

THE
LEY
HUNTER

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LEAD-IN

The hypothesis that prehistoric civilisation in Britain was highly scientifically minded and that the ley system exists has been severely attacked from several angles recently, and is to receive another broadside from Dr. Glyn Daniel apparently. The most severe criticism came in The Listener of all places. In fact the November 27 issue published three items which were critical of either our ideals, our results, our aims, or some or all of us personally. The items in question being reviews of John Mitchell's "The View Over Atlantis" (reviewed last month in The Ley Hunter), and Professor Alexander Thom's "Megalithic Sites in Britain", and an article by Ian Rodger.

To take Rodger first - as he appears most sympathetic towards ley hunting, though he makes reservations about the interest in the subject shown by the "hippy underground." I reproduce part of his article for the benefit of those who missed reading it or hearing him on the radio.

MEGALITHIC
MATHEMATICS Rodger first discusses headless horsemen and urges archaeologists to pay attention to such legends, especially when they are related to stories about the building of a church. He then gives the basis of Alfred Watkins's theory on leys and relates how he himself found an "astonishing" number of churches on sight-lines drawn from Bre Hill to marked beacon hills in the Chilterns.

"The Lower Icknield Way, which passes at the foot of the Chilterns, connects a string of villages whose churches represent repeater stations for sight-lines crossing the Vale of Aylesbury from the hills above. These sight-lines frequently intersect and the lattice of direct sight communication in the plain west of the Chilterns is extraordinarily complicated. Sceptics may dismiss the alignment of so many churches as merely fortuitous, but I am assured that the incidence of alignments exceeds statistical probability.

"Supposing that this lattice of sight-lines is not an accident, we can of course attribute it to the English, who in the period of Danish invasion required an efficient means of direct-sight communication. But the English did not arrive in a virgin land and were furthermore encouraged, even ordered, to build churches on pagan sites.

"The origin of these sight-lines is therefore earlier and I feel it to be a misfortune that their existence has somehow come to the notice of the hippy underground. A wild mythology has gained popularity which somehow associates trackways with unidentified flying objects. The underground seeks to relate both UFOs and the trackways to some kind of non-terrestrial force. This has led to an interest in Druidic ideas and the Arthurian legend, and from an artistic point of view it's proving occasionally productive. But false mythology of this kind obscures appreciation of the work of some of our ancestors and it's probably deterring orthodox archaeology from a serious study of these sight-lines."

Rodger then briefly mentions Prof. Thom's discoveries and those of Professor Lyle Borst, of New York State University, a professor of astronomy and physics, who became inadvertently involved in archaeology when three years ago at a temple of Hera in Argos, Greece, he noted it would have aligned with the rising position at the vernal equinox of the star Spica in 500 B.C.

"Spica is one of the red stars and, like Antares, another red star, was one of those selected by Megalithic man for his observation....."

Later he visited Canterbury Cathedral and found the axis of the choir deviates two degrees to the south from that of the nave, and the Trinity Chapel deviates a further two degrees.

"It's a popular idea that the axes of churches are aligned to the point of sunrise on the day of the patron saint. Deviations in alignment between naves and chancels are then supposed to be due to variations in solar alignments. But these deviations cannot be accounted for in this way. They can only be explained by supposing that the buildings were aligned to the rising point of a star which moves with the regular precision of the equinoxes. Borst's calculations conclude that the most suitable star for Canterbury is that of Betelgeuse. The deviation of the axes implies an original series of stellar observations between 2300 and 1500 B.C.

"Borst was by then familiar with the work of Prof. Thom and when he studied the ground-plan of Canterbury he detected a pattern in the layout and a geometric structure similar to those at Stonehenge, Woodhenge, Arminghall and five less well known stone circles all of which Prof. Thom had classified as Type One. Turning to other cathedrals, Borst found a similar geometry displayed in the cathedrals of Wells, Winchester, Gloucester and Norwich. At Lincoln, he identified another geometric pattern which is of later origin and which Thom classifies as Type Two.

