

Ancient Astronauts Modern Mysteries

STRANGE MONUMENTS

We think we're pretty smart. About 300 years ago we stopped believing in witches, goblins, and leprechauns and became very scientific. We finally figured out that the Earth revolves around the Sun instead of vice versa. We even discovered that the blood in our bodies circulates through veins. And, in 1969, Neil Armstrong came back from the moon with the news that it wasn't made out of green cheese after all.

There is, however, uncomfortable evidence that none of this is new. Our planet is 3 billion years old . . . at least . . . and there is growing evidence that great civilizations existed here while our ancestors were still climbing trees. They probably knew all about the circulation of blood, and the mineral content of the moon. And they seem to have known things about our planet that we are still trying to discover.

Back in the 1920s a man named Alfred Watkins stood on a hilltop in England and suddenly noticed something nobody else in modern times had bothered to see. Stretched out along the rolling hills were thin lines or tracks, following absolutely straight courses for miles. They traversed impossible terrain, loping up steep mountains, cutting across swamps and bogs, connecting England's most ancient stone monuments like Stonehenge and the *tumuli* (man-made mounds). These tracks—or leys, as they are now called—were apparently made thousands of years ago by some unknown race, for some unknown purpose.

Accompanying these leys are mammoth man-made ridges of earth which do not appear to have served any practical purpose. They could not have been part of some irrigation system, and they are too low to have been used as fortifications.

To compound the mystery, Watkins's leys are by no means unique to England. Identical systems can be found in South America, Africa, China, and elsewhere.

At one time in the distant past primitive men everywhere were engaged in the construction of these tracks and strange monuments. Enormous labor must have been required, with thou-

sands of people struggling generation after generation to haul baskets of dirt and huge stones—sometimes for hundreds of miles—to build them.

But why?

TRACES OF A LOST WORLD

On many remote Pacific islands there are vast stoneworks as impressive as Stonehenge. Some of these monuments are made of stones not even found on the islands. On the coral atoll of Tonga-Tabu, for example, we found 2 upright stone columns weighing 70 tons each, topped by a crosspiece weighing 25 tons. How did the builders get these huge stones to the atoll in the first place? And why did they bother?

The ancient city of Metalanim on the shore of Ponape Island in Micronesia is now in ruins, but it could have once housed 2 million people. No one knows who built it or when. Some of the blocks in these ruins weigh 15 tons, and the stone used in the city is *not* from the island. Canals and waterways intersect the city, some of them big enough to float a battleship.

Three thousand miles to the southeast of Ponape Island, on tiny Malden Island, in the Line Island chain, there are the ruins of 40 stone temples whose architecture is identical to that of Metalanim. Basalt roads lead from these ruins *into* the Pacific Ocean. The island is uninhabited. But if we draw an imaginary line southwards from Malden for 1,200 miles, we arrive at Rarotonga in the Cook Islands. There another ancient road of basalt blocks rises *out* of the ocean.

Other scattered Pacific islands boast of huge man-made mounds like those found throughout the U.S. and England. And strange statuary (the natives of the Pacific were not statue builders).

All of these things seem to be inter-related, as if they were all once part of some great civilization—a common culture that spread throughout the world and then mysteriously vanished.

The intricate network of leys in England is somehow connected to similar formations in China on the other side of the world. The great man-made ridges

have been measured from the air in Florida, England, and Peru. The ridged field at Lake Titicaca in the Andes covers 200,000 acres.

In the last century stone chests dug from the mounds of the Mississippi Valley were found to be identical to chests unearthed in mounds in Yorkshire, England. But we call the American *tumuli* "Indian mounds," even though the American Indians deny any knowledge of who built them or why. (However, a few tribes in the South continued to add to these mounds after white men arrived.)

In the early 1800s a religion was founded by Joseph Smith who said he discovered a stone chest filled with gold tablets in a mound in New York state. He claimed to be able to translate them and produced the Mormon bible—a purported history of North America in ancient times.

A number of scholars—and not a few crackpots—have scanned these archaeological mysteries and accepted them as evidence for the lost continents of Atlantis and Mu (or Lemuria). And, in fact, these things do seem to verify ancient myths of a superculture that blossomed in the Atlantic and Pacific thousands of years ago. When you consider other things, such as the *Piri Re's* map, a startling picture of the ancient world takes form. (The *Piri Re's* map was made in 1513, apparently from much earlier maps, and depicts parts of the world then unknown, including Antarctica.)

WHERE DID THEY GO?

We have a reasonably complete history of the past 2,000 years, and a half-baked archaeological reconstruction of the past 5,000 years. But there are so many gaps in our knowledge that most of the popular archaeological theories of history really have very little merit. Indeed, we can't even be sure that the Egyptians built the Great Pyramids. Peter Tompkins, a leading authority on the Pyramids, has stated, "But as more is discovered it may open the door to a whole new civilization of the past, and a much longer history of man than has heretofore been credit-

ed.”

