



**THE
LEY
HUNTER**

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THE OLD STONES OF LAND'S END by John Michell

AN APPRECIATION by ALLEN WATKINS

I have just finished reading John's latest book, and find it difficult to find words sufficiently glowing to express the thrill and interest the book produced in me. Here we have the most radical and important development of ley thinking since my father's book in 1925.

Major Tyler followed up my father's discovery on the right lines with his "Geometrical Arrangement of Ancient Sites" pamphlet -- a most suggestive essay, but it left us still guessing at the basic meaning of the arrangements, except for his shrewd surmise that they were in some way associated with The Ancient Wisdom.

So far, then, we have the mysterious sacred sites (1) aligned, and (2) set in an indeterminate geometrical pattern. It is distinctly a major achievement on John's part to have filled in so many blanks in those patterns with such exact and proven details. This he did in his "City of Revelation" which opened up a new world of thought and an old world of fact.

This achieved, the sites are found to show other features besides alignment and geometrical pattern. John now enumerates and discusses the additional features in his "The Old Stones of Land's End" - orientation with sun, moons and stars, parallelism with dowsing, and the physical facts of earth fertility currents.

John argues that these mixed and apparently incongruous features have in reality a common factor, and from them is able to deduce the outlines of ancient magical thought as contrasted with modern "scientific" thought, and so reach a new concept of ancient man.

It takes a broad and exceptionally well-informed mind to reach new concepts with the imaginative sweep that John shows in his book. He must have put in an immense amount of travelling and painstaking local inquiry. Actually when my wife and I were in Padstow two years ago, he and two of his helpers called at our flat overlooking the estuary, and showed us some of the photographs.

My father, in his writings, referred casually to all the features of leys now under discussion, but it has remained for John to gather them up neatly, bind them together, and make something new and definite out of them. In effect he has completely transformed the original concept of leys and immensely strengthened the evidence. In the current cant of the popular press he has achieved "a major breakthrough". My father would have been delighted with this new development of his original thesis.

MISCELLANY: Maurice Green wrote a piece in the April 1974 issue of "19" (!) on "UFOs - A Message From The Past?" He says: "Many philosophies believe that 'ley lines'...." Christopher Lee, of Mole View, 11 Cambray Place, Cheltenham, Glos., wishes to correspond with anyone working on sites in the Orkney Islands... ..And Nancie Paterson, of 38 Redcliffe Road, London SW10, seeks contact with fellow London ley hunters.....

THE BRITANNIA COCONUT DANCERS OF BACUP, LANCASHIRE

- by JOHN RADFORD -

Bacup in Lancashire is a small mill town on a rather hilly site. Easter Saturday sees the Britannia Coconut Dancers, familiarly known as the Nutters. It is a mysterious event, impressive by the quiet dedication of the dancers and a general sense of pride.

On Easter Saturday Bacup attracts numbers of people. I take them to be mostly local, so that the town is pleasantly full but not crowded. People wander about the streets, cluttering here and there. When I was there the weather was a rather typical Lancashire damp drizzle. It didn't seem to reduce the general feeling of expectancy, of a certain inevitability. Round about 11 o'clock the sound of a small brass band begins to be heard, and down the street come the dancers in single file. There are eight in the team. They wear black breeches, black clogs and black jerseys; and their faces are blacked. They also wear white stockings and little red and white striped skirts over the breeches. Red and white caps are worn. The "coconuts" are wooden discs made from bobbins. One is worn on each knee and one carried in each hand; and a fifth is worn on the waist.

At suitable open places the dancers stop, the brass band draws up and a dance is performed. These are something between clog dances and morris dances in style. Some are done with garlands, others are clapping dances, in which a complicated rhythm is beaten out on the coconuts.

The meaning of the event is impossible to discover. The best guess is that the dance is simply a local variant of morris dancing, and thus a remnant of the ancient cycle of seasonal rituals of which other fragments are seen in sword dances and mumming plays. The blackened faces may derive from coal mining: but there is a clear resemblance to the disguises adopted by mummers. As one old guiser put it: "They mustn't know who I be." The individual is for the time lost within the mythic figure he is personating. Thomas Hardy in a description of Wessex mummers referred to an almost impersonal quality: the players did not act but rather spoke the lines as though compelled to do so, "...intoning their parts on one note, and punctuating them by nicking the sword against the staff." Something of this undoubtedly comes through from the Bacup dancers.

