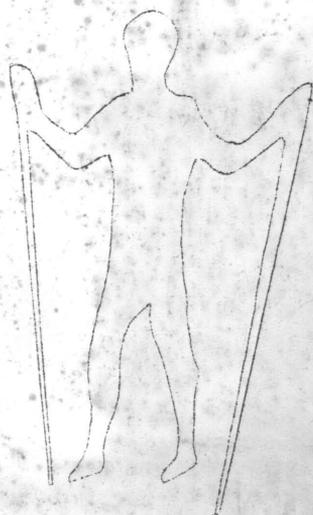


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THE  
LEY HUNTER

THE LEY HUNTER

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E D I T O R I A L

I have written to several members during the last month about the possibility of starting a postal folio system as was used by the Straight Track Club. Very little support was forthcoming so we have had to abandon the project for the time being and continue with the magazine as the means of keeping members in touch with one another.

We are lucky in this issue to have two very interesting articles by Allen Watkins and Jimmy Goddard, but I must continue to urge every reader to contribute something, whether it be a letter or an article, to the magazine, or we may have to cease publication due to lack of interest, which I am sure is not the case.

We are also enclosing two book plates which you may care to insert in any ley books which you possess. Further copies may be obtained from the Secretary by enclosing a stamped, addressed, envelope.

Lastly I would like to say something about our next issue. This is to be a special Christmas number and will be larger than normal and any contributions for this will be most welcome.

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M Y F I R S T L E Y H U N T

by Allen Watkins M.A., F.C.A.

In 1931 I was living in Cambridge. My Father wrote asking me to report on one of the many Leys he had traced on the map all of which touched the ancient camp containing the Castle Mound within the Borough.

From its northerly end the map line of the Ley took in Belsars Hill Camp, Woodchurch Farm, Pleasant Hill (by the Castle Mound in the Borough), footpath in alignment, Great Shelford Church, Strethall Church.

I was eager to try my inexpert hand (or Foot) at Ley-hunting, so I arranged for a day off, and one lovely morning took the train to Royston and made my way on foot across country towards Strethall along the Icknield Way which was then little more than a rough field-track with occasional stretches enclosed by a hedge on either side. This latter feature is fairly common in Cambridgeshire, and sometimes forms an impassable thicket.

Striking across country again from the church at Strethall, I stopped for a moment to take in the country scene. It was a lovely day. The ground fell away and you could see for miles. There wasn't a house or a man in sight — no, wrong! -- there was one solitary figure in the dim distance. I watched him as he grew larger: he was moving in my direction.

It occurred to me that I was probably a trespasser, and he might be coming to "see me off". Anyhow he was clearly walking towards me, so I waited for him. However, when he came up he turned out to be a farm labourer, who greeted me with a genial "Morning, Sir! Lovely day!".

"Yes, isn't it?" I said, "I'm out for a day's walk in the fields, and glad to get some fresh air and sunshine. I've just walked over from Royston."

"Ah! Then you must 'a come by the old Roman road, Sir. Now when I first came to these parts some of the older folk did used to say as they'd seen another old Roman road. It went straight from Strethall Church towards Cambridge."

My Father's Ley! This was indeed extraordinary. I had never suggested roads as a topic of interest, but had merely indicated my route in the way one does. He must have read my mind in the way that a native countryman often does.

"Tell me" I said "Did you ever see this second old road?"

"No, Sir, I never did" he replied, "But I'll tell you a funny thing about that old road. You can't see it at all on the ground, but when the corn grows you can see exactly where the old road went by the poorer crop: I've often seen that!"

Was there ever a more perfect case of Beginner's Luck? I go out in search of confirmatory evidence, and at the first place I stop, in the middle of a field miles from anywhere, a man marches up to me and, unasked, gives me exactly the kind of evidence I am looking for -- first-hand field observation.

You may call this coincidence. But is it? In the Ley-hunter's note-book these "coincidences" begin to accumulate. My Father had a score of such experiences. Nothing gives so much confidence as unsolicited evidence from an unexpected quarter. In this instance the casual memories of an elderly man unearthed a valuable clue.

