

THE LEY HUNTER

No.
50



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LEAD IN

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Despite its being a decimal celebration, the golden anniversary issue of THE LEY HUNTER is published appropriately at a solstice and at the season of the comet. In the November of 1969 this magazine of ancient skills and wisdom appeared phoenix-like from the ashes of the original THE LEY HUNTER and feeding on good vibrations of the Aquarian Age has grown and been sustained. It would be egotistical and improper for me to attempt to assess the magazine's and its' contributor influences on the thinking behind the "live" archaeology. What I really want to say is a heartfelt "thankyou" to those who have made the magazine what it is -- my printer, by contributing articles, sharing discoveries, subscribing, and encouraging others to share in the mag's ethos. As for this, No. 50, the issue attempts particularly to give an indication of the beginnings of ley hunting and its current state.

*****NOTES:NOTES:NOTES

To UK SUBSCRIBERS - apologies for some recent delay in producing and dispatching copies. It is a hectic business for basically one person - please bear with me. To USA SUBSCRIBERS - Eccentric amounts keep being sent as one year's sub. For many months the figure has been consistently maintained at 6 dollars. To CONTRIBUTORS - No payment for articles is made but for each article published your sub. is extended by one month. To CORRESPONDENTS - Pressure of producing this issue means replies will be delayed. To EVERYONE - Issue 51 will include Bob Rickard on E.J. Eitel, Robin Holtom on William Blake, and more.

O.K. so the comet isn't so far as marvellous as predicted but.....look at what's happening! Let's refresh our memories with a dip into John Michell's "CITY OF REVELATION" -- "Trivial omens give warning of trivial events, but the momentous historical events that attend the birth of a greater cycle in time are preceded by phenomena of a portentous nature, through which the least observant can scarcely fail to become aware of impending change....It has always been believed that the decisive moments in history are attended by the appearance of strange aerial phenomena, such as...the comet over the battlefield at Hastings." Let's hope THE LEY HUNTER No 50 will brighten somewhat Xmas folks.

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FROM Page 12:

..of military exploitation. Only to an extent can it be argued that this is natural with regard to the Communist Bloc. This book excels in many ways and all true ley hunters who accept the alignments as power lines should carefully consider research here into the bioplasmic body of man. It's a hefty book the last few chapters are mindblowers.

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MISCELLANY

THAT ZODIAC - Hawk Harrison, of California, researching biography of Glastonbury Zodiac rediscovers Mrs K.E. Maltwood.....FAYRE ENUF - Andrew Kerr, Glastonbury Fayre organiser now Guru Maharaj Ji devotee (whose mag. recently published excellent piece on Glastonbury). I'm surprised....No room here for reviews but recieved No. 2 of THE NEWS; TORC 11 wit pieces by John Michell and Charles Shepherd; QUEST 16 with remarkably lucid article on the parapsychology/occult argument + Sid Birchby.....Hopefully next issue more reviews of magazines and books.....Articles required always.....LOVE.....

THE MOMENT OF DISCOVERYHOW ALFRED WATKINS FOUND LEYSby Allen Watkins

For reasons which are fully explained in my memoir "Alfred Watkins of Hereford", my father was always reticent about the actual moment of his discovery. The following short factual account is intended to bridge that gap in the records for those who have not yet had access to my memoir by request to their local library.

On June 30, 1921, my father had to make a journey to Blackwardine which is a small one-street village in the north-western corner of his native county, Herefordshire. Accordingly he took a "dekko" of his local map to see whether there were any interesting hill-tops around with likely views of the surrounding valleys.

It must be appreciated that nothing was further from his mind than any kind of investigation of a preconceived idea. His frame of mind was the natural curiosity of a native who loves his county and enjoys improving his acquaintance with odd spots of it.

His eye lit on the lofty camp of Croft Ambury, travelled along the map to Blackwardine and continued further to Risbury Camp and on to the high ground at Stretton Grandison where he surmised a Roman camp.

He stared amazed and incredulous, and reached for his straight-edge ruler. It was an exact straight line! Then things began to work fast. He didn't have to think any more: he KNEW. A complete picture of The Old Straight Track and what it all meant in its sundry ramifications flooded his mind. "It all happened in a flash," he told me privately. "Do you know that except for beacons I never discovered a single thing afterwards that I did not see in my mind then."

