



THE LEY HUNTER

CONTACT
COLUMN

R.V. Ling, of 103 Westwood Hill, London SE26, would like to contact anyone with some knowledge of leys in the area Tunbridge Wells - East Grinstead - Burgess Hill - Lewes - Uckfield..... Anyone with information on the leys system in Northumberland is sought by Mike Corner, New Age Access, P.O. Box No. 4, Hexham, Northumberland. Tales relating to megalithic structures in that county would also be welcomed.....J.T. Marsh, of 3 Madeira Avenue, Bognor Regis, Surrey, would like to know if there is any "group" in his area working on leys.

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AMAZING

by JANET BORD

What is it that links the American Indians with the Zulus of Africa with the Kota of the Nilgiri Hills in India with the New Hebrideans off Australia, and so on round the world? The answer - mazes. All these peoples, and many others besides, have at some time developed their own version of the maze or labyrinth pattern, and consequently it is found springing up in all centuries and in diverse places, apparently independently. This symbol has obviously been of great importance from the time when it appeared in rudimentary form in some West European passage graves of C.3,500-3,000 B.C. right up to the present, when it is found in a number of art forms and even in a London underground station.

Today the maze is usually employed because of the attractive pattern which a designer can create from the basic idea of a maze; in the past its significance has been far deeper, and goes into the realms of death and rebirth. Whether Britain's oldest surviving true mazes had such a significance for those who constructed them is open to question, and even the dating of them is usually disputed. The classic example is to be seen on a rock face in Rocky Valley near Tintagel, Cornwall, where two small, carved, Cretan-type labyrinths were discovered as recently as 1948. They have been attributed to the Bronze Age, or to an idle miller of far more recent time! (The latter suggestion arose because there are ruined mill buildings close by.)

Dating at least from the Middle Ages, and probably, earlier, are Britain's eight surviving turf mazes. These vary tremendously -- in type of location, in pattern, and in size (from 40 feet or less in diameter, to the huge example at Saffron Walden which measures 138 feet from corner to corner) - and are rarely found outside England. Scandinavia's equivalent is mazes of stones or boulders. Whether the turf and stone mazes were built purely for fun, or had ritual significance for their makers and those who "ran" them, can only be a question for argument at this late date. There are no records to provide a complete answer. But there are memories of the mazes' importance in village games at such significant times as May Eve, and one Alkborough villager, describing the turf maze he had known, said that they played games there "under an indefinite persuasion of something unseen and unknown co-operating with them." Such memories suggest that the mazes had a role to play in the life of the community, but that it was a role whose nature has imperceptibly changed over the years until today it is no more. Not quite, though, for the remaining turf mazes are still kept up, by village committees and individuals. A turf maze is soon lost in an English summer of rain and fast growth, and needs frequent and careful maintenance. That this work is faithfully carried out shows that the mazes are still important.

The maze manifests itself in Britain in other, less perishable, forms - in churches and in hedges, for example - but if I describe them all now there will be no surprises left for you in my book MAZES AND LABYRINTHS OF THE WORLD, published on February 12 by Latimer New Dimensions Ltd at £7-50.

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AS EDITOR I GET A LARGE AND VARIED POSTBAG OF COMMENTS RELATING TO THE LEY HUNTER AND ITS CONTENT. IT IS NOT ALWAYS EASY TO ANSWER INDIVIDUAL POINTS AND I HAVE CHOSEN IN THE PAST TO DISREGARD THE GENERAL POLICY OF USING AN EDITORIAL TO BEGIN EACH ISSUE. SPACE IS TIGHT AND I WOULD RATHER USE IT FOR ARTICLES OR REVIEWS. HOWEVER, I AM OPENING THE COLUMNS THIS ISSUE FOR A NUMBER OF CORRESPONDENTS WHOSE LETTERS RAISE MATTERS WHICH ARE RELEVANT. READERS ARE FREE TO COMMENT UPON THESE POINTS AND SHOULD SPACE ALLOW I WILL PRINT MORE READERS' THOUGHTS, REQUESTS OR COMPLAINTS.

