

QUICKSILVER MESSENGER

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* THE SOUTH-EAST MAGAZINE OF EARTH MYSTERIES *

Druids Among the Fireworks (the 5th in Lewes as a Celtic Fire Festival). The Alfriston Ley Line and Star Inn (is there a connection between the famous carvings and the dragon path?). Terrestrial Zodiacs and Leys - is it all waffle? Introduction to Ley Dowsing (Dowsing as a Path of Inner Development). A Brighton Stone (Did Brighton have it's own Megalithic Stone Circle?)



Quicksilver Messenger.

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In this the first issue of Quicksilver I would like to thank Paul Devereaux for encouragement and advice as well as each of the contributors. As can be seen in the brief biographical details included as an introduction to the articles, the authors are each well known researchers in their fields and it gives me pleasure and confidence to begin the magazine with such a well shod group.

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Thanks to Gerry Ashton and Barbara Wilson for typing.

NEXT ISSUE

Will be published in late summer and will include an article by John Michelle on misapplied Darwinism, Michael Bentine on an aspect of Earth Mysteries, Book Reviews and much more!

When talking with people for the first time about the phenomena of ley lines one often comes across the same sort of reservations which can be simply stated in this question, "Do they really exist?" And quite often the way in which this is asked implies the unstated question, "Aren't you imagining the whole thing?" A lengthy conversation as to their real or imagined existence can be a waste of time. If anyone is really interested in their actuality all one needs to do is to look for alignments on the map and then walk them. They are quite easy to find.

Cynicism is a healthy trait - without it we'd all be fanatically clinging to different ideologies ready to condemn anyone who thought differently to ourselves. But too much of it can preclude the possibility of new patterns of thought developing in the

individual. It's like the guard in the old story who stands at his masters gate and is so blown up with his own importance that very few visitors get in to see the master. Thus while investigating into the area of earth mysteries a touch of cynicism is quite necessary but too much of this quality may result in a throwing out of the proverbial baby with the bath water.

The real question is "Why did our ancestors contrive to lay out certain sites across the landscape in straight lines?" Tentative answers to this question leads one into speculation as to the parallels between Chinese geomancy (Feng Shui) and dragon lines.

However, as well as getting into speculation as to the function of the ley system there is another very possessing question begging to be asked: If ancient man was capable of laying out sites in straight lines across the landscape and if he was capable of the mathematical and engineering feats of the stone circles, then, is he really the painted savage of traditional ancient historical dogma? From the evidence now available it seems that he was not.

If one only accepts this as a possibility then one is led into a line of thought which questions the accepted and traditional view of history. This view of history is basically misapplied Darwinism. It is a view which takes Darwins inspired theory of the evolution of the species and applies this to the development of civilizations.

Thus, we have what seems to be a plausible hypothesis for the biological development of life on the planet which is somehow also used to explain the history of ideas and institutions. It looks as if somewhere along the line, someone, some group or perhaps some kink in mans' way of thinking has almost deliberately ripped off a biological explanation and used it to explain something quite different. It's like saying birds fly because they flap their wings; therefore hot air balloons fly because of the people waving cheerily in the basket to the people outside.

The dangerous thing about this misconception is this. Darwin's theory (and let's remember it is a theory) incorporates the idea of the survival of the fittest. Turn this around, as is the niggardly want of man's mind, and you have 'those who survive are those who deserve to survive'. In other words 'are the best'. If this is then applied to the development of civilizations what you end up with is this: the present phase that our civilization is in (which is gross materialism) is the best there has ever been. This basic assumption, which is widespread, allows people to see scientists as the new high priests capable of solving all problems given sufficient time. This is not an attack on science. But it is an attack on putting unquestioned

faith into systems of thought which are set up to be superior on the basis of misconception.

And we get into these byeways and philosophical highways through the gentle pastime of ley hunting! Earth mysteries is a unifying subject area. It builds a bridge between different subjects eg. folklore, history, mystical, para-normal and rambling. In an age when people specialise to the extent that they can't communicate any longer

except about football, politics and the quality of different ales we have a subject, an activity, which unites different fields of knowledge, providing a pool into which ideas from various branches of knowledge can stream and stimulate each other, firing the imagination. And it's only through this synchronistic approach that we'll begin to get a more total and more wholesome view of the pattern of our evolution and, indeed, the shape of our reality.

Introduction to Ley Dowsing - Colin Bloy.

Colin Bloy broadcast on Spanish national radio earlier this year. He has twice addressed an international conference of dowers in Barcelona; has addressed The British Society of Dowers; has given a lecture at the French annual conference of dowers and has also given a paper--by Michael Bemtine--to the annual paranormal conference in Madrid. Colin is the chairman of a company of international repute and success based in Sussex.

Whereas the study of earth mysteries and ley-lines with maps, geometry and field work is rewarding, fascinating and healthy, the act of dowsing the energies in ley-lines opens up a whole new dimension of the subject.

I do not propose here to seek to prove that dowsing works; merely to explain, how, in my opinion, this particular faculty functions, and how to stimulate and develop it within the individual.

Once established, the ability to dowse is a form of perception on a par with clairvoyance and may be used in that way.

In New Scientist, Dec. 29th, 1979 in an article on dowsing and ley energies Anthony Hoppgood suggests that the dowsing faculty is a neuro-muscular reaction stimulated by the body entering an electro-magnetic field (I should say in parenthesis that in the article I believe he makes an honest and understandable confusion between ley energy and artificially induced electro-magnetic fields.

This view of the dowsing faculty conceives of it as a purely external phenomenon with the body acting in the same mechanical way as a magnetometer, and in a similar way, the act of dowsing water is a similar reaction to whatever field emanates from underground water.

It is a view I initially accepted myself when I, quite by chance, began to dowse accurately underground pipes, cables, etc., - a phenomenon recognised by a surprising number of G.P.O. underground services engineers.

However, my own experience, and recent research from the University of Barcelona (yet to be published) indicates that an essential concomitant of the act of dowsing is a significant change in brain rhythm, in the bands associated with forms of psychic activity.

After some years of dowsing gas-pipes and ley-lines, with the rods, a particular event occurred which appeared to be the cause of an additional dowsing ability I had long sought without success namely pendulum dowsing. The manner of "catching" this faculty from a well-known expert, rather than being instructed in it, impressed me considerably, but what impressed me even more was the discovery that I could subsequently use the pendulum over a map to locate ley-lines in areas I did not know.

