



THE LEY HUNTER

LEY HUNTING IN WALESby JIMMY GODDARD

Wales is a fascinating area for ley hunting, as my wife and I found during our week there in early September, although my ignorance of Welsh was something of a handicap with regard to the place names. We stayed in a caravan on the slopes of the Mynydd y Gaer (Mountain of the Camp) overlooking the village of Llanefydd across the valley. It was an idyllic setting with a beautiful view, and very clear skies at night. The Milky Way was the brightest we have ever seen it, and the stones also attested the unpolluted atmosphere by their lichen coverings. The narrow road to this summit was lined with bushes laden with blackberries, and from the top (where traces of the camp are still visible) one can see Snowdonia in one direction and Rhyll in the other, and, misty in the distance across the water, the Wirral peninsula.

Mynydd y Gaer is a ley centre with a peaceful atmosphere despite its warlike use by the Romans, and energy could be felt from our caravan position, though not at the top. This phenomenon has been noticed before, for instance at St George's Hill, Weybridge, Surrey.

Llanefydd church, on a ley from the camp, is no longer used due to lack of congregation (the population are mainly nonconformist) but it is well maintained inside, and a fairly strong energy could be felt. About two miles west of Mynydd y Gaer is the tiny isolated hillside church of St John's in the parish of Llanfair Talhaiarn. It is, however, no nearer that village than it is to Llanefydd -- right out in the wilds, with only one service a month -- nevertheless it is remarkable in the terrific energy felt there. I could feel it even sitting outside in the car (which has never happened anywhere else) and when I walked up the avenue of double trees leading to its door, it was like a band of numbness around my head. Unfortunately it is kept locked, so we could not go inside. It is of course a ley centre.

Another very interesting church ley centre in this area is Henllan church, between Llanefydd and Denbigh. The name of the village means "old church" and the building, although rather plain and non-cruciform like many Welsh churches, is notable in that it has a detached tower on a large limestone outcrop on the hilltop (the church itself is lower down). The tower is s-e of the church, which is a rare example of one being aligned due east. The ley running between church and tower is a good one: coming from the n-w direction it passes through three crossroads and two other peaks before coming to the church and tower, passes just west of Denbigh to come to a motte and bailey, then goes to Llanfwrog church and an earthwork, and the church at Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd. The church is rather lovely inside, the walls being faced with limestone blocks with some fossils visible, and a high, semi-cylindrical wooden ceiling. A fairly strong energy was felt there, though nothing like at St John's.

On the other side of the Clwydian Range, south of Nannarch, there is a stone circle. Only four stones remain, but it is nonetheless very interesting. The circle of stones has largely been replaced by a circle of trees, all very large and all oaks except for one elm, unaffected for the moment at least by Dutch Elm Disease. The interior of the circle is completely covered by nettles and there are fragments of stone everywhere. One stone that seems to be firmly embedded is in the centre, but it is impossible to say whether this is original. However, perhaps the most interesting thing is the strange leonine face on one of the stones, so similar to the one pointed out to us by Mollie Carey at Stanton Drew, here wearing an expression of intense sadness, reflecting the desolation of the place.

The circle is set near a stream and between hills, and at some distance from it, near a path lined with an avenue of copper beeches, is another much larger stone, noticed, to my shame, by my wife and not myself. Not until I returned to the caravan did I realise that this stone was almost certainly on the west-running ley linking the circle with Henllan church. However, I did not feel any energy at the circle, despite the fact that I touched all the stones. The ley from the circle to Henllan, travelling westwards, after leaving the circle and its stone, skirts the northern tip of Pen-y-Cloddian camp, then goes to Henllan, and the six road and track junctions.

POWYS, BRITAIN AND THE GOLDEN AGEby ANDREW LARMAN

John Cowper Powys, the novelist, essayist, critic and philosopher, lived from 1872 until 1963. He spent his youth in Wessex, his middle age lecturing in America and his old age in North Wales. His works are largely inspired by Wales and Wessex; in addition to those discussed below, they include "Weymouth Sands", "Morwyn", "Owen Glendower", "Wolf Solent", "Porius", and "Atlantis".