From Alan Jones, 16 Old Road, Holmbridge, Huddersfield: "My humble opinions of the magazine as it stands: it's very diverse, which I guess is a positive aspect. But I feel that there's an important piece of the jigsaw missing somewhere. The pieces on leys in various localities are really only interesting in their own right if one actually happens to go to the area concerned and can follow them up -- though with luck they can stimulate people to go out + find + follow up lines themselves in their own area. Would there be any use for a sort of central register of leys -- possibly for some of these ardent scientists to do their computer tests on? (Since part of my new job involves learning to use a computer that aspect of ley hunting seems rather promising to me at the moment!). But, as you said in your interview in UNDERCURRENTS, "No one as yet has come up with an all-embracing theory that will fit all the threads together." And so articles like the long one on Leicestershire, while being very interesting seem so much a collection of unrelated facts that they're just about falling apart -- it seems to me (perhaps from not having read enough on the subject) that even the speculation which binds that article together is so vague in its terms of reference, in its assumptions or causes or connections which aren't proven that it doesn't really convince me of anything: it just appears on the same level as strange lights in the hills in an H.P. Lovecraft story! But better be vague in speculation and recording than not do it at all. I remain unconvinced in the existence of any life force/earth force confined to straight lines on the surface of the English landscape -- but I'd still like to think there might be one, and get THE LEY HUNTER to back up my hopes. P.S. I was pretty interested in the article on Powys -- further articles on such seers wouldn't be amiss.

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From Peter Williams,
52 Hertford Avenue, East Sheen, London: "I have enjoyed the magazine over the past year but the article that particularly caught my attention was "Psychoarchaeological Bulletin" in No. 65. The mind boggles, surely this cannot be taken seriously?? However assuming ~~it~~ can, several of the points in it can be questioned. Who has considered the architecture and symbolism of mental hospitals a profound mystery? Also I doubt if a "casual visitor" would ascribe its origin to earlier constructions whose sacred purpose has long been forgotten. Near the top of page 6 reference is made to "the ancient ritual pathway" without an explanation of exactly what this means. I doubt if the MoH would ever issue a report connecting energy accumulated in the people and buildings of mental hospitals with the propulsion of craft whose existence they do not recognize. Although ridiculously far-fetched, I remain semi-convinced by the article as a constant idea runs through it. However, the row of exclamation marks at the bottom of the article is surely symbolic of something. Could you please print some explanation of this curious piece in the magazine as I am sure many other people were puzzled (Editor: I was non-plussed myself and took around six months debating whether to print it).

In "The Forgotten Heart of Albion" the discrepancies in some Ordnance Survey maps was mentioned and I must agree with them. A ruler laid along the eastings or northings on any map is likely to deviate from them by up to 3mm or so indicating a small but worrying distortion in the map, but lining up one sheet with the next in my experience is impossible. I found on two adjoining 1:50,000 maps that when the top corners were made to meet the central part was 6mm out of line, thus no line could be accurately carried over from one to the next. However, there does seem to be a method of drawing accurate lines between sites using grid references, presumably some formula is used for this as in correcting for the Earth's curvature but I do not know it. Would it be possible for you to print some explanation of the methods of accurately drawing lines over longer distances. (Ed: Anyone wish to submit an article on this?).