How did this revelation happen? It was the culminating point of a long build-up in his unconscious mind which started in boyhood. He and a schoolboy friend picked up a Roman coin on a ford in the Hondw river near Llanthony Abbey in the Welsh Black Mountains.

So the schoolbooks were not something you had to memorize but told the real truth! Roman soldiers had actually been there: they had crossed that ford: and that coin proved it!

That experience started an instinctive liking for things which were historical and traditional. These were the real things! So all his life he had been attracted to hill tops, camps, and spots of ancient sanctity. In his working life he travelled all around the county. The result was inevitable. At the age of 66 he discovered leys in the way described above.

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SOME MEMORIES OF ALFRED WATKINSby GODFREY C. DAVIES

My first recollection of seeing Mr Watkins was in about 1912, when I attended a meeting of our local photographic society with my father, who was a personal friend of his and an active member of the society. I often went to the lantern lectures with my father and saw quite a lot of the father figure of A.W., who was a founder member and past president of the society.

It was as a photographic pioneer that A.W. was so well known not only in this country but in Europe and the United States of America. He was a modern da Vinci with an enormous range of interests and was the first to invent and market a photographic exposure meter. He discovered the relation to time and temperature in photographic development and he also initiated the famous Watkins system for factorial development.

He was always an active member of the local archaeological society and did a great amount of research into the subject. When I became secretary of the photographic society in 1920 I learned of his theory regarding trackways and it was my job to

arrange the first public lecture which he gave on the subject. The local Town Hall was packed and the audience were very appreciative. The lecture was illustrated with many excellent lantern slides, the making of which occupied a great deal of his time. He used to lecture on such subjects as bee keeping and bread making, and one of his favourite lecture subjects was the journey of Little Nell and her grandfather. Mr Watkins had a theory that Dickens had this district in mind when he described the journey in his book "The Old Curiosity Shop", and the series of slides depicted places and scenes described in the book.

We were all busy looking for anything that might be of interest to A.W. and I was able to tell him about one site which he had overlooked. It was in a very overgrown piece of land seldom visited and he was glad to be able to find it and fit it in with a planned idea.

A.W. was a familiar figure in his native city, Hereford and on his walks through the streets would stop and talk to very many people, many of whom would have a question to ask or something to discuss. He lived in the shadow of the Cathedral and most of the buildings he frequently visited were nearby. When quite late in life he went to the art school party dressed as an old farmer in a smock frock, giving great pleasure to all present.

The local photographic society had at times inaugurated special Watkins memorial lectures, and important people in the photographic world have given lectures. When the Photographic Convention met here a few years ago a great deal of praise was emphasised and several speakers said that by his pioneer work he had done as much as anyone to further the progress of the subject. The Royal Photographic progress medal has only been given a very few times and he received it twice.

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THE SPIRIT OF POPULAR LEY HUNTING

GLIMPSES OF AN OUTDOOR HOBBY OF FORTY YEARS AGO
THROUGH THE EYES OF A WEALDEN DETECTIVE

**
** by PHILIP
** HESELTON
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Some thoughts and comments
on the writings of Donald
Maxwell - an appreciation by a follower of
the paths he rediscovered and made known
through his books.

Essential truths change
not from age to age, but
the form in which they are
presented varies greatly
according to the time and
circumstances in which

they were revealed and given form in the written word. What may emerge is perhaps as much a picture of such circumstances as it is of the underlying verities that are seeking to be explained. Such a truth was that revealed to Alfred Watkins in that summer of 1921, and such writings about this truth are those of Donald Maxwell.

Capturing very much of the spirit of Britain between the wars, Maxwell was a writer of what may loosely be called "guide-books" of the counties around London, but they are really far more than this. They are more like invitations towards adopting the spirit of adventurous questioning of the landscape which is so much in tune with the spirit of the ley hunter.

The books I specifically want to mention are the "A Detective in..." series, of which there were four, dealing in turn with Sussex, Kent, Surrey and Essex, and all published in the 1932-34 period. This is the area in which I started my own ley hunting and although the books can hardly be described as ley hunting manuals for the areas in question, it is nevertheless an exciting feeling when one sees printed in a book written over 30 years previously a description of a ley that one thought one had rediscovered after several thousand years. So it was with me, and so my attention was drawn to the works of Donald Maxwell.