There was no way that that faculty could be explained in terms of my organism entering into a "field", and bearing in mind the fact that dowsing with a pendulum had been "communicated" to me in circumstances which implied a form of bio-feedback related to consciousness rather than some form of muscular waning, the physical field theory did not seem acceptable.

If map-dowsing is to be accepted, as I am satisfied on an empirical basis, it only means relating exclusively to my own experiences, that it may be then we must regard it as a non-physical phenomenon which, if properly analysed, may be the explanation for the whole dowsing experience - and thus the approach to the development of the faculty may be most satisfactory if conceived in that light - namely that the critical factor

is the state of mind, rather than some neuro-muscular ability and the failure to recognise this may be the explanation of many disappointments in the past.

In my experience, the dowsing ability may be developed in 9 out of 10 people - and the 10th is frequently so sceptical of the possibilities that the placing of himself in the requisite state of awareness is impossible.

How then does one start? I was lucky because both of my rod and pendulum capabilities were acquired in the company of dowzers with much experience in both, but I would recommend that one way to acquire the requisite state of mind is to implant firmly in one's store of knowledge or subconscious, the expectation that what is going to happen is in the mind and not in the body.

Many putative dowzers begin with the expectation that some external force is going to affect them and their whole being is anticipating such an influence. If my contention is right, then they are excluding the possibility from their minds and therefore it doesn't happen as often as it might.

Having said all that, however, if you don't have a friendly neighbourhood dowser to work with you and literally hold your hand (which is one means of bio-feedback), one of the ways to start is to take an ordinary wire coat-hanger, break it in two, and form it into two "L" shapes. With the lesser arm in each hand, one is ready to dowse with rods. A reaction is usually determined by the rods swinging inward and crossing the other. Try it simply over a basin of water in the living room just to start. Make the rods cross over deliberately even, so that the mind starts to make a link with water. Find your local gas-pipe and do the same thing. This will fix the conditioned reflex in your mind

but while you are doing this, seek to recognise the reality of the water with your mind: do not conceive of it as producing a field which is affecting your organism.

If that is working, it is time to go blind. Find someone who knows where underground things are and then try to find them when you don't know where they are. When you can identify their positions, you are really dowsing.

This opens up the next dimension of dowsing. Around a house or along a street, there are many different underground services, sewers, gas mains, telephone cables, electrical cables, water pipes etc. How is it that the dowser can distinguish between them - to the extent that if you ask him for the water pipes in a street, that is what he will pick up, eliminating the rest? If the electro-magnetic field theory were correct, one might assume that a dowser in an urban street would have a nervous breakdown - he would get reactions everywhere. The fact remains

that he doesn't have a problem, as G.P.O. engineers and gas fitters only too frequently bear witness. The gas fitter can do this then and the G.P.O. engineer find his cables, to the exclusion of other considerations.

In some way or other, therefore, the human being in the dowsing state, can select the stimulus he is looking for and eliminate extraneous matter. This is a very important point, I believe, in evaluating the true nature of dowsing.

Many dowzers of the present and the past use what they call "the witness". When they are going across country looking for water, coal, minerals etc, they carry in one hand a physical sample of the material they are seeking. Pendulum dowzers have hollow pendulums in which they place the sample. It works. Other dowzers find that if they carry in their imagination the idea of what they are looking for, without any physical sample that works too.

The physical witness dowzers evolved the theory that each mineral or chemical has it's own fundamental ray. If they held a sample in their hand or put it in their pendulum, then their rod or pendulum was attuned to that ray or vibration, thus they were able to locate the object of their search. Atheory which falls to the ground, if the experience of the mental witness is accepted.

Once again, we are back to a phenomenon of awareness or consciousness, in which some form of selectivity according to visualisation is possible. The use of the physical witness is thus capable of evaluation as a form of consciousness. It serves as a trigger for those whose conception of dowsing is as a physical reaction to external fields and has, if I may say so, been a highly inhibiting factor in the development of the dowsing faculty from a form of prosthetic awareness into true clairvoyance.

If the case for dowsing as a state of active awareness rather than passive reaction has been made, this may account for the fact that public dowsing of ley-lines is a relatively modern phenomenon. Indeed our groups would claim to be pioneers in this class of dowsing.

A corollary of what has been said above is that the dowser cannot find what he is not capable of visualising. As the concept of ley energies is relatively new in public terms, this may account for the fact that centuries of country water dowzers have never come up with strange energy lines across the country, although they will have covered many nooks and crannies of the countryside.

From this we may deduce that once the aspiring dowser has got the knack of finding underground services and distinguishing between them, if he seeks to go looking for ley-lines, then he should have in his mind a concept of what they are in order to permit his awareness to relate to them and locate them.

A Brighton Stone

-Mike Collier.

Mike Collier is a well known jazz musician in South East England whose band has just released a record album. At present Mike is involved in research into terrestrial figures in Sussex in which activity his skill as a dowser helps him. He is an occasional contributor to The Ley Hunter.

Just by the Clock Tower in Brighton there is a short pedestrian way at the end of which stands a stone by the corner of a building, probably placed there by a Victorian builder to protect the walls from carts turning the corner. It is, however, no ordinary stone and is worth prolonged inspection, being shaped like an omphalos and having an interesting mark on the front similar to a Tau cross. It was undoubtedly moved there from a stone circle, of which Brighton had more than one, perhaps from the site which was at, approximately, the eastern end of Clifton Terrace. There was a print in nearby Saint Nicholas Church which showed the edge of a circle of like stones, although somewhat larger, but this has now unfortunately been stolen.

The stone is mentioned in "Giants, Myths and Megaliths" by John Foster Forbes, F.R.A.I., F.S.A. Scot., and Iris Campbell. The following is taken from this and I have left in the, to me, rather puzzling last paragraph, which however, may make us open our minds just a little bit more and look at the stone with a view to trying to discover what it has to tell us.

AT THE CENTRE OF BRIGHTON

Some years ago, when spending a week in Brighton and taking a short cut to the station through a small alleyway called Zion Gardens, near the Clock Tower, I suddenly came across a megalith standing firmly on the edge of the pavement. It took me completely by surprise, but from my experience in tracking down these stones one gets accustomed to recognising wherever they are. They belong to the class of what are known as Sarsen Stones, i.e. stones that do not belong or are not indigenous to any particular area. I have never heard of any circles or avenue of stones in the Brighton area, but later when I came to live in Brighton I began to read up the history of the place and discovered that the mound on which stands the Church of St. Nicholas was originally a megalithic centre, crowned with a Bronze

Age tumulus (burial ground) and that avenues of stone led up - at any rate - from the south and east; and that what is now Church Street leading directly from the Old Steine marked one of the routes leading to the mound. Originally Old Steine was the point of confluence of two rivers which flowed from the high ground up by Hollingbury and terminated by way of what is now the London road and Lewes road until reaching the port or entrance to

Brightlingstone at the site of the Pool or harbour where Pool Valley now is.