From Frank James, Stonelea, Staintondale, Scarborough: "Those like myself who live in the wilds will know what it is to be dependent on book reviews for one's choice of reading. I was interested to find in T.L.H. 68 a review of Reiser's "This Holyest Erthe", and felt that a word was in order (I bought it on the strength of a good review elsewhere, some 12 months ago). Your reviewer (your editor) calls it, (albeit hesitantly!), a "worthy introduction -- may I suggest that this is the last thing it should be called and explain why. A few points at random: p23 -- what is the point in bringing in a 15th.C barn, (of which there are many still standing) into the discussion? I have never seen these considered significant anywhere else. On page 30: "Perhaps someday it will be shown how '(certain of Le Poer French's views on UFOs)' would fit in with the oriental conception of the Yang-Yin complementary". Yin-Yang embraces a great deal, of course! But this in particular? How? On the other hand (p31) -- "All this presupposes a reservoir of knowledge far beyond anything we presently have reasons for believing could have been possessed by any pre-scientific era of mankind" -- Surely this is one thing that has been clear for some time now, as the result of several independent researches on measurements, maps, etc. Again: perhaps there were "stone circles of Druid worship" (?) which looked like Fig. 8, the restoration of the Ziggurat at Ur; but he can hardly expect us to swallow this without any substantiation. Finally, on p19, "To his surprise Major Tudor Pole found inscribed inside the Tower" (on the Tor) "these words -- 'Christ stood here' ... There are other scribbles on the walls". Well, was it scribbled or "inscribed", and if the former, why even mention it? No doubt Kilroy and others also had the honour. I steer clear of the last few chapters (apart from $\sqrt{-1}$ (fig.14) and the Social embryology of World Federation - perhaps it is a mistake?) but may I refer the author to his own statement on p.9 -- "we realize that the problems she opened up" (i.e. Mrs Maltwood) "led to an interdisciplinary project of immense proportions requiring for its resolution a knowledge of astronomy, astrology" etc. The operative word is surely interdisciplinary -- each of the subjects is itself a discipline, indeed a well-established one; nothing is gained by a muddled and superficial skating between one subject and another. The reason why Alfred Watkins eventually won approval with "The Old Straight Track" (Ed.: But not from academics. Zodiacs and leys seem almost equally established as far as Hermetic topographers are concerned) is that it is an eminently scholarly and disciplined book: he must have realized that he was in effect creating a new discipline -- that of ley study -- and that the work had to measure up to its own high standards in order to have any impact at all. As a result it has copious references throughout, admirable illustrations, and above all a clear argument from beginning to end; the book is a good example of how intuition can be -- (indeed must be, to be generally acceptable) supported by the evidence. I have quoted Watkins as many others have attempted similarly awesome tasks of focussing in depth on one special aspect of the problem and, as it were, laying their own foundations for their own discipline. (I am far from suggesting that these are the only sort of books that are valid on these subjects -- obviously a book dependent on psychic communication or psychometry will satisfy none of these conditions -- but hardly can it be expected to endear itself to outsiders either). If, as Mr Reiser does, one takes the view that (p.7) "the scholar is under obligation to uncover and report the story as objectively as possible", then the critic is entitled to accuse Professor Reiser of muddled thinking which would not be tolerated in an undergraduate, let alone a professor of philosophy. As a book it may, as your reviewer suggests, contain worthwhile facts; the problem to a comparative novice is identifying them without becoming inextricably confused in a welter of gossip and hypotheses, which is why I feel that though the expert may glean from it, the book is in no way an introduction to the subject (I must argue that it is this by comparison with Kate Maltwood's work). May we please have more research along the lines of our friends in Leicestershire, for instance; the speculations are the least important aspect when we are still none too clear about the extent of the range of facts with which we are dealing. The issues are all too easily clouded and need a clear mind to steer a way through the labyrinth; otherwise ley hunters can hardly hope to inspire any sort of respect in the rest of society; specially in those who possess the various qualifications needed for the more detailed research which we all

recognize as so necessary.

Might I append a note on "The Girt Dog of Langport" (quoted from Mrs Maltwood in Reiser p.70) -- anyone who has spent any time in the West Country will know that girt=great. I'm sure most readers will have noted this, and I can hardly believe that many man hours have been waster trying to discover what the Great Dog was fastned to!

(Continued from Page 2))-

The devil ne'er did sleep again
The old monk never more did wake.
-- from Ingoldsby Legends by Tarham.

This sort of legend is attached to many old stones throughout the country. The thing I like about this little rhyme is the way it almost says that the monk had awakened a certain force within the Peak "whering the devil slept, how strange it is that goodness can, extend beyond itself so far." Yes, indeed!