Thirty or forty years ago, in the Welsh town of Corwen, a strange ritual could be observed early every morning. A tall, elderly man of striking, somewhat wild appearance would emerge from a small cottage on the hillside above the town. He would make his way out until he reached some noted inanimate object -- a dead tree, a single stone -- and then, stooping, bang his forehead on it several times. This was John Cowper Powys paying his own peculiar homage to the ancient powers of this land above the sacred Dee, the old kingdom of Powys from whence he believed his distant ancestors derived.

Like most artists who have exhibited an occult eccentricity, Powys has been shunned, neglected, insulted and despised. At last, however, he is receiving something like just recognition. This is not only because his literary worth is being favourably evaluated, but also because his ideas and themes are attractive to the growing body of people interested in the spiritual wisdom of ancient Britain. He is almost unique in English literature in showing awareness and concern for the ancient and particular powers of this land. Sometimes he is explicit about them; at other times he gives tantalizing hints. But he is always aware of the true nature and essence of his heritage, and champions its cause against the scientific and dogmatic approaches of archaeology and religion.

Powys wrote as a visionary, with the awareness and fervour of a bard or prophet. Although he undoubtedly possessed a rich and extensive knowledge of Celtic and pre-Celtic culture, Arthurian romance, theosophy, and so on, he went beyond the merely intellectual to see the deeper truth, and to express this poetically. He proclaimed himself a "medium" for the "marginal sensations of mankind" in general; and an expression of the hidden powers of ancient Britain in particular. Saturated in the traditions of Wessex and Wales, he yet remained a startlingly individual talent.

There is a certain direction in his writing, both a progression and a regression. Powys is not concerned with a sense of historical continuity, but with the recovery of what we have lost from the past, forgotten sensual/spiritual capabilities that united both "the aboriginal and the psychic". His mythic imagination viewed Man in cosmic, not social terms, harking back to a Golden Age when these accomplishments were fully utilized. For some poets the Golden Age is a metaphor for a state of the soul, for lost childhood innocence, or a classic myth. For Powys it is an actual historical epoch, its memory now debased, its powers lost or corrupted, its actuality ridiculed by all but a few. For him it was a time when in Atlantis or even before a civilization had existed which united both the social and the spiritual in perfect, liberating concord, producing an individual fullness of mind now almost wholly lost.

That is, except in a few places, a few instances. Powys believed that the fullest survival of the Golden Age was to be found in the traditions, culture, language and mythology of Wales. He used "Wales" in its widest sense to embrace aspects emanating from it -- such as the Grail, deriving he believed from the Welsh Pair Dadeni or Cauldron of Rebirth. It was more than coincidence that when Powys finally went to live in Wales, it was to the area known as "Hiraethog". In Welsh "hiraeth" means a longing, a nostalgia, but something deeper than English has a word for: a harking-back to the earliest days of a people, with the overtones of a Golden Age -- yearning. Powys' own "hiraeth" led him to make an imaginative recreation of the most ancient traditions, seeking to convey some of their primal power in a contemporary setting. He knew well that the mythologies and artifacts of ancient Britain were not the mutilated remnants of a primitive, degenerate society but the poetic and architectural expressions of an advanced civilization.

Powys maintained that the Welsh, by virtue of their geographical seclusion, temperamental introversion and racial age, had managed to conceal the ancient "planetary

secrets" longer than any other people. He discerned a distinct "aboriginal" trait in what he called the "true Welsh", those who by their remoteness and lack of interbreeding had managed to keep alive the pre-Celtic race which had inhabited the country.

Like many Celtic myths, J.C. Powys' novels deal with borderlands; geographical or natural, they form appropriate quasi-symbolic localities for the "psychic borderlands" which are the essence of his writing. Especially potent for him were those places where the old powers lingered on and which could form a psychic "bridge" between past and present. He had an occult belief that an inanimate object could act as a receiver and accumulator of impressions generated by thought or action. From this, by "poetic psychometry", a sensitive mind could attune itself to lingering emanations. So, in a place like Glastonbury Tor, with its long-established spirituality, an immense reserve of occult power would be accumulated, capable of emitting great force and intimating something of the power of ancient times to a sensitive recipient.