The dancers themselves probably give little heed to their ultimate origins, though they do possess their own versions of their history. Motivation lies in carrying on the tradition they have inherited and in giving and receiving satisfaction through their entertainment. Yet each survival needs to be explained, and it is hard not to think that each ritual event, however debased in itself, is not also inherently satisfying for essentially the same reasons as first gave rise to it.

The old morris tradition has clearly become mingled with the Lancashire clog-dancing skills. Clog-dancing itself, of course, is simply the universal (in Great Britain) art of step-dancing, done in the local clogs. Traditions do not survive without organization and it is often because changed circumstances destroy the organizations that we lose the traditional event. The Coconut dancers have arrangements for practising through the year. Their secretary, Mr Flynn, kindly gave me the following account (undated):

"The dances themselves are supposed to be pirate dances which were brought over to Cornwall by Moorish pirates. Some of these sailors settled down in Cornwall and became employed in the local industry, mining. As mines and quarries were opened in Lancashire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries quite a few Cornish men came north bringing with them their knowledge and experience of this type of work, and it is with these people that the dances were reputedly brought to Bacup. In particular two Cornishmen who came to work at Whitworth quarry (Whitworth is a small village three miles from Bacup on the road to Rochdale) are supposed to have started the dances up here. This fact was given to us by a former member of the team who is now retired. We cannot be certain of the

date but it was a well known fact amongst his father's generation about sixty years ago. The dances spread throughout Rossendale and at the turn of the last century there were at least four groups of Coconut dancers in the valley. Of these the Tunstead Group celebrated their half-century in 1907. It is from this group that we ourselves are descended and last year we celebrated our centenary. The caps, black jerseys, kilts and white stockings are thought to come from the Moorish sailors. This is also the reason for our black faces. The clogs are most certainly Lancashire. The nuts themselves (the name coconut was given to them comparatively recently, probably since the dance came to Lancashire) are not coconuts at all but made of wood. These possibly were used by the miners for protecting their hands and knees as they crawled along seam faces, the one on the belt being a spare one. The garlands are quite normal, originally being made of flowers.

The traditional day for our dance is Saturday before Easter Sunday and we dance all day throughout Rossendale. In fact we have danced upwards of fifty miles, starting about 9-0 a.m. and finishing about twelve hours later.

The traditional instrument of accompaniment is the English concertina. However, for street work as at Easter we now use a brass band.

I must emphasize that this information is no way authoritative and is quite open to doubt. As you will appreciate it is practically impossible to gather evidence of a really valid nature about a dance which goes back several centuries."

This honest-sounding story has the air of one constructed to make sense of events that now puzzle their participants (rather than of one to frustrate the inquisitive, as in other cases).

Easter Sunday at Bacup shows the curious phenomenon, which I have noted elsewhere, of parallel events. While the Nutters are dancing in the streets, one or two of the pubs are full of Irish music and English songs deriving from the last 20 years. The one event attracts the other but the two do not intermingle. It makes for a nice day, though.

Like every real traditional event I have seen, it remains vividly in the memory as though, even now, it corresponds to a long-forgotten need. The decent little working town, the grey Lancashire skies and hard wet streets: and these exotic figures weaving in and out, clogs beating on the pavement, nuts clapping rhythmically to the tune of the little brass band. Each dancer an ordinary citizen now transmogrified as he goes seriously but not jokingly about his ancient business.

So destructive has been the work of "progress" that we must be grateful for whatever remains to link us, however tenuously, with the past and with the rest of the human race. -- c. 1974 John Radford.

WEBS AND MESH

It is time I came into the open. To begin with, I am the "John Grimshaw" who wrote "The Earliest Roads" in TLH 53, about Geoffrey of Monmouth and the tradition of "King" Belinas and his roads. Beyond that, it must be borne in mind that I am a novice at ley hunting, and that physical conditions prevent me from following leys on the ground except where they are crossed by metalled roads. My ley hunting is therefore done in the first place on the one-inch and 2½in. maps.