The mound of St. Nicholas, in common with many others of its kind, was the sacred gathering-place for the community. In those days (as I have often stated) the People who erected this site were well aware of the purpose for which it was brought into being and in their ritual would co-ordinate with the dual forces of nature, the centripetal and centrifugal, the feminine and masculine movements. There is more than an outward reason for styling St. Nicholas Church as the mother church of Brighton, for not only has it always been so but it is the parish church of the town and not St. Peter's, which has been wrongly so called and really belongs to Preston. So now we take up the story where it comes into line with my partner's psychometric interpretation as given on the spot on a later visit.

It must be borne in mind that Miss Campbell knew nothing whatsoever about the site or my findings before going there. I had, of course, told her nothing about the place prior to visiting it and we entered the churchyard just as we might if visiting any other place. This is the interpretation which she gave me:

"This was formerly a sun-worship site, but I do not so far pick up any great ritual. I feel that this was a magnetic centre to which people were drawn, and as they performed their simple act of worship to the sun as solar deity and felt the warmth of His

Being within themselves, so they came to feel one with the Solar Being and to recognise His Absoluteness. Nevertheless, the ritual was very simple and through their understanding of the earth and the sun being dependent the one on the other, they felt this unity within themselves, therefore the cosmic rays (from the sun) passed through them without obstruction and were earthed once more. In conjunction with the earth powers which had become cold and bereft of their heavenly inspiration the dormant powers within the Earth began once more to respond to the quickening rays of the Sun. So is the planet substance to be redeemed by the Human race."

At this centre of St. Nicholas a great deal of thought was expended. The fact that there has always been a place of worship here shows that the Great Ones have never lost control of the planetary body and have always been able to earth at least some of the greatness through the ones who worshipped here.

Ted Ambrose.



Ted Ambrose.



BOOK REVIEW.

THE PLACE NAMES OF SUSSEX - Judith Glover (Batsford Books, 1975, £4)

This book is a must for Ley Hunters and Earth Mysteries, researchers working locally in the South East. It comprises an A to Z of more than 2000 Sussex place names in which their origins and development of towns, villages and hamlets are traced. This analysis involves the often fascinating local history and folklore of that place.

The book complements the OS map in the initial stages of research most admirably. I continue to find it a valuable aid in my own research. It's not the sort of book you read through but one you dip into for a particular reference. (unless you're the sort of person who likes to read dictionaries!) I got my copy at one of the remainder book shops at a bargain price - there are still a few about.

Druids Among the Fireworks

-Ward Rutherford.

Ward Rutherford was born in 1927 in the Channel Islands where he was imprisoned by the occupying German forces in the last war. He has been involved in radio and T.V. broadcasting and in 1962 became head of news for Channel T.V. in St. Helier, moving to B.B.C. West Region in 1964. Author of seventeen books on contemporary history as well as short stories and newspaper articles one of his more recent books is on the Druids.

History is pro-Roman. Thus when Tacitus and Suetonius assure us that the last remnants of Druidism perished at the hands of the legionaries at Mona (or, as we now call it, Anglesey) in AD 62, the statement has gone virtually unchallenged.

Yet it's manifest falsity is easily demonstrable. That Druidism continued down to Christian times in regions untouched by the Roman sandal such as Ireland and Scotland we know from the statements of the missionaries themselves. 'Christ is my Druid', declares St. Columba, a turn of phrase surely meaningless if there were no Druids around.

Even in those places where the people had reason to fear the Roman writ, there are signs of survival. One Druidic subterfuge was to take up the harp and pass oneself off as a bard. The separations of the two vocations had, in any case, come about only in comparatively late times. Merlin, who makes his first appearance in the Arthurian stories only in the Middle Ages is plainly intended to represent a Druid. He is, on the consensus of most scholars, derived from the Welsh Myrddin, a historical personage who was, in fact, both prophet and bard and sufficiently renowned to have a town (Carmarthen-Myrddin's town) named after him.

But if the Druids survived, in no matter what guises, are we justified in asking how far their beliefs and practices may have lived on? Roman influences have ensured that, until recent times, the very notion of such survivals was laughed out of court. If the Druids themselves had gone, how could their ideas persist? This requires a more than usual willingness to ignore facts distasteful to an accepted theory. Not only have Druidic practices and beliefs lived on, but they exert a greater influence on our lives than has hitherto been acknowledged.

Though the proofs of this abound, one must serve. Throughout the British Isles one comes across the well and water sources dedicated to 'St. Anne' or to 'St. Bride' and one need go no

further than Hove with it's St. Anne's Well Park in search of examples.

By tradition, St. Anne is the mother, St. Bride or St. Bridget the midwife of the Blessed Virgin. They may, however, have an infinitely older ancestry. A goddess known as Brigantia or Brigid was to be found occurring right across the Celtic world and we know of an extremely powerful mother-goddess variously rendered as Dana, Danu, Anu or Ana. She may also be the prototype of the Roman Diana since the prefix 'Di-' means no more than 'the bright one' and was frequently attached to god-names. (The J of 'Jupiter', is a case in point, for it is merely the 'di' ellided). Furthermore, the connexion between deities and water-sources is well-attested among the Celts.

The names of their Gods - including Dana/Ana in the Welsh form 'Don' recur in the early Welsh versions of Arthurian legend, leading to the supposition that these were in origin myths encapsulating what one might call Druidic ideology.

But this matter of Druidic identifications and survivals can be taken still further. As it happens there is a cycle of myths much earlier than the Welsh. These are the Irish epics which not only contain specific references to Druids, but also to the major festivals. When the great hero Cu Chulainn tries to seduce the lovely Emer in The Cattle Raid of Cooley, she tells him: 'No man will travel this country (a metaphor for her body), who hasn't gone sleepless from Samain, when the summer goes to it's rest, until Imbolc to Beltine at summer's beginning and from Beltine to Bron Trogain, earth's sorrowing autumn.'

Imbolc, the lactation of the ewes, comes in February and survived until late times as Candlemas. It was certainly a day sacred to Bridgid and is celebrated as 'St. Bridget's Day' in the Isle of Man.