Let us now examine some of Powys' writings in more detail. His "Autobiography" (1934) recounts much of his knowledge of Ancient Britain gained as he became increasingly obsessed with the "idea of Wales". He believed that the Welsh inherited the wisdom of an older race, the builders of Stonehenge. The wisdom is summed up in Powys' assertion that "the oldest Welsh wisdom was the wisest and most ancient of all human wisdom; it is within the power of the will and imagination to destroy and recreate the world". Powys believed that thought could actually achieve physical ends; an inference that Stonehenge may have been raised by mental power is not an unreasonable assumption.

Seeing himself as "restorer of the hidden planetary secrets of these mystical introverts of the world," Powys undertook his mission both in word and action. In his spellbinding lectures he conveyed "a magic message from the gods of the old world to the market places of the new". His lectures were famous for his blend of knowledge and showmanship; and no wonder, for he was genuinely inspired by "something...from those far off 'sacred hills', from Glastonbury Tor, Dabury Camp, from Shaston, from the peak of Snowden."

He could call upon the old powers both as a practical force and as a creative inspiration. The full range of his vision is best seen in the monumental "A Glastonbury Romance" (1933). Geographically, this novel moves from Norfolk via Stonehenge to Glastonbury; this also represents a spiritual progress. For the traveller John Crow, this journey -- which he makes on foot -- is "the walking towards some mysterious celestial fount wherein pain was transmuted into an unknown element." At Stonehenge he encounters the Welsh antiquarian and mystic Owen Evans, who explains to him some of the circle's mysteries. Crow is sensitive to the true power of the place; "he felt drunkenness with the magnetism emanating from these prehistoric monoliths and trilithons" and does not need Evans' chatter. Note here the specific use of the word "magnetism"; strange that Powys should use this with its now-recognized association with ley power. The stones impart a sense of liberating ecstasy, and here Powys describes in a most powerful way the true nature of Stonehenge, its spiritual aura and innate force; talking of the actual stones he says "they had become by the mute creative action of 4000 years, authentic Divine beings...they gathered godhead up, as a lightning conductor gathers up electricity and refused to delegate it to any interpreter or to any priest."

John Crow comes eventually to Glastonbury, where he meets Sam Dekker, the unorthodox son of a vicar. Dekker is attuned to the spirit of the place, believing that "the deepest-rooted superstitions here...would turn out to be the religion of the people who lived before the ancient Britains, perhaps even before the Neolithic men." Here is a hint of some primal culture, perhaps that of Atlantis. John Crow has a lover, Mary, at Glastonbury. In their sexual and spiritual bond Powys sees a link and an affinity with the ancient powers -- "in the etheric atmosphere about these two...quivered the immemorial mystery of Glastonbury. Christians had one name for the Power, the ancient heathen inhabitants of this place had another and quite different one...as different people approached this

spot, they changed its chemistry, though not its essence." He goes on to elucidate the nature of this all-important "essence". The influence was personal, yet impersonal, it was a material centre of force, yet an immaterial fountain of life...older than the gods of Neolithic man, it had been handed down to subsequent generations by three psychic channels...the channel of popular renown, the channel of inspired poetry and by the channel of individual experience." This "influence" is equated with the Grail, not the Christianized form of mediaeval romance, but the original form that gave rise to the Cauldron of Rebirth in Welsh lore and thence subsequent manifestations. The grail is a symbol for ancient powers, poetic powers of inspiration and rebirth, the certain something outside itself for which mankind always yearns.

Desire for Powys -- whether sexual or spiritual -- is the strongest force in the world, and can lead to the grail-vision. It is "what Merlin had and what Joseph found -- the indying grail", "the desire of generations -- a little nucleus of eternity, dropped somehow from the outer spaces upon one particular spot." The "spot" is Glastonbury, and through the medium of Owen Evans Powys expounds upon the nature of the place. Evans equates it with "yr Echryd, the land of Annwn, the land of twilight and death." Evans asks of the Fisher-Kings "For what did they fish?...the triads only dare hint at these things." Powys expounds: "They sought for more than a fish. For the knot of the opposites. For the stone without lichen which the people before my people worshipped, when they set up..." He does not finish but we can tentatively guess and supply something like "Stonehenge" to fill the gap.