"Last February Borst published a preliminary paper in the American magazine Science. His offers of mathematical proof for Megalithic occupation of Christian sites seemed to support the hazy hunch I had derived from my folklore research.

"I wrote to him supplying him with horseman legends connected with the building of churches and was pleased to discover that he was already interested in the long barrow at Rodmarton. In June we met at Wing in Buckinghamshire, where I learned more of his ideas than he has so far committed to paper."

Rodger then discusses the site, shape and history of Wing Church, its ley alignments and alignment with the star Bellatrix. Wing, he says, is possibly also the oldest continuously used religious site in Britain.

He states that there is also a correlation between the age of the Megalithic foundations of churches and simplicity of the geometry employed. Later circles offer more complex triangles, and so on.....

Borst suggests that the reason why Megalithic man chose to elaborate his circles was that he was simply enjoying himself. The shapes being mathematically pleasing and Borst calls the Megalithic period man's first age of elegance.

Rodger continues: "Sceptics will find much of all this rather far-fetched. But there is more. Let us suppose for a moment that today's churches occupy pagan sites and that these were first occupied in the Megalithic period. Not every church, of course, reveals the complex geometry noted in some of our cathedrals but it is significant that so many of them are situated on sight-lines. It's reasonable to assume that men who were capable of sanctifying their stellar observation points with a fairly complex geometry also practised ground survey work. Intermediate points on direct sight-lines of communication would need repeater stations. Watkins suggested that where distinctive topographical features were lacking trees of a distinctive nature were planted or observation towers were built. Initially such points would be maintained and guarded by the surveyor priesthood and in the course of time they would remain hallowed even though the reason for them had been forgotten. Successive invasions of different peoples would occupy these sites and devote them to their particular rituals.....The lattice of sight-lines requires statistical analysis to prove beyond doubt that the incidence of churches on sight-lines is more than accidental. Borst after a cursory study of the lattice for the Vale of Aylesbury, considered it likely that some of the sightings had stellar orientation, and the wild thought now occurs to me that the range of the Chilterns was once employed as a gigantic stellar computer."

"I know that much of what I've been saying will be dismissed as wild nonsense by the orthodox archaeologist. The history of archaeology is full of scholarly scandals.

THE LISTENER gives what must be the first ley cartoon - by Barry Fantoni. Below a painting of a UFO over Stonehenge one hippy tells another: "This book shows how the roundabouts on the M4 are built on a system of ancient burial mounds, and on clear nights you can see a headless motorist....."

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"Its pioneers were no better than grave-robbers and their successors, trained in arts rather than science, tended too often to bend facts to suit their particular case. It's understandable, now that archaeology is respectable and scientifically inclined, that the professionals should treat the enthusiastic layman with caution. As I'm a mere amateur I don't expect to be taken very seriously, but people like Borst and Thom are men trained in measurement and the observation of factual data. Unfortunately it seems that most archaeologists aren't mathematicians or astronomers and they tend to dismiss the findings of men who are more qualified to appreciate Megalithic geometry. And perhaps there's also a feeling that the astronomers and the engineers are taking something of the magic away by explaining these monuments so precisely. Stories of sacrifice on altar stones at Midsummer somehow seem more attractive to many people than bald statements that the stones were sighted on some star. For my part I find these bald statements infinitely more exciting. For Borst there is a feeling of close affinity with the men who, as he put it, started man on the way to the moon.

"Of course it can be argued that many of these ancient monuments have slightly altered their shape in the course of the years. It can be objected that even if some of our churches and cathedrals conform to Megalithic patterns, their geometry may have been borrowed. It can also be argued that those who built the churches didn't follow the precise outline of the pagan shrines. Borst replies that builders habitually prefer to use existing foundations, that shrine-builders are inherently superstitious and that architects have a professional respect for previous structures. For example, on his visit to Norwich this summer he found a curved line in the floor of the choir which completed precisely the lower half of the egg-shape defining the chancel. This line nearly disappeared in a renovation, but the restoring architect decided to preserve it, not knowing its purpose. It is likely that the same fear of taboo, has preserved elsewhere similar magic curves from our first age of elegance. Close study of them may yet prove that our recognised Megalithic monuments are only a part of the whole, that many others lie beneath our churches. If any archaeologist wants to start digging I'd be happy to send him a list of churches whose building was bedevilled and which are still frequented by a ghost who is not a ghost at all - merely, a headless mathematician."

