year. Houwing was an Argentinian of German descent, a friend of Anthony Nelson Page and Wendel Polich, the developers of the Topocentric house system, which, like Placidus, which it closely resembles, was designed as an aid to **Primary Directions**.

Houwing was influenced by the Austrian astrologer **Capt. Gustav Schwickert**, who was himself an advocate of the astrology of **Jean-Baptiste Morin**, or perhaps Schwickert and Houwing independently discovered Morin. At the time, the mid-1940's, Morin's great work, the *Astrologia Gallica*, existed in only as partial translations, dating back to the late 1890's.

Morin's astrology differs from that of **Ptolemy** in that Morin, perhaps for the first time, fully integrated houses and rulerships into signs and planets. While this appears similar to traditional horary astrology, the actual details are entirely different. I am deliberately cutting off the discussion of "acci-

dental rulerships" as Morin's accomplishment, staggering though it was, was always an inherent, undeniable part of astrology as a whole. It had waited patiently more than 1600 years to be discovered. I say this because I myself largely reprised Morin's work without having read nor studied him. I have met others who have, unwittingly, done much the same. I take no credit whatever for my insights and am happy to be counted among Morin's students, even if, technically speaking, I am not. Remember that Morin, like most astrologers, made forecasts, which I do not.

In addition to James Holden, among Houwing's other students was Patti Tobin Brittain, author of **Planetary Powers, the Morin Method**, one of the finest astrology books ever written. I draw attention to this small circle of Dallas-Ft. Worth astrologers of the 1960's and '70's as they have, single-handedly, matured and revolutionized the study of this ancient science. Using Morin's long-overlooked techniques, we have at last synthesized plants and signs and houses by means of rulerships, resulting in an astrology of astonishing strength, suppleness, detail and flexibility. These techniques are so precious that we must never lose them. They are our very soul. This history must be preserved. I only wish I did not have to second-guess secondary sources to piece it together. James Holden was an integral part of it.

JAMES Holden had **Pisces rising**. We find Jupiter, the ruling planet, hiding in Aquarius in the 12th. Which is unfortunate, as Pisces can be scattered and take a great long time to "come together" and achieve a focus. When the ascendant ruler is itself hidden away in the 12th, we have a virtual definition of a late bloomer as well as one who may well deny his importance altogether. You look at James, you see Pisces, an agreeable simpleton. You then see, or rather, sense, Jupiter in the 12th behind that, and write him off as a nobody. Which, if true, was a terrible fate.

Chart ruler Jupiter is itself ruled by Saturn, as Saturn rules Aquarius. This takes us to the heart of Holden's chart, the Mercury-Saturn conjunction in Scorpio on his 9th, opposed to the Moon-Mars conjunction in Taurus in the third. Whenever you see this kind of polarity in a chart, two planets in this

continued, pg. 4

house, opposed by two planets in that house, you have found the center of the chart, one way or another. At worst, if the four planets are outer planets (say, Jupiter through Pluto), one may say he lived in interesting times, as such a polarity will play out in warfare or a contest or an external conflict of some sort.

When such an outer planet polarity falls in 3 and 9, the result is often a refugee, one of many. Which can be from religious causes. When in 6 and 12, a victim of an epidemic. In 2 and 8, one who has led an heroic life, much despite himself. When in 5 and 11, part of an hedonistic crowd, etc.

When personal planets (Mercury, Venus, Mars) enter into the polarized mix, the result are tools the individual can use for his own purposes, for better or worse. As our essential natures are composed of the Sun, Moon and ruler of the ascendant, when these three are elsewhere and a strong polarity is also present, the individual has a device which he can use for purposes of expressing his lunar, solar or ascendant energies. His ability to do this will depend upon rulerships and aspects that link these two groups. Is any of this in Morin, can anyone tell me? Or did I invent it myself?

And, finally, when a powerful polarity includes Sun and/or Moon, the individual identifies with it. When Sun and Moon are both part, the native is more powerful still, while the addition of the ruler of the ascendant can make it overwhelming, as he can express the results with full force in the world, which may or may not be ready for it.

As an example of Sun and Moon in a powerful polarity, see Goethe and Newton. For Sun-Moon and ascendant ruler, that's, well, me. Holden had the Moon, and that's enough.

James Holden's 3-9 polarity was composed of planets that were hostile to each other. The opposition forced him to continually change and adjust. As the signs are fixed, this was done under a great deal of stress, under a great deal of pressure. Holden's fixity meant he did not give up his ideas easily, but give them up and replace them with better ones, he did and did constantly. He had no choice.