Evans's own particular quest is to find the meaning of the mystical word "esphimeoir", the place to which Merlin disappeared. Powys equates this with the fourth dimension, both in time and space and in the mind. It is the place of the Grail, the place of the Golden Age; both in actuality and poetically, Glastonbury can be the door to "esphimeoir".

In "Maiden Castle" (1935) Powys's knowledge of ancient lore is stated in an obvious manner. Throughout the novel he refers to the earthwork as "Mai-Dun", thereby giving it its original British name. Again, an antiquarian -- here, Urien Quirm -- is used as a mouthpiece. He stands for, and partially symbolizes the old, buried powers in conflict with the scientific approaches of archaeology. He believes that Mai-Dun was "a civilized polis, long before the Romans came, and it is only an impoverished imagination that sees them living in miserable thatched holes" -- Powys's own view clearly asserted.

Urien has changed his name from Enoch, for Urien is a character from Welsh mythology. In doing so he symbolically places himself in the line of heritage of the locality's powers, originating in a lost golden age; in actuality he feels himself to be in touch with these hidden forces, an inheritor of "the old magic of the mind, the secret of which has been so often lost, but the Welsh, alone among the races hid it instead of squandering it." Although Quirm is Welsh, he believes that these secrets ante-date the Celts; he says that "Urien is no Celtic word but far older -- a word belonging to that mysterious civilization of the dwellers in Dunium and in the great cities about Avebury and Stonehenge, Caer Drwyn and Caer Sidi and Cattrath and Carbonek, that was not Aryan at all but a civilization possessed of secrets of life that Aryan science has destroyed." He later goes on to say that this civilization knew the "true power of the golden age"... "it is the power our race adored when built Avebury and Maiden Castle and Stonehenge and Caer Drwyn...they twisted it all round later, the sly children of gold and of burning...but the power that rushes through me when I go there (Maiden Castle), the power that I am under my name Urien goes too deep for them to destroy." Powys knew of the sanctity and true purpose of places like Stonehenge and Maiden Castle. At a time when established thought viewed them as primitive expressions of degenerate culture.

There is a hope in Powys's writings that the Golden Age will be restored. Urien prophesies that the old powers will break through, and these 4,000 years which the world has been deceived will be redeemed. Powys himself wrote of the coming Age of Aquarius, attended by a more feminine, a more intuitive culture; a partial return to the matriarchal society of the Golden Age. In our present awareness of the true nature of ancient British civilization, and in our acceptance of a thinker like

Powys, we may be paving the way for this rebirth.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Maiden Castle (Macdonald); A Glastonbury Romance (Picador);
Autobiography (Macdonald); Obsolete Cymric (Village Press).

Part 3: THE FORGOTTEN HEART OF ALBION: Some Aspects of Leicestershire Lore

by PAUL DEVEREUX and ANDREW YORK

LOOSE ENDS

CROSSES: Not on the 1" map, and missed by Rimmer, a 12' high cross stands in Rothley churchyard. It is of Saxon origin and Dare considered that it had only geometric designs on it. However, Ken Clarke points out to us that from our photograph of it he can decipher the barely discernable figure of an angel. Once pointed out, easily seen. There is a curious triangular motif on another face of the cross, which is a shaft without a head. Dare, who excavated the base in the 1920s was of the opinion that the cross never had traverse arms. The cross is set in a boulder that lies beneath the ground. Records of other Leicestershire crosses we have noted include an amazing one excavated at Higham on the Hill. A tumulus existed S of the church, by the roadside, and when it was partially opened in 1899 a very ancient oak cross was found. The transverse bar was 16 feet long and fitted to an 18ft long perpendicular beam by a scarf-notch. No wooden or metal pins were used. The cross was laid due E and W. A cross in a tumulus? Other records name crosses at: Sproxtton - Saxon, carved with rings, wheels and interlacing; Hoby - stump; Ashfordby - stepped, apparently the figure of a man with his right hand raised in blessing can be deciphered; Bottesford - stepped; Frisby on the Wreake - 10ft high, stepped; Billesdon - C14, fluted shaft; Foxton - fragment of Saxon cross; Harby - fragment built into war memorial; Hathern; Ragdale - old cross "among the tombstones"; Rollestone - ancient shaft in churchyard; Scalford - ancient cross fragment; Stoughton - C14, fluted shaft; Tilton - broken shaft in churchyard; Wymondham - fragment of ancient cross serving as sundial; Scaptoft - C13; Swithland - cross here moved from Mountsorrel; Hallaton - market cross "like a cone of steps"; Breedon - portion of Saxon cross; Kirby Bellars - remains of a stone cross in churchyard. We recall also that we noticed the stump of a cross in the churchyard at Grimston.