These are still fairly well known today and in their time were very popular. I picked up the two volumes I have in second-hand bookshops and they are still fairly frequently to be found on the shelves of public libraries, particularly in the S-E.

As is often the case in books of the time, the information is woven into the form of a story. In "A Detective in Surrey" for example, Maxwell himself, in the company of his stalwart friend Brown and two young ladies with the unlikely names of Scylla and Charybdis set out to explore Surrey by car and footpath. At first they are intent upon the search for Roman roads, but their eyes are subsequently opened by the dramatic entrance of the "Watkinsian" who catches up with them at the White Hart in Bletchingley anxious to "call them from the error of their ways and from their Romeward leanings". The tall, thin stranger then goes on to explain the theory and significance of leys, that they pre-date the Roman roads and a little of their history and origins. He leaves them a "Dodman snail" as a clue and a copy of "The Ley Hunter's Manual" and then mysteriously disappears from the story.

As a not infrequent contributor to these pages once said to me: "I don't believe it!" Well, no - it is a story, and one written in a language very different from the way it might be written today. Here was an effort to appeal to the popular audience of the 1930s, but can we not try to read these books with those eyes, and is the essential message not the same? Is it not to look at the landscape with new eyes, become "Watkinsians" if you like. This is what Maxwell succeeded in doing for many in the 1930s and was well on the way towards establishing popular support for what the Birmingham Post called "a new outdoor hobby". Many of us may feel that ley hunting is more than just "a hobby", but who knows where things can lead once one has started on the path, and what inspiration these books have provided and indeed may yet provide.

Perhaps the underlying depth is best provided in Maxwell's own Preface to "A Detective in Essex". Even at that time there was a realisation and a depth of vision into the reasons for the professional archaeologists' attacks and unwillingness to take the subject seriously - their potential insecurity is well brought out. Maxwell had been taken to task by the reviewers of "A Detective in Surrey" for his own discovery that a church on one of his leys had turned out to be modern in origin, and he was criticised for "being too cocksure". He answers as follows:

"Anything less cocksure than the frank narrative of complete failure in a point of archaeological research, it would be difficult to find. No archaeologist would ever have admitted that he had been entirely wrong, and recorded the headstrong foolishness of his attempted discoveries. It must be remembered that these papers are narratives of the hopes, fears, uncertainties, and sometimes certainties of an explorer and his friends who by means of sketches incites others to be "detectives" and go over the same ground. Should these novices make observations and follow up clues that the writer has missed, the topographical world will be richerI could wish that there were some machinery for the collecting of evidence from amateurs who, as hikers, ramblers and motorists, are 'raking over' the fields of archaeology as they have never been raked over before. The British Astronomical Society has compiled valuable records of the radiant points of meteors by means of postcard reports from members (often technically untrained in astronomy). The probable inaccuracy of some of the observations is checked by the coincidence of others in cases where all are (as evident by time reports) recording the same phenomenon.

"That there is no such help from amateur explorers is largely the fault of archaeologists themselves. It would seem that any fresh evidence - as in the case of that discovered by Mr Alfred Watkins - of methods and matters concerning archaic England is almost invariably treated with scepticism, which is natural to the wise and prudent, or with antagonism - which is just unscientific.

"An example will show what I mean. In the same review of A Detective in Surrey... the writer goes on to say that I had discovered 'Roman roads in every possible direction'. I did not do so, but we will let that pass. He goes on to another delicious gem of archaeological prejudice, and writes: 'One imagines the shade of Professor Haverfield returning in horror to view this new profession of Roman roads covering the face of Surry.'

"Why should the shade of Professor Haverfield view any fresh evidence or new excavation with horror? The inference is that an archaeologist who is an expert or a professor must be considered to speak like the Pope, ex cathedra, and that all true believers will firmly shut their eyes to any new light from whatever direction it shall come.

"Mr Alfred Watkins has been treated by the archaeological world very much as Galileo was treated by the scientific world of his time - the only difference being that the anti-Watkinsian has not dragged the Church into this dispute. No doubt many of Galileo's arguments for a moving world were unsound. No doubt many of his friends gave silly reasons for the hypothesis.

