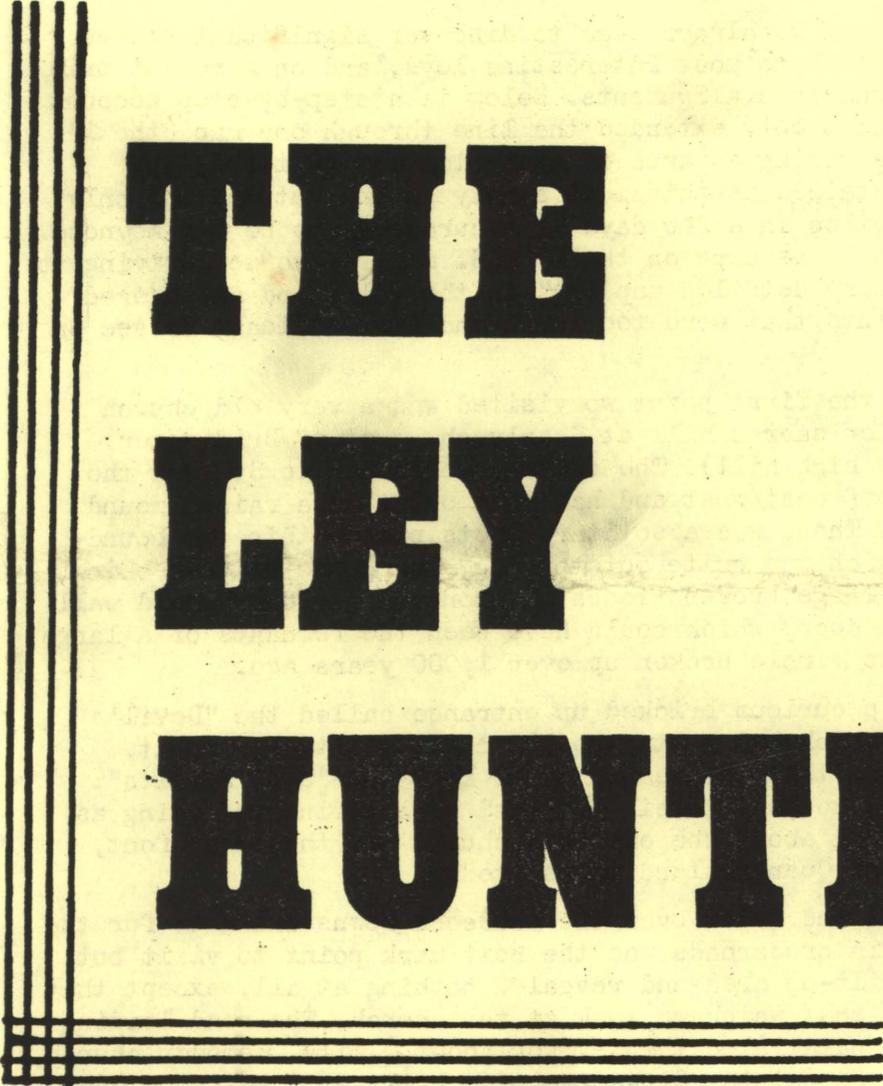


No. 65



THE LEY HUNTER

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No. 65

April/May 1975

Editor: Paul Screeton, 5 Egton Drive, Seaton Carew,
Hartlepool, Cleveland, Ts25 2AT.
Subscriptions: 75p six months (3 issues inc. p&p)
.£1-50 one year
USA six dollars a year

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THE CHAR YNCH LEY (SOMERSET)

-- by JANET ROBERTS --

Every time we visit Somerset we always seem to discover significant places which can usually be extended into most interesting leys, and on a recent trip (March 1975) we found several good alignments. Below is a step-by-step account of the "Charlynch Ley". I have only extended the line through one map (the 1" Ordnance Survey No. 165), covering an area of approximately 30 miles, but undoubtedly something as detailed as this must surely go on, but one can only cover a certain amount of miles in a few days if accuracy is to be the keynote. As I have said, the main work was done on the 1" O.S. map, but after driving to each spot, I obtained the more detailed map (2 1/2" to the mile) and discovered even more corroborative points that were too small and insignificant to see on the smaller map.

Travelling west to east, the first point we visited was a very old church (c1245 A.D.) on an even older sacred hill at Charlynch, west of Bridgwater. (Lynch in this case meaning high hill). The church, dedicated to St Mary the Virgin, was orientated 10° off east/west and had been built on a raised mound with a circular churchyard. There was a solitary Scots pine within the boundaries of the church wall which was quite outstanding, being the only tree in leaf at the time. We found large broken pieces of stone in the churchyard wall and in the path to the main door, which could have been the remnants of a large markstone or perhaps a stone circle broken up over 1,000 years ago.

Inside St Mary's we found a curious bricked up entrance called the "Devil's Doorway" in the north wall which had a strange little tale attached to it. Apparently in mediæval times this was sealed up to keep out "evil spirits". This suggested to us that up to then "evil spirits" were coming and going as they pleased! The oldest thing about the existing church was the Saxon font, one of the earliest relics of Quantockland in use today.

We then came down the hill and drove over the Woodcock Downs and made for the small town of Wembdon. A main crossroads was the next mark point to visit but alas this was completely built-up area and revealed nothing at all, except that the compass reading matched that which we took at the church. The road leading from the crossroads (B3339) paralleled the ley for about 1/4 mile. Wembdon church, dedicated to one of the dragon saints, St George, was built on a raised piece of ground with a circular churchyard and was probably in use as a sacred place of worship long before Christianity was thought of. There are the remnants of a very ancient cross near the south door in the churchyard with an octagonal shaft. The church itself dates to about 1284 A.D.

A small detour here will take you to see the Holy Well or St John's Well, which has always been noted for its medicinal qualities. The location of the well is supposed to be the reason for the ancient Pilgrims Way passing over Wembdon Hill and down to Wembdon church, where a call would be made for worship before travelling to Glastonbury Abbey.

The Charlynch Ley proceeds through a site called Castle Field, touching the edge of a small earthwork, both in the town of Bridgwater itself.