The results, over a lifetime, can be simply astounding. Once oppositions have been hammered into a final balance (the end product of all oppositions, especially those in fixed signs), the result will withstand loads that are infinite. And this by definition, since the stress of oppositions between hostile planets has long since smashed all lesser solutions to pieces. You may not think such a

James Herschel Holden

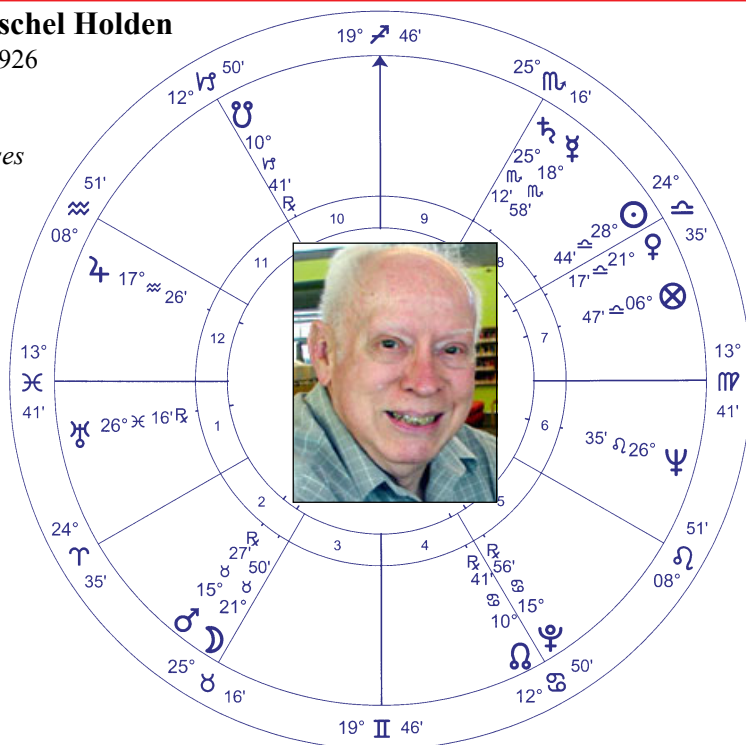
October 22, 1926

4:00 pm CST

Texon, Texas

Placidus houses

Mean node



person is right and I may not think he's right, but, my heavens! his results will be staggering in their own right and likely impossible to deny.

On the mundane side of the chart, the third house, we find Holden's Moon and Mars, both in Taurus. The Moon in an earth sign is a bit slow, whereas Mars in Taurus is a blunt force. Mars in Taurus goes for the obvious, it goes for the frontal attack. It lacks subtlety, it lacks finesse, as it is debilitated.

The Moon in the 3rd learns by instinct. It does not study, it does not memorize, it does not do rote work. The result is an eager (Mars) persistent (Taurus) scholar (3rd).

While the Moon in the 3rd will make one move about, Taurus is perhaps the slowest moving of all the signs, while Mars in Taurus is too concerned with the here and now to think of going anywhere else. So it seems that Mr. Holden stayed put in Ft. Worth, at least until retirement, when it seems he moved to Tempe to be near his beloved AFA. Which brings us to the other side of things.

Opposite Holden's Mars-Moon conjunction, we find Mercury and Saturn in Scorpio in the 9th. Mercury and Saturn in Scorpio are intense and unyielding in their probing curiosity. They will leave no stone unexamined and may well overwhelm the generally abstract world of 9th house philosophy.

But here, James ran into a host of problems. For one thing, the Moon, even in Taurus, was a lot faster and a lot sharper than

Mercury could ever be in Scorpio. The two planets opposed, the Moon called Mercury stupid, as Mercury was stupid. I say this without fear of offending the memory of Mr. Holden, as I have Moon and Mercury opposed and I know exactly how they make me stupid and always will. I myself revel in my own dumbness, my wonderful ability to miss the bleeding obvious until some third party points it out to me.

Mercury is still further addled as, in the 9th house, he is far out of his element. A 9th house Mercury tends to ignore the details, presuming them to be unimportant. He is aided in this delusion by the Moon itself, as he may rely upon the Moon to bring those details to his attention, should need arise. Which makes him lazy, which is often the net result of fixed signs, by the way. Cardinals may be relied upon to rush off to the next thing, while mutables are generally confused.

For his part, Saturn gets the worse from Mars, which rules it. While Mars may be debilitated in Taurus, it knows exactly what to do with Saturn in Scorpio, and as the two planets, Mars and Saturn, hate, hate, hate each other (Mars and Saturn always hate each other, this is not special to Mr. Holden), their opposition is quite frankly a life or death struggle, with Mars, the ruler of Saturn, the invariable winner.

