

Touchstone

Surrey
Earth
Mysteries



No. 10

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STONEHENGE LOOKALIKE

As up the hill with labouring steps we tread
Where the twin clumps their sheltering branches
spread
The summit gain'd, at ease reclining stay
And all around the widespread scene survey
Point out each object and instructive tell
The various changes that the land befell.
See on the skyline there, yon shapely mound
That ancient earthwork formed old Mercia's bound
In misty distance see the furrow heave
There lies forgotten lonely Gwichelm's grave.
And in the vale where stands the stately tower
In days gone by, up rose the Roman power.
Around the hill the ruthless Danes entrench'd
And these fair plains with gory slaughter
drench'd.
And yonder there, where Thames' smooth waters
glide
In later years appeared monastic pride.
And in the field where stands the grazing herd
High walls were crumbled, stone coffins
disinterr'd.
Such in the course of time is the wreck which fate
And awful doom await the earthly great.

This poem, thought to have been written by a nineteenth century blacksmith, is unusual in that its author did not choose the printed page, but the bark of a living tree on Castle Hill, Wittenham Clumps, Oxfordshire. On visiting the clumps last May I found the poem almost certainly on the

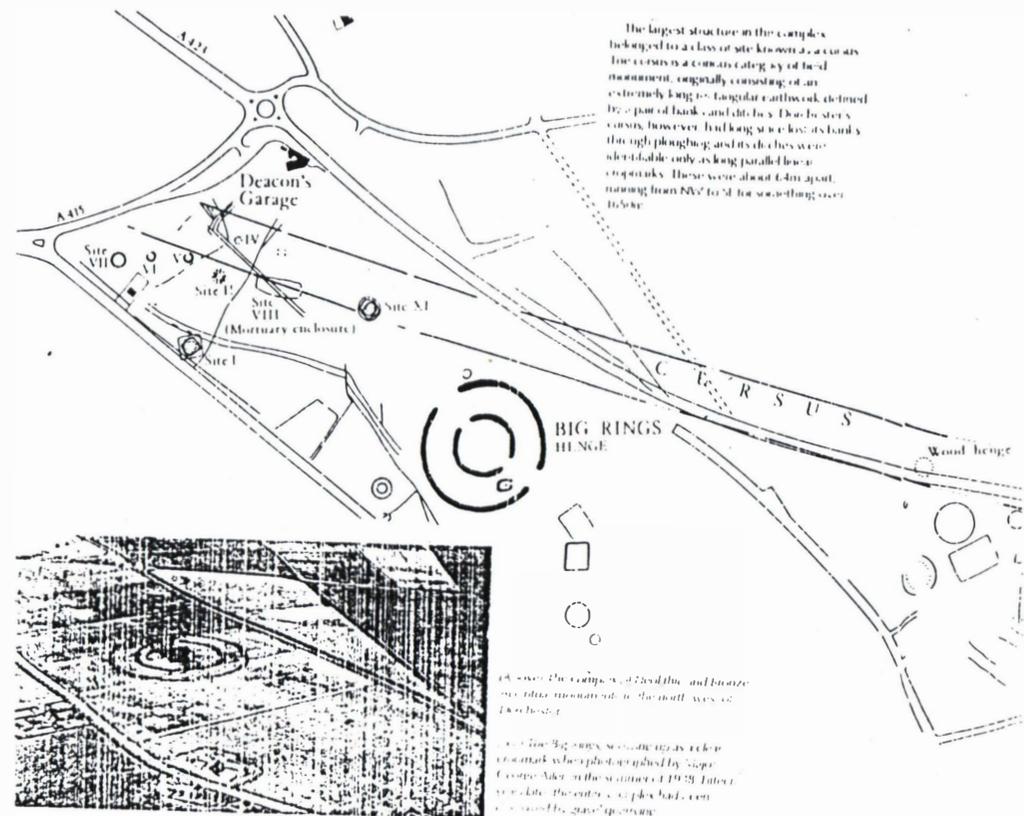
alignment of the three clumps (Wittenham Clump, Castle Hill (Iron Age on Neolithic) and Brightwell Barrow), which also aligns with Long Wittenham church, and a small church near Sandleigh. The three clumps are in visual alignment.

Visiting St. Mary's, Long Wittenham, this was found to be of great interest. Fragments of cinerary urns had shown it to be a place of pre-Christian sanctity, and also there was a carving of a dragon and a face on the chancel arch. The face had been defaced, possibly in Cromwell's time, but, strangely, the dragon had been left alone. If the ley goes through the centre of the church it goes at an angle to pass through the 12th century font and also an unusual piscina in the vestry (formerly a chapel) which contains the smallest monumental carving in England, of a knight.