UNDERGROUND LITERATURE

If we refrain from questioning the archaeological observations here - except that I fail to see any prehistoric significance in the headless horsemen - then two points require comment. The lack of belief in these theories by all but Thom, Borst, Fred Hoyle and Gerald Hawkins will be dealt with later. The other point is his indictment against hippies and the ley-UFO connection theory. John Michell has something to say later about the UFOs, but most ufologists are far from being hippies.

Anyone familiar with underground literature, as I am, will be somewhat mystified by the attack. Though the youthful dropout element is more spiritually aware than the rest of the populace I doubt if many hippies are aware of the ley system or scan the skies for UFOs. However, it was in underground publications (International Times, Albion and Image) that John Michell introduced most of his early theories on leys, UFOs and spiritual engineering. Other contributions on similar lines have been few. The highest circulation underground publication - bigger than the rest put together - is International Times, which under a previous policy used a few such articles. There were two on Icarus, a weird piece associating Glastonbury and Jews, one on the Great Pyramid, one on prehistoric conspicing (a special form of deep meditation) in Britain, and oddest of all a piece on a Martian bid to promote Earthly peace. Oz has hardly touched this area of thought. Albion survived one issue. Image may now have disappeared. Sporadic Gandalf's Garden is all that's left, and in its fourth issue Glastonbury and the Somerset zodiac is discussed by three writers. But my point is that only a few hippies such as the Tribe of the Sacred Mushroom and Muz Murray, editor of Gandalf's Garden (who was quoted as saying in The Times on Dec. 18, 1968: "We are working on a thought-camera into the past to solve the mystery; the earth has a memory just as we have. I personally know extra-planetary beings exist through my own experiences.") are deeply into the prehistory/UFO subject. So why make such a sweeping statement Mr. Rodger?

LEYS TO BECOME
RESPECTABLE ?

The real point is this: why are most professional archaeologists unwilling to research ley theories? Surely it is because if a respected professor were to subscribe to the ley system's existence he would have to:

- a) admit a previous misconception of early man's abilities.
- b) need to reconsider and rebuild a lifetime's work.
- c) put his career and reputation in jeopardy.
- d) invite derision from his colleagues.
- e) risk a vote of no confidence in scholarship from students.

Maybe leys will soon achieve respectability, however. The archaeologists have now elevated stone circles from appearing as crude worshipping places to their rightful place as incredible astronomical devices requiring a mind on a par with Einstein's 4,000 years ago to create them.

Harvard astronomer Gerald Hawkins in "Stonehenge Decoded" proposed that Stonehenge was an astronomical computer, only for the book to be described as "tendentious, arrogant, slipshod and unconvincing" by Professor R.J.C. Atkinson, the leading archaeological authority on Stonehenge, in a scathing review in Nature. A few weeks later Professor Fred Hoyle, the cosmologist, supported and extended Hawkins's conclusions. Prof. Thom drew further conclusions on circles and now in The Listener Atkinson reviews Thom's book in an extremely cautious fashion.

"That poison called history." - H.G.Wells

"History is a fable agreed upon." - Napoleon

"History is nothing more than the belief in falsehood." -
Nietzsche

"That huge Mississippi of lies called history." - Matthew
Arnold

BARBARIAN BRAINS

"In the two years since it was published Thom's book has acquired both a scholarly standing and an underground reputation among mystically-minded hippies. It has all the characteristics of a well-constructed parcel-bomb. The non-committal title, the carefully tabulated measurements, the inevitably mathematical treatment of the data, all combine to provide a tough but apparently dull package; but it is one which conceals a core of explosive power, capable of damaging severely a number of received ideas about the prehistory of Britain and about the beginnings of scientific thought and practice.... The conclusions he presents are as startling as they are difficult to rebut."