The work we did at the Hemlockstone was purely inspirational. UFOs have been seen in the area lately. I think the moral of this tale may be "let sleeping dogs lie". But, more probably it is just saying that goodness flowing through these hills will awaken sleeping power. Anyway, the atmosphere of the hill has certainly improved lately. Still, 'nuff said, let's pass on to the next point (4) Stapleford Cross. Here is a quote from "Notts Crosses" by A. Staplton, p.91: "If we were invited to express our opinion as to the most important, most valuable, or most interesting cross in Nottinghamshire, we should not hesitate to indicate the monument at Stapleford." Only the shaft of the cross is now standing. It is about 10ft high and 2ft diameter. Probably Anglo-Saxon and is said to have been carved under the guidance of Celtic priests. On it is carved a great winged figure treading on a serpent with the head, ear and horns of a calf. The church was an early dedication to St Helen although the cross was there before any church. In addition to this a raven is carved on the top. The cross gave its name to a river ford which later gave its name to the village, which, I think, is unique. Also the village maypole once stood right next to where the cross is, but that was taken down more than a century ago.

The ley then passes on to a small chapel in (6) Long Eaton, a small town, and then down to old (6) Sawley Church with its nearby earthworks, another probable ley bypasses through this point with such names as Risley, Mapperley, Shipley, Ripley and Butterley. Then we come to (7) the remains of a church on Dale Acre Hill with the remains of a castle nearby. Here, the ley passes out of my territory into darkest Leicestershire. On to (8) Diseworth, a quaint little village with its ancient church dedicated to St Michael. It was also the birthplace of William Liley, the 16th. Century astrologer. His almanac, for 36 years, was as popular as Old Moore's is today. The ley then passes through a farmyard near the village of Belton (Beltane?) and on to (9) Osgathorpe, where it runs through the churchyard of the 14th. Century St Mary's. Then passes near Grace Priory, through Thringstone through a Red Hill and finishing at the moat hard by the 13th. Century St Mary's at Snibston in between Coalville and Ravenstone (10).

My research at the Leicestershire end was confined to brief visits to the said spots and areas. But, nevertheless, I found the research interesting and it has opened up one or two other avenues that are worth exploring. There you have it, the Hemlockstone Ley.

Contact 2;

John E. Hall of 7 Jackson Street, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire, would like to contact fellow ley hunters in his area.....

BRITISH UFO SOCIETY --
for details write enclosing
s.a.e. to British UFO
Society, 47 Belsize Square,
London NW3.

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- by Anthony Roberts -

The legend of the Lost Land of Lyonesse is one of Cornwall's most mysterious and enduring myths. It has remained fresh because the earlier memories of a flooded land have become enmeshed within the Arthurian Mythos, through the person of Arthur's most romantic knight, Sir Tristram. His fearsome warrior, who died so tragically for the fair Iseult, was said to come from Lyonesse, which in this version of its history was supposed to have finally submerged about 600 A.D. The basic legend is immeasurably older and is found in one form or another in Ireland, Wales, Cornwall and even western Scotland and across the sea in Brittany. But the core of the story centres around Land's End area, more specifically in the vicinity of the Scilly isles. In the Cornish myths Lyonesse is called Lethowstow and is said to have been a flat, extensive country, situated between Land's End and the Scillies, possessed of many flourishing villages and 140 churches. There was at least one great city, the site of which is reputedly marked by the rocks called Seven Stones, lying seven miles west of Land's End itself. This area is still known by some as "The Town" and William Camden, writing in the C16, stated that even in his time fishermen continuously dredged up broken pieces of masonry in their nets. An earlier antiquary, one William of Worcester, roamed about England in the C15 collecting much factual data on myth and legend which he wrote down in his book of memoranda called the "Itinerary". In the library of the monastery that graced the summit of St Michael's Mount, William found archival references to the vanished western country, stating that "there were formerly great woods, rolling fields and many villages, all now submerged, between the Mount and the isles of Scilly."

A century and a half after the writings of William of Worcester, the Cornish antiquary Richard Carew made extensive studies of ancient topography in relation to a land bridge once joining Land's End to the Scillies. In his book "Survey of Cornwall" Carew included the following interesting information:

"Lastly, the encroaching sea hath ravied from it (i.e. from Cornwall) the whole country of Lioness, together with divers other parcels of no little circuit; and that such a Lioness there was, these proofs are yet remaining.