-- by
Guy
Ragland
Phillips --

Geoffrey's much-derided quotation of about 1137AD led me to have a look at those maps. It will be remembered that he cited a tradition that 500 years before Caesar a King Dunwailo Molmutius decreed a law of inviolable sanctity

to any man who was in a "bity" or a temple or on the roads leading to them; and that his "son", Belinus - the name really of the oldest and chief god of the Celts - was faced with a "controversy" about the "extent" of such roads; he accordingly constructed four straight roads covering the length and breadth of Britain, and confirmed the law of sanctuary on those roads only. One of the four ran from St David's Head in Pembrokeshire to Hamo's Port, i.e. Southampton. The other went from the Sea of Cornwall to the shores of Caithness. Professional archaeologists have long remarked that such roads were a geographical impossibility.

In reality, "Cornwall" formerly was understood to mean virtually the whole of the south of what is now England; and "Caithness" was taken to refer to the whole northern coastal area of Scotland. With such termini, it is just possible to draw two straight lines from one to the other, nearly 13 miles apart. The western line runs through Morecambe Bay and the Solway Firth; but there still exists fords over both - and the latter ford goes through an "Altar Stone" in the middle of the Solway. In any case, 5,000 or 6,000 years ago both the Bay and the Firth were virtually dry land. The central section of this line lies within reach of my home; and where I had plotted it on the map (in the area between Preston and Lancaster), there I found it.

The second line, to the east of the first, has a stronger series of ley points. This line runs from the inn at Knights Sands at the north-west end of Lee-on-Solent (that is, perhaps, Hamo's Port), up through the heart of Winchester (through the ruined St Catherine's Chapel and the Dome beside the cathedral), through the big crossroads at Moreton-in-the-Marsh, through minor streets and major roads in the western half of Birmingham, through Congleton, Biddulph and Salford. There are no street-alignments in Greater Manchester, but from here northwards the line is followed almost exactly by the Manchester water pipeline from Haweswater, and as a result the route is marked out by the statutory gates which the water undertaking had to install and maintain on every public right of way.

The line leads precisely through Hollowgate Farm, where the A6 and many mediaeval and other north-south roads run just west of Penrith and just east of the centre of Carlisle, it goes exactly along the Firth of Forth railway bridge, a little east of Inverness across the Inverness Firth from Castle Stuart to just west of Fortrose, through the crossroads in the centre of the Black Isle, by the line of the ferry across the narrows of the Cromarty Firth to the old church west of Invergordon Castle, across the Dornoch Firth to the Duncreich prehistoric site, through Tomich and Mudale to Inverhope where it emerges in an area rich in prehistoric monuments on the shores of Loch Eriboll. The total length is 500 miles. The central section of this line, 25 miles from Kemple End at SD695402 to Kirkby Lonsdale at SD606786, has now been surveyed by a team of three: myself; Ivy Heaton-Smith who ferries me about in a car; and John Marsden, a young man with a huge stride and a healthy scepticism. He is still unconvinced, and he is the only man who has sought the line on foot over ten miles of extremely rough and high moorland. I, on the other hand, regard the evidence as logically irrefutable. The survey is going ahead, in both directions. We are calling this alignment the Belinus Line; and - for reasons which will become clear later - the line 12 miles to the west (measured at right-angles to the line) is BL-1, i.e. Belinus Line minus one.

Kemple End is close to an instance of what I have come to call nodes of lines, such as are no doubt familiar to ley hunters. Six lines cross there, one of which goes due east-west; its western end appears to be the Pennystone Rock, half a mile out to sea off Blackpool where the inn used to be at a village named Singleton Thorp which was engulfed by the sea 200 years ago.