BEACON HILL: We note that this is pictured on p84 of "Mysterious Britain"...The authors state that there is a ghost legend attached to the place and that the name of the hill suggests it was used as a beacon site. There is, in fact, more substantial evidence. "Mr Langham of Needles Inn...well remembers that there stood on the high point of the Beacon, an erection of rude and ancient masonry about 6ft high, of round form, and having in its centre a cavity, about a yard deep, and a yard in diameter, the sides of which were thickly covered in burnt pitch...He remembers too, that at that time entrenchments on that hill were more visible than they are now. I discovered, by digging, many heaps of nearly perished mortar mingled with fragments of stone and dark red brick." (Potter).

FOUR DRAGONS: We have noted accounts of a "remarkable carving" on the Norman font in the church at Thorpe Arnold. It depicts St George fighting a snorting dragon. Behind the saint the dragon appears again, sleeping peacefully. The church at Stoney Stanton has carvings of a winged dragon and other "strange beasts". At Appelby Magna there is a moated farmhouse, its moat still wet, which has a roughly carved stone over the kitchen mantelpiece depicting "an armed man, a woman leaning on a stick, and Michael with the dragon."

SONIC ANOMALY: "If you descend the hillock on which Old John stands....and sit in the cavity of the rocks...you can get one of the most remarkable echoes to be found anywhere, thrown back by the wood behind the wall-ladder...It reproduces every syllable of even fairly long sentences, and the speaker's accent and pitch of voice as well!" (Dare). The wood in question is at SK 524116 - where the "Bradgate Stones" (referred to in the first section of this article) are located. There is also a large depression in the ground within this wood.

HINCKLEY: The difficult exorcism of a child's ghost at Old Hall near here is supposed to account for "the buzzing or humming on the surface" of nearby moats.

ROTHLEY: A lady, now in her seventies, born and bred in the village told us of a tradition that the Temple at Rothley (built by the Knights Templars -- now only the chapel survives and a hotel occupies the greater part of the site) was connected by a subterranean tunnel with Nottingham Castle - a distance of 17 miles. It is worth noting that a great many passages and tunnels do exist in the great rock in which the castle stands. Moreover, there is an ancient inn built into the cliffside which has cellars leading into this network of tunnels. The inn is called the Trip to Jerusalem and, it is believed, originated around the time of the Crusades. Now we ask you, fellow ley hunters, what group of men really made the trip to Jerusalem?

BLACK ANNA: "Black Anna was said to be in the habit of crouching amongst the branches of the old pollard oak which grew in the cleft of rock over the mouth of her cave or "bower'." (Leics. Chronicle, 1874). The writer of this piece claimed he had seen the cave, on the Dane Hills, as a boy and said that it had a ledge of rock running along each side.

IBSTOCK TO WALES: There is a tradition in Ibstock that a path once existed between the village and Wales. There seems to be no physical evidence for this tale but we have a tentative suggestion to make. Ibstock lies on, for practical purposes, a great circle centred on Whiteleafed Oak in the Malverns. Indeed, Ibstock church is actually outside the present village - to the SW where the old village was situated. This would put it as exactly on the circumference of the circle as can be determined. This circle also passes very close to Meifod in Montgomeryshire which had a Druidic college in its vicinity. Could this path legend be vestigial folk-memory concerning this huge circle and how it linked Ibstock with a Welsh centre of ancient wisdom? In addition, this invisible terrestrial circle seems strongly associated with the oak. Whiteleafed Oak is its centre and no two counties in Briatain are more connected with the oak than Leicestershire and Montgomeryshire (Powys).