"However, the world still moves and leys or 'straight lines', in spite of the ridicule of 'experts', still exist."

I have quoted this at length because I think it provides an insight into the working of the minds of some "experts" which is just as relevant today unfortunately. The last two paragraphs in a nutshell show up clearly the illogicality of orthodox scientists in every field who refuse to investigate because of the "cranks" who are interested or the "demonstrably fallacious" arguments which are given. Only when scientists are once again guided into what to investigate by the inward light of inspiration rather than by the outward dictates of fashion and prestige will science regain its rightful place as a tool in the search for truth.

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NOTES ON A LEICESTERSHIRE LEY NETWORK

Compiled by Paul Devereux

Three or four years ago my wife Jay and I were driving from Birmingham to Leicester. We turned off the A5 (Watling Street) to cut across country to meet the A47 just south of Leicester. Although I was born and bred just north of Leicester I was quite unacquainted with the greater part of this "hinterland" of which Market Bosworth is the approximate centre. As we drove along we both felt through some sixth sense that we were in a particularly rich ley landscape. Most ley hunters must be familiar with this feeling. When we passed signposts to Odstone, Snarestone, Barlestone and a great many other "stone" place names (one place even called "Stone Rows"!) our intuition was further strengthened.

It was some time later that we learnt that friends of ours - DAVID and JUNE MORRIS - had done some preliminary research in that very area. They were natives of the district though they now live in Chester. I have finally persuaded Dave to send his maps to me and I quote from his covering letter:

"Ibstock church has several leys passing through it. The present building is 10th century but, of course, there are signs of earlier holy settlements on the same site. It has an avenue of trees leading to the new main road, the ley crosses the road and goes up a small lane where we found two markstones which have never been disturbed (even local council blokes tarmac around them). The ley continued to Heather and thence to other churches etc. We walked it and there are plenty of tracks, gates, paths, wall patterns which all fit. One thing we noticed about the area to the west of Ibstock was the number of villages with names ending in "stone": Shackerstone, Thringstone, Whetstone, Ravenstone, Nailstone, etc., etc. We haven't found much to link this lot but I bet a bit of delving will pull up something or other. From the rough pattern of criss-cross leys throughout Leicestershire we reckon that they form a star of some kind with the old site of Ratby or Ratae earthwork (Bury) as its centre. It's a bloody massive earthwork. Most of the area is untouched by industry apart from Leicester, of course, and that's where traces are minimal. Local legend has it that there was once a path from Ibstock church right to Wales but due to Stoke-on-Trent that is now impossible to verify."

June Morris discovered when going through the old records of the church at

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Stones near Dorchester. The traffic was hurrying by polluting the atmosphere and desecrating the otherwise peaceful valley with very unmusical sounds. However, within the circle I was soon at peace.

Man is far more than the things he makes and the disturbances he creates. He has the power to detach himself from the material side of life and to become conscious on other levels of existence. These other levels are every bit as tangible to his conscious mind and really more important to his welfare than are the things he makes from denser matter. At the same time there are so many levels on the unseen side that he must keep his wits about him and use all his faculties in dealing with them.

And so it was that I turned my attentions to the stones of the circle and away from the blatant sounds close by. They faded away and the stones came closer and as I attuned to them they each told me something of itself. I learned that each stone represented some trait in the human character. Not every circle I visit impresses me so but yet it is a story other stones have told. And so I am led to believe that some stone circles and some stones were used in what we would call a religious manner.

The day I visited Carnac was a perfect autumn day, that is after the early morning mists had cleared away. The whole countryside for miles around has many ancient sites, some of which I turned aside to examine. I also passed a number of quite new country cottages and was rather intrigued to note they had standing or other stones on their plot. I almost envied them of their positions until I came to the rather extensive yard of a monumental mason and landscape gardener. Disillusioned I carried on. The route to the alignments is well signposted and yet the easterly end comes as a surprise as one rounds the bend in the lane. The first section is most impressive consisting, I think, of 15 parallel rows of stones leading up a slight incline. Another row across the far end links the rows together. Immediately behind is what may have been a circle or part of a circle. A little distance beyond various arrangements of stones are to be seen and then the rows recommence to stride across the gently undulating countryside for several miles. A very impressive sight.