While Bron Trogain has yet to be identified, with the other two we are on firmer ground. Beltine is the festival of the great sun-god, Beli or

Belenos and occurred on 1 May. We need have few scruples in associating the enormous number of May Day practices, such as village Maypoles, with it. In case doubts linger, there is supportive evidence from those places where celtic life remained least disturbed by external influences; Ireland, the Scottish Highlands, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, the Orkneys and Shetlands. In the last three, the term Beltain is still in use and there are various local customs, such as well-visiting, associated with it.

But it is perhaps Samain which gives us even more surprising examples of the quite extraordinary longevity of Druidic ideas. It occurs, as Emer's speech makes clear even if we did not know it from other sources, at 'summer's end', in fact in late October-early November. It was not a festival devoted to a particular god, but a period in which the people of the Other World - the dead - could exert a baneful influence upon the living. It was the time when, according to Irish myth, the sidhs, (or shees), the prehistoric barrows, lay open and when their inhabitants tempted the living into them. Then it was that the sidh-women, the banshees, in the form of beautiful temptresses went in search of mortal lovers.

It is plain, without further description, that Samain is the original of our own Hallowe'en, the Feast of the Holy Souls, and, indeed, it corresponds exactly with it. And to support the hypothesis there is the fact that in the Isle of Man Hallowe'en is kept up under it's Manx Celtic name 'Sauin' which not only bears strong resemblance to Samain, but actually means 'summer's end.'

However, having established that Hallowe'en is the successor of the Celtic Samain, we may yet overlook something else. From China to Mexico, wherever men have found the need to protect themselves from the malign spirits of the dead, they have adopted the same technique. It is that of instilling fear by means of fire, noise and the wearing of fearsome masks. In the employment of these methods, the Celts were no exception. We know this from many sources.

At once, and perhaps a little incredulous, we find ourselves being reminded of another well-known folk-festival - Guy Fawkes' Night, which occurs on 5 November and is thus well within the accepted Samain period.

Logic intervenes. Can this possibly be more than coincidence, it asks? It was on 5 November 1605 that James I's Parliament met and Guy Fawkes was found amid his powder barrels. But logic also prompts one to ask why the British people should choose to celebrate an occasion which had not the slightest effect on their history? If an occasion for lighting celebratory fires was required why not the anniversary of the defeat of the Great Armada less than

twenty years earlier which changed British and European history? Except perhaps, that it occurred in August!

There is, in addition, an aspect of November Fifth we should not overlook. It's centrepiece is and has always been the burning of an effigy of a man! Druidism practised human sacrifice and both Beltine and Samain were occasions on which human offerings were made. An interesting parallel comes to us from the Channel Island of Jersey. There, until the Puritans forbade it, it had been the custom to fell a tree-trunk at New Year which, shorn of it's branches was dressed in clothes and then burned. The overtones of human sacrifice are obvious enough.

The log-victim was called in local patios 'le bout de l'an', - the end of the year - and this was corrupted into the word 'boulelau'. Strangely enough, the Guy Fawkes custom also spread to Jersey, despite the fact that what happened at Westminster had no conceivable relevance to the islanders who have their own Parliament, the Jersey States. That this was simply the older custom revived is proved by the fact that the word 'boudelau' was used for the Guy Fawkes dummy as late as my own boyhood in the island.

All the same, these are no more than intimations which tempt us to conjecture and we have better evidence than this. Once again it comes from the most undilutedly Celtic areas. In the Orkneys, the Shetlands, the Scottish Highlands we find that Hallowe'en itself was traditionally celebrated with the lighting of huge, communal bonfires. As Ernest Marwick says in his Folklore of the Orkneys and Shetlands, Hallowe'en and November Fifth became inextricably confused. In the Scottish Highlands we are told, by no less an authority than Professor Anne Ross, the chosen site for these conflagrations was the summits of barrows - the Irish sidhs. In other words, fire was fulfilling it's ageold function of protecting the living from the spirits of the dead.

One is therefore led to the conclusion that fireworks, the bonfires, the burnings of Guys on November Fifth came about simply because these activities seemed especially appropriate to the season. The Gunpowder Plotters simply provided a convenient excuse.

Inevitably, one is led from this to the consideration of the most spectacular of all November Fifth celebrations: those held in Lewes. Are the various bonfire societies, unknown to themselves, merely participating in a dark, pagan custom?

Before we dismiss the notion as too fanciful we should remember that in this part of the Downs we are deep in Celtic country.

Sussex is more or less coextensive with the Tribal territory of the Regnii, a name hinting at royal antecedents (Rig-king). Next to it was that of the Cantii which became the focal point of the struggle between the Saxons Hengist and Horsa and that chieftain the history-books misname 'Vortigern' (it is, in fact a title, Great Lord). Even at this late date after some four hundred years of Roamn occupation, the chief of the Cantii was a devout follower of the old religion. The 'magicians' attributed him by Nennius were almost certainly Druids and are so named in some versions of his Historia Brittonum. The Saxon incursions marked the commencement of the Celtic Britons' trek westwards.

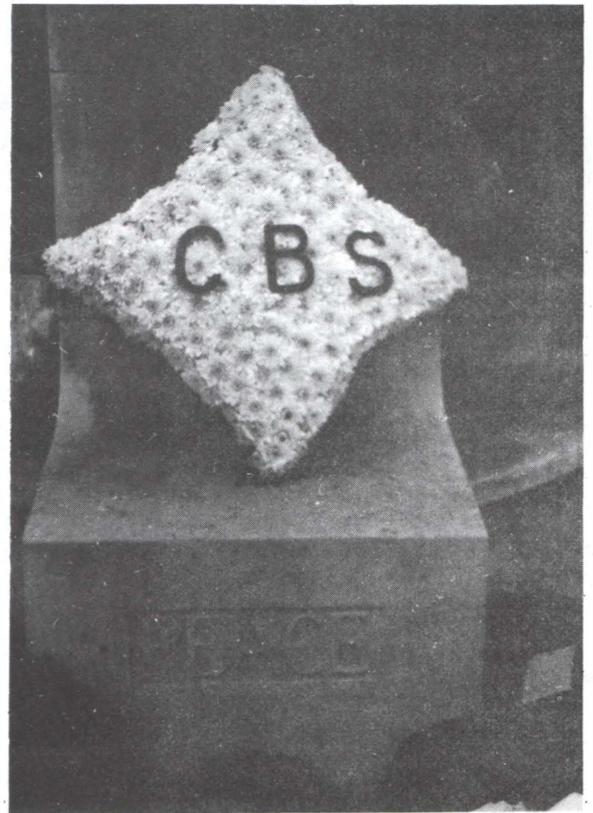
Among indicators of the importance of the area there is not only the Wilmington 'Long Man' - on the analogy of other hill figures almost certainly a god, - but a host of archaeological finds including the Piltdown stone head and the dolphin linchpin found at Hassocks. The various discoveries unearthed at Caburn give plain witness that, as one writer puts it, the area was 'inhabited from 500 BC to AD50 by an artistic race who carried on many arts and crafts'. The last date may well be significant, for the period from roughly AD50 was one in which the wholesale extirpation of Druidism in Britain began under Claudius. If this was an area of religious importance as

there is reason to suspect, this may well have been the moment it's leaders decided it would be prudent to move elsewhere.