From Kemple End the Belinus Line goes through the park of Brownsholme Hall; up the sward in front of the home (and through the sundial in the middle of the sward); into the splendid front door of the ancient mansion; across the entrance hall (passing a black-oak cupboard which contains one of those eerie talisman-skulls that are attached not to families but to sites); through a door giving on to a staircase; through the staircase, and under a chapel which is relatively modern; out of a back door, down some steps, across an accommodation lane, through

THE NEWS -- Issue 4 of this miscellany of Fortean curiosities is out and includes a tribute to C.H. Fort, William Porter on "Welsh rumblings", Mary Caine on the Glastonbury Zodiac, cuttings and reviews. U.K. annual sub: £1-80 from Robert Rickard, 31 Kingswood Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 9AN.

THE ATLANTEAN -- This is the bi-monthly magazine of The Atlanteans, a society with a philosophy offering a sensitive and compassionate approach to life. It covers a wide range of occult matters of the gentler variety. Sub: £1-25 from 42 St George's Street, Cheltenham, GL50 4AF.

a gate and up a tree-lined notch which used to be a public path and which leads straight to a triangulation point at SD680468 where it crosses a road and another alignment. Two miles beyond, it comes to Sugar Loaf, a small but highly distinctive hillock at 671508 where the ground all around is churned up by leys.

This is the point where John Marsden set off. He went over the summit of Beatrix Fell, noting that a wall (a parish boundary) came up from the south-east until it reached the alignment and then turned at right-angles north-east. On the summit he also found a cairn, but believed that the alignment would have been some 30 yards or so to the west of it. From the cairn he looked down on the pair of houses at lonely Whitendale, near which he camped for the night.

The following day John pursued the alignment - finding no trace of track - up the Whitendale River first on the eastern side and then on the western, to a point where the alignment fell down to the stream and climbed up the other side to the watershed. He took a photograph from this point, and in my opinion it does show a track mounting from the stream towards the watershed.

At the top, there is a curious node. The old, unmetalled Salter Road comes up from Slaidburn and crosses over towards Lancaster. A Roman road comes up southward from Casterton and continues up from Clitheroe Castle and the village of Newton (where John had already noticed it). All these met at a gate in a fence marking the Yorkshire-Lancashire boundary. Even so, John could still see no sign of the Belinus Line; indeed, he was misled by the sight of a farm (and probably by aching muscles) and unknowingly went off to the right of the alignment to Green Bank. He returned to the correct course at Summersgill Farm, where he found what he considered to be possible traces of the Line.

Beyond here the Line passes over a triangulation point at SD638645, and on to Park House where it drops markedly down to a spring and a clear, embanked tump. It passes indistinctly immediately west of The Ridges and Ashleys at 632678, and is crossed north of here by the pipeline; but east of Wennington at Box Tree, 625703, it is splendidly clear and lined with very beautiful trees, though the pipeline is just the other side of the hedge. At Cantsfield (619730) the line is marked by a most impressive embanked tump. Northwards through Nether Burrow and down to the crossing over the Lune the line is not distinct until near Holme House; and through the western end of Kirkby Lonsdale it is marked out by those statutory pipeline gates.

Meanwhile, what about BL-1? Northwards this led to Cape Wrath, southwards to a castle on the coast just east of Bournemouth, with lots of important sites on the way. It had exactly the same orientation as the Belinus Line, Magnetic $N4^{\circ}W$. If two lines, why not more? And sure enough, west of BL-1 was another, BL-2, coming up through Birkenhead, across to Blackpool and up to the Pennystone Rock - $11\frac{3}{4}$ miles west of BL-1. In the other direction $11\frac{7}{8}$ miles eastward from the Belinus Line was BL+1 running through Calderbrook Church (SD941182), Dobroyd Castle, over Black Hameldon, through Colne, Barnoldswick Church, Hellifield crossroads (855565). Eastward again $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles was BL+2 through the middle of Huddersfield, Edgerton crossroads, Southowram Church, Northowram

(some road alignment here), the Queensbury crossroads, Thornton crossroads, Harden Hall (SE089378), Lady Blantyr's Rock and the Fairfax Intrenchment, Keighley's Mount Pleasant (where it crosses the east-west line from Pennystone Rock), and so on. From this $11\frac{7}{8}$ miles eastward we find BL+3, going through Howe Hill (western Wakefield) and the middle of Leeds. BL+4 is $11\frac{3}{4}$ miles eastward, aligned on South Milford, precisely on Barkston Ash (SE485361) and the famous Cowthorpe Oak (446528); but BL+5 is only $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles farther east, aligned on Healaugh, Ulleskelf and Kellington. From here it is just over $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles to BL+6, running from a major node in the middle of Goole Docks through moats and halls by East Cottingworth and Warthill Church. The same picture emerges farther eastward - all the lines on Magnetic N4^{OW}, and mostly about $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles apart.