I went without having seen any plan or having read anything much about them. I prefer to visit first and study afterwards. Now when I read I shall be back at Carnac maybe to colour whatever is before me with my own impressions. These stones did not have the same impact as those in Dorset perhaps because of their number and with so many stories to tell. Right or wrong I will make comment. The alignments were laid down first but other peoples followed who fitted in their own particular arrangements which could be confusing to the present day observer. Also I would say the rows and circle at the end towards the east was used in a ritual or religious manner providing power for the rest of the alignment. In other words a head with a body. I shall probably go again.

A visit to the museum in Carnac town was very helpful. However, I did not think much of their illustration of ancient man. Why does orthodoxy regard those very intelligent men, capable of laying down such monuments, as a sort of missing link? I am told that approved thinking is changing its mind and that ancient man was not quite what they thought he was. Perhaps next time I visit Carnac the museum will have a revised illustration.

On my round trip I visited sites in Jersey including the rather important one at Hogue Bie. This site has a passage grave surmounted by a huge mound on which various buildings have been built and demolished over a long period of time. The occupying Germans appear to have respected it and dug out a bunker close by. This together with another building house museums. A very interesting site to spend an instructive hour or so.

On Guernsey there are a number of remains and also a good, if small, museum in St Peter Port. A small passage grave is to be found near La Rochelle which I visited and will remember for it was here that I had a similar experience to that at

However, this isn't an article on the occult. It's about leys. Some years ago I found a genuine pre-Watkins reference to a local ley in the form of a country saying printed in "Cheshire Notes and Queries" for 1881:

"Broken Cross and Lung Moss
And Whirley dyne below,
Kettle's i' th' dyche and Trugs
i' th' hole
A' stond a' in a row."

The writer said that Trugs is a small farmhouse in a valley between Alderley and Macclesfield near the Harbarrow, and that the four places do stand very much in a line. With a lead like that, I have been on the

lookout ever since for further information, and if one fiddles about with 6in. OS maps there is no doubt that some curious results can be obtained. The district between the Harbarrow and Alderley Edge is seething with barrows and stone circles, and there is at least one Cold Arbor place name not far away. It would need more expert ley hunters than me to study the area, and I hope that they will now do so, for it is a very rich and unexplored field for research. That there are leys in the area is suggested by a passage in Alan Garner's "Gomrath", describing a tradition of an "old straight track" starting from Alderley Beacon and finishing many miles away at Shining Tor near Dove Dale. This is crying out for investigation. I have done a little, and I think that with a few days tramping over the hills, this track would "go", to use a caving term. Incidentally, the name "Alderley" does not, I think, have anything to do with leys as old straight tracks. The oldest form of the name is "Aldredeslega", which can be translated many ways. The one that makes most sense is "The Wizard's Wood". But I could be wrong.

Thinking about the two different sets of facts that had emerged about the district gives an interesting result. First there is the turbulent psychic case history. Second, there seem to be leys, and there are certainly many prehistoric sites. Sometimes the two sets of data come together, as, for example, at Whirley, mentioned in the folk saying already quoted. A legend says that Whirley Hall is supposed to have a pack of red and white hounds (like the Hell hounds of the Mabinogion) which enter at the back door and rush out at the front on New Year's Eve. Is this the Baskerville Hound in another form? Whether or not, I should not care to be out on the hills near Whirley at certain times of the year.

But the speculation that comes to mind is this. There are, to some who study leys, such things as leys that have "gone sour". The rationale is that leys are associated with earth currents of some form (dragon lines) and that the ancients who set out the leys were able to make use of those currents. In some cases, defects have arisen in certain leys and the defects manifest as psychic events: UFOs, hauntings, and the like. Very often, leys and earth currents coincide on the site with underground streams, and it is worth noting that one theory of poltergeist activities is that there may sometimes be a stream under the affected house.

At Alderley Edge there are 3 natural wells; the Holy Well, the Wishing Well, and the Wizard's Well, all full of legends, bent pins and coins at one time. In Victorian days an archaeologist named Roeder made a map showing all the Alderley antiquities that he knew about. I have a copy, and it shows 9 wells, not 3. For the significance of the Nine Wells of Celtic mythology see any book on folklore. I think it's also possible that here is the power centre, as it were, on which the local leys drew, and that it's out of control. The map, by the way, does show where the 6 missing wells were. Fieldwork, anybody? Rescue operation, anybody!