We next found ourselves in a small village east of Bridgwater called East Bower. At a T junction the ley came across the fields and bisected the junction at a dew pond, then travelled along the still existing straight road for about 1/4 mile. At

this point we found things a little odd, for although we had visited this spot before, when my husband was investigating the Monk's Ford Ley (see The Ley Hunter, No. 20), the place didn't quite seem the same. The problem became obvious by the noise -- the M5 had been built right across the alignment, which after some hours of living in the remote past, brought us back to reality with a soggy thud. It just goes to show how almost hopeless it is to carry out thorough investigation nowadays. About 3 yards from the abrupt end of the lane, the fieldgate we were looking for was thankfully still in situ. As I mentioned before, we visited East Bower in 1971 and this spot, although now almost ruined, is quite special as this is a cross-ley point. We remembered finding a quite large stone somewhere near the gatepost and so we kicked and prodded the overgrown bank and ditch that ran alongside the road thinking the march of "progress" had finally destroyed it. We almost gave up, but then, under a thick clump of nettles we found it, a fine puddingstone to the left of the gate, by a miracle still intact. This renewed our faith a little and we pressed on to yet another crossroads near East Bower called Slape Cross, which must have been more important in days gone by than it is now; we nearly missed it! We prodded around hoping for another forgotten remnant to come to light but all we could find was a tin of cement, where two trackways crossed a minor road junction. However, the crossroads was exactly orientated along the alignment.

The ley carried on to skirt the right side of Pendon Hill and then ran through the triangulation station on Slocombe Hill or Righton's Grave, a shaped mound (322ft.) near the Roman road that runs along the Polden Hills. On a clear day this would be an ideal spot from which to view aspects of this ley but alas our stay coincided with a terrific snowstorm which was hardly conducive to extended vision. Undeterred, we pressed on to the next point, this being the church at Shapwick, but before the church the ley bisected a crossroads just up the road from the building itself. St Mary the Virgin at Shapwick looked very picturesque in the snow with its Scots pine in the churchyard. The building was started in 1329 A.D. and was consecrated in 1331 A.D., which just goes to show what can be done if there's a good enough incentive. It seemed odd that this church didn't quite agree with the compass reading and no matter where I stood I kept on getting a deflection of 10° . Being rather disappointed we retraced our steps to the south doorway where we found a potted history. It stated that a church existed in Shapwick before King Ine (725 A.D.) but NOT on this spot. In 1329 the Abbot of Glastonbury ordered a new church to be built on the present site and this renewed our geomantic faith yet again. The old site of the church "was around Beerway Farm" and this was the clue to the wrong compass reading. Although Shapwick Church is very old and "nearly" on the compass alignment it just didn't quite fit the pattern exactly. The site of the "old church" did, and it is also in direct alignment with the ley, being further east towards Glastonbury Tor. The orientation was slightly changed in 1329 for some obscure geomantic purpose.

The next fascinating point we came to was where the ley ran along the perfectly straight edge of Buscott Copse for some distance then, just below Cradle Bridge there was a bifurcation in the very straight road which the ley intersected perfectly. Coming into Glastonbury the crossroads at Fisher's Hill was the next spot, situated at the foot of Wearyall Hill (Pisces in the Glastonbury Zodiac) and then along a straight piece of road for a short way to the mighty Tor itself. It followed the main contour line of the Tor and touched right on the corner of the lane just below the lynchets at a place known as Park Corner. The last point was near East Pennard. There's a slight bend in the lane where an old ford runs and at this evocative spot the Charlynch Ley ends -- or at least for the time being.

I must take this opportunity of pointing out how much larger scale O.S. maps have helped. It's the little seemingly unimportant spots that really make a ley hunter's life interesting and it's these places where ancient mark stones are sometimes found. We have found four since our investigations began; not many you may think but it is so rewarding because they are usually so well hidden. Wherever there's a slight bend in the road, hummock of land or peculiar shaped bridge etc., you can bet your bottom dollar it's got something to do with ley lines. In one spot we visited while investigating another ley, the neat

OBJECTIONS AND OBSCURITIES

by MICHAEL W. BURGESS

When I began my research into leys a few years ago I was firmly convinced of their existence as pre-Neolithic route-ways. But in the past few months my doubts as to the validity of plotting leys have been slowly gathering strength. I have no quarrel with Alfred Watkins's original supposition that such routes may have existed, but what I do wish to raise are a few points about the way in which they are plotted on maps, and the conclusions which people draw from the great multiplicity of lines that result.

Perhaps I should say to begin with that I have no actual experience in tracing leys in the field. Though I have drawn many lines on maps, the countryside around me (in Suffolk and Norfolk) is generally so enclosed and partitioned off as to make ley hunting impractical. Yet this should have little bearing on what I am about to put forward, being primarily concerned with map -- and not field -- work; for if a map-alignment is proved to be invalid, then the rest is wide open to suspicion.

I also don't wish to concern myself here with geomancy, gematria, or what-have-you, since although it is an interesting and curious by-line, I have no real feeling for it. The dowsing and "psychometric" aspects of "sacred geometry" seem to me to be founded on very uncertain ground. The very nature of it is subjective and open to individual interpretation, and as such seems most unreliable. The main point against leys by the geomancers who think they are "lines of earth or cosmic power", seems to be that man would never have followed routes which led him over mountains and through bogs. Yet Watkins himself said "that man in an early stage of civilisation is doing today exactly what these objectors say man would never do." And again, he criticises those who try to "gauge by their own civilised mentality what uncivilised man would have done."

This distinct bias of mine against geomancy is probably increased somewhat by the demonstrations of it I have seen in various books. They seem very vague and inconclusive, and in some cases downright fallacious! For instance, in TLH 60/61 there was an article about a vesica piscis that was discovered around Colchester. Well, I tried to reproduce this and found so many inaccuracies and assumptions as to render it incredible. To begin with, some of the sites on the diagram are wrongly placed and misnamed, but even after sorting it all out, four of the framework alignments (even 3-point ones) do not remotely align. I won't go into it all here, but as a last item, Maypole Green is NOT the exact "mid-point of the vesica piscis"...it is in fact 0.45 miles north of the centre. There are many dubious points about this construction, but I'll press on with the rest of my argument.