The bulk of local population would, of course, have stayed where it was, rooted in the land and it's agricultural pursuits. Undoubtedly they would have kept up the festivals even without benefit of clergy.

As added evidence in favour of the thesis that this was a stronghold of pagan religion, there are the numerous Christian establishments in the neighbourhood, while the dedication of a church to 'St. Anne' is interesting if no more. It was common practice to erect Christian monasteries and churches on sites dedicated to the pagan deities, in many cases the materials from the temple or sacred enclosure being used for the new buildings. In this way the impotence of the old gods was effectively demonstrated.

What I am suggesting, then, is that Lewes represents the epicentre of what was formerly an important Celtic area with strongly religious over-tones. In such an area one would expect the festivals, of which Samain with it's similarities not only to Hallowe'en but also to November Fifth, to be kept up. The contemporary celebrations of November Fifth are simply, I suggest, a survival - or revival - of this.



C. Ashton.

The photo on the left shows the War Memorial in the centre of Lewes with wreaths laid by Bonfire societies. The right hand picture shows a close-up of a wreath laid by the Cliffe Bonfire Society with it's initials CBS picked out over white carnations. The pictures were taken early in November 1979.

The questions which force themselves upon us are: why Lewes? But it is no more curious than the survival of other Celtic festivals elsewhere. Why, for instance, should Abbots' Bromley in Staffordshire have retained its Stag Dance, plainly associated with the powerful horned god, Cernunnos. Why does Helston have its 'Furry Dance' or Padstow its 'Obby 'Oss'?

Editor's reflections.....

As an appendage to this article I'd like to add the following notes: Judith Clover in 'The Place Names of Sussex' records "There is a tradition that the town was named in honour of the British God Llwy, Lord of Light, in whose memory tar are rolled down to the river on November Fifth each year, perpetuating a custom which once involved the use of flaming chariot wheels."

In Lewes there is a strong connection between the fifth as a fire festival and festival of the dead which echoes loudly a Celtic tradition. Each year on this day the several bonfire societies lay wreaths at the war memorial in the town centre. They further remember the dead of the two wars in a special Festival of Remembrance in the church of St. Thomas a Becket (a man chiefly remembered for his death) on the nearest Sunday to the fifth. It could be argued that this remarkable interlocking of two traditions originated with the burning of the Protestant martyrs. If this is so why is the martyrdom not more overtly remembered? What seems to have happened is this. An already extant tradition received a boost taking on a new meaning and interpretation from contemporary events. This continues into our own time with the Fire Societies honouring our fallen war heroes.

Egerton Sykes: Critical Memories.

Egerton Sykes is 86. He trained as an engineer and has worked as a soldier, diplomat, edited newspapers in four different languages and has been foreign correspondent to the British press. He has lived through two world wars, ten revolutions, worked in twenty five different countries and speaks four different languages. He has made an estimated fifty T.V. and radio broadcasts chiefly in the U.S.A. and has had published in the last thirty years, between 3½ and 4 million words. His written work has been mainly concerned with ancient history, archeology, U.F.O.'s and radiesthesia. He is the last surviving member of the Straight Track Club. In this article he reflects on the impact of Watkins' discovery of leys and sounds off at what he sees as some of the more fanciful speculations surrounding them.

In the early 1920's at the close of the First World War, British amateur archeology was in the doldrums. Nobody who had spent four years digging trenches in France was interested in doing anything of the kind in England. And it really looked, at the time, as if we had come to a dead end in anything but official archeological work.

However the situation was changed by a man called Alfred Watkins who was a Photographer and expert on lenses. He was quite well known and had considerable professional status. In 1923 he published a book which revolutionised the entire archeological field for a period of several decades. His book was called 'The Old Straight Track'. The basis of Watkins theory was that

prehistoric points of interest eg Silbury Hill, Stonehenge etc., had radiating from them a series of trackways which were indicated by standing stones, Tumps, barrows and the like. What has never been worked is whether these trackways radiated from central points or to them. That is something which many years of research has not been able to establish. It seems that every prehistoric monument was to some extent a holy site. The fact that they may have been used for purely secular purposes is neither here nor there, but they had acquired the veneration of many generations of people using these trackways. The principle was extremely simple. If you stood in a valley and were going in a given direction, you looked up to the surrounding hills and on one of these hills

you would see outlined against the horizon a standing stone marking the way. Occasionally these trackways would cross. Where this happened you'd usually find some kind of an establishment set up. It might eventually turn into a church, a monastery, or even into an inn for wayfarers. It made no difference at all. This was an automatic development for where you have a crossroads it's the most suitable place for setting up an establishment where you expect people to congregate.

This theory hit the archaeological world of amateurs, of which I include myself, rather like an atomic bomb. It suddenly opened up wide new horizons and possibilities. Some of these have not yet cleared up. In the early 1930's an organisation was formed called The Straight Track Club of which I was a member until it finally died just before the war. Most of the books and literature were taken over by one of the members on the understanding that they'd be made available to all and sundry. Instead of this he kept them locked up until he died, and they were then handed over to a local library where they still are (Hereford Reference Library - Ed). There were 30 - 40 volumes of them. They consisted of very closely packed notes by people who had put in an immense amount of work with maps and compasses trying to sort things out.