Why that orientation? Why not due North, as the "horizontal" lines were due east-west and presumably laid down on the the equinoctial sunrise and sunset?

There seemed to be one possible explanation: lodestones, pieces of magnetite that always point to Magnetic North. Magnetic North is known to have swung 35 degrees in 240 years. Huge resources of magnetite used to be available (they have virtually all been mined) in Rosedale in the North York Moors, half a mile south of one of the east-west alignments. Lodestones were used by the Arab navigators and by their predecessors, the Phoenicians, who traded with Britain long before the Romans.

If north-south, why not also east-west? And again, sure enough, it was not difficult on the map to find alignments due east-west (by latitude, not by the Grid), again separated mostly by 10 to 12 miles but sometimes by only a mile or two. We emerged with a fantastic sort of prehistoric National Grid.

If a king or high priest were located at about the middle of the country; and if he had a system of couriers posted at each crossing-point of that mesh, prepared to run 10 miles or so; then he could send orders to, or obtain information from, any part of Britain within 48 hours.

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READERS' LETTERS

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From Brian Jackman, of The Sunday Times: "Thank you for your kind letter and your latest issue of The Ley Hunter. Since my first article on ley-lines many readers had written in to inform me of the existence of your magazine, but this was the first copy I had actually seen.

Having had to answer a deluge of letters on the subject, I am sure I will be forgiven for telling you that I am now going to let the subject rest for a while, but no doubt I shall have another go at it some time."

From Frank Jordan, of Burnley: "Having read a book called "The Lost Gods of England" (published by Thames & Hudson) I came across what could be some relevant points to ley hunters about the Norse god Thor. In the author's chapter headed Thunor (which is the Old English name for Thor) he says the following in one section - "There can be little doubt that the Old English Thunor was regarded as the son of Woden and Earth, driving over the storm clouds in his chariot, drawn by two goats while he flings his thunderbolt from mountain peak to mountain peak. Many Old English place-names incorporating Thunor have as their second element the word Leah, meaning 'wood' or 'woodland clearing' and it is certain that the Saxon part of our forebears connected the god with trees and particularly with the oak tree." The author then says Thunor (Thor) was a weather god and mentions the fact that the double axe or Thor's hammer is even carved on a trilithon at Stonehenge, and also that various Stone Age skulls have been found with like symbols branded on them. Thor also seems to have had an affinity with the Indian god Indra, and the Hittite weather god. The myths surrounding these three gods all speak of the god fighting and overcoming a great serpent (any connections with SS Michael and Georg legends, I wonder), and the author also says that Thunor (Thor)

being the son of the Earth Mother Jarth, was credited with possessing a mana or power called Jardamajin or Earth power. Although I realise there is nothing soecifically connecting Thor with the ley system there does appear to be a certain amount of evidence to suggest that this certain Norse god may have, for some reason, been incorporated into the ley system in a symbolical way similar to the St Michael and St George Mounts as above mentioned; perhaps some of the readers of The Ley Hunter may know of a further linkage of this god (in fact maybe all the gods) and the ley system.

Postscript: As an example of the above notes based on my own area; most of the important prehistoric finds near Burnley, especially two stone circles, bath comprising of seven stones each, are situated on the moors overlooking THURSDEN Valley. And a book I own on the "History of Burnley" written by W. Bennet has got this to say about the word Thursden; "The word is derived from Thirsdeneheved, which means 'Valley of the Giant', and is probably connected with the Norse god Thor."

