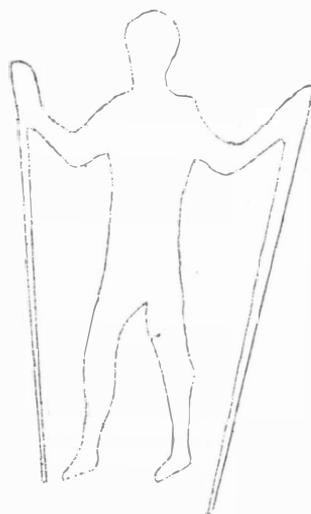


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THE
LEY HUNTER

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ABOUT THE NEW EDITOR

by Jimmy Goddard

Ken Rogers is seventeen and works for the Daily Express in London. For about a year he has been Secretary of the newly-formed Enfield UFO Investigation Society, and more recently has also become Secretary of the English Association of International Sky Scouts, an organisation which takes an interest in leys as well as UFOs and other related subjects. However, although he was introduced to our subject through its connection with the UFO enigma, he has now become interested in leys as a subject in themselves.

The previous Editor of LH, Philip Heselton, will still be taking an interest in leys and will probably write articles for future editions of this magazine, although university work has prevented him from continuing as Editor. He is planning shortly to bring out a small booklet giving a survey of all the leys in Britain.

EDITORIAL

Although I think the two are very much connected, I shall, until proven beyond doubt, try and keep the subject of leys separate from orthoteny.

I will try my best to keep the Ley Hunter up to the good standards set by the previous editor, Philip Heselton.

I would be very grateful if readers would send in articles, letters and comments for this magazine. I hope shortly that our representatives abroad will be able to send in material on leys in their particular country.

It should prove very interesting if Stewart Miller of Cambridge University does use the "Titan" computer on leys. By feeding Titan with the grid-references of all the prehistoric sites in Britain, it will not only prove that leys are NOT due to chance, but should also yield forth more, even accurate alignments.

Unfortunately we shall not know the outcome of this new 'streamline' experiment for sometime due to the lengthy task of working out the various grid references and programming the findings into the computer on punched tape.

ERRATA

p.5, para. 12 "sunfaring" should read "seafaring"
p.4, para. 4 "fort" should read "font" in both cases.

"FENLAND PAST AND PRESENT"

by Flight-Sergeant Michael Davidson

Watkins mentions field work as the essential complement to Map work, he could well have added book work, for the more one knows of the local folk lore, history and place names of a district the more clues one has in Ley Hunting. Often too one picks up information that backs up Watkins theories, as an example the old tale of St. Guthlac after many wanderings, making his cell in a tumulus on one of the clay or gravel islands in the Fens, where Crowland Abbey now stands; the site of the original cell being marked by a plaque.

This came from an interesting old book called "Fenland. Past and Present" written by Miller and Skertchley in 1870. They don't build books like that now, three inches thick and heavy with it, but offering the best of browsing: take the death rate per thousand in the Isle of Ely in 1865 - 12 died of Small pox, and a 109 from Diphtheria, Measles and Scarlet Fever; they also had a rain fall of 50 inches that year and one is not surprised to hear some of the "poorer classes" had taken to opium eating.

However it's main interest lies in the fact that though written so long before Watkins published "The Old Straight Track" in 1925, the authors firmly believed there to have been a road system before the Roman occupation, and also that many so called Roman towns were built on the site of British or more correctly Celtic ones. On general terms they argue that the British were a cultured people, minting their own coinage, and in a prosperous way of business with the Continent before the occupation; not long after which Seneca lent the Iceni 10 million Sesterces, which he was hardly likely to do without good security. Caesar himself remarks that the British were countless in number, their dwelling numerous, while Ptolomy talks of 56 cities in existence which could scarcely be all Roman. It is hardly likely that such a people had not found roads a necessity before the Romans came.

That they had them is born out by the ease with which Caesar penetrated into southern Britain, he had no time to build roads himself, while the Britains were able to assemble very quickly a mixed force of infantry, cavalry and chariots against him. Just how large the quantity of chariots involved must have been can be judged by the fact that after the British commander has sent away the main body of them, Caesar estimates 4000 were left to watch his advance. There must have been an awful lot of traffic about that day. The authors speak of an old tradition that the Fosse and Icknield Ways, together with Watling and Ermine Streets were pre Roman, and that contemporary archaeologists believed there to have been four others, together with a road encircling the whole coast line, traces of which could then be seen near Boston.