Travelling from here to the nearby town of Dorchester-on-Thames, an even more exciting find was made. Exhibits in the museum indicated that it must have been an important centre in Neolithic times, for it had a henge-and-cursus system very similar to the one at Stonehenge. It even had a wood henge in a similar position to the one in Wiltshire, in the cursus alignment. Unfortunately the monuments are now gone; in 1938 they were seen only as cropmarks, and now gravel excavation has destroyed even this. But the important thing is that the site is known.

There seem to be some interesting alignments going through the Big Rings henge site. One has too few sites to be called a ley - but the churches of Long Wittenham and Drayton St. Leonard align with the henge, and are about equidistant. A more spectacular line is the one which passes through Dorchester Abbey, the Big Rings, a causewayed ring ditch on the cursus, Windmill Hill, a church by a holy well in Oxford, and two cross-tracks further north. A further line passes through the multi-junction at Berrick Salome, the wood henge on the cursus, the Big Rings, a church in Abingdon and one in Tubney, and Harrowdown Hill, which looks from the map to be a spectacular clump. The name also implies prehistoric associations. These alignments would be an interesting subject for a future field trip if anyone is interested.

I am sorry that there is a dearth of articles for this issue. Don't forget we are always glad of articles, if you have anything of earth mysteries interest that you would like to send to us.



FUTURE MEETINGS

PLEASE NOTE!!! The monthly meetings in Addlestone are continuing, but have had fewer people since I began circulating them in Touchstone rather than circulars. Do please note these dates in your diary - we would be very pleased to see you and meetings are more lively if there is a group present rather than just one or two.

Dates: NO MEETING IN AUGUST, September 11th, October 9th, November 13th, NO MEETING IN DECEMBER.

BOOKS

A number of interesting books have come my way recently:

Pyramid Power

This gripping story by Ann Ruffell is about the intrusion of ancient powers into the life of a teenager when he buys a small pyramid "for sharpening razor blades". His house, as his ley-hunting Grandpa tells him, is at the crossing-point of two "ley lines", and this may be the answer to his problems, as his pyramid hums with power and attracts piles of paper from all over the room. The hero also has a recurring dream of trying to get to a pyramid in the desert which is shown to be more than a dream in the final pages of the book, where he faces the dark and light sides of his own humanity deep in the pyramid's interior, and comes up triumphant. Normal problems of teenage love and even the school bully are woven expertly into this tale, and do not seem at all ludicrous. Apart from anything else, it is presenting ley-lore to a wider young public.

The Tall Stones- Book 1 of a Magical Saga

This novel by Moyra Caldecott is set in the Bronze Age. Like the previous book, its central characters are teenagers coming face to face with ley power and its implications for humanity, but in the very different setting of a prehistoric village. The coming of a new priest spells bad news for the village for he is not at all like his kindly predecessor, despite his power. Eventually matters get so bad that the stone circle has to be used to induce an astral journey to the Lords of the Sun at Avebury. A very deep tale, and I am not sure if its sequels were ever published, for my letter to the author was returned undelivered.

The Philadelphia Experiment

This interesting but rather chilling book gives evidence that an experiment in invisibility took place on a U.S. Navy ship during the second world war in the Philadelphia Navy Yard. The experiment was apparently successful - all that was visible when the equipment was switched on was the shape of the ship outlined in the water. It was said to have been achieved by resonating magnetic fields using principles discovered by Einstein in his Unified Field Theory (connecting electromagnetic fields with gravitational).

However, the effects on the crew were apparently so terrible that the experiment was never repeated, and the Navy to this day deny that it ever happened. Some of the men were said to have gone mad, others even to have died. Most chilling of all were the indications that the

subsequent clampdown was so severe that those investigating the mystery often died in mysterious circumstances.

The most interesting part to me was the subsequent work - dogged by misfortune as it was - of one of the scientists thought to have been involved with the project (Townsend Brown). The basis of this was the discovery that a condenser charged with high voltage will tend to move in the direction of its positive pole - even in a vacuum. Devices were apparently made that could lift more than their own weight and eventually saucer-shaped "gravitors" were built that could achieve quite high speeds in tethered tests.

CUSTOMS IN A LANCASHIRE VILLAGE

As for the past, Chipping certainly knew how to enjoy itself, with fun and games, ritual and old custom up to the last century dictating the pattern of a score of purely local happenings, from the cradle to the grave.

A child is born. Neighbouring goodwives attend the laying-in, to celebrate with rum and tea-drinking; all attend a "shouting", a merry night with the family. When the mother is strong and able she invites all to a "shilling tea", proceeds to the infant.

A lad and lass start courting. Friday is forbidden, for every house-trained lass is too busy on that night for walking out or sitting in. Saturday is the favoured evening. No outsider dared to trespass in Chipping's limits, knowing if found chasing a Chipping girl he would be tied unceremoniously in a sack of flour!

The wedding bells ring; small boys tie the church gates, refusing to unfasten until the bridegroom throws out "hen silver". A race follows to the bride's house, the winner sure to be next at the altar.