The possibility of "seeing" tracks from afar which are quite invisible close at hand is referred to in Appendix A of my Father's book "The Old Straight Track". There is also a brief reference to this strange encounter in his "Archaic Tracks Round Cambridge" which contains a very full list of Leys in the district.

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## A NEW MEANING TO LEYS

by Jimmy Goddard

The mystery of orthoteny is remarkably similar to that of leys, though Aime Michel, of course, knew nothing of our subject when he plotted these alignments of strange aerial objects during the French flying saucer "flap" of 1954. But since then new evidence has come to light.

The plotting of orthoteny follows the same rigid restrictions as does finding the ancient tracks, with a few more besides. As well as having to be exactly aligned with a certain number of points, all the sightings on

an orthoteny must have taken place in the same day (from midnight to midnight). But naturally, as with leys, the experts try to explain them away as random alignments.

It would perhaps be a little too bold of me to write here that leys and orthoteny are the same lines found in a different way, for this has not been conclusively proved. But there is evidence pointing in this direction. The reason for its scarcity is that no leys have so far been discovered outside Britain, and most orthoteny (but not all) are in France and America. However, those orthoteny that have been discovered in Britain have always been on leys. Let me give you some examples:

The first person to guess at the connection was Tony Wedd, a flying saucer enthusiast and member of the Ley Hunter's Club, who lives in Kent. His excellent booklet "Skyways and Landmarks" shows many leys which he has discovered near his home, coupled with the locations of UFO sightings in the area. The only trouble with this was, as the late editor of the FLYING SAUCER REVIEW pointed out, that as there was no "flap" there were not enough UFO sightings to constitute an orthoteny. But it was a beginning.

In the January 1964 issue of ORBIT (of the Tyneside UFO Society) there is a diagram of an orthoteny which occurred on July 25, 1963. The four points on the line are Bloxwich, Staffs., Walsall, Birmingham and Stratford-on-Avon. This line also happens to be a ley.

The latest example, though not strictly speaking an orthoteny, concerns a ley which was discovered by aligning two UFO sightings which were both seen on August 29, 1964. One sighting was in Wandsworth, and the other in Finchley at the junction between the Great North Road and the North Circular Road. Both sighting points were found to be ley centres, and the ley runs due north through four churches and one other cross-roads.

Well, there it is. Not all that much evidence, perhaps, and certainly not what a scientist would call absolutely conclusive, but it points the way very definitely to an avenue which I believe should be explored. Alfred Watkins' discovery could have implications the nature of which he could never have imagined.

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## S T R I K E   T H E   T R A I L

### An Introduction to Ley Hunting

by Philip Heselton

The subject of Ley Hunting is an exciting and stimulating one, but in order to get the greatest value from it, there are certain general lines which should be followed, and I hope that this introduction will be of some help to those readers who are new to the subject.

Firstly, it is useful to know what the subject is all about and for this one or both of Alfred Watkins' books, The Old Straight Track and The Ley Hunter's Manual should be studied. Details of these are given later in this issue.

After this, you should buy a paper flat 1" Ordnance Survey map of an area in which you are interested, which could be your home area or somewhere you are going on holiday, but it should be somewhere that you can see

conveniently in the field. Most parts of Britain have some leys, but in general lowland areas have more than highland areas. Especially good for Ley Hunting are East Anglia, South-East England, the West Country, the Cotswolds and Herefordshire, but this may just be because they have been studied in more detail, so here is an opportunity for anyone who wants to correct the apparent concentration in these areas.

Once you have got your map, lay it on a flat surface. You also need a fairly long straight-edge, a length of dark cotton and a sharp pencil. Details of how to find leys on maps are to be found in Alfred Watkins' books, but in general what you should do is to remember the points that count on leys, such as mounds, stone circles and ancient churches, and then attempt to find a ley with at least five of these points aligning. A good way is to find a likely point and try lines in all directions. Once you have found a few likely lines, you may find a pattern beginning to develop, perhaps of parallel lines, star formations or hexagons. After this, check with other sources of information, such as books and articles, to see if you can find confirmation of your lines or add further lines.