As to the British origins of Roman stations they argue that Caesar in the Bello Gallico compliments the British on the siting of their fortified towns "well defended, both by nature and by art" and the difficulty with which they were taken, why then waste time building others when these were already to hand, and most probably linked to other places by road?

continued

Perhaps more interesting is their argument that, granted they had knowledge to build roads and massive fortifications, is it not possible that many of the land drainage schemes attributed to the Romans, were already in existence? It is argued that the Greeks had often engaged in this work, the drainage of Thessaly being given as an example, that Greek influence through the colony at Barseilles, penetrated into Northern Gaul where their methods were employed by the Belgic Gauls for drainage purposes. In fact when the Romans wanted labour for their British works they imported Belgic Gauls because they were skilled in this work. Considering the close ties which existed between the British and the Gauls, and which eventually led the Romans to invade Britain, what is more probable than that technical knowledge had been exchanged? If the Greek link seems tenuous, remember that the British coins were close imitations of the drachmae of Alexander the Great.

To think of the Car Dyke, extending from Lincoln down to Cambridge as native work is hard, it seems too vast in concept, yet if it is Roman it is strange that they should have given it a foreign name, for the word Car is the Celtic for Fen: more likely that the Romans strengthened and improved something already in existence. As to the vastness of the undertaking the authors point to the great ramparted ditches defending the Icknield Way; the Devils Ditch is still an impressive sight, still seven miles long after much of it has become lost under ploughing. Modern authorities remain non committal as to the builders of these ditches, and if anything incline to attribute them to the Saxons, chiefly on the grounds of the vast numbers of Saxon dead, found fallen in battle against them. This seems a slight reason, since even now, given an anti tank gun or two to defend the road intersections, they would be a formidable obstacle, and the Mercians may well have adopted an earlier work as a convenient frontier.

This seems to be worth bearing in mind when leys strike ancient drainage schemes, it may not be co-incidental.

Incidentally one of these ditches, the Fleam Dyke, provides the only convincing evidence of a Ley from the field work aspect I have come across in these parts. From a tumulus at Thriplow $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles S. of Cambridge a line drawn N.E. to Garboldisham meets 4 other separate tumuli, the foot of a circular castle mound, close to Higham Ch. and the junction of 2 Roman roads, one a track now, the other the A.11. The ley crosses the Fleam Dyke at the Bedford gap; an authoritative work on the archaeology of this region does not mention this break, but does mention a similar gap to the E. as modern. The ditch is filled in to make a causeway across the ditch well able to take a wagon and horses or a herd of cattle, yet no modern farm track uses it, no group of buildings stands near by, even the division of crops is farther to the E. when seen there were young crops growing and I couldn't see any sign of a track at this point; possibly at other times this might show. Where the Ley crosses the Devil's Ditch to the N. no gap is shown on the map, it may be that this ditch was built later, then again I do not have the blind faith in the O.S. I once had: although this is a recent map the gap in the Devil's Ditch cut to allow aircraft to take off during the War is not shown either.

A SUSSEX LEY HUNT

by Geoffery Forrester and Nick Odell

Last October we went from our homes respectively in Hertfordshire and Essex, to Ashington, a little village in Sussex. Our object was to pool our knowledge in leys and the surrounding countryside and try to locate, examine, and if possible prove the existence of as many leys as possible in the short time available to us. Here follows a day by day account of our work.

Saturday 31st October 1965: After having done extensive map work the previous evening, we went to the village of Rock. We did not find a rock, but we did find a very old symmetrical arrangement of scotch pines. These were in direct alignment with one road in the Rock Cross Roads, but since no other alignments were seen, this is most probably just coincidence. A few hundred yards further along the A24, is a piece of National Trust land, known as Warren Hill. Here, we had a field day, for we found one long barrow, several clumps of small tumuli, not to mention several clumps of scotch pines in prominent places. The pines are interesting, since there are no others we know of within five miles of these. From many of these points, other alligning points could be seen.