STONEY STANTON: Mill Hill, near this village, was formerly famous for fairy rings and fairy dances. People in the neighbourhood used to have many "wonderful traditional tales" regarding them, according to Nichols.

LEA WOOD: A countryman told us that this wood "drew the thunder". Electrical storms were attracted to the place and were notoriously active within this vicinity. Our informant was himself driven to his knees, physically, by the force of the thunder when caught in the area as a storm raged. Apparently, the original wood has been removed and the area no longer seems to have a particular attraction for storms.

SWITHLAND WOOD: This wood has been notorious as a focus for suicides for many decades. Indeed, even Dare records the fact in his book on Charnwood Forest. Old slate quarries have to a degree altered the topography of the wood. Could this alteration of the local landscape in an area of power create negative forces?

2 1/2" MAP DISCREPANCIES: Mr Bob Chaplin, of Lewes, writes to tell us: "The discrepancies I've come across in O.S. maps refers to the 2 1/2" to mile series. I bought maps TQ40 and TQ41 in the "Provisional Edition" which matched perfectly. Then I bought TQ21/31 and TQ20/30 in the "Second Series" which did not match up. Over one map there was a discrepancy of about 2mm. I wrote to the O.S. Office... They said words to the effect that they couldn't do anything about it..."

FORTEAN ODOUR: While we were doing some fieldwork during July/Aug. 1974 we noticed an account in the Leicester Mercury describing a strange smell which drifted across Charnwood Forest, reported by many people. Gas board and other officials were called out to investigate the odour but were unable to account for it.

THURNBY "SPIDERS": R.J.M. Rickard reminds us that there was a swarm of money spiders on Thurnby Lodge Estate, Leicester, on Oct. 13, 1967. Houses and cars were covered with webs -- an estimated 2,000,000 per acre (The News/6). We note from the records we have collected that 15 days later some eight UFOs were seen over a spot 1 1/2 miles from Thurnby Lodge. Indeed, on this same night, a dark oblong with lights at each end was sighted over Braunstone, Leicester; a T-shaped

light was seen over Aylestone, Leicester, and a kite-shaped red and white light was seen over Earl Shilton. A month before the swarm of moneyspiders a pink, flashing light was seen from Humberstone, Leicester, travelling E to W. In fact the whole period from July 2 - Oct 31 was UFO active.

STRANGE CITIES: We have already noted the road called "City of Three Waters" to the E of Whitwick, near the Cademan Stone. We also notice from the 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " map an area to the SE of the village called the "City of Dan". Danaan? This whole area around High Cademan is mysterious - a great many tiny groves, some on tumps, most surrounded by ancient drystone walls; sudden, rugged rock outcrops pushing up amidst groups of trees. It is an area that gives one gut-reaction of remote, primeval power.

"BLOOD": In 1645, 14 years before the amazing Markfield events, the artificial lake near Garendon Abbey began to turn red. For four days it became deeper in colour until it was blood red and the consistency of the water was like paste. Cattle refused to drink from it. After the fourth day the water began to return to normal and the red colour sank to the bottom. The people of the village drained the lake in case animal carcasses were causing the "blood". Fish were unharmed, but the red colouring remained on the lake bed like a carpet. This strange occurrence made Garendon Pool famous far and wide. Other "blood": every April drops of red moisture are supposed to appear on the gravestone of Richard Smith in St Mary's churchyard, Hincley, because of his murder; Edmuntthorpe Church contains a tomb of Sir Rodger Smith and his two wives, one of whom was supposed to be a witch - her alabaster tomb-sculpture streaked red as if with blood.

MORE OLD STONES: In order to drive home his point about his Ibstock ley (TLH50) Mr David Morris has sent us photographs of two remarkable markstones in Ibstock, one at the corner of a lane and the other a short distance along it. Mr Morris says that the stones are opposite the avenue aligned on Ibstock church. The corner markstone is a dome with slight ridges running down it. The other stone looks to us more like a small standing stone than a simple markstone. There is, or was, a boundary stone near the top of New Walk in Leicester. There is an extant standing stone at Grace Dieu Priory which is in ruins and stands near the Ashby-Loughborough road. The priory is reputedly haunted by the ghost of a white lady. The stone has four sides, three rough hewn and one perfectly smooth facing north. The stone slopes, and seems a focal point for the moles in the field in which it stands! Clearly, there must be many old stones of different types to be rediscovered in Leicestershire.