And later: "It is not entirely surprising, therefore, that Thom is able to provide convincing evidence that the principal diameters of these stone settings are not random in their distribution, but tend to cluster around multiples of a unit which he calls the 'Megalithic yard', with a value of 2.72 feet or 0.829 metres. The idea that a standard of this kind could have been enforced and accepted in the essentially barbarian societies of Britain in the second millennium BC is one that conflicts head-on with current views about the nature of the contemporary societies; but however improbable this may seem, to reject it involves acquiescence in an even greater improbability, namely that the observed clustering of the measurements is due to chance and nothing more....."

"It is impossible to resist the cumulative weight of the evidence which Thom has compiled, all pointing to a high degree of competence in empirical astronomy amongst our ancestors 4,000 years ago. This does not mean, however, that we need to take seriously the ill-considered fantasies about alignments at Stonehenge, or the supposed Megalithic foundation of Canterbury Cathedral, which have recently been propagated in the pages of serious scientific journals.

"It is unfortunate that the innumeracy of most archaeologists will deter them from following the author's arguments in detail, and acquiring thereby a respect for the scrupulously fair and cautious way in which he presents them. Those who take the trouble to master the necessary mathematics, which are not very difficult, will find that they are compelled to question one of the axioms of human history, which states that systematic observation and measurement, and the development of arithmetic and geometry, are functions of civilisation, generated as a response to

the pressures of urban living. It is about time, perhaps, to remember that barbarians too had brains."

Barbarians indeed!!

Atkinson's piece was commented upon in the January 8, 1970, The Listener by Ian Brice of Balliol College:

FOLLOWING IN FOREFATHERS' FOOTSTEPS

"Can it really be that the two professors (Thom and Atkinson) believe that either Megalithic man had a standard unit of length 'enforced and accepted' throughout the country or this must be an extraordinary chance phenomenon? 2.72 feet is the size of an average pace. The obvious way of marking out a large area on the ground in a simple fashion is to pace it out. Minor variations in length of pace would tend to be cancelled out over large distances. What further explanation is required?"

An interesting point. However, if Mr Brice had studied pages 161/2 of "The View Over Atlantis" he would have understood the relevance of this measurement.

Now enter Dr. Glyn Daniel. In a letter to The Listener of January 1, 1970, Ian Rodgers replies: "When I gave my talk on Megalithic mathematics I was unaware of the pending publication of Mr. John Michell's very interesting book. I innocently believed that if the theories of men of science could be dissociated from wilder theories current in the hippy world, orthodox archaeology might be persuaded to widen its horizons. It seems, though, that the views of another layman, Mr Grigson, are shared by many professional archaeologists. From one of the many correspondents who have deluged me with factual data and sober reflections, I learn that Dr. Glyn Daniel intends to roast us all in the March issue of Antiquity. The obstructive attitude which he and his like are maintaining will not serve the aims of scholarship and I am grateful to the Third Programme and The Listener for providing a forum for this controversey."

However, not all reviewers take the view that professionals know best. The reviewer of "Chariots of the Gods" by Erich von Daniken, and "The Monkey's Tail" by T.C. Lethbridge, in the January 10, 1970, issue of the Northern Echo began: "A couple of books here for the speculative minds that are not afraid to resist the weight of conformist acceptance." And later: "Mr. Lethbridge, an archaeologist with a more open and curious mind than is fashionable nowadays - though in earlier centuries they were the foundation of discovery - writes a disarmingly persuasive personal narrative disputing

"The only way to be right is to prophesy after the event, like the historians, who also have the privilege, denied to the Deity, of altering the past." - Dean Inge.

Darwin's theory...."

The Sunday Times of January 18, 1970, made a relevant point on this subject when it reported that educationalists feel we

* "When a land neglects her legends
 * Sees but falsehood in the past
 * And its peoples view their sires
 * In the light of fools or liars
 * 'Tis a sign of its decline
 * Branches that but blight their roots
 * Yield no sap for lasting fruits"

- R.G.C.