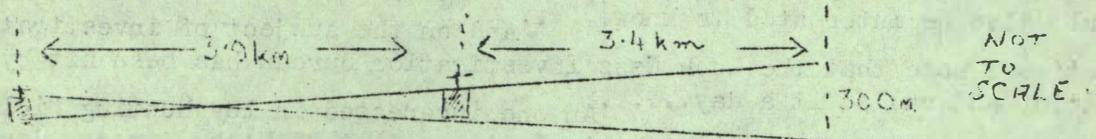
Since my case concerns the use of maps, I wrote to the Ordnance Survey about accuracy and the use of symbols, to see what they would say. Part of the reply was that "the accuracy of the one-inch (and metric map) is within the limitations of the scale, but is affected in parts as a result of conventionalisation of roads, generalisation of buildings, symbolising of churches. For example, the average width of a main road is less than 10 metres, but scales about 40 metres." I tried this also on other maps and found that on the 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " scale, a 10 metre road scaled to 26.4 metres, and on the 6" scale to 17.07 metres. The accuracy increases with larger scales, yet it still leaves much to be desired. "In the specific case of church symbols, no general rule can be stated, for where a church is alongside a road, a certain amount of displacement will already have

* rectangular shaped fields sud-
* denly took on different irreg-
* ular boundaries and met up
* with two streams just where
* this ley went through, and all
* this topographical activity
* was at the abrupt end of a
* farmyard track right out on
* the moors. It's through all
* these subtle hints of the fan-
* tastic past linking up in the
* landscape that we can take
* pleasure and instruction to
* help us face the future. There
* is a sense of historical con-
* tinuity in ley hunting that
* is very real.

taken place as a result of the road being conventionalised." The limitations of scale apply also to churches and various other symbols. If this inaccuracy were consistent all over the map less doubt would arise, but it is only "affected in parts."

As to lining up sites on a map, the O.S. Archaeology Officer said, "I have not myself come across any demonstrable results from such activity."

If the maps we work on are not as accurate as they could be, what point then in aligning sites? And the precision of lines should be such as to leave no room for doubt. And which part of the church symbol should the line be drawn through? As shown in the sketch, I drew two lines through different parts of two churches on the 1:50,000 map, and after a distance of only 3.4 km from the latter church there was a discrepancy of 300 metres.



If, as Watkins says, it is sites that the ley system uses, and if standing stones were the original markers, then it makes the alignment of churches seem ridiculous. Personally, I never use the small cross used to denote a chapel or church without tower or spire, but many people, including Watkins, do so. Yet the line must pass clearly through the centre-point in order to be on the church site at all, and who knows which part of the building the line passes through? If it comes to that, I wonder just how many ley hunters do adequate research to find out if every church on a line is in fact ancient? Those in the larger towns are the most suspect, since many churches have been built there in the last hundred years.

There is another symbol on the O.S. map which takes the form of a simple cross, namely that of the site of an antiquity. These are very rarely accurate in positioning, particularly in the case of Roman forts, etc. Again, which part of the symbol should be taken? Roman sites in any case I would not accept as ley points, unless it is proven that they occupy far older sites. Watkins makes mention that existing mounds are probably enlargements of smaller ones, which in turn came after a simple mark stone. I wonder just how many excavations have delivered such evidence, or in fact, out of all the barrows which are still extant, how many have been properly probed? There are too many doubts and inconsistencies to claim, as many do, that the ley system is proven.

Stones must be researched very carefully, since many may have been moved from their original site. Nowadays, halls marked in antique script seem to be accepted as points, and Watkins himself did so, yet they are not even mentioned in his famous list of permissible sites. Some that are noted, however, such as crossroads, wells, islands and hermitages, remain quite dubious.

Now I think I should turn my attention to moats since they are very numerous around here. I once did a very strict study of 40 ley lines in my own area, and out of a total of 174 points, 49% were moats. Alfred Watkins was unsure whether or not square or rectangular moats played any part in the ley system, yet these are accepted readily by modern researchers, and they are by far the most prolific type. Next to Essex, Suffolk has the greatest number of moats: 505 in 950,000 acres. Most of the moated settlements in the country were made about 1250-1400 for water storage purposes on badly-drained land, since the 13th. Century was exceptionally dry. Out of 3½,000 sites, only 17 have been accurately dated, so there might be something about them that we don't yet know. But the fact remains, no one has ever proved that they evolved from mounds, and earlier, from mark stones. The circular one almost certainly enclosed windmills.

"any antiquities are no more than tiny, vague dots on the map, so how can anyone hope to align them properly?"

Turning aside from symbols and sites, Peddar's Way was (Continued in Page 8)

When he refused a gypsy's talisman luck ran out for postman Alan Foster. He was delivering letters in Stanhope Drive, Harrogate, when a woman called out: "Postman, do you want to buy a lucky charm?" Mr Foster replied: "No thanks, I believe in making my own luck." So the gypsy retorted: "If you buy a charm you will never get bitten by a dog". Hapless Mr Foster turned into Fairfax Avenue and -- you guessed it -- gave a howl of pain as a small mongrel sank its molars into his ankle. The postman commented: " Luckily it didn't draw blood, but it certainly hurt. It is the first time I have been bitten for three years. I will take a bit more notice of gypsy women in future....." (From Yorkshire Post, March 18).....

Mr Doug Hardman, of "Llangollen", Kinmel Way, Towyn, Abergele, Clwyd, wonders whether anyone knows if the Faery Investigation Society is still in existence or whether it has published anything. I would also be interested to know.....

And on the subject of investigation societies I note that the Loch Ness Investigation Bureau has been hit by infalction and called it a day..... Anyone interested in ley hunting fieldwork in South Humberside should contact A. Lattimore, at 85 Digby Street, Scunthorpe, South Humberside.....