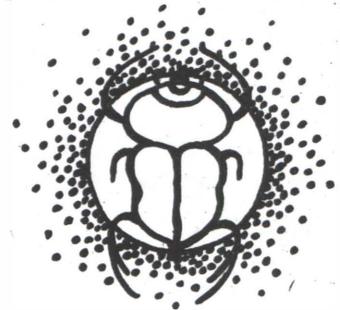
Since the folding up of The Straight Track Club there have emerged several journals in the field. I like the eternalists but I'm afraid the standard of research contained in some of them has not always been up to the standard which is essential for any serious progress to be made. I may give several examples. First of all there is no relationship of any kind between ley lines and flying saucers. Second, although ley lines coincide to a considerable extent with the magnetic configuration of the region this does not of itself prove anything for or against ley lines. Magnetic lines have been there for thousands of years and although there are slight alterations every year when the magnetic pole shifts a few feet they are not sufficient to justify anybody drawing wide conclusions upon them. It is easy to take linking up ancient sites with a ruler and call these leys. But one must remember that the population of Britain at the time was probably somewhere about $\frac{1}{2}$ million, possibly less. And we have at the moment such a plethora of leys all over the place that it would take considerably more people to construct them. Therefore it means that quite a lot of them would have to be diminated simply because they were unnecessary. In my opinion, when the Romans came to Britain and built a marvellous system of roads, to a very great extent they followed tracks laid out generations before by the original setters out of the ley system.

There has been an awful lot of emotional guff talked about ley lines which I find rather distressful. This is

because I do think that when one is doing archeological research as an amateur you must apply certain rules of logic and common sense. For example, in years before the war Mrs. Maltwood discovered the remnants of a zodiac round Glastonbury. During the war, Lewes Spence discovered one at Pumpisant in Wales of which I published a description at the time. Since then zodiacs have been cropping up all over the place like toadstools. Well, I'm frightfully sorry to say but there was no necessity for such vast quantities of zodiacs that people claim to have discovered. None whatsoever. There were not enough people to make use of them. If you consult the best sources eg Geoffery of Monmouth the Mabinogion, the early French Romances etc. not a single one of them mentioned zodiacs in any form or shape. I've looked through various Greek sources where again I've been unable to find any trace of a mention of them. We cannot discover anything which would justify the immense amount of energy involved in putting them in. And yet, it's absolutely definite that we do find them - though not in the quantities that some people suppose.

We do not find any trace of any zodiac having been built since the departure of the Romans. We do find, for example, hill figures all over the place which were put up by the adherents of Epona or other fertility goddesses. But we find no notes at all on the construction of zodiacs and yet they are there. This is something that the next generation will have to solve.

SOLSTICE



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I have a friend who has discovered remnants of hill side drawings within twenty miles of Brighton, showing elephants' tusks. The questions that arise are who put them there? What purpose were they intended for? I've not the slightest idea. No more has anybody else. If you have a zodiac you may use it for astronomical purposes or something like that. But you've still got to justify that, to take the one at Glastonbury for example which probably occupies an area of between five and six square miles, the amount of work needed to make it which must have been colossal. Why did people go to all this work? What did they want them for?

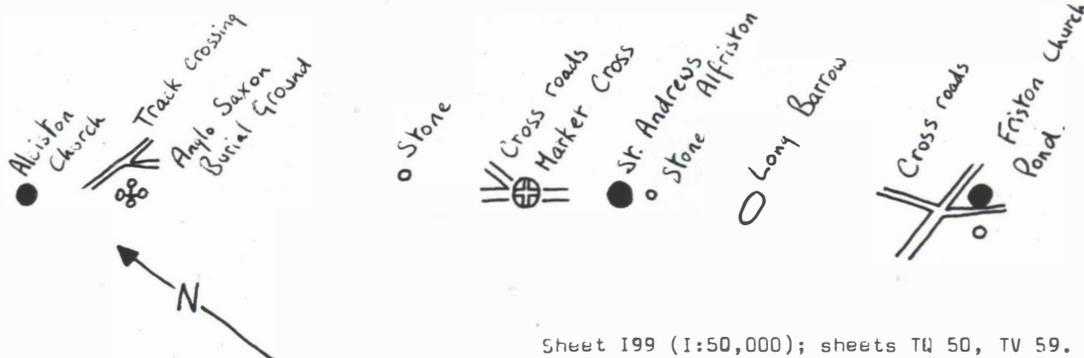
Now I go back to leys. They covered practically every religious site in Britain. The fact is that religious sites turned into cathedrals and churches in the interim. For example, St. Paul's in London was built on the site of a building intended for the worship of Harned the Hunter. You can find reference to this in Christopher Wren's Diary. Another example, the Notre Dame in Paris was built on the site of a temple of Isis. Champs d'Elysee in Paris (the Elysian Fields) were probably originally on an Egyptian cemetery. These are things of

which one has historical records and its fairly easy to check up on them. But no historical records of any kind have been produced referring to ley lines or zodiacs and their use. Now this can only imply that whatever was done was done before historical records of any kind were kept- possibly by a different race of a different branch of the human race. And let me hurriedly say that we are not supposing that they were put up by alien invaders landing from space craft or anything like that. They would be far too busy in trying to stay alive and avoid all the numerous diseases of earth without having time to worry about putting up ley lines or zodiacs. But nevertheless both these things exist. Both of them are completely unsolved mysteries.

I would like to emphasise that there has been more waffle written about both these things than one would ever imagine possible. But out of all the waffle one manages to squeeze an occasional drop of real information. I think that one can accept that the ley lines, the main ones, are perfectly genuine. That they were designed for pilgrims or passengers of various kinds to get from one place to another. And that zodiacs, too, certainly existed.

The Alfriston Ley Line

- Chris Ashton.



Sheet 199 (1:50,000); sheets TQ 50, TV 59.

The alignment of sites between Alfriston, Alfriston and Friston is approximately 7 miles long and takes in some of the classical features of the Watkins tradition. The line is easily walkable and takes you via the Downs to the sea through typical Sussex countryside. The area is rich in remnants of the distant past. Nearby stands the enigmatic Long

Man of Wilmington, Anglo-Saxon and Celtic burial places have been discovered in Alfriston, a beacon top can be sighted high on the Downs at Firle, and the Star Inn with its strange heraldic devices is conveniently situated just a few yards from the line. The line passes a church built on a mound (a quite common feature in this area), a market cross, a long

barrow and finally a cross road church with a pond close by.

The line runs NW-SE. The church at Alciston is the first ley mark if we start at the NE point. Access is gained to the church via a fenced foot path which is about 30 yards long. At each end of this path, close to the gates, there are situated two sarsen stones. These stones appear to have ferrous deposits in them and occur frequently along the line. The church itself is built on a mound-like several churches in the area. It's present structure dates back to Norman times, the Domesday Book referring to a Valuable estate at 'Alistone' which had become the property of Battle Abbey. The dedication of this little church has been lost in the mists of time and it has never been renamed.