From Debbie Turnbull, of 7 St James's Street, Hammersmith, London W.6.: "Perhaps you could advise me if there are any 'expeditions' arranged to trace leys across the countryside. I would be interested in at least corresponding with people who have the same interest in these lines. Also, as I originally come from Warwickshire and know the countryside well, I would like some information on Warwickshire leys. I know of one place which I feel sure is on a ley, a place called Burton Dassett on the Warwick-Banbury road. It is actually a series of strange shaped hills where a beacon stands. There have been many UFO sightings up there and just from the incredible feel of the place I am convinced that a ley runs over these hills. Is there any literature available which would assist me in tracking leys in Warwickshire?"

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Miscellany: After the success of York's ghost-hunting weekend, the city's tourist department is planning a series of "enrichment holidays" which will include a study of witchcraft. Each holiday will last about three days. An Mr R.W. Davies, of "Dunedin", Eglwysbach, near Colwyn Bay, North Wales, is interested in anyone who can give him information on the original location of the Devil's Ring and Finger, a holed stone, situated at map reference SJ707378, three miles NE of Market Drayton, Staffordshire. The stone is one of two stones now incorporated in the wall around the northern edge of Oakley Park and others are scattered in the area. These all presumably formed part of a chambered long barrow in the vicinity. Does any ley hunter know the site well enough to be able to suggest where this original location could have been so that Mr Davies can calculate an accurate latitude and longitude reading for the site?

HONG KONG DRAGON

(From "Awake!", February 22, 1974)

Superstition still plagues Hong Kong construction efforts. Recently its Lok Ma Chau village patriarch learned that a mysterious fever had stricken his grandson. The local diviner claimed that bulldozing a tourist parking site atop the village hill had cut off the nose of an invisible dragon who lived there. The mysterious fever spread to seven more grandchildren before villagers convinced construction workers to stop. Demands for appeasing the dragon and the villagers included thousands of dollars for Taoist priests to exorcise the demon and hospitalization for the stricken children

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MORE MISCELLANY::::::: The U.S. is working on a rocket to catch a comet. The U.S. Space Agency is investigating the possible development of an electrically-powered spacecraft that could rendezvous with the comet Encke in 1979. The rocket would fly through the nucleus, comma and tail of Encke and send TV pictures and other information back to earth.....Precocious guru Maharaj Ji has added a wife to his possessions and a Maerati car was a present from his Divine Light followers. His holiness is 16.....

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DRAGON'S BLOOD  
DRAGON'S BLOOD

No. 1

"Dargon's Blood" will remain a part of THE LEY HUNTER though it can be built up as it appears occasionally within issues of THE LEY HUNTER. Dragonlore is probably the most fascinating and analytically elusive part of British folklore and the subject will receive comment from various authors in coming months. "Northumbrian Dragon Legends", by your editor, has been accepted by a Newcastle publisher though it is likely to be some considerable time before publication due to the company's large backlog of work.

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DRAGONS OVER ALBION

"Nevertheless the high places were not taken away: for the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places"

- 1 Kings xxii, 43.

This Albion of ours is wrapped around with the power discovered and made use of by the ancients, the carryovers of ancient man's knowledge, and the lingering traces of a power that has been forgotten yet lives on, can be seen on all sides, awaiting the seasonal flow of the serpent that will activate and re-energise the land it traverses without hindrance. Look upon the high places for the knolls, the hills, and the mountains that are traditionally the resting places of the dragon-serpent, and witness in many parts of the country the hilltop churches dedicated to St George and St Michael, Christian heroes of serpent killing and masters of the Underworld, saints held up for the old peoples of Britain to acknowledge as greater than their own gods - yet in one place particularly where the old gods were insulted by the Christians, at Glastonbury Tor where St Michael's church was erected on the site of a stone circle at the summit, the cruciform structure was destroyed by an earthquake which left standing only the pagan symbol of a monolithic tower, and the edifices of the ancients held themselves high again, in confident affirmation that the gods of Albion, though their worship had degenerated and even their existence forgotten or temporarily superseded, are awaiting their time to reawaken. And now, as man and non-worldly affairs move into the realm of Aquarius, and men are rediscovering the power of the serpent, and retreading its paths, is not perhaps the time near for the heritage of Albion, the spiritual Britain of Blake, to blossom forth again, the gods of Old and New uniting to show that there is harmony in the heavens and therefore in mankind, drawing the veil aside that the true nature of Albion may be seen by those so much maligned at present by the ruling interests of the United Kingdom. Then, perhaps first in Glastonbury where paganism stands on high and the West's first shrine (represented by the great abbey) below, the serpent may rise again in the bidding of the heavens, to spread its beneficial power across the land, as it will in all parts of the world.