Not the likeliest publication to spread the good word, but New Musical Express has made two recent references to leys. The first appeared in an article of Ramases and Selket (they're reincarnations of the original Egyptians) noting the couple have no personal "ley-line" from Felixstowe to Cairo. Then came a piece on Viv Stanshall (for the uninitiated he was chief freak in the Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band of "Urban Spaceman" fame) and his practical jokes, which went: "His chum wasn't so sure about this one. He sealed his lips and quietly awaited the next suggestion. "Speakers' Corner!" snapped Stanshall with the authority of a bingo caller. "Just getting up on a box and miming or talking about Straight Lines which I can get fairly animated about, or maybe going down one of the many subterranean tubes of Oxford Street and miming to a tape of Segovia or John Williams with the ukele.." ...

Also I draw upon New Musical Express to mark the anniversary of the death of musician and singer Graham Bond, who died on May 8 last year under a tube train in London. His body was unrecognisable and only fingerprinting identified him. One of his rings was so badly damaged it hardly seemed to be a ring, but a large silver pendant star around his neck was totally unscratched. Tony Tyler, in N.M.E., stated; "It was, of course, a talisman star but it only looked after itself." Bond signed his name Aleister Crowley at one period and Stonehenge is depicted on the cover of one of his L.P.s. Tyler wrote: " They former a group and actually made an album 'Holy Magick' -- after a great search of the ley-lines of Western Britain for inspiration -- in the studio." His wife, Dianne, recalled that Bond did a ritual for one song and "we were all freaked out when, at the end of the take the whole studio wall suddenly caught fire". Bet that never happenâ to the Osmonds.....

* * * * *

PSYCHOARCHAEOLOGICAL BULLETIN

compiled by Robin Holtom

The architecture and symbolism of mental hospitals has long been a profound mystery.

Recent researches, however, are beginning

to reveal vestiges of the occult origins of these constructions. Even the casual visitor to one of them will not fail to have been struck by the characteristic labyrinthine design of the corridors, and may surmise that, like so many other ancient buildings the basic ground plan owes its origin to earlier constructions whose sacred purpose has long been forgotten in the misty pre-dawn of mythology. Parallels may be drawn with the long tradition of labyrinths and mazes which stretches back to Minoan Crete. Another mystery perhaps lies in the large number of permanently closed doors reminiscent of the well-known "false doors" or "spirit doors" in ancient Egyptian tombs through which the spirits of the dead were supposed to come and go. Stranger yet are the inscrutable networks of "footpaths" and "car parks" located apparently at random in

the grounds of the buildings. Most of these constructions can never have served any practical purpose at all and it is therefore scientifically legitimate to speculate as to their ritual origins. Often for example an earth path still in regular use will be found to cut directly across the ancient ritual pathway which is however still tarmaced and well maintained although it is often found to lead nowhere. Often the paths around these intriguing buildings are arranged in symbolic geometric patterns equally devoid of usefulness but not entirely without a certain aesthetic appeal.

To begin to postulate an explanation for these enigmas, reference must be made to the ancient Chinese art of landscaping or geomancy. The Chinese word for this is feng shui, which means "wind and water" because it is "like the wind which you cannot comprehend, and like water which you cannot grasp". Here surely is the key to these enigmas. The landscape round about mental hospitals must have been arranged in accordance with principles not unlike feng shui. Similar configurations have been discovered also in ancient European holy places and it has been revealed that they appear to correspond with subtle terrestrial currents known to the ancients, but largely overlooked by contemporary science.

Now these currents have a very particular relationship to the human nervous system and while the exact details of this interaction have not yet been fully investigated by neurologists, it is perhaps reasonable to suggest that it concerns in some way the remarkable phenomenon known to theoretical physics as "negative energy" or "anti-energy". It would appear therefore that as people perambulate through the ritual labyrinth and the ceremonial energy accumulates in their nervous systems and occasionally can even be perceived directly by the unaided senses as a mild headache or mysterious and hitherto unexplained outburst of irritability.

I now beg leave to speculate briefly as to the ultimate explanation of this data. It has been shown how the subtle manipulation of the landscape and architectural constructions on the sites now occupied by mental hospitals has been contrived by means of long-forgotten skills to accumulate large quantities of anti-energy. I feel it is incumbent upon a scientifically minded psychoarchaeologist to offer some explanation of the purpose of these large reservoirs of anti-energy. The suggestion I am obliged to make may well encounter many objections, but it is the only explanation among a large number which fully satisfies all the data at present available.

A recent report from the Ministry of Defence implies that the phenomena known as unidentified flying objects are now thought to be powered by this very same anti-energy. It will be noted at once that UFOs are regularly reported in the vicinity of the anti-energy reservoirs. The tall "water towers" which are, of course, the rebuilt remains of earlier symbolic constructions, are often used to conduct the anti-energy to the UFOs which moor to them and have been reported refuelling in the early hours. The anti-energy is thereby sucked by a complicated process from the entire population of the building by the innocuous medium of the water supply. The original architecture can, therefore, safely be assumed to have been laid out by extraterrestrial beings known in mythology as the "gods".

However, a somewhat specious if not libellous explanation has been proposed regarding the way in which extraterrestrials have been able to maintain their anti-energy reservoirs functioning effectively up to the present day, in spite of the total unrelatedness of their constructions to human needs. I mention the theory only as an example and a warning to unscientifically minded psychoarchaeologists who may be misguided enough to wander into the fields of politics or sociology in search of an explanation. It is as follows. It suggests that the extraterrestrials have been able to maintain their refuelling reservoirs of anti-energy by the simple device of impersonating senior administrative functionaries on occasions when these people make planning decisions that affect the accumulation of anti-energy. While the impersonation of human beings by extraterrestrials is well documented in Greek mythology nevertheless one cannot but be repelled by such a facile and farfetched explanation for the maintenance of the anti-energy reservoirs.