The next ley point is the Anglo-Saxon burial ground which lies at a gap in the Downs where the Cuckmere River flows through to the sea. This site is adjacent to the cross roads of two ancient track-ways. I. D. Magary in his book 'Roman Ways of the Weald' says that these tracks are in fact Roman. However it is possible that they may be of greater antiquity as it was a policy of the Romans to repair and utilise convenient roads which were already laid out when they arrived from across the Channel. This part of Alfriston is the ancient hamlet of Witon. The hill here is known as the Hollow but for centuries was known as the Hallow Furlong. One of the original meanings of 'hallow' is burial place or shrine. In 1912 work was begun on the digging of Foundations for a house at this site. As a result of the discovery of some interesting Anglo-Saxon remains here, the Sussex Archeological Society undertook an excavation of the site. This resulted in the discovery of a sizeable Saxon cemetery of about 150 graves. During the excavations bronze and iron armour was found as well as fine glass ware, pottery and beads. The size and splendour of this burial place indicates the importance that this site obviously had for the Saxons. The

house that now stands there is called 'The Sanctuary.' One other unusual feature of this site is the way-side cross which stands just outside the house on the road to Alfriston.

Some distance along this road about 100 yards before the post office, there is a large stone perhaps 4 feet high, set into a garden wall. The stone is of the same material as those described at the Alciston church - with the same ferrous deposits. It is set about 2 feet away from the corner. It is possible that this stone was laid to protect the corner from traffic but if this is so it's positioning is not very effective, unlike the next sarsen stone on the road set in to the corner of the post office. The post office is at a road junction and right outside there is a market cross.

Locally the cross is known as the Cross Stone. The stone pillar was surmounted by a cross until 1830 when it was replaced by a round cap. It used to be surrounded by three ancient steps which have now disappeared, apparently so as to allow more space for traffic. Furthermore the original cross was badly damaged in 1955 by a motor truck. The cross has been reconstructed using the same material as the original cross. There are only two surviving market crosses in Sussex. This one in Alfriston and the splendid Chichester Market Cross.

The next point on the line is St. Andrews in Alfriston. This fourteenth century church was built on mound on a bend in the River Cuckmere. On the green at the front of the church there's a group of four sarsens very similar to those we have already encountered on the way of the ley. Publications repeatedly refer to a statement made by a 'visiting antiquary' in which he describes the church as 'the cathedral of the Downs'. An image such as this always adds a touch of colour to a description, which is why I use it yet again! However, dear reader, let me add a touch of colour of an almost psychadelic hue, Whilst visiting this sweet site one warm, sunny Spring day I met, quite by chance, the dowser Colin Bloy (see 'Dowsing as an Inner Path' in this issue). Standing at the centre of the church under the tower, he could detect eight concentric bands of energy (of some kind) which seemed to be flowing out on four axes. Walking out of the church to the southern wall of the church yard I pointed out a large stone which had been set in the wall and was quite unlike the other smaller stones used in its construction. Was this in any way related to the energy flow which had been detected inside the church? The flow, Colin said, went down the southern aisle of the church and passed over the church yard wall at the place where the stone is located. I wondered if this stone had the function of aiming an energy flow more accurately - working on the same principle as that which accounts for longer gun barrels being more accurate.



C. Ashton.

There is legend, often repeated, which describes the fixing of the site of the church. The original intention was to build the church to the west of the village street. The site had been specified, the stones prepared and laid out at the site ready for use. However, when the workmen came to begin their task of construction they found - no doubt to their dismay - that the stones had been somehow miraculously moved to the Tye (the aforementioned village green outside the church) during the night. It took the men most of the day to carry the stones back to the original place. But when they came back the following day to begin work the same thing had happened. And this pattern repeated itself (according to this story the Medieval inhabitants had tremendous powers of perseverance) until one day a wonderful sight was seen. Four oxen lying on the mound in the Tye with their backs touching - forming the shape of a cross! The villagers held a meeting (or moot as it was known then) at which it was decided that the oxen were the instruments of some Divine agency. And that this agency was instructing the people of Alfriston where to build their temple and what shape to build it. A cruciform church was built on this spot in the form of a Greek cross. Could it be that this legend is a folk memory relating to the laying out of the landscape in this area according to the forgotten science of geomancy?

This legend is not unique. It has been told of other churches - notably of Durham Cathedral. It is interesting that there is a legend, widely told throughout the land, which specifies the location of temples. And that this item of folklore has the site pinpointed by spiritual agencies. The statement that the legend makes can be summed up thus: "the church must be located in exactly the right place." In this statement we have a clear parallel with the Chinese concept of Feng Shui.

It is known that a monastic church stood at the place where the present church now stands. The body of St. Lewinna, a Sussex girl martyred towards the end of the seventeenth century, was interred here. For this reason it was an important place of pilgrimage. However her remains were stolen in 1508 and taken to Flanders. This event must have had a bad effect upon the local contemporary pilgrimage industry.



C. Ashton.

Before we leave the church it is worth noting that Mr. C. Piper, in his little book on the village records that some parts of the church walls used to be enriched by murals. One of these depicted St. Catherine and, according to John Michel in his seminal work 'View Over Atlantis', there is a connection between this character and dragons/ley energy connection). The Star Inn is only about 20 yards away from the line and is itself an enigma. It asks questions to which hasty answers cannot be given.



C. Ashton.

The next ley point is the long barrow situated about a mile south east of the village of Litlington. It is one of the smallest long barrows in Sussex and lies close to the edge of the Friston Forest. Some excavations were carried out here some years ago which resulted in an interesting find or two.

After running through the Friston Forest (a new forest) the line seems to have Friston church as its terminal point. The church stands on relatively high ground at a cross roads. Just across one of these roads there is a pond perhaps five yards out of the church yard.

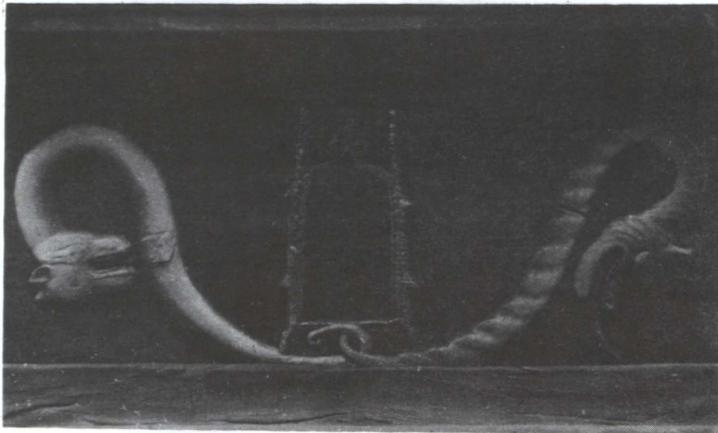
All the points mentioned here are classical ley markers. For a fuller account of these see either Watkins 'The Old Straight Track' or Devereaux and Thomson 'The Ley Hunters Companion'. Coupled with these ley markers we have the legend of the church's siting and a possible drag - on connection with the old St. Catherine mural in St. Andrews. Furthermore, very close to the running line there is the Star Inn with its medieval carvings of dragon fighter and serpents. It is to the Star Inn that we now turn and also to a fuller account of the dragon connection.