BEAUMANOR: We learn that the present C19 manor house at Beaumanor is built on the site of two earlier houses and that the place was originally moated. It can therefore be considered a definite point on the Heather-Ragdale ley. A point of interest is that the previous houses were destroyed by fire.

LAST WORDS

EXTENDED FOLKLORE: We have endeavoured to provide a "study in the round" of Leicestershire. We have tried to stretch the concept of folklore to more realistic proportions by adding matters directly related to leys, aerial phenomena and meteorology -- an extended folklore. It has not been possible to discuss many items in detail but we have tried to balance this shortcoming by providing a really comprehensive framework that would be of particular use to a ley hunter or allied researcher approaching the county. Of course, we have been forced to be selective in our choice of material. We have taken Leicestershire apart, hopefully to indicate more revelatory ways of putting it back together,

POINTS OF DEPARTURE: There are two problems related to the county that immediately confront the researcher. One is Leicester itself: even these days it is one of the wealthiest cities in Europe and its gross materialism spreads deep into its environment. Thus the true, poetic face of the county is easily missed. One must try to overcome this, ignoring the road-building, quarrying, blue-rinse, bingo, status symbols, bigotry and all the other joys the C20 offers. But then there is the second problem -- the map. From the ley hunter's point of view the 1" and 1:50,000 maps (at least) are cartographic disasters. We have found stones

marked in Somerset and Devon, for instance, that are in no way as important as some of those omitted from the Leicestershire maps. There is plenty of work facing the stalwart researcher. Many prehistoric tracks cross the county. If these were carefully walked, more old stones would probably be discovered. A general, continued search for old stones throughout the county is recommended. A thorough index of Leicestershire leys needs to be compiled. Suspicious, but inadequate, map-alignments should never be discounted as far as this county is concerned. A 3-point line on a map can easily become a 5-point ley after fieldwork in Leicestershire. A realistic gazeteer of earthworks in the county is desperately required...and so on. We suggest, however, that the area has one overriding claim to importance. The county, particularly to the west, contains examples of most of the aspects we presently understand to relate to the prehistoric science. In the way that a code can be broken by the use of a key-word, we wonder if the mystery of the landscape can be deciphered by the use of a key, or model, area. If this conjecture should be founded, in fact, then W. Leics. is the place where it will be proved. It still possesses an elusive remnant of antiquity -- the relationship between a wide spectrum of ancient structures and natural features and phenomena. For example, the link between the Croft Hill omphalos and the incidence of aerial phenomena was not invented by us -- it was evidence that presented itself. And what is the relationship between these two factors and the fault line? We pass it on to the reader for deeper thought. If W. Leics. does show itself to be a ley-area then Croft Hill will be the key. And there is another feature that is amazingly, perhaps uniquely, preserved in Leicestershire - trees. Almost all the old stones are related to one or more trees. There are anomalies and power-effects connected with certain groups of Leicestershire trees, as we have seen. This has been noticed elsewhere (eg Fatima). We ask - could trees have a significance over and above that of being mark points on leys? Is it possible for trees to augment the function of land/sky (earth/atmosphere) power at certain places? We are currently investigating this question in relation to other factors and cannot go into the matter here. We would be failing in our duty, however, if we did not indicate a fascinating set of Leicestershire correspondences.....