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AUNTIE HAS HER LITTLE JOKE

by COLIN BORD

Casting my eye over the Radio Times pages, it was arrested by the words "straight stones", and reading more closely I saw that David Attenborough was talking about a little-known group of islands in the Pacific called the Shebas with unusual flora and fauna and "the mystery of the Straight Stones". Definitely worth following up, I thought. So at 11-40 a.m. I tuned to Radio 3 to hear about this mysterious group of South Sea isles. The principal island, Mr Attenborough told us, is Looflirpa, and he went on to describe some of the strange and hardly believeable forms of animal life that had been discovered there. But I was really waiting to hear about the straight stones, and listened intently as he started to describe them. They are, he said, standing stones 10 to 12 feet high and are placed apparently at random, but on closer examination the early explorers had found that they were in fact in alignment. Not only that; there were holes bored through the stones and by placing one's eye to a hole the next stone in line could be observed. The native legends stated that the stones pointed to where their ancestors came from, but some researchers had emphasized the phallic symbolism of the upright monoliths. The interviewer

asked if von Daniken had used this material in any of his books, and Mr Attenborough said that surprisingly enough he had not. Never having heard of these islands or their stones I was all agog to trace them on the map, and felt that surely some of the explorers that David Attenborough had mentioned must have written about the Sheba Islands. He continued by describing some of the incredible rituals and strange habits of this matriarchal society, and ended by saying that it was most appropriate that the programme was being broadcast today, April 1, as it was the precise anniversary of the discovery of these islands. It was then that my suspicions were aroused, and checking with the Radio Times again I saw that it was indeed April 1, and we were now just past mid-day. I also realised that the names Looflirpa, when reversed, described my situation precisely. I think David Attenborough and his producer Madeau Stewart should be congratulated on a most convincing and accurate anthropological take-off.

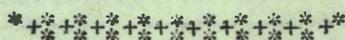
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MISCELLANY MISCELLANY

It used to be said that being satirised by Punch was the signal that an idea had arrived at the point of significant impact on the nation. Now there's a second standard. I refer to Private Eye where under Great Bores of Today No. 6 we read: "I wonder of you've got a book a friend of mine was telling me about you know it's written by this extraordinary man who's worked out that there are all these stones dotted about all over England and if you draw a line on the map if you see what I mean joining them all up it means there were people who lived millions of years ago and what this book says is that Stonehenge was some sort of Flying Saucer landing place I know it sounds incredible but apparently if you read this book you'll find it all there the awful thing is I can't remember the man's name or what the book's called but my friend said it had completely changed her life....."

ONE-DAY ANTI-METRICATION FESTIVAL

A grand fete and rally to celebrate the proposed rejection of the metric system and the reinvigoration of the British system of weights and measures will be held on Saturday, August 2, at noon, at Blacklands House, Calne, Wiltshire. They need the support of all who are in sympathy with the campaign to defeat the menace of metrication. By reversing the progress of metrication NOW, we can reverse the progress of all artificial, inhuman and unjust standards with which metrication is associated, and which are designed to promote the material prosperity of the few against the wishes and best interests of people as a whole.



built by the Romans along the line of a far more ancient track, yet in all its length, I cannot find one single piece of ley alignment. The same is generally true of the Conglomerate Track, a trail of puddingstones over 4,000 years old stretching from the Wash to Berkshire. Evidence of any form of alignment is minimal.

If leys exist, then they were obviously made after the retreat of the last glaciers 10,000 years ago. Yet the Fens and various parts of East Anglia have been inundated since then, even in historical times, and still the leys can be drawn! How come, when all the marks should have been erased by the waves? I feel certain that this is also the case in other areas of Britain.

Returning for a moment to the precision of people's lines, I decided to buy maps and plot some of Watkins's leys. I have yet to complete this, but I have already found 16 instances in which his leys have been anything but accurate, and another 5 that are on the borderline and which I for one would not accept. A few of John Michell's have gone the same way. If two people can get differing results using the same points, then something is obviously wrong with the whole idea. Finally, I come to an important angle which could throw everything, namely that of random alignments. I tried Watkins's idea of drawing random crosses on a specified size sheet of paper, and indeed found very few lines. But then I realized that this was not a true random test, since to draw a small cross on paper one has to look where one is putting the pencil. This effectively destroys the random factor. Closing one's eyes and simply "dotting" the paper with a felt-tip is random enough, but the resulting dots bear no relationship in size to the symbols on the map. In any case, I tried this twice and got completely opposing results.

Then I attempted a far more relevant experiment on the O.S. map, in which all the sites used were just as random as churches, moats, or whatever-you-like. Taking a 375 square mile section of the 1" map of the Lowestoft area, I ringed all the sites that I would take as possible ley points, giving a total of 246. I then ringed 246 farmhouses (chosen randomly using seven different initial letters of the farm names), and proceeded to line them up. The result was a multiplicity of lines just as great as the number of actual leys I had drawn. The maximum number of points on a line I have found (at the moment, and there are many more yet to be drawn) is 6. I have even found a 7-line centre at a place called Brooke Farm! So have I then discovered a whole new system of ancient routeways, marked at intervals by farms, or have I simply shown that leys MAY be a coincidence within the laws of probability.

Well, in spite of all that I have said, I do not claim to have disproved leys. Indeed, my intuition tells me that there may be something to the theory, and I remain fascinated by it. All I want now is for somebody to clarify my thoughts, dispel my doubts, and prove to me conclusively that leys are what they are pronounced to be.

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STRAIGHT LINES FROM OLDHAM

by JAMES H. FOUNTAIN

*** This article is condensed from a piece in The Chronicle, Oldham, of November 16, 1974

For me, the hunt began 10 years ago. In 1964, for the local library, I was asked to photograph a large stone on the western boundary of the Shaw-Crompton area, and the strange entrenchment earthworks on the eastern side. I read all I could find on the subject and discovered that there were two views. One was that these objects -- or at any rate the entrenchments -- dated only from the Wars of the Roses. The other was that they were one more example of a strange network of tracks and earthworks covering the whole country and laid down in the Stone Age.

The latter explanation was first put forward about 80 years ago by Dr Moeller, Director of the Copenhagen Royal Museum, followed by a few other researchers in Britain and elsewhere. It was most fully developed by Alfred Watkins.....

for about an hour at midday, a straight line running from the top to the bottom of the hill on the left of the figure.