"The space between Land's End and the Isles of Scilly, being about 30 miles, to this day retaineth that name in Cornish - Lethowsow - and carrieth continually an equal depth of 40-60 fathoms, a thing not unusual in the sea's proper dominion. Save that midway there lieth a rock, which at low water discovereth his head...Fishermen casting their hooks thereabouts have drawn up pieces of doors and windows. Moreover the ancient name of Saint Michael's Mount was Cara Clowse in Cowsel. in English the Hoare Rocks in the Woode; which is now at every flood encompassed by the sea, and yet at some low ebbs, rootes of mightie trees are descried in the sands about it."

Carew's summary is essentially accurate geologically, being confirmed by all succeeding research. For instance that most sceptical of archaeologists O.G.S. Crawford studied the Lyonesse myth in depth 50 years ago, publishing his findings in the journal "Antiquity" of which he was the controversial editor. He confirmed the accuracy of the geological aspects of the legend by field work in both the Land's End area and the Scillies, coming to the conclusion that "there are good reasons for believing that the substance of the legend is true: that within prehistoric times there did actually exist land which is now covered by sea." Crawford was never noted for his imagination or romanticism and would not have endorsed such an archaeological "heresy" as Lyonesse unless he was totally convinced of its once factual reality.

In the oldest records (Roman, etc.) the Scilly Isles were marked and known as the Scilly Isle, showing that subsidences of the sea-bed in this area have continued well into the Christian era. Drowned field systems, fossilized tree boles and stone huts have been traced between the various islands, and lines of ancient stone walling are still uncovered at low tide. The most famous legend of Lyonesse features a family, the Trevillions, who were said to have had lands between the general area now occupied by the Scillies and Seven Stones reef. The Trevilion legend states that as the seas began their last encroachment upon Lyonesse, the head of the

Trevilion family sent his wife and children to safety in Cornwall. Just before the final submergence Trevilion escaped upon a white horse, splashing through the angry sea-waves and just making it to the Cornish coast. Now it is obvious that with Christian churches, Arthurian knights, Cornish gentlemen, etc., the legends of Lyonesse have become telescoped in time. They all present a rich, historical patina that has come to cover a very unusual archaic relic. In the oldest Irish legendary, Lyonesse is called Liathan, in the Welsh it is the drowning Lowland Hundreds or Land of Llydan. In Scotland the lost western island is known as Tir Sorcha and in Brittany the realm is designated as Ker Is, Ys or Iys. At the root of all these legends lies the oldest myth of all, Plato's memory of vanished Atlantis, the magical "continent" in the western Atlantic that supposedly vanished about 9,000 B.C.

As mentioned above, the old Cornish name for Lyonesse was Lethowstow and this in itself is an interesting fact if looked at from a semantic point of view. In Greek mythology the island-studded western flowing River Lethe was the major river in the "underworld" of Hades. The full Greek reading of this word is lethe, letho, latheo and lanthano. These are all similar to Lethowstow and it is known that the ancient Greeks traded with southern Cornwall for tin (shipped from St Michael's Mount) many centuries before Christ. The Greeks followed in the primordial footsteps (or sea-wakes) of the Phoenicians, who also had legends of a drowned, western "underworld" full of magical beings and great riches. It looks as though there was a general legendary memory semantically extant throughout the West thousands of years before the Christian era, dealing with a lost "underworld" whose name was remarkably similar to Lyonesse or Lethowstow. Again linguistically the first syllable of Lyonesse has affinities with the word "ley", the word used by Alfred Watkins to denote the geometrical alignments of prehistoric sites that pattern the whole face of the British Isles. Watkins derived the Saxon word "ley" from the ancient Celtic "llan" meaning church place or holy enclosure, in fact sacred ground. Many ley alignments exist in southern Cornwall and quite a few home in on the conical island of St Michael's Mount, which was a prominent pre-Christian sacred centre as well as trading post for tin. Some of the prehistoric monuments on the Scilly Isles appear to line up on St Michael's Mount (author's research) and the Scillies were once known as the "Isles of the Dead", prehistoric sites being proportionately thicker on their limited land surface than anywhere else in the British Isles. If the Scillies are the surface remnants of Lyonesse it is only natural that they would be remembered as very "sacred ground" indeed. It is possible that the late terminology "Lyonesse" could derive from "Ley Land" or "Sacred Place of the Leys."