The Moon-Saturn opposition made him a loner with few friends, while the Mars-Mercury opposition is argumentative. While

oppositions always tend to see both sides of anything, when Mars and Mercury are opposed, there can be debate and argument merely for the sake of it.

These four planets, Moon-Mars, Mercury-Saturn, polarized across the 3rd and 9th houses, resulted in extreme mental (Mercury) and emotional (Moon) instability, which is to say, a great and powerful and dynamic mind. Which was true. To understand how dynamic this is, a parallel: I once heard that military fighter aircraft are among the least stable of all planes. These craft must be extremely nimble and maneuverable and hence, unstable while aloft. Up until the advent of on-board computers, the best fighters were all but unflyable for this reason. (And woe betide the modern pilot who loses his on-board computers.) So I would hesitate to cross swords with a mind of Holden's sort. I expect I would quickly have my head handed to me.

Nowhere in his biography can I see training in languages. Holden was fluent in at least Latin, Greek and French, and while some smattering of Latin might still have been taught in Texas public schools in the 1930's, I doubt it would lead to mastery in the language. I have never heard of Greek being taught in American public schools, not in the 20th century, at any rate. It was most likely Holden who taught himself. I doubt he stopped with those three.

HOLDEN's Sun we find in Libra in the 8th. Sun in the 8th gives a natural curiosity for the secrets of the world, for the hidden facets of life and death itself. You stare into that for awhile and mere academic subjects will not frighten you. With Venus nearby and also in Libra, Holden never had a fear of death.

With Sun and Moon both in signs ruled by Venus, with Venus itself in Libra, a sign it rules, with Venus as co-ruler of his Pisces ascendant, Venus becomes his final dispositor, the single planet that rules over all the others. This made him pleasant and agreeable and charming, in every respect. It kept his titanic 3rd and 9th house polarities under control.

James Herschel Holden, it turns out, was a most delightful man. He was for many years employed by Southwestern Bell Telephone. Which, as it turns out, was my father's employer, in Kansas. I know them well. I really do not know how many ancient texts Mr. Holden translated. As a strongly cadent house person, with his chart ruler in the 12th, his translations were all done for his own amusement and for many years were circu-

lated privately. We will likely see one or more published posthumously. If so, we have more of Mr. Holden to look forward to.

We very likely have Bob Cooper, Executive Secretary of the AFA from 1970 to 2007, for discovering and promoting James Holden. Cooper has for many years been faulted for a heavy-handed management style, but he was responsible for moving the AFA from Washington to Tempe, AZ. He was responsible for greatly expanding the number of books published by the AFA, as well as strengthening the AFA's underlying membership. In so many ways the AFA is by far the best and strongest of all the various astrological organizations. Bob Cooper is not responsible for all of it, but he should get much more credit than he does. As a PS, I would have linked to sites where you could learn more of Mr. Houwing and Mr. Cooper, but aside from Holden's own **biographical dictionary**, biographies of these men simply do not exist. The AFA has long been skillfully led.

While Robert Zoller, Robert Hand and Robert Schmidt are credited with the current astrological revival (Hindsight, Arhat, Golden Hinde, etc.), it was Holden, not the three Bobs, who has sustained that revival. It was James Holden who had a ready-made set of translations which the AFA could quickly and easily put into print. Not only was the AFA Holden's ideal publisher, thanks to Cooper and his hard work, the AFA was also an established wholesaler and distributor of the books it printed. It could move copies, in other words. I envy them. There would not have been a revival without both Holden and the AFA. That they were well-positioned is almost miraculous.

By comparison, the translations that Zoller and Hand made for Hindsight were suppressed after only a few years and have now been lost, for all practical purposes. Schmidt's own translations, which I have always considered poor, are available only from him and are rarely seen. As the years have progressed there are now others who have joined in, among them, **Benjamin Dykes** and myself, as publisher.

Holden's translations are not only sturdy, they are available in attractive and inexpensive editions. It was James Holden, the shy, retiring cadent mouse-who-roared, who for many years led an astrological revival which may, if we are lucky, finally revive the study of astrology as a whole.

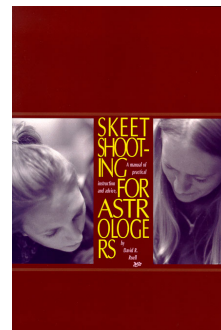
Which, finally, makes for a successful and astonishing life. His loss is great, his shoes impossible to fill. Looking back on his life

READ MY BOOKS

At Amazon, these books are now searchable.