But what is the serpent? And what is its power? If we look for physical manifestations of serpents in the air and on the ground at or between the ancient sites, then we may well find ourselves disappointed. When St George killed his dragon-serpent, an act which took him to the status of patron saint of England, he slew the manifestations of the Megalithic religion, which took repeatedly the form of the serpent. Though perhaps the corruption of the great Druid culture had gone as far as should have been allowed - blood sacrifices etc. - George's sword of Christianity tried to erase the roots as well as the form of the Old Religion,

\*\*\*\* This article is taken from CYMBELINE No. 1 (11p, inc p&p from 15 East Hill, Colchester, Essex. The writer's name is not given. The article puts dragon lines and leys in the current state of the subject, though this should not be regarded as rigid. It is also a good introduction to leys.

and he was imposed as a national hero, the salvation of Britain, for a mythical and symbolic job that at best could only be superficial. Everywhere, after churches claimed for themselves the land dedicated to the worship of pre-existent deities, the people remembered and walked the paths of the dragon, and performed its rituals of fertility, etc., until they became half-recalled traditions. Many are now May Day ceremonies to commemorate the death and rebirth of Nature, fertility and fire. Indeed, the procession of people going to the high places where often lay their churches or the sites of their ceremonies must have evoked the vision of the serpent, as in the early days of the Tor, when the processional path that entwines like coils around the hill was in use.

The serpent then was the acknowledged form of the power of the Old Gods, the gods whom few now know, but who are as utterly cosmic as any other acclaimed deity. Its power is the extraterrestrial, the life force of all four elements. Its paths were the flow of this life force, a force the new churches drew upon in their ancient "pagan" sites, though they were probably unaware of it. The great Sun temple of Avebury was discovered by Dr Stukely to have been originally the symbol of alchemical fusion, the serpent passing through the circle; stone avenues  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles long on either side of the Avebury circle. Such serpent representations exist in several other places in Britain and elsewhere in the world, such as the earthen serpent measuring 300ft in length and 20ft high at Glen Reochan in Scotland, and the spiral mounds of the Deccan in India. In China the paths of the serpent are called dragon lines. In all cases of the incidence of ancient religious sites and other significant constructions, they are linked by the serpent paths, straight lines over which the serpent travels in the form of the life force, which is itself scientifically verifiable as having direct relation to the Earth's magnetic force. In the normal twisting and turning of the lines of the Earth's magnetism these concentrations of current are somewhat conspicuous, and are produced in large part by the relative proximities to our planet of heavenly bodies exerting magnetic pulls; these lines can also thus be seen as carriers of terrestrial-cosmic energy as well as serpent power, but however one calls them, their existence is hard to deny, particularly when the energy present has been testified to by dowsing and electromagnetic methods. Alfred Watkins, the man who rediscovered the existence of such lines in the early 1920s, called them leys, and reckoned they were trade routes, being reluctant at the time to assert that they had religious significance. However, straight lines between hill summits in remote areas, traversing all kinds of terrain without deviating from the "straight and narrow", are not very useful as trade routes, and the fact that Megalithic structures found themselves on these routes to an extent far beyond that explicable by coincidence told an older Watkins and subsequent searchers that they had come upon a facet of ancient religious experience that had been almost totally forgotten. Moreover, the profound scientific uses that many of these structures can be shown to fulfil - Stonehenge, as Professor Hawkins has found, can be used as an accurate predictor of the movements of the heavenly bodies and to foretell lunar eclipses - suggests man (or some helpful cosmic agency) had a system of knowledge and its practical application that only now are we beginning to reapproach. In fact, Soviet scientists have officially declared that in their view mankind is presently returning to the state of knowledge that our ancient forefathers were in possession of certainly, the student of the rediscovered sciences and practices cannot avoid that feeling.