The perennial staying power of folklore is amply demonstrated in the myth of Lyonesse and even orthodox scholars now suggest that the story is based on dimly remembered facts relating to a long-vanished terrain. The current scholarly view is that well before the Bronze Age (2,000 B.C.) there was much land subsidence around the fringes of the Atlantic Ocean and that settled groups of men were driven before such floods into Ireland, England and western France. The whole area of the western Atlantic was volcanically volatile up to this period. The contemporary fishing grounds of the Dogger Banks have yielded up flint instruments and polished stone tools that have been dated to at least late Palaeolithic times. These artifacts prove conclusively that mankind once hunted and roamed across lands that are now permanently covered by deep sea. Exact dating is, of course, conjectural but it is known that the British Isles were cut off from continental Europe by the North Sea around 8-9,000 B.C. It seems as though aspects of Plato's Atlantis loom nearer to reality with each succeeding archaeological theory and Lyonesse plays an integral part in this ornate tapestry of sunken western lands. The continuity of tradition embodied in a legend that stretches back at least 10,000 years is a remarkable example of historical memory. In its earliest stages the Lyonesse myth must have had a purely oral succession, being preserved by bards, poets and loremasters for literally thousands of years. Its gradual colouration with the pervading tales of each successive era has ensured its perpetuity while diminishing its exactitude, and this is true of archetypal myth everywhere. However this does not invalidate the general fact that at the base of every particular myth there resides a strong foundation pertaining to a universal truth. A golden grain at the centre of time's web.

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SOME REFLECTIONS ON CHOOSING A NAME FOR THE NEW COUNTY PRIMARY
AND JUNIOR SCHOOL ----- BEAL VALE

by James H. Fountain

I was requested to submit a list of suitable names for the new county primary and junior school on Glebe Street/Salts Street site in Crompton, replacing St Paul's Methodist, Rochdale Road. The terms of reference were not to have saints names or local worthies, so the list was made from my local records, from the Tythe Register of 1870 based on the Tythe Plan of 1848 the site of the school is in the old Bardsley estate adjoining Beal Moors estate and within the Beal Moor area of Crompton, for the district is made up of four moors, i.e. Shaw, Beal, Hathershaw and Crompton. As the field names for Bardsleys estate were unsuitable I had then to consider a wider area so the first name was Bardsley, second Beal Moors and for a third BEAL VALE (which was chosen) came to mind for some writers have referred to Crompton as the valley of the Beal whilst in the 1850s it was Crompton above Beal. The word Beal is perhaps one of our oldest place names, its origin dating back to pagan times when beacon fires were lit to guide the travellers on their way along the old pathways, one such beacon site is Goghill. Other meaning derived from Beal are bela or beala fires, then we get Beltine, Bas, etc., the month of May, etc.

With the beacons the pathfinders all link up with an ancient track system dating back to 2000-8000 B.B. and is occupying the minds of men today. The primary and infant school teachers are the pathfinders of the C20, pathfinders to the uncharted minds of their charges.

In an article "A Window on the Past" (Oldham Chronicle, Nov. 1974) in which I describe a line it happens that there are are four schools and two churches: Crompton House C/E Sec Mod, Beal Vale Jun and Primary School, St James East Crompton P.J. School, St James's Church, St George s School, and Heights Church. These six places of learning are the modern countefpart of the old abbeys of North Yorkshire which fall in a straight line and are the subject of much speculation and study by several of my friends who are giving much time and thought to Alfred Watkins's theories of "The Old Straight Track".

Here are two lines of thought:

A: A physical line of contact via pathways, tunnels in a straight line...

B: Non-physical line of contact -- thought, ideas, ideals, wisdom, behaviour...etc.

It is on the non-physical idea that I ponder the question was it a hazardous choice that the schools are so placed and so the following advice...Train up a Child in the way it should Be That when it comes of age it will not depart from the Straight Path, an ideal which still lingers in the MINDS OF MEN.

