

4. Braithwell Moat Hall. This is a fortified earthworks; although of small dimensions possibly of early origin. It is a military castle. The ruins of the main building has Gothic arches and high-pitched roof of oak. It is erected upon a square mound of earth of slight elevation, of artificial origin. At its centre there is a well with a lining of limestone. The name Braithwell means "a well can be deep but not broad". The well referred to is possibly the Holy Well on the village outskirts. Three sides of the moat are still visible and one is still wet.

5. Moat Farm. The cluster of buildings called Moat Farm are the oldest in Wickersley apart from the church. The trace of the moat can still be seen and followed. The site is connected with Roche Abbey, when in its splendour a moated farm existed. Nearby the monks built fish ponds.

— The zodiac may be of a vesica piscis shape due to the position of Capricorn. The moat ring being one of the circles. —

The figures of the zodiac are as follows (to date):

AQUARIUS: This is a figure of either an eagle or phoenix, giving rebirth to itself. It is based around Braithwell and is very similar to the figure found at Glastonbury, but much larger. At the tip of one wing there was the Clifton Beacon. The head of the Glastonbury Aquarius is on the Chalice Well. The mouth of the Letwell Aquarius is on a Holy Well. This could be significant, but I can find no confirmation about the well.

CAPRICORN: This figure is of a unicorn with the head tossed around the village of Wodworth, the church as the eye, and horn formed by a very long but narrow field heading along away from the church. The figure is similar to that found at Nuthampstead and is outside the moat ring giving the vesica piscis impression. The Glastonbury figure would at one time have been half flooded at high tide. This figure's head is 222' above sea level and tail 12'.

SAGITTARIUS: This is the largest of the figures in the group and is one of a man with a lance falling from his horse. The tail is formed by the River Idle and its drains; the back leg by a Roman road. The head is at Oldcotes and the lance Thornbury Hill. The figure contains Tickhill and the place names Styrrup, King's Closes and Lords Meadow.

SCORPIO: This figure is like that found at Glastonbury, stinging the horse of Sagittarius at Scrooby. The body segments are formed by farm roads, part of the Great North Road and the Roman bank earthworks. One of the mantles is upon Blyth, with its priory, the other reaches out towards the rider of Sagittarius.

LIBRA: The figure of the dove here is the same size and shape as that at Glastonbury. If the centre of the moat ring is the centre of the zodiac then it is also in the same position. The body is formed by Dyscarr Wood.

VIRGO: The figure is very large, but similar to the one at Glastonbury. It is interesting to note that a straight stretch of road starting from the Roman bank earthworks runs in the same direction and position as the Fosse Way in Glastonbury. The back and feet of Virgo are formed by the River Ryton; the sheaf by a road and footpath near Carlton in Lindrick.

LEO: A figure similar to Nuthampstead's Leo. It is centred upon Netherthrope Moat. The River Ryton forms part of the underside of the lion. It seems to be attacking both of the Gemini figures. The claws going for the Harthill figure and the head for the Todwick figure.

CANCER: This figure is absent.

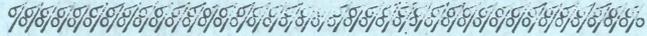
GEMINI: Both figures are similar but larger than the Glastonbury Gemini twins. The one at Harthill has its back on Leo and is of a sitting, long-haired human. The second figure based at Todwick has both arms above its head; one arm shaped similar to that of Nuthampstead.

TAURUS: The figure of Taurus is that of a bull's head. This was the first figure found and like Libra is the same size, shape and position as that found at Glastonbury -- only the horns are different. The bottom part of the eye is formed by a sharp bend in the road of Roman or earlier origin. The mouth is on the main street at Loughton-en-le-Morthen. This figure stands out very well on aerial photographs kept in Rotherham Library.

I encouraged Philip to publish his findings in "The Ley Hunter" during my editorship (he too having once been editor) and was responsible during this T.Z.s' early inception in suggesting that the Leo should appear prominent.

The mere fact that we find the figures different to elsewhere and patently not in sync with the planisphere is worrying. Yet, for instance, Bob Lord's Pendle T.Z. is even more daunting. At one level it is healthy that T.Z. finders are not all reproducing the Glastonbury Zodiac exactly in their own neighbourhoods, but these abstruse forms mean that any scientific credibility (for anyone believing that means anything) is blown. I would suggest that a number of criteria can, however, be utilised, for example: that folklore be related to figures; names of villages, pubs, and individual houses be checked for relevance; that astrology be used to see if, say, certain trees associated with a particular sign are specially prominent there. This could be seen as a useful midway approach between the objective and subjective.

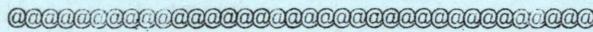
Meanwhile the North Sea studiously erodes the Holderness Zodiac.



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FORTEANA AND A TENTATIVE ELEPHANTINE FIGURE : I hope to persuade Mike Collier to write up his Sussex T.Z. researches for the next newsletter, but feel it might hearten other investigators to record the following. We may all seem somewhat cranky to the general public, but Mike's feeling that an elephantine shape around Arlington led him to try a "long shot" by writing to the waterworks company occupying the "tusk" area of the shape. Obviously bemused but helpful, an employee in his reply mentioned that "the ancient course of the river showing that the meander had moved in the past and in excavating in one of these areas, the tusk of a mammoth was discovered. The tusk is now in the possession of the British Museum." There's a moral here!

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In addition to hoping to get Mike to put pen to paper I hope to get an article upon another Somerset zodiac! But even more important is the possibility that I can include photostats of Lewis Edwards's Pumpsaint Zodiac articles of the 1940s. A university lecturer has kindly offered to organize the reproduction, but naturally there is cost involved. Any cheques/P.O.s/stamps would be acceptable. If you send a small amount each then this would be gratefully received. Also small donations to T.Z.N. would be appreciated.