The Star Inn

Enquiry into the history of the Star Inn in Alfriston proves to be puzzling. Its features and the stories which are told about it indicate a fusion of the secular and religious worlds.

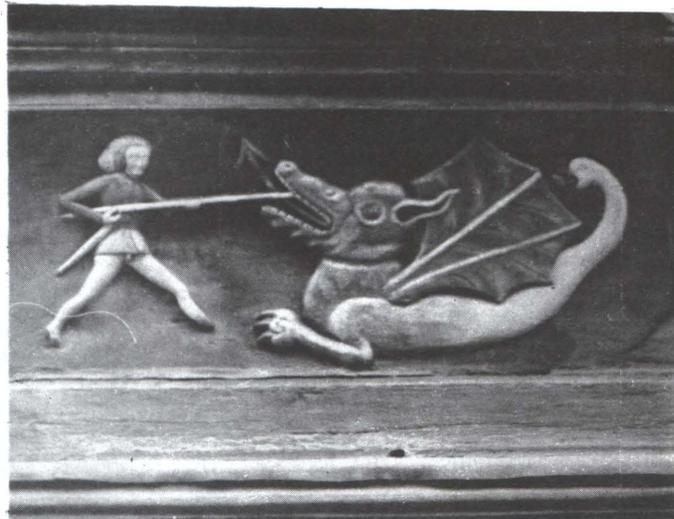
The Inn stands in the main street of Alfriston and is a beautiful example of early English timber frame building. It was constructed around the middle of the fifteenth century as was the George which is across the street from it. There is a belief that it was built for pilgrims or mendicant friars on their way to visit the shrine of St. Richard in Chichester. However if it was built in the middle of the fifteenth century it seems more pertinent to assume that it was for pilgrims visiting the bones of St. Lewinna housed across the road in St. Andrews.

There are several designs carved in the timbers on the front of the building which suggest the religious and heraldic.



Some take the form of grotesques or gargoyles which decorate gothic churches. The designs invite the idea that the inn belonged to a religious order. Though there were four religious houses nearby which could take the credit, no factual connection proving any has come to light.

It has also been said that the Star once had the right of sanctuary but again there is no evidence to support this claim.



C. Ashton.

Legend also has it that there's an underground passage leading to the sea - a distance of nearly three miles! The town once had a thriving smuggling business but the construction of a three mile long underground trade route seems to be a task too great for the profits to justify. Tea couldn't have been that expensive and most kinds of dope were still legal. The presence of these fantastic stories in relation to the inn indicates that it holds a prominent place in the popular imagination. And even if these stories are fantasy the question remains as to why they should attach themselves to this particular building.

The sign of the inn is a sixteen pointed golden star rising from the clouds. The immediate visual impact of this sign is to suggest heraldic or even alchemical symbolism. One researcher into the field of lost knowledge put forward to me the idea that this sixteen pointed star represented the two octaves and that this in turn represents the marrying of two levels of conscious. The sign is in fact the crest of the Inn-holders Company of London. This body was incorporated in 1514 and it has been suggested that this is where the Star got its name. However, if the inn was built in the first half of the fifteenth century it was built before the ICL existed. Either it changed its name 60 years after its founding of it had its name and crest before the ICL. If it did have its crest before then it seems highly likely that there are heraldic connections.

The sign and the carvings come from a period in our history when heraldry was seen as a serious and living science with which to toy would be sacrilege. Therefore it would seem that an unravelling of their connections and associations would be fairly straightforward. But this is not the case.

The carvings decorate the front timbers. One of these shows a man thrusting a double bladed sword into the mouth of a basilisk. In Christian art the basilisk is recognised by the snake-like head on the end of its tail. It

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is one of the emblems of deadly sin and the very spirit of evil. In Christian legend there are many dragon fighters, the two most famous being St. Michael and St. George. This is possibly a representation of George, as Michael, being an angel, is mostly depicted with wings. Most writers on the subject have observed a reoccurring link between leys and dragon legend. John Mitchell has this to say, 'Many centres of the English dragon legend stand at the junction of well marked leys.....St. Michael and St. George appear to illustrate two aspects of the same principle. The archetype to which they relate is the same as that represented by Castor and Pollux who directed St. Elmo's fire, a current of etherical electricity over which the Greeks seem to have retained some control even into historical times..... and he became (Michael/George) a natural successor to the prechristian deity, the guardian of the dragon current that he supplanted'. (View Over Atlantis).

The appearance of the dragon and dragon fighter at a point so close to such a well marked ley suggests the marking out of the dragon current at this point in the landscape.

Another carving depicts two serpents with their tails entwined and striving to move in opposite directions. They issue forth from what seems to be a tabernacle. On initial reflection the picture suggests the balancing of opposing forces. Screeton records Iris Vorel's observation that Aquarius is represented by 'two serpents gliding in opposite directions'. Could these have an astronomical significance?



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One carving set on the corner of the building shows two animals climbing what looks like a caduceus. Age has distorted the features so as to make their identification extremely haphazard. However it does appear that they are composed of the parts of two or more animals. The caduceus was the symbol of Asklepios the Greek god of healing. Further carvings show heads blowing in different directions and a bearded bishop with a hare at his feet.



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What all this adds up to I don't know. But what we do have is several references to the Mercurial archetype. The dragon (which alchemists used to represent the metal mercury); the caduceus (which according to Cornelius Agrippa, the spirit of Mercury carried). John Mitchell has noted that it is the Mercury/Hermes/Michael archetype - "the quicksilver diety that hovers over the straight tracks and standing stones". Are the carvings on the Star Inn the mere doodles of some medieval craftsman in defiance of contemporary conventions? Or do they make reference to traditions and activities connected with the place of whose real purpose we can only, as yet, dimly speculate?

There is much to be discovered.

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