He does not appear in written record until 1766 when a contemporary sketch shows a rake and scythe added to the staves and a face with eyes, nose and mouth looking rather as if a child had drawn it, but there is some doubt as to the accuracy of this sketch. Considerable skill went into the outline of the figure, for the proportions are so adjusted that though he is unduly elongated when seen from a point directly in front (that is, from above), this excess just counteracts the effect of foreshortening when seen from the lower level of the Weald. Thus he would seem to be meant to be seen from the ground. It should be mentioned that when he was established in his more permanent form the feet were turned sideways, before that he looked more as if he were striding downhill. Another fact is the height of the staves is just twice their distance apart. Thus is it a representation of the 2:1 measurements of which so much has been written, enclosing a man.

There are several giant legends associated with him of which the one of most interest to ley hunters concerns two giants, the Long Man on Windover Hill and the other who lived in the large round barrow on top of Firlie Beacon three miles away. (Those interested in nursery tales and where they may just possibly fit in with our subject will be interested to know that Firlie has a Bo-Peep Hill and a Beanstalk Farm?. The two quarrelled and hurled boulders at one another; the Firlie giant eventually killing the Long Man, who now lies dead on the hillside or else in a long barrow called Hunter's Burgh on the top of the hill.

For some years now I have played in a rather splendid band named The Expedient New Orleans Marching Band, whose main function has been to perform in something that appears to be unique in the whole country to just this part of Sussex. These are the bonfire societies, whose most well known meeting is at Lewes on November 5. However, they actually start at the end of August and go on almost every Saturday until the finish at East Hoathly on the Saturday after the Lewes gathering; and to see several hundred people carrying flaming torches through the streets wearing various costumes and making music is quite an experience. Now it is obviously very old and pagan in origin and the curious thing is that with the one exception of Littlehampton they all take place in the country in front of the Long Man, i.e., Crowborough, Mayfield, Uckfield, Rotherfield, etc. Perhaps this is another example of folk tradition being hard to eradicate and I would fully recommend anyone who can manage it to see one of them.

There is a theory that the Man had Roman associations as there have been coins of the period found that show a man holding two poles and, of course, Alfred Watkins described him as a Doddy Man.

As far as I know nobody has pointed out that the figure on the gate of the sub-god at Tiahuanaco holds two "staves", in this case with slight broadenings at the base of them. Now Hadrian Allcroft has this to say of the Long Man: "His next-of-kin appears to be a small and rude rock carving near Lake Onega in Northern Russia, which might be flippantly maintained to represent the Giant when a boy. It stands in the same attitude and leans upon the same two staves, with no other difference than that the Russian staves end in a circular something which forcibly recalls the ski-stick affected by winter-sport." H.J. Massingham refers to his as probably being a derivative of Horus-Re.

Now for a personal view, I think that his importance lies as well in the country around and in front of him as far as say Tunbridge Wells. The map is covered in animal and bird names which in themselves make an interesting problem but I think it only fair to point out that any reference to owls could possibly, though not necessarily be connected with "owler" which is the old Sussex slang for smuggler.

To the left of his feet are three interesting churches, Alciston, Berwick, and Selmeston. Join these up and you have a triangle with angles of 40, 100, 40°. To the N.E. there is Brightling, where at the beginning of last century an M.P., John Fuller, built a stone obelisk in the middle of a field that just so happens to be an ley intersection. He also had himself buried in a stone pyramid (See T.L.H. 56/57).

Just in front of the Long Man I can see the outline of an elephant which I quite realise that some may disagree with. The tip of the trunk starts at the crossroads at Berwick and goes upwards past the station, bearing right at the inn at Dicker and then turning right, keeping Michelham Priory on the left until Cacklebar is reached. The continuation is on the other side of the main road, over the old railway towards Glynleigh Level. Some of the outline of lower jaw and front leg can be seen around Arlington. What could be the significance of this? Well, Guy Underwood mentioned that the elephant, among others, made the pattern displaying the sacred spiral symbol and Jill Purce in "The Mystic Spiral" has this to say -- "The elephant is often known as the 'pillar of the universe'. His four-square stance, and the spiral of his ears, make him a symbol of cosmic orientation."

Could there be a zodiac in front of him? There is not a lot to go on that I have found, but there are a few clues that I think are worth noting. Taking Glastonbury as a guide, there is Argos Hill roughly where Cancer could be; Cancer being represented by the star ship Argo Navis, but it should be pointed out, I think, that Ar-Goat was Celtic for wooded country. It is slightly to the right and below Crowborough. However, below this where Leo would be there actually is a Lions Green and where Virgo could be, the intriguingly named Three Cups Corner could easily represent her sheaf. Those who might dismiss the elephant could not possibly deny two other outlines near Laughton. A little below Hawkhurst Common there is a village called East Hoathly which will give you the beak of a bird that is presumably a hawk. Trace the road south through Whitesmith, turn west at Holmes Hill, through Laughton and Broyle Place, turn right up the straight road and go through the oddly named Terrible Down and then right to Hoathly again. There is even a convenient pond for the eye. On his left, enclosing Little Horsted, there is a magnificent horse's head that I am sure anyone can easily trace with once again a pond in the right place for the eye.

Now I think that the hawk is so obvious that he must be there to tell us something. Is this, for instance, Arturian territory? Well, for a start Merlin means small hawk and Sir Gawaine sometimes went under the name of White Hawk. (There is actually a prehistoric camp called Whitehawk a few miles away in Brighton). Apart from this, the local Berwick could be Bearwick that could remind one of the bear associations with Arthur. Also, there is a nearby important site just to the east of Lewes named Mount Caburn that to me could equal Caliburn that equals Excalibur.

Now to return to the figure unseated from his horse; in the Glastonbury Zodiac he is reputed to be the wounded Arthur.

And most strange, about three miles in front of the Long Man there is a Knight's Farm just on the edge of a small district called almost unbelievably, Camberlot...

References: The Folklore of Sussex -- Jacqueline Simpson ; Mysterious Britain -- Janet & Colin Bord; The Sussex County Magazine -- E. Heron-Allen also J.B. Sidgwick.