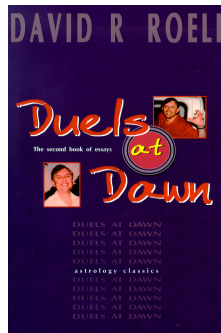
Skeet Shooting for Astrologers, the first book of essays, 2007-2010. Oral vs: written, Dancing lessons, more. \$24.95

Buy from **me**
Buy from **Amazon**



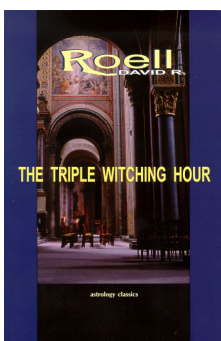
Duels At Dawn, the second book of essays, 2010-11. Time twins. Republicans. The royals, more. \$24.95

Buy from **me**
Buy from **Amazon**



The Triple Witching Hour, the third book of essays, 2011-12. Astrology under our feet. Science. Ludwig, more. \$24.95

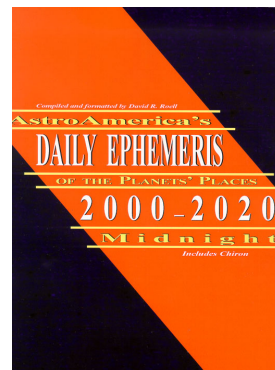
Buy from **me**
Buy from **Amazon**



USE MY EPHEMERIS

AstroAmerica's Daily Ephemeris, 2000-20, also for 2010-20. Daily positions, including declinations, full aspectarian. Midnight.

Buy from **me**
Buy from **Amazon**



and work as he must now be, James Holden can justifiably be proud of his many accomplishments.

Here are his books. All are in stock:

As author:

Biographical Dictionary of Western Astrologers
History of Horoscopic Astrology, from the Babylonian Period to the Modern Age

Astrological Pioneers of America, with Robert A. Hughes

As translator:

Paul of Alexandria - **Introduction to Astrology**

Abu 'Ali Al-Khayyat - **Judgments of Nativities**

Brahy, Gustav-Lambert - **Confidential Recollections Revealed**

Firmicus Maternus, Julius - **Matheseos**

Five Medieval Astrologers: Albumasar, Pseudo-Ptolemy, Hermes Trismegistus, Bethen (probably Ibn Ezra), Almansor

Masha'allah - **Six Astrological Treatises**

Jean Baptiste Morin: **Astrologia Gallica, Books 13, 14, 15 & 19**

—**Astrologia Gallica, Book 16: The Rays And Aspects of the Planets**

—**Astrologia Gallica, Book 17: The Astrological Houses**

—**Astrologia Gallica, book 22: Directions**

—**Astrologia Gallica, Book 23: Revolutions**

—**Astrologia Gallica Book 24: Progressions & Transits**

—**Astrologia Gallica Book 25: Constitutions of the Caelum**

—**Astrologia Gallica Book 26: Astrological Interrogations & Elections**

Porphyry - **Introduction to the Tetrabiblos**, and, Serapio of Alexandria - **Astrological Definitions**

Rhetorius the Egyptian - **Astrological Compendium: Containing his explanation & narration of the whole art of astrology**

In addition, at AstroAmerica.com you will find James Holden's translations of Morin's books [here](#). His own books, as well as his other translations, can be found [here](#).

VETTIUS VALENS

book was rare and generally mangled. I have heard from the publisher of the Regulus facsimile of his great struggle to print his edition of 1985, while the Wiggers edition is so full of errors as to be completely useless, and this despite her tremendous efforts. I myself removed this curse, which is the only reason why my edition has survived.

The curse Valens put on his Anthologies is extensive, as you can find it scattered almost everywhere. It has worn away with time and neglect, but it is still the underlying reason why Prof. Riley was unable to get his translation published. I would remove it, as I removed Lilly's, but I have been fatigued. I need the assistance of a female psychic who can view the curse once I bring it into view, and who can assist in its removal. The process takes only a minute or two and can be done over the phone. If that sounds like you, the world will be eternally grateful.

Since I set the book aside two years ago, I have been able to work out set of tables for the first clime, from the back of Book VII. Ideally there should be fully worked out tables for each of the seven climes, even though these longevity tables are probably of little real use. In calculation I was assisted by a brief look at Neugebauer and Van Hoesen's Greek Horoscopes, of 1959, where this is explained.

There is, however, one feature of the tables which Riley quotes in his introductory notes which is not part of the calculations. He tells me he is unable to explain it. Riley tells me he copied the fragment from an early source, which had a complete set of tables. Why did he not copy the complete set of tables? Because academics are not working astrologers. They want a good, clear text. As they have no interest in actually using it, they of course will not bother with tables per se. I think they are surprised we need them.