It is generally assumed that the British Isles were populated by scattered primitive tribes at the time Stonehenge and the leys were built. Yet recent computer studies have shown that Stonehenge was a very sophisticated structure, built by people with a modern knowledge of astronomy. It was hardly the work of savages. And the leys were already ancient when the Romans invaded the isles. In fact, the Romans built some of their roads along the old leys.

The Pyramids may have already been in existence when the first Egyptian empire was formed, just as the great mounds of North and South America were already here when the first Indians arrived on the scene.

So the unanswerable question is: who preceded modern man? What happened to them?

Whoever they were, *they were inspired by something or someone to construct huge ground markings which can only be seen from the air.* The leys of England had gone unnoticed for hundreds of years until Alfred Watkins spotted them from his hilltop. Since then aerial surveys have shown gigantic figures cut into the hills and valleys of Great Britain. There are giant horses and even the form of a huge man brandishing a club. It is almost as if someone were marking a hill to inform aerial visitors “men live here.”

In the U.S., many of the great mounds of Ohio, Minnesota, and Mississippi are in the form of serpents and elephants. *Elephants!* The beasts have been extinct in North America for thousands of years. Again, you could stand on the top of one of these mounds and never recognize its true shape. They can only be discerned from airplanes.

From Florida to California there are also intricate patterns cut into the ground and visible only from the air, just as the astounding Nazca lines of the Peruvian desert forming spiders, snakes, and other animals can be properly viewed only from an airplane.

Why did our mysterious ancestors devote so much time and energy to building these seemingly worthless mounds and designs?

THE TRACKS OF THE DRAGONS

Until Marco Polo's adventurous journey, China was isolated from the western world. There was no communication between ancient China and ancient Britain. Yet these widely separated countries maintained identical legends about the great dragons. Along the leys of England there are innumerable churches and monuments raised to commemorate historic battles with fierce dragons—hideous animals that were described in much the same way as the Chinese dragons.

But the Chinese lore extended beyond mere fights with wild animals. The Chinese laid out dragon paths, noting that weird flying objects appeared year after year, following the same routes. These routes became sacred, and persons of high position were carefully buried in mounds planted along these routes. The Chinese also believed that electromagnetic currents or fields of force pursued specific lines. Such a field was mapped out over the centuries and marked in much the same way as the leys of England.

Back in the 1950s France's leading ufologist, Aime Michel, discovered that UFOs followed specific routes over France year after year. Other ufologists, such as the late Dr. Fontes of Brazil, extended this discovery and tried to calculate worldwide UFO routes. This “Straight Line Mystery” became a ufological controversy. Some scientists said it worked; others labeled it hogwash.

In the U.S., UFOs seem to appear frequently in the mound areas and even seem to traverse lines between such areas.

We know, of course, that this planet is surrounded by a magnetic field which follows different courses in different parts of the world. Places marked by magnetic anomalies and compass deviations do seem to produce more UFO sightings than places where the natural magnetism is more normal.

Even more peculiar, many of the ancient temples of both East and West were carefully built directly over magnetic anomalies. How did the ancient peoples locate these spots? Was their

science as advanced as ours?

It could be that they located these places through observation alone, by studying the flights of mysterious objects century after century until they had determined their exact routes and could mark the places where those routes intersected.

Did they then lay out designs on the ground to guide these aerial visitors or pay homage to them in some way?

LINKING THE MYSTERIES

Worldwide evidence has been found indicating that ancient peoples had an incredible knowledge of astronomy. Stone calendars found in South America are extremely accurate. Ancient records from the Middle East reveal knowledge that could only have been gained through the use of telescopes and sophisticated instrumentation. The intricate ley systems of Britain and China prove that the ancient peoples knew as much—or more—about the Earth's magnetic field as we do.

We are also confronted with the many legends of early man which suggest that the “sky people” who once visited Earth taught us the rudiments of agriculture and astronomy. These mysterious “gods” assumed great importance in the lives of the ancients. So great that the only traces left of some of the ancient civilizations are the stone monuments and temples they built in tribute to the gods.

Is it possible, we must ask, that these “sky people” might have conned early man into constructing guideposts to aid them in their sorties over this planet? The leys are worthless as roads but they did point out the flow of magnetic currents. Did the craft of the “sky people” depend on these currents as a glider depends on air currents?

Did early man map out this entire planet to satisfy the needs of the mysterious aerial gods?

What will happen after we finally learn the answers to all this? Will we begin working on leys of our own? Or, having unlocked the secrets of the universe, will we simply disappear as suddenly and mysteriously as the learned ancients did? ★ THE END