Once you have done this you are ready to go out into the field. Field work is just as important as map work and is definitely much more exciting. The thing to do is to pick out from your map a particularly well-marked ley and walk along a section of it as closely as you can, with due regard to farmland, of course. The things to look for are slight indications of a trackway, especially near a stream, faint unmarked earthworks, ancient stones, clumps of pine-trees and other traces. After a while you get a feeling when you are on a ley.

Another thing to do is to go to a point where many leys cross on the map, and frequently a pine-clump or something of the sort is to be seen. Photographs are very useful to illustrate leys, and, as Alfred Watkins said, they should if possible be taken along the line of the ley.

After you have been on a ley hunt, a full report should be written based on field notes together with photographs and sketches. If you could possibly manage to send a copy of your report to the Ley Hunter's Club for inclusion in The Ley Hunter, this would be very helpful.

Anyway, I wish you luck with your ley-hunting and I hope that you have as much success as Allen Watkins had on his first ley-hunt.

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### BOOK REVIEWS

THE OLD STRAIGHT TRACK by Alfred Watkins published by Methuen.

Can only be obtained from: John Grant Booksellers, Ltd.,  
31 George IV Bridge,  
Edinburgh 1. for 10/- (incl. postage)

Alfred Watkins' first book Early British Trackways was published in 1921, but is now unobtainable. His second and most famous book The Old Straight Track was published in 1925 by Methuen and can still be obtained from the address above.

It is his largest and most detailed book, well illustrated with his own photographs, for Alfred Watkins was a Fellow of the Royal Photographic

Society. The chapters include Alignment of Mounds; Leys in Radnor Vale; Mark Stones; The Sighted Track; Water Sight Points; Sight Notches; Camps; Ley Men; Sighting Staffs; Sun Alignment; Beacons; Churches, Castles and Assemblies on Mark Points; Place Names; Folk Lore; etc. and has a useful appendix on ley hunting.

THE LEY HUNTER'S MANUAL by Alfred Watkins published by Simpkin Marshall  
Can only be obtained from : Markham House Press Ltd.,  
31 Kings Road,  
London, S.W.3. at 6/- (incl. postage)

This was published in 1927 and incorporates some of Alfred Watkins' later discoveries. It is smaller than his earlier book and written more for the practical ley-hunter. It is very helpful as an introduction to the subject and for use in the field. It includes a detailed description of the marks that are left, a chapter on seasonal and beacon alignments, details of actual leys in all parts of the country and some very useful working instructions.

Both these books are of great help to ley hunters, but they are in short supply and only a few copies are left, so all intending ley-hunters should get them while they are still available, for they are well worth the money.

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### LEY HUNTS

Peter Furness, Jimmy Goddard and Philip Heselton investigated an area of Essex on Sunday, July 25th 1965. Below is their report.

"We started from North Weald station and travelled along a ley leading to Colliers Hatch, a centre of five leys. We saw a farm called 'Gold Hall', on another Colliers Hatch ley, then walked along the straight track that the ley followed to the moat. This was mainly through wooded countryside, though much of the tree coverage had been cleared since the map was published. Colliers Hatch we found to be a moated house.

"From here we continued along the same ley to Wood Hatch, where there is a pond, quite small and not marked on the map, exactly on the ley next to the road junction there. Whether in fact it was ancient or not we had no way of telling.

"Continuing along the ley we soon came to Stapleford Tawney Church, a centre of three leys. Inside the church there was a notice saying that histories of the church cost 6d., but on looking around for these we could not find any. However, the fact that a history had been written suggested that the church was quite old.

"After we left Stapleford Tawney the road diverged a little from the ley, though we did notice an interesting raised clump of trees on a road junction. We were unable to find any leys going through it, however.

"The next mark point was on a different ley. It was Stapleford Abbots Church, a centre of four leys. The list of Rectors goes back to 1330.