ST VIGEANS PICTISH SYMBOL STONES -- by JOHN WILCOCK (from "The Quest for Magic", Sidgwick & Jackson, due this year)

Near to Arbroath is the village of St Vigeans (pronounced as if spelt with a "j") where the church sits on a small hill under which -- the parishioners of 2½ centuries ago believed -- was an underground lake that would swallow them up if communion services were held. The village is best known for its remarkable collection of engraved Pictish symbol stones taken from the churchyard and now preserved in a cottage museum across the street. Although archaeologists estimate they were carved about the 9th. Century, at a time when Christianity was presumed to have almost absorbed the old pagan beliefs, some of them bear the typical Pictish symbols of z-rods, v-rods, and crescents that have never been entirely deciphered and which exist in no other culture. "They demonstrate no artistic or cultural antecedents; they come down to us widespread and mature, obviously of great and instant significance in their

day. In meaning and purpose a mystery, yet artistically they are completely satisfying," as the official guide puts it.

The Drosten Stone, a six-foot slab with a cross, serpent and dragon at one side, and a hunting scene at the other along with the mysterious words DROSTEN IPE UORET ETT FORCUS which nobody has been able to translate except to assume that they were names of people.

St Vigean, by the way, is the Latinized name of St Fechin who came from Ireland in the 7th. Century and founded a church here. The present church incorporates in its walls some of the earlier masonry.

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REVIEWS
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"Atlantean research within the sphere of speculative

"ATLANTEAN TRADITIONS IN ANCIENT BRITAIN" -- by ANTHONY ROBERTS (UNICORN, £2-40)

((At £2-40 + postage - possibly around 25p - from Unicorn Books, Nant-Gwilw, Llanfynydd, Carmarten, Wales.))

archaeology is an admittedly contentious business," write Tony Roberts. He adds "rather like walking on thin ice with only a rudimentary knowledge of swimming."

In the book, the research is first-class, but the application has me undecided. Having reviewed parts of this work in their first incarnation as several separate entities, I can do little more than reiterate my admiration for Tony's masterful marshalling of facts and manipulation of these into an Atlantean context. However, though facts they remain, I am yet far from convinced of a physical Atlantis. Similarly von Daniken will never persuade me of his ancient astronauts though some of his material is interesting and, for various reasons, I would hate to be debating against him.

Tony Roberts, however, is not a dubious hack but a sincere investigator with a fine style. I would have preferred not to describe his books as a snakes and ladders affair but must in all honesty to my beliefs. The ladders being his ability to construct the correct relationships between elements of the Megalithic Culture such as stone circles, leys, zodiacs and astronomical alignments. But for me, at least, snakes appear in the form that all the prehistoric science and migratory correlations are associated with a once and future earthly Atlantis.

Probably the evidence for such a former continent is on the face of it overwhelming and this book presents it as such. In fact, within our areas of interest I feel to be in a minority having intuitively cast aside belief in such.

This does not in any way invalidate the core of the book's argument that the Megalithic Culture was highly sophisticated. Fine illustrations, ably-compiled information, sensibly-argued theories and interesting format make this a prized possession.

Tony, who describes himself as "a mystical anarchist in the Blakean tradition" has written for THE LEY HUNTER -- as has his wife Janet -- and other non-academic periodicals, and this work reflects a view of society, past and future, which is becoming increasingly acceptable.

consumers' guide to the occult press

THE ATLANTEAN. Strong on meditation, astrology and New Age thought. Each issue includes a lecture by Helio-Arcanophus, leader of this spiritual society. The bi-monthly magazine is professionally printed and has articles, a miscellany by Betty Wood, book reviews and advertisements. Annual sub. is £1-50, inc p&p from The Atlanteans, 42 St George's Street, Cheltenham, GL50 4AF.

QUEST. Quarterly, duplicated magazine covering a wide spectrum of occult interest. Usually at least one article on Ancient British Mysteries. Strong on witchcraft, Qabalah, magic in general. Articles, advertisements, reviews. Specimen copy 25p,

inc p&p; annual sub 90p. From: BCM-SCL Quest, London WC1V 6XX.

GNOSTICA NEWS. A truly intellectual magazine of the occult in newspaper format. The sheer professionalism staggered me when I recently saw my first copy. Monthly, it covers magick, witchcraft, UFOs, astrology, I Ching, etc. Book reviews, ads, articles, letters. 12 issues U.S. 5 dollars (difficult to determine exchange on so bulky an item) from P.O. Box 3383-GN, St Paul, Minnesota, 55165, USA.

THE NEWS. Fireballs, mystery coastal flares, vanishings, pyramid theory, exotic animals on the loose, and more in issue 9. Bi-monthly. £2-10 pa. From R.J.M. Rickard, 3½ Kingswood Road, Moseley, Birmingham, B13 9AN (until July).

INFO JOURNAL. Latest issue I've seen is Vol. IV No. 2 with F.W. Holiday on monsters, C.H. Hapgood on maps, wolf girl, falls, phantom islands and other Fortean matter. Single copies 1 dollar 50 cents (remit at current rate of exchange plus postage from R.J.M. Rickard -- address above).

TORC. Glastonbury's answer to the Reader's Digest (their definition!). Articles on the past and future, and the life of Glastonbury district. Also reviews and poems. Issue 15 includes Joan Foster on leys, Paul Screeton on ley computer analysis, a review of this editor's book "Quicksilver Heritage", King Arthur, and pieces by Geoffrey Ashe and Barbara Crump. Sub for 5 issues £1. From Longacre, Withial Lane, Parbrook, Glastonbury, Somerset.

LANTERN. An East Anglian bias covering psychic phenomena and borderline subjects. No. 9 includes Nigel Pennick on Suffolk Landscape Geometry; psychic photography; aviation ghosts; and a news round-up. Quarterly. Sub is 70p p.a. Cheques/POs payable to Borderline Science Investigation Group, c/o I. Bunn, 3 Dunwich Way, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 4RZ.