Monday 1st November 1965: We went on an exploratory trip in the region of the Cissbury Rings. This camp is one of the highest points in the region, and from here we sighted several leys. We managed to walk along one or two for a distance and we are quite convinced about the existence of these.

Tuesday 2nd November 1965: On our return home, with an hour to spare, we visited the Horsham parish church, The Church of St Mary the Virgin, Horsham. The road to the church was straight and remained so for nearly a quarter of a mile. It did not however align with the church tower or any external feature of this comparatively modern, 17th century church. It did however align with the fort, which is well, being much older than the church and positioned in place where no fort would normally be placed, was carved out of a solid block of a sandstone not found in the area. This was just crying out for investigation, as can be imagined by the reader, but we did not, unfortunately have time to do this.

Editor's note: I am sorry that the carefully drawn map accompanying this article has not appeared in the L.H. This is due to the fact that it would be rather difficult to reproduce onto stencils for printing. We have been able to print the interesting account of the Sussex Ley Hunt.

Much publicity and interest has been attached to the new theory that Stonehenge may have been built by very skilled astronomers. The possible alignments between stones and marker positions have already been shown to have detailed relationship with some eclipses and with the positions of the sun and moon throughout the year. Now in the July-Aug edition of NATURE, Professor Fred Hoyle has gone a step further and shown that the 56 Aubrey holes which encircle the site can be used to predict virtually every eclipse of the sun and moon. Professor Hoyle in other words, is claiming that Stonehenge was really a giant pre-historic computer and astronomical observatory. For the interested, a book is available on this new theory entitled "STONEHENGE DECODED" by Professor Gerald Hawkins. (Souvenir Press, 30/-)

Dear Sir,

It is indeed useful to know the degree of investigation of leys in various parts of GB.

I think it should be noted that Ireland also has its leys - often perpetuated in place names.

Do you find that when people cannot explain a phenomenon they resort to ghosties or ghoulies or Things that go bump in the night? I prefer to hold that the phenomenon needs explaining till it is explained.

How can a Great Isocolesse Triangle prove that the constructors were other than folk with intelligence like the Phoenicians or Chaldaens?

In one of the Old Straight Track volumes there was a mathematical article on the impingement of the laws of chance on a proportion of the alignments recorded. The same laws applied to genuine leys which could show that a triangle of a certain size would appear in an overall given area.

Have you ever tested the laws of chance?

Here is a simple one - Toss a penny a hundred times and once in the hundred times it will turn up seven times consecutively the same, either seven heads or seven tails and if it doesn't in one hundred times, it will do it twice in two hundred times!

What has Atlantis to do with leys?!

My late uncle and I found a few leys in Co. Down but we only took photos on one between Legananny Cromleck and Leestone Point through the Mourue Mountains.

There is an interesting ley from Ballyhalliert, near Burr Point, to the Lead mines at Conlig between Bangor and Newtownards. Another goes across the upper end of Strangford Lough. We were alerted to it by a local name - Crossnamuckley!

In all cases we found that following the actual track most rewarding. Ancient and filled in wells not shown on 1" to the mile maps and in one case a standing stone forming part of the bank between two fields! - and, of course, not shown on the 1" map.

Please define 'orthoteny' as I cannot find it in the dictionary. Christine Crosland Symms connecting Atlantis with leys reads like conjecture. Alfred Watkins dealt with tangible facts and with what one can learn from the accumulation of such facts.

Some of the writers in the O.S.T. Club folios pointed out that a number of alignments followed sunrise on Beltane, Sampane, and a third day whose name I forget.

Alignments of this order would be within the capabilities of sunfaring folk, and as a number of leys go to the coast in N. Ireland the suggestion is that some at least were used as trading routes.

A. Hugh Finlay, Drumadillar, 56, Demesne Road, Holywood, Co. Down

Dear Sir,

The Church of SS. Peter and Paul at Heytesbury, that you mentioned in your Warminster Report, is a good deal older than the 16th Century; the foundations are anyway. It became "collegiate" in 1165 abd was REBUILT a little later. There are traces of Norman work in the chancel. As regards Bishopstrow, there was a Saxon church here. Present church went up in 1757.

Dr. John Cleary-Baker, 3, Devonish Road, Weeke, Winchester, Hampshire.