* * * * *

are neglecting the most speculative kinds of intelligence in our students. Professor Liam Hudson, of Edinburgh University, suggests that we have recently tended to reward conformist thinking as against creative and emotionally involved thinking. Darwin and Einstein, he feels, might have failed the 11-plus. To quote from The Sunday Times: "The traditional 11-plus IQ test expects only one right answer: 'Hat is to head as shoe is to... (arm, leg, foot, fit, glove).' Answer: foot. An open-ended test gives no limit to the possible answers: 'How many uses can you think of for a hat?' One answer was: 'Put on head; drink out of; smother someone with; smother a small fire; wave; cup up for pipe cleaner; rags; chamber-pot in emergencies; polish shoes; enhance ego; home for mice; collect blackberries in; jelly mould...etc.,' Those who succeed at the former kind of test often dry up very soon on the second. The first kind asks for convergent thinking - you 'converge' on the right answer. The second encourages you to diverge and roam creatively. Among English schoolboys Hudson has discovered that those who choose arts tend to be divergent, and convergers tend to choose science."

The stone circles and leys have a multitude of uses, but this will not be apparent to the scientifically minded professional archaeologists.

And now to Geoffrey Grigson's shabby review:

STRAIGHT
 TRACKS
 RETRACED

"Reading this book ("The View Over Atlantis") induces visions of odd people. I see Stukeley - that Avebury-, Stonehenge-, Druid- and mistletoe-besotted man, that aboriginal in the affair - making a Stonehenge temple of the Druids in his garden (out of filbert trees and pyramidal shrubs) and interring his wife's miscarriage... in a camomile bed below his Roman altar. I see John Wood - the architect - enunciating that Bladud, arch-Druid and founder of Bath, had erected the stone circles of Stanton Drew to serve as 'a stupendous Model of the Planetary World' for instructing Britons in the liberal sciences. I see the British Israelite at the moment when Flinders Petrie came on him around a corner of the Great Pyramid which he was chipping or chopping to make the measurements of the pyramid fit the theory of its mathematical message for mankind. I see that once popular heresiarch Alfred Watkins... who believed that a net of straight lines or 'leys'... linked the ancient holy sites of Britain.

"The View Over Atlantis' calls on many of these odd people, Watkins in particular. It synthesises theories, dogmas, illuminations, of unreason. Glastonbury, Avebury, Stonehenge, Druids, the Great Pyramid, astrology, Atlantis, and UFOs, are combined with these leys.....

"How are leys to be explained? By combining very pseudo-science with such very pseudo-archaeology; by postulating a prehistoric civilisation of spiritual engineers concerned with the flow of a vital solar force, associated with terrestrial magnetism. Leys are the lines of its flow; Stonehenge, one of various Megalithic engines for the control of the life force, is an astronomical instrument designed for the prediction of eclipses, which could interfere with the flow. (Woodhenge, which should be exhibited at the Hayward Gallery, or reconstituted on Salisbury Plain, or in Penwith, by Dame Barbara Hepworth, was 'a stringed musical instrument laid out according to the plan of the universe'). /Grigson's parentheses/

"Sorrowfully the author recalls that O.G.S. Crawford declined to allow "The Old Straight Track" to be advertised in Antiquity, which he edited. The formidable Crawford was right, of course. There are kinds of nonsense whose promulgators must rely on their own megaphones. There is no conversation one can hold with them, no dialogue which is possible with their trimming of evidence to theory. Mr. Mitchell supports his view that Lichfield Cathedral was built on astrological principles, under the sign of Mars, by observing that the stone is red and that Lichfield, according to a medieval document, 'was formerly called Liches from War'. A very little investigation would have revealed to him that Lichfield means the clearing in Letocetum, the 'grey forest', and that red sandstone is the local building material.

"I would say that in our time the dreams of a unity in multaneity, of an esoteric knowledge which explains everything, can have results which are only less ridiculous - with the priests and deacons - or more ridiculous - with the initiates. Nowadays, esotericism on the matter of stone circles can only bore us with the amiable puerility of such as this "The View Over Atlantis."