SPECTRUM. No. 4 has Paul Screeton on "Sacred Alignments of Britain"; also articles on Crowley, gems, Magic, Avalon, etc. £2 for six issues from Bywood Publications, 62 High Street, Croydon, CR9 2UT, Surrey.

MORE MISCELLANY

The April issue of "Books and Bookmen" has Jacquetta Hawkes among those giving their best and worst books of 1974. Predictably under "scandal" she chose "In Search of Ancient Gods" by Van (sic) Daniken "that it should ever have been published". Michael Moorcock blotted his copybook in this commentator's eyes by choosing John Sladek's jaundiced "The New Apocrypha" as best non-fiction work.If you want to back one of Britain's hill figures then there is no better time than now. Though the Kilburn White Horse is supposedly recent there is a theory it replaced an earlier example. Work on repairing the steps leading from Kilburn, near Thirsk, in Yorkshire, up the Hambleton Hills, is almost complete and reaching the horses back is going to be alot easier. The 118-year-old hillside earving has had a tremendous amount of money spent on it in recent years. £5,000 was raised to save the horse which was deteriorating and disappearing back into the hill at an alarming rate. Now the steps that climb at an exhausting 30 degrees are being improved with financial assistance of £800 from the North Yorkshire Moors International Park Committee.....

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THE LEY HUNTER

The editor of THE LEY HUNTER is always interested in receiving articles on leys, Megalithic culture and related matter for publication. This is your magazine and I encourage readers to submit material. As might be expected I do not always agree with the material I publish, but apart from crass incompetence or direct plagiarism look favourably upon submitted material. Even where an article is in direct contradiction with my views or acceptance of established speculative archaeological thought I will publish if the writer is partially positive. As an editor I see my role as that of encouraging.

DRAGONS BLOOD

DRAGONS BLOOD

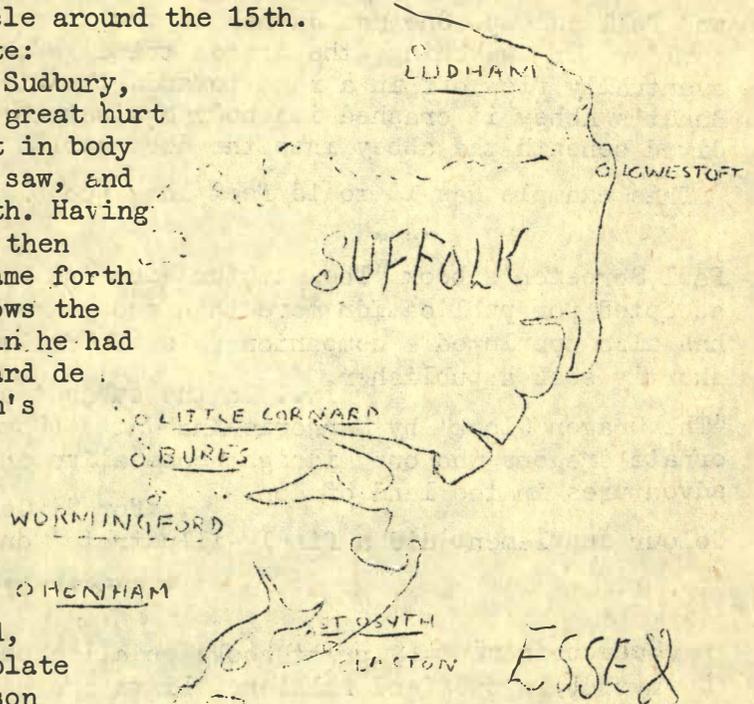
DRAGONS BLOOD

EAST ANGLIAN DRAGONSBy PAUL SCREETON(research by M.W. Burgess)

In close proximity on the Essex/Suffolk border lie the sites of three dragon combats.

The first is described by a monk, John de Hokelowe, who wrote a Latin chronicle around the 15th. Century, who for the year 1405 wrote:

"Close to the town of Bures, near Sudbury, there has lately appeared, to the great hurt of the countryside, a Dragon, vast in body with a crested head, teeth like a saw, and a tail extending to enormous length. Having slain the shepherd of a flock, he then devoured very many sheep. There came forth in order to shoot at him with arrows the workmen of the lord on whose domain he had concealed himself, being Sir Richard de Waldegrave, knight; but the Dragon's body, although struck by archers, remained unhurt, for the arrows bounced off his back as if it were iron or hard rock. Those arrows that fell upon the spine of his back gave out as they struck a ringing or tinkling sound, just as if they had hit a brazen plate and then flew far away off by reason of the hide of this great beast being impenetrable. Thereupon, in order to destroy him, all the country people around were summoned. But when the Dragon saw that he was again about to be assailed by arrows, he fled into a marsh or mere and there hid himself amongst the long reeds; nor was he any more seen."



Connected to the Stour by a stream, this mere still exists. This is the legend attributed to Bures, but to be strictly accurate it occurred nearer to Wormingford.

When Richard I returned from the Crusades he brought back a "curious little cockadrille", which he housed in the Tower of London as the beginning of a royal menagerie. The beast grew so large that it managed to escape and journey down the Thames before making inland. The villagers of Withermundford, as Wormingford was then named, appealed to the local knight, Sir George de la Haye, to rid them of the beast. He killed it in a field henceforth called Bloody Meadow.

A villager pointed out that, "Our village became known as Warmyngford or Wermynford soon after the incident and the first part of the name was an old term for serpent or dragon". Wormingford Church has a stained glass window depicting the dragon.

An ancient chronicle, now in Canterbury Cathedral, relates the occurrence on September 26, 1449, of a battle between two fire-breathing dragons near Little Cornard. The black Suffolk combatant lived on Kedington Hill and the reddish and spotted Essex contender came from Ballingdon Hill. The red dragon won after a fierce hour's fighting and the site is still known locally as Sharpfight Meadow.

A large moving dragon which set houses alight was reported in 1170 at St Osyth's.

Villagers with pitchforks killed a dragon at Henham, between Bishop's Stortford and Saffron Walden, in 1668, after ten days of rampaging. It was stated to be about nine feet long and scaly.