THE OAK-GOD COMETH: June 24 is an interesting date. It is St John's Day. In Leicestershire, St John the Baptist is one of the most popular church dedications. We recall the connection of St John's stone with rituals and fairies on June 24. Floral rents were given on June 24. It is the day after the midsummer solstitial period. June 24 is another of John Keel's five key UFO/occult days of the year (yet we can trace only one June UFO-report in 21 years in Leics.) June 24 comes midway between June 10 and July 7, the month of Jupiter, the oak god. June 24 was the day the oak-king was sacrificially burned alive. After a 7-day wake the Celtic year began in July. Could this sequence account the June "death" of UFO activity in Leicestershire? The Roma god Janus was two-headed; facing both ways at the turn of the year. We recall the Roman temple of Janus alongside St Nicholas' Church in Leicester. We remember that King Lear was buried by one of his daughters in a vault originally built in honour of Janus. The connection is made. "Janus shall never have priests again. His door will be shut and remain concealed in Ariadne's crannies," Merlin prophesied. Robert Graves traces the oak-king back to the pre-Roman British god Llyr, and shows that the Beth-Luis-Nion term for oak, Duir, meant "door". In this sense Hercules was Janus/Llyr etc on becoming the door-keeper of the gods after his death. Lear is, like Arthur, a curious blend of an historical character tied in mythological perspectives. If King Arthur walks Albion again, Llyr will be at his right hand. So. We have the name of the god of England's heartland: Leicestershire is the Land of Llyr. Although obscured by the machinations of modern man the heart of Albion remains one of mystic oak.

FOOTNOTE: In the "Confirmation" chapter of his "The Old Straight Track", Alfred Watkins quotes a letter from a Mr M. Paul Darr of Leicester. This is, of course, a minor error. The correspondent is M. Paul Dare, one of our guides through these pages. Dare states in his letter that although he was sceptical at first his own investigations in Leicestershire entirely supported Watkins's work. This admission from a respected local archaeologist and journalist must have required courage, and we salute the memory of M. Paul Dare. He has helped to give us a fresh, because forgotten, area of Albion for us to investigate.

Perhaps such an investigation would add one more more precious item to our knowledge of the ancient understanding. We complain about the difficulties of finding leys in Leicestershire -- perhaps we should get a little mud on our boots. Leys may be the least we could discover in the area.

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**** Also: Various issues of Flying Saucer Review, The Ley Hunter, The News; selected cuttings from Leicester Mercury; selected tracts from the Transactions of Leics. Archaeological & Historical Soc., and Leics. Literary & Philosophical Soc.

REVIEWS

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"THIS HOLYEST ERTHE" by Oliver L. Reiser (Perennial Books, Pates Manor, Bedfont, Middlesex. Distributed by Thorson's. £2-50).

The most astonishing aspect of this book is that it fails to mention any terrestrial zodiac but that around Glastonbury. Of course, the book is about Glastonbury and its many legends, but this act of chauvinism is unfortunate. Now with a personal grouse past, I would say that in general the book is rather flimsy for it neither matches or illuminates Katherine Maltwood's own zodiac research and other authors on Glastonbury have made deeper studies of such aspects of Glastonbury lore as King Arthur, Camelot, Joseph and Jesu, the Tor, Bligh Bond, Grail, and Labyrinth. It covers the ground efficiently and there is no need for nit-picking. For a newcomer to this important aspect of sacred and geomantic research it is a worthy introduction. After meat though? This is almost a vegetarian's banquet. But he throws out one morsel which is a real aphrodisiac (to take a metaphor too far) on page 56. He notes Mary Caine's views on a connection with lingam and yoni, yang and yin, as interacting forces playing between earth and sun. "Mrs Caine ventures further and regards these cosmic forces as assisting in the formation of the giant effigies which therefore can not be entirely man-made." That tidbit is the crux of terrestrial zodiac truth. I heartily agree that "the problem of verification...will be a matter of crucial importance" and too hope this book will act as a spur to further disciplined discussion.

EUROPEAN METROLOGY by Nigel Pennick
 (20p inc p&p 142 Pheasant Rise, Bar Hill, Cambridge, CB3 8SD)

THE PRPOAGANDA OF THE METRIC SYSTEM:
&& A REFUTATION by Edward Nicholson (15p
 + p&p from 11 Miles Buildings, Bath.

First decimalisation; now metrication, Next we British will drive on the right hand side of the road. By clownishly abandoning traditional measures we will adopt a confusing and irrational system. Metrication has, however, had one strange side-effect; bringing together folk of very different backgrounds to fight a common cause. Much like the Spanish Civil War.... (Cont. Page 1).