"In Mr. Mitchell's defence, it might be said that the archaeologists he despises are a little to blame. Stukeley is alive in the application by archaeologists - let's not bother about the Stukeleyan mathematicians - of 'ritual', 'sacred', 'religious', to sites for which a less mysterious origin, or use, or basic use, is feasible.

"One antidote would be reading Marc Bloch on the nature of history. Or another might be to remember Gordon Childe remarking of cup-and-ring carvings that 'as we have no insight into their inner function and significance, we mask our ignorance by calling them religious or magical.' The great Childe also made fun - surely justified - of the thought of our ill-clad ancestors, in our boreal

island, shivering 'night long in rain and gale peering through
the driving mists to note eclipses and planetary movements in
our oft-veiled skies'."

IGNORANCE
IS BLISS

This review reveals narrow-mindedness, incapacity to
comprehend ideas and facts, no attempt to produce
alternative ideas, blissful ignorance of Megalithic
man's true intelligence and behaviour, pettiness in the remarks
on Lichfield Cathedral (which only attacked minor points of
the suppositions regarding it), and unforgiveable downright
rudeness.

GREEN
CHEESE
MOON

This attitude of superiority is not new to me. Follow-
ing an article I wrote as a sixth-former for the
newspaper I now work for, denigrating the Romans and
praising the Ancient Britons the head of my school's
Latin department was enraged by this attack on his beloved
Romans. He particularly hated those passages and ideas I took
from Alan V. Insole's "Immortal Britain" (The Aquarian Press,
1952). My headmaster, also a champion of the Romans, asked if I
believed the moon was made of green cheese. Insole's book is
quirky, has inaccuracies and makes much of the Cold War. His
two main points are that Prehistoric man was not a wood-
painted savage but peace-loving and intelligent, and that the
Romans were totalitarian barbarians. He quotes Vergil ("Let
others study Art and Science; Rome has somewhat better to do,
namely War and Dominion.") and Tacitus ("To robbery, slaugh-
ter, plunder, the Romans give the lying name of Empire; they
make a solitude and call it peace."). He equates the Romans
with the Nazis.

Discussing our lost heritage of prehistory he says: "There
have been many attempts to recover this lost history; but
every one of those writers has come against the blank wall of
intellectual obstinacy in the form of hostile criticism and
the deadly inertia of official education."

I have also come across two books which curtly dismiss
Watkins's work - and through it our own. There are probably
others I fear. In "Fieldwork in Local History" by W.G. Hoskins
(Faber & Faber, 1967) we find: "Probably the best-known of all
books about old roads is also the most dangerous. This is the
late Mr. Watkins's "The Old Straight Track," which should be
read only by the most strong-minded readers. As O.G.S. Craw-
ford (in "Archaeology on the Field") rightly says, the book was
based upon a misconception of primitive society, and support-
ed by no evidence. His writings on the subject are quite val-
ueless."

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OBVIOUSLY UNAWARE OF LEYS a Mr. G.B. Berry discovered an
alignment between the English Channel and the Severn, linking
Berstone Castle, Silbury Hill, Ludgershall Castle and St Cath-
arine's Hill etc.,. In The Times Saturday Review of December
20, 1969, he mistakenly attributes this to a Roman signalling
network. His article "Legacy of the Legions" is, however, well
worth reading.
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And in "Field Archaeology" by the Ordnance Survey (Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1963) we find: "The subject of ancient trackways has always appealed to amateur field archaeologists and has given rise to much imaginative writing well divorced from common sense and the plain facts of the case. Since there is no evidence of any attempt to construct roads of any length before Roman times, and since prehistoric man must have moved about the country fairly freely..... Examples of ancient land routes exist in plenty in Britain, but their courses are not determined by 'mark stones' or the paraphernalia of those who believe in the 'Old Straight Track'."

BOTH SIDES NOW

Philip Heselton, a former editor of The Ley Hunter, in drawing my attention to The Listener articles, wrote: "I think we're going to find occurring some sort of conflict - in basic terms two opposing - the underground, UFO-oriented mystical side and the statistical minded side which is aiming to convince professional archaeologists of the existence of leys. Let me state immediately that I fall quite definitely into both these categories and I do not think that they conflict in any way - both are valid (and valuable) lines of approach and both are needed. What is regrettable is that some people may try to create a dichotomy where there needn't be one at all."