This talk of "earth currents" is not all fantasy. See the Geological Survey

Reader's letter: From DAVID TOOP,
of London.

"Just two small points with regard to the William Porter appraisal of Marie Yates's Arnolfini Gallery exhibition poster (No. 48). First - the Nine Maidens photograph shows 10 stones - the 10th being myself (playing flute) not Marie. Second - the poster is not so much a Nine Maidens poster as a Hilson's Ho poster. Dartmoor ley hunters will recognize the large photograph as being the long stone row almost immediately south of the extremely long row of Stingers Hill/Green Hill. Hope this eliminates any possible misunderstandings."

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ghosts plotted in the same area 90% appear in places or at spots on the leys. Out of 170 UFOs plotted over 90% are either travelling along the same alignments or appear over points on the leys. Believe it or not ALL the local black puma-like animal sightings since 1965 appear on leys too. The latter phenomena seems to have connotations with the Black Shuck ghost reports in the West Country. The more apparent "transcient" phenomena one plots the crazier it all seems. As a matter of interest, I am working on a book about the ley-ghost and UFO tie-up and would be grateful for any help from ley hunters in my local area. Please write to Phil Grant, 2A New Park Road, Southbourne, Bournemouth, Hants.

The dowsing method we use is a very simple one - metal angle rods - and what we pick up is best described by Guy Underwood in his book "The Pattern Of The Past" under "track lines". These take the form of parallel triads about 6 to 9 feet apart running down the centre of the alignment with weaker "secondary" triads ray-ing out to about 35 ft each side of the centre of the ley. The triads appear to cross over at intervals giving one the impression of a corkscrew effect or influence that is rayed out by whatever it is that we are dowsing at the centre of the line under the ground. I can supply more details to any of you who wish to follow the thing up yourselves. Please send a S.A.E. as my stamp bill seems to get higher every month.

What we can glean from all the above data is debatable. I don't for one moment think that we have cracked the ley-ghost-UFO enigma in one fell-swoop but I do feel that we are on the right track. As would be expected I have my own theories about this subjectly - mostly governed by what I have read and experienced etc. As space is short I will try and define them within a few terse headings.

- 1) The leys are part of our perception of things - not material tracks, currents or the like, although to our material senses they probably represent something like the capillary system of the Earth.
- 2) Ghosts-UFOs-apparitions etc are probably also a part of our subjective perception. Possibly they are properties of "higher" dimensions that we perceive as movement - solidity, animation, etc.
- 3) That this existence is but an unreality compared to a greater reality of which we are a part, that we are wrong to attempt to localise the Universal with our "nuts and bolts" concepts.

Of course, the above is only a quick, rather facile, definition of my thoughts on the matter and probably reads like gobbledegook to most of you. I can only reiterate the remark I always make to my UFO study evening class session students - I cannot teach or convince another of the unexplained. All one can do is offer to share one's conviction and struggle for enlightenment with others. We all must come to terms with this things in our own way - indoctrination is strictly for the politicians. I honestly believe that the truth - or a truer state of awareness - cannot be hidden. Once one knows a little of the enigmatic for what it really is - the rest shines out like a beacon to all those who tread the right track. With all my heart I can honestly say that I am glad to me a "ley-man". I only hope that we can eventually see things for what they are and not for what we want them to be.

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PSI: Psychic Discoveries Behind the Iron Curtain (Sheila Ostrander & Lynn Schroeder. (Abacus, 95p).

This is an exciting and informative book; it is essential reading. However, I advise readers not to allow the authors' own opinions to unduly influence you. Let your own judgment guide if you have any occult sensitivity. For the authors make a categorical early statement that they regard the parapsychological discoveries as being non-spiritual. Consequently the book reflects a materialistic viewpoint and line of approach to both subject matter and eminent and gifted interviewees. Those reading this review will largely be persons rejecting the notion we have but 5 senses, and also will regard other organs of perception as being in the realm of the sublime and specially adapted to take us closer to Spirit and far from maddening materialism. All too clearly is the reader confronted with a one-sided account of ESP being utilised on stages or in circumstances suggestive
(Cont. P1)