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PRAYER WHEEL OR SWASTIKA?

by Stephanie Farrar

On the edge of Woodhouse Crag, the unique prehistoric carving of the Swastika Stone overlooks Ilkley and the Wharfe Valley. Readers will remember Brabara Crump's article (T.L.H. 60/61) describing it and drawing attention to the alignment of the design with high point of Simon's Seat. It seems rather surprising that she should have denied that the incised symbol is a swastika, and gone on to suggest that it "may have been a form of prayer-wheel". Surely the swastika is in itself a kind of prayer wheel, invoking solar forces and the associated beneficent influences. Hence its incredible antiquity, going back to the Palaeolithic cave paintings, and its appearance among peoples as remote as Tibetans and Amerindians. Hence also the repudiation of the reversed swastika, contradicting the movement of the sun, as an evil omen with uses in black magic. Whatever solution we propound to the mystery of the Ilkley Swastika it remains an oddly moving monument to those prehistoric travellers who left their creative imprint on the landscape all along the 1,000ft contour of Rombalds Moor, as they passed -- how

many thousand years ago? - perhaps along a trade route, to barter their goods for Irish gold. Readers who feel the spell of the Swastika Stone may like to know that a facsimile print of a rubbing from it (size 22" x 32") is available from Daley's, 1-3 Grove Terrace, Bradford, price 50p including postage.

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MISCELLANY

On page 122 of his new book "Rambler's Riding" Alan Falconer writes of aligned tumuli on the North Yorkshire Moors and mentions ley hunters too..... Ley hunting ace guitarist Martin Stone (ex-Mighty Baby etc.) now fronting Ratbites from Hell....and on the pop scene still we hear of Gong guitarist Steve Hillage's request to Pace, the Cambridge firm who claim they can make anything musical, for some pyramid speakers; nothing unusual in that, but he rang up later to ask if he could send a diviner around to investigate the speakers' cosmic properties....and former T.L.H. contributor David Toop has one side of an L.P. on Eno's new label....

...Anvil Music of P.O. Box 23, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2LS has produced a series of story-cassettes for children. There are legends of Ireland, tales of the east, Bible stories and "Stories of King Arthur" by Jess Foster told by Pat McDonald. Each £2-75.....

The Institute of Geomantic Research has been set up as a non-profit making organization to study all aspects of geomantic research in Britain and Northern Europe, aiming to co-ordinate and publish original work in the following fields:

Landscape geometry
Leys, alignments, figures, etc.
Terrestrial zodiacs
Geodetic studies (dowsing etc.)
Sacred geometry
Ancient metrology
Legendary geomancy

The institute will produce a journal at regular intervals in which this research will be presented in the form of complete papers and working notes. The annual subscription is £2-50 from 142 Pheasant Rise, Bar Hill, Cambridge, CB3 8SD.

LETTERS (2)

From Janet Bord, of London: "Michael Burgess made some good points in his article "Objections and Obscurities" (TLH 65), especially with regard to the accuracy of the 1" Ordnance Survey maps, which is what the majority of ley hunters work on, initially at least. I agree with him that many would-be ley hunters don't seem to know what a straight line is (my phrasing, not his), and that a number of the sites permitted are dubious. (The frequent admission of place names incorporating "ley" or "stone is naive to say the least.) Also, it is not safe to rely on the evidence of lines drawn on maps because paper has a tendency to stretch or contract according to the prevailing humidity, and this may effect the relationship of one part of the map to another, albeit to a minute degree. Greater distortion can be caused by the use of folded maps, and serious ley research should be undertaken on maps bought unfolded or "flat", and kept rolled up except when in use. His latter point is elementary and should not need repeating.