I hope Philip will be enlarging upon the lines in which ley research may continue in a future issue.

"WAPPING LIE"

Dr. J. Cleary-Baker, as regular readers know, is a ley sceptic. He has continued the debate between himself, myself and Jimmy Goddard. He writes: "My article in the Summer 1967 issue of BUFORA JOURNAL seems to have been one of my 'brighter' efforts, to the extent, at any rate, that it is one of the half-dozen or so of my writings listed in the recent Library of Congress Bibliography on UFOs. Jimmy Goddard and many other ley enthusiasts must have read it when it appeared. NOT ONE ATTEMPT AT A REBUTTAL HAS EVER COME TO MY NOTICE! I think I am entitled to assume that the acceptance of the ley idea is a product of belief, not of impartial study."

"Certainly as Jimmy observes, one cannot 'undiscover' things. One can, however, repudiate pseudo-discoveries and disprove the false evidences adduced in support of the same. Learned treatises have appeared which 'prove' that

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BUFORA proposes to hold a lecture in London on November 7 to discuss leys in relation to UFO phenomena. John Mic-hell will open the discussion, with Tony Wedd, Jimmy Goddard and myself, Paul Screeton, on the panel. I hope as many readers as possible will attend what promises to be a lively and fascinating exchange of views.

not the same thing at all.

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(Ed:Dr. Cleary-Baker here says Michel has "repudiated" orthoteny, yet in The Ley Hunter - Number Two he said Michell had "virtually abandoned it" which is not quite the same thing at all.)

"It is not true that all unusual discoveries are official scientific heresy to begin with, although admittedly some are. I am the last to deny that scientific dogmatism often stands in the way of scientific progress. However, an idea is not necessarily true and valuable because it is new and unusual.

"A simple consideration will often serve to punch a hole in a vast bag of alleged evidences of a given hypothesis. Consider the 'proofs' of the former existence of Atlantis, resting upon cultural, architectural and lingual resemblances between Old and New World phenomena. All this airy superstructure vanishes when we reflect that the great galleys of the Ancient World were as capable of negotiating the Atlantic as were the cockleshell ships of Columbus.

(Ed:Yet one man rowed the Atlantic single-handed last year).

"Scientific dogmatism is probably right in rejecting Atlantis but wrong in rejecting the notion of contact between America and the civilisations of the Ancient World.

"Excuse these rather rambling remarks. The lack of any decisive attempt by the ley hunters to rebut arguments against their notions, renders any attempt to meet them on their own ground more than a little difficult."

I have not sent him a nationwide list of branches of F.W. Woolworth because even if an imposing pattern was produced it would have no significance. I doubt whether F.W. Woolworth's build their stores on sites of Megalithic monuments. But I agree with his December issue point that patterns can be found everywhere, which is not surprising as harmony is the basis of the universe. You could even say there is significance in the names of William Stukeley, Brinsley le Poer Trench and Wellesley Tudor Pole in our field of research. Or when Bob Dylan was at the Isle of Wight pop festival last summer he visited Godshill Church which is a ley-orthoteny centre and his record on release then was "Lay, Lady, Lay."! Obviously these are coincidences but leys are beyond coincidence.

HERE BE
DRAGONS

John Michell is one of the leading champions of the ley system and I reprint his letter not so much because he touches upon the theme of this issue, but it clarifies the point I made in my review of his "The View Over Atlantis" regarding what I believed to be a retreat from associating leys and UFOs.

"In your kind review of 'The View Over Atlantis' you comment on the slight attention given in the book to the question of UFOs in connection with the ley system.