Fuss with climes (latitude) and charts, including the death charts in Book 2 initially led me to believe Valens lived and worked in the Crimea, as that was the simplest explanation for all the various loose ends, including the chart for the infant who died at six months and who was set, specifically, in clime 6. By definition this had to be Valens' own child, or that of one of his friends, which, as clime 6, in the early, narrow Mediterranean system, was that of Rome and as Valens was not known there, meant that Valens had given his climes in the expanded, Ptolemaic system that covered the entire planet.

This was because I presumed that Valens, like modern astrologers, drew his charts from

his clients, who would be local to him.

At some point I realized I was wrong, and that Valens, like many later Medieval astrologers, was actually giving us the charts of the famous and powerful. Valens merely forgot to name them for us. The birth and death charts for Nero are among those in the book.

Which means the infant in question could well have been the child of an emperor. One of Book II's death charts is mangled, as a few chart are, in that the exact combination of planets Valens gives was unknown in his day. If only one planet is out of place, the result is a chart on a particular day and time.

If *two* planets are wrong, we could well have the Crucifixion itself. Of this luckless individual, Valens says, *thrown to the lions*. As the early Church was just coming into prominence in Valens' day, he may well have included early Church leaders, their birth or death charts.

Regrettably, this means we no longer have any idea where Valens himself may have lived. It is unlikely he lived in Egypt, as he is scornful of Egyptians and their ways. From various descriptions in the Books, he most likely lived in a major port city. Of which there were many. Just not in Rome itself.

HELLENISTS have so far glossed over early chart calculations, which I think is a mistake. Valens gives explicit instructions for determining planetary placements. These are by means of counts. The starting point, in every case, is the end of an Emperor's reign. At first I took Valens literally, that a count would begin on the day Augustus died, as several do.

I was corrected by James Holden, that the next Emperor's official reign began on the first day of the next year, which we know as the 28th or 29th of August. Which made a lot more sense. Setting charts for these starting dates reveals the underlying error in Valens' counts.

Valens' many charts had previously been given in wheel format by Neugebauer and Van Hoesen in Greek Horoscopes, but, even in 1959, they themselves used counts to obtain their charts, which therefore contain some of the same sort of errors as Valens' originals had, some 1800 years earlier. All praise to computers!

Which brought up the next problem, that Valens had no way of obtaining natal ascendants. He makes this clear by giving us six or seven different methods for its calculation. I tried each of them on my own chart. For the most part these gave only a sign, not a degree. Not one method got the sign right, though several of them were off by only one sign. Since Valens in fact gives ascendants

for every one of his charts, this may doom all his charts to being approximations.

On the other hand, Valens gives but one method for finding the midheaven. Taking the best of his guesses of my ascendant and using his instructions, I was pleased to discover the Valens MC was off by only 2 degrees from what a computer would give for the same combination of clime and ascendant. That was quite good.

In the Anthologies, Valens often speaks of the solar and lunar gnomons, which is the upright, shadow casting part of a sundial. Early on I realized that an obelisk would function as a sundial, and should there be marks on the ground and should one have a simple set of daily tables, one could read the ascendant directly from the shadow itself.

Which means that sundials can simultaneously give both time as well as ascendants, which is most useful. But just as Valens does not give names for his chart, he does not give this simple and obvious formula. Perhaps because he presumed it would be understood and used if at all possible.

The lunar gnomon, which is presumably the shadow cast by the Moon at night, puzzled me until a few days ago. I suddenly realized that if one had a calendar — which everyone in fact had — and knew the number of days since the last new Moon — which most people would, then another simple set of standard tables would give the daily times of moonrise and moonset. With these, as well as a certain fudge factor (the Moon moves 12 degrees in a day, the Sun only one), one could know the time at night, from the shadow cast by the moon. Like as not, if there were lines on the ground in front of the obelisk for the Sun, there were likely to be a parallel set for the Moon, at night. Why do we not know of these lines? They have probably all worn away.

Elsewhere it was pointed out to me that pairs of antiscia, which are based on the Cancer-Capricorn axis, are actually cast shadows of equal length, from the winter solstice (Capricorn) to the summer solstice (Cancer), and then back again. If the antiscia are the same, the shadows cast on those days (where antiscia equals days of the year) are the same.

By these means I have gradually come to realize that much of Valens is based on simple observation.

Finally, rather than saddle the world with a huge expensive book, I have been inspired to publish the Anthologies in three volumes, at prices of \$25 or \$30 each. I just have to get back to it.