However, the main point which I wish to make here, and which Mr Burgess has not mentioned is: How wide is a ley? The answer to this question affects a number of his queries, for example "Which part of the church symbol should the line be drawn through?" The "ancient tracks" aspect of leys is probably a red herring, in that many ley hunters are now agreed that leys were only secondarily trackways; these being constructed along the lines of current. So the width of a ley is not necessarily the same as the width of a prehistoric trackway. I don't think anyone has yet attempted to ascertain how wide leys are, and to do so would probably be impossible. The width may vary from ley to ley, and also it may vary in any individual ley according to the strength of current flowing along it at various times. They may even fade out towards the edges. If this "variable width" hypothesis were true, then the plotting of leys would be less critical than Mr Burgess suggests, and it doesn't really matter which part of a church (or any other) symbol the line is drawn through - the whole building may lie along the line. I realise that to loosen the criteria for determining the existence of leys in this way does mean that any positive findings can

more easily be attributed to chance -- the wider the proposed ley line, the more symbols will fall along it. But nevertheless I feel that this aspect should be taken into consideration by those who are trying to get to the bottom of what is still an enigma, rather than enthusiastically drawing lines on maps and presenting them as evidence of this, that, or the other. It is time that someone updated Alfred Watkins's work on the actual plotting of leys, for much has come to light in the past fifty years. Both Paul Screeton and John Michell have made considerable contributions, but neither deals fully with the actual minutiae of tracking down leys, nor has anyone tackled the basic questions Mr Burgess raises in his article. Perhaps Paul Screeton, John Michell, and anyone else seriously involved in the subject would like to comment in the pages of TLH on the points raised by Mr Burgess and myself. ((Let a Great Debate commence)).

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DEJA VU

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THE word indispensable should not be used lightly, but it is appropriate in the case of "A HISTORY OF MAGIC, WITCHCRAFT AND OCCULTISM" for anyone studying the esoteric traditions of the world. Dr. W.B. Crow has written a comprehensive, encyclopaedic account of magic and related matters spanning time from the cavemen to the present. If you want a concise account of any sect, personage or belief in this sphere it will be found in these pages. His wide-ranging account includes the zodiac, megaliths, pyramids, Templars, lamas, Norsemen, Holy Grail, Rosicrucians, black magic, ceremonial magic, dowsing, and much much more. This brief account of the book is intended to encourage the reader to seek out a copy of this book published in hardback by the Aquarian Press in 1968 and paperback in Abacus imprint in 1972.

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A special offer open to readers of The Ley Hunter is being offered by Bath booksellers Mushroom Bookshop, of 94 Walcot Street, Bath, Somerset. Send £2 + 25p postage and you can receive a copy of "Old Stones of Land's End" by John Michell.

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Two publications which may be of interest are issue 20 of ORE with a poem on Avebury (20p + p&p) and a slim volume by Tony Rowe, "The Pattern" with a perceptive piece on "The Druidstone" (25p + p&p). From E. Ratcliffe, 11 High Plash, Cuttys Lane, Stevenage, Herts.

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#### DRAGON'S BLOOD

In a piece of ludicrous television, Peter Holland pranced in mediaeval gear around Teesside supposedly seeking the Sockburn Worm of dragon legend fame, in a Tyne Tees Television news magazine. His antic ended at the new Dragonara Hotel where he left escorting Miss World....Seven etchings of the Lambton Worm are to be displayed in an exhibition to tour Sunderland area schools. They are the work of polytechnic arts faulty teacher Dave Gormley.....

The Dragon by Jane Gaskell (Universal-Tandem, 45p)

I have been a great admirer of Jane Gaskell's novels for many years and wish her output was more prolific, especially I would like to see another volume in her Atlan series. For those who have not read the three novels as hardbacks or in paperback, there comes the second part of "The Serpent" entitled "The Dragon". Not about dragons of legend but a Dragon-General, this book is swords and sorcery with sophistication. Here is a passage which shows the power of her style and skill:

"Staggering, lurching, his eyes glazing, blood everywhere and the bones of his face standing out like white stone, Dalig howled, brought his big-toothed knife held in both hands down with all his force on Kond's head, and fell sprawled in blood. Kond was kond, young and new-shaven with two eyes and a firm mouth and unkempt brown hair, and then his two eyes were sliding apart from each other and his head had been split right down."

It is an extremely imaginative work, written vividly and encompassing war, passion, self-realisation and all the ingredients which make for first-class fiction.

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