"I think most of us realise that the phenomena of UFOs and prehistoric alignments are in some way related. After all, it was the reports of UFO sightings that led to the present re-examination of the ley system. Alfred Watkins was years ahead of his time, and had it not been for Jimmy Goddard and a few others, who some years ago first suggested an association between leys and UFO paths, his work would have remained neglected. But unfortunately the association is very hard to prove. The ley system stretches all across the country, set out with the accuracy of a modern surveyor. The precision of alignments between individual standing stones can only really be appreciated on maps of the 6 inch scale. On the other hand, very few UFO reports contain any exact information on the location and direction of sighted objects. In general, UFOs, and also migrating birds, do appear to follow certain lines of exceptional magnetic properties such as geological faults. The earth's magnetic field, and thus everything within it, is directly influenced by the sun, moon and planets, and this may well explain the prehistoric practice of astronomy in connection with leys and alignments. The legends of dragons as manifestations of cosmic energy indicate that the phenomenon of UFOs was known to the prehistoric astronomers as it still is to primitive people, and that its nature was once far better understood than it is now. That is why I believe that the most rewarding approach to the problem of UFOs may be through the study of prehistoric science and philosophy. At the same time, we will never understand what it was that the prehistoric scientists knew about the elemental forces until we have found it again in terms of our own modern science. Quite probably, the vital clues to the prehistoric mystery have already been discovered by physicists and biologists, but their significance has not yet been recognized. The importance of our subject is that a study of the ley system in all its aspects helps us to move out of the dream world, into which we are all educated, to a world of reality, in which commonly observed phenomena such as UFOs are given due attention. It is no use expecting established authorities to accept the reality either of UFOs or the ley system. New ideas never convert those totally conditioned to reject them. They only prevail.

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transmitting station, so it is "reasonable" to "infer" that power is associated with the crystals in the standing stones. Now in the first place, quartz is an oxide of silicon; whereas the crystals in the early wireless sets were, if I remember aright, galena (lead sulphide), or carborundum (silicon carbide) with a voltage-bias, or perhaps iron pyrites or other things, but certainly not quartz of which ("Magnetism & Electricity for Students" by H.E. Hadley) it is said: "Of all insulators, fused quartz is found to be the most perfect." So the analogy between quartz and wireless crystals is "off the beam" anyway; but even if it were hot, I cannot see what the use of crystals for a very specific purpose (rectifying oscillating voltages) in a wireless has to do with the idea that Megalithic stones "form a power system."

*Another inaccuracy in the same article - not very important, but adding to the suspicion that he is not as precise as he ought to be - it is not possible to go to Stonehenge or use any other type of "sundial" and "set my watch by that transit at the meridian, and not be above 5 mins. out." Because of the ellipticity of the Earth's orbit round the sun, the movement of the Earth round the Sun during the year is not uniform (as it would be if the Earth's orbit were a circle). This causes the moment of passage of the Sun across the meridian to swing during the year on either side of "clock-noon" (or 1.0 pm by BST). So one's watch, so set, could be (at Stonehenge, which is about 2° west of Greenwich) about 20 mins. slow or 8 mins. fast (roughly) according to the time of year.

When I embarked more or less accidentally at Midsummer Sunrise, 1949, on the long trail of my investigation of the significance of stone circles etc., I had no knowledge of the activities of Thom, Watkins, etc. An attempt a few years later to interest the local amateur archaeologists in my findings (which, in the event, proved to have close affinities of Watkins and Thom) had results which conformed with Jimmy Goddard's statement with which I opened. However, I kept my own counsel, gradually brought to notice my findings on a strictly factual basis with the minimum of speculation, and have built up a reputation, I think, as a man of precision who will not make assertions except on a pretty firm foundation of fact and logical inference. I take the liberty of advising everyone else who is interested in the objectives of The Ley Hunter to proceed likewise. Progress may thereby seem slower, but it will be all the surer.

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NEXT MONTH

The Ley Hunter will include:

- * Tony Wedd: "The Path." How Mr. A.J. Dunkin Wedd came to associate leys and UFOs.
- * Barbara Crump; "A Lost Network of Ancient Ways." The Romans refuted as original builders of the ancient Fosse Way.
- * Circumlibra: "The Ley on which I live." A Yorkshire ley is traced.

SCIENCE FICTION SECTION: So as to concentrate on leys and orthoteny this section has been dropped. It may appear occasionally as a separate magazine if interest warrants it.