Many more recent disclosures add weight and mystery to the ley system and the force which flows through them; for example, tracked routes of UFOs often follow the paths of leys. The entire Earth is covered by an interrelated network of lines and sacred phenomena, by which common symbols such as the serpent are found irrespective of supposed ancient cultural barriers. It is easy to find



evidence of leys oneself, as their routes are marked out by physical objects such as mounds and other ancient monuments and stones, moats, wells, beacon points, crossroads, old churches, castles and camps. Marking sites like these carefully on an Ordnance Survey map, one can then find straight lines joining some of them - a minimum of four points aligning over a distance of about 12 miles can be considered reasonable evidence of a ley to an extent that cannot be covered by coincidence; if you want to experiment, take a sheet of paper the same size as your map and mark on it at random the same number of points as you have on the map. Then try to align them! After marking suspected leys on the map, one should then investigate them in the field to find the shreds of evidence - straight track, avenues of trees, markstones, etc. - to add up to the existence of a ley. You will find, as John Michell claims, that following a ley over several miles across country is a very rewarding experience, but I'll let you find that out for yourself.

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EXTRACTS FROM THE STORY OF KING  
FORTAGER -- by Peter S. Hannah

The story tells of an attack on Britain by Angys, the Dane. The King's steward, Fortager, led the Britons to victory against the Dane. "Now that I am King," said Fortager, "I will indeed give a meet reward for traitors." He aroused the wrath of those who helped him to the throne. Needless to say, he was hunted down and barely escaped his life. Enlisting the aid of his former enemy Angys, the Dane, he took Britain by force. Fortager, fearing the Dane and the Britons he had betrayed, also the men of Brittany (Uther Pendragon and Aurilis Brosias, his brother, were exiled there) he decided to build a strong castle on Salisbury Plain.

The workmen building the castle on returning the morning after the first day's work found the stones scattered all over the ground. They tried again, clamping each stone together with iron, but, again, in the morning they were overthrown as before. Fortager called together ten wise men and shut them in a tower open to the sky, so that they might read the stars. After nine days, they came to him and said: "Sire, we read in the stars that an elf-child has been born in Britain, knowing things past and to come. Find the child and slay him on this plain and mix the mortar with his blood and so shall the castle stand fast." The story continues when they found the child, Merlin. He gives several demonstrations of his psychic powers, by foretelling things, etc. When they came to the palace, Fortager marvelled at the wisdom of one so young. He asked him to reveal the mystery of the castle. Merlin said: "The fiends have deceived you wise men by showing false signs among the stars for my kindred of the air are very wrath, because I have been baptised into Christendom and they seek to destroy my life. But if you send your men to dig a yard beneath the wall's foundation they will find a stream of water running over two mighty stones under which live two dragons. Each night, at sundown, these dragons wake and so do battle so that the earth is shaken and the walls fall down." They followed his instruction and found the dragons. One was red, his body a rood in length. The other was milk-white and had two heads. On being awoken they did battle, which ended in the red one being reduced to ashes. Merlin then goes into a symbolic interpretation, seeing in it a kind of parable about what will happen to Britain. The story is simple and tells of age-old good against evil. Right cinquering might, but in the Merlin figure, in the story of the dragons, there seems something out of character with the rest of the story. It may be harmless, but possibly it contains fragments from a much older tale:

"How Merlin, by his skill  
And magic's wondrous might  
From Ireland hither brought  
Stonehenge in a night." -- Drayton  
(From "The Romance of Merlin. 13th  
or 14th Century).

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NOTES: In folklore dragons' favourite beverage is milk. Now there's a pop group called Dragonmilk.... From Puffin Books comes "The Dragon's Quest" by Rosemary Manning (25p) & "The Home Made Dragon & Other Incredible Stories" by Norman Hunter (20p).

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