The passing bell tolls; all men are "bidden" to the funeral. Two women in black stand at the house of mourning, handing spiced ale and funeral biscuits to the mourners; and into the chief mourner's hand, if poor, a shilling is given. The poor walk to church bearing the coffin, singers and musicians going before. At Roman Catholic funerals the mourners always knelt and repeated the Deo Profundis at the sites of early wayside crosses.

Fairs and festivals. Candlemas was servants' hirings, the village full of stalls like a fair day. An orgy of pancakes lasted through Shrove Tuesday. Pancake tossing

caused great hilarity when the pancake fell when being turned, and the unfortunate one who was last to finish his pancake was carted to the muck midden or his face blackened with soot. Frottis Thursday followed Ash Wednesday and all ate special cakes. So they did on Mid-Lent Sunday, when it was simnels, with spiced "braggart ale".

Eastertide. On Good Friday children begged door-to-door for cracklings. Easter Monday meant horseplay, one day men lifting the girls, the next day the girls retaliating.

Spring and the rising of the sap. A boy in a sack, playing "Old Ball", ran wild through the streets, wearing a horse head of calf skin with a mouth which snapped open and shut and scared the children. April Noddies and May Geslings were made fun of on the appropriate days, and young girls arose early to go May-dewing in the cool fresh fields. All May horses were bedecked in braid and flowers, whilst boys adorned with ribbons trooped behind Jack-in-the-Green in and out of the houses and yards, like a North Country version of the Helston Floral Dance without the music.

Club walkings on Ascension Day, perambulation of the township boundaries, sheep-shearing, hay-time and harvest, and so to Michaelmas, when the curfew rang once more. In October, Chipping great fair, and, on the last night of the month, All Hallows, the faithful at prayer for the souls in purgatory and a girdle of fires on every hilltop.

(From "Lancashire Villages" by Jessica Lofthouse. This village seemed to hold a microcosm of the nation's customs, particularly interesting to us being the prayers at wayside crosses, perambulating the bounds, and the hilltop fires).

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NOTES AND NEWS

Two Local Lines

When walking with my son Peter on St. Anne's Hill hillfort, Chertsey, over the late May Bank Holiday, I found a very pleasant, compact little clump overlooking Thorpe Park. I have since found two interesting lines going through it.

One of these showed a previously-found pine clump at the Chertsey end of Green Lane, Addlestone, the St. Anne's Hill clump and Thorpe Church to align. The other was found when I noticed some "feeling" in a roadway inside the Plessey factory where I work, and which is aligned on Woburn

Hill. On plotting its line, it is found to align on the St. Anne's Hill clump, passing over a large clump on Woburn Hill, the roundabout, a cross-roads, the St. A's clump and a multijunction in Windsor Great Park. These lines do not have sufficient points found yet to be called leys. Will any member of the group interested in investigating with me in the field please contact me.

Centenerian

The Ley Hunter, with much fanfare, has reached its hundredth issue (although really that landmark was passed unnoticed some time ago - Philip Heselton and I started the magazine and produced several issues before passing it to Paul Screeton). The Landmark Issue has much of great interest to ley hunters - an article by Alfred Watkins, one on Professor Thom, another on radiation at megalithic sites, details of the York Minster Ley, etc. etc. All great stuff, and the Hundredth Issue Committee have done well. Unfortunately it is clear that such excellence is only possible once in a while. I would personally rather see a TLH less well produced but appearing regularly and frequently. I must confess, when thinking of Paul Screeton's TLH, to feeling something for which I am reprimanded in the Hundredth Issue - nostalgia.

Dodman strikes again

My son Peter was mentioned in a previous issue as having made something resembling a leaf-shaped arrowhead without realising it. More recently he has come up with something else - a perfectly carved phallic symbol, tied neatly around the centre with a piece of grass! When asked what it was, he simply said "a carving".

Amskaya

Readers of Touchstone may be interested to know of the starting recently of the magazine "Amskaya". This is the newsletter of the STAR Fellowship, an organisation interested in contact with extraterrestrial intelligences. Most ley hunters will probably know that the Earth Mysteries movement was started in the 1960s when Tony Wedd, a UFO enthusiast, considered a connection between UFOs and leys in the orthoteny lines found by Aime Michel. This also brought ideas of earth energies to the fore. The STAR Fellowship despises supercilious attitudes to "sixties thought" in this regard. As was said in an early TLH: "Branches that but blight their roots, yield no sap for lasting fruits".

Amskaya is edited by Jimmy Goddard and is £2 for four

issues. You also receive the STAR badge!

EXCHANGE LIST

QUICKSILVER MESSENGER, c/o ELTI, Hotel Wisata International, P.O. Box 2457 Jkt., Jakarta, Indonesia.

CAERDROIA, 53, Thundersley Grove, Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex.

EARTHQUEST NEWS, 19, St. David's Way, Benfleet, Essex.

COMMON GROUND, 14, Northfold Road, Knighton, Leicester.

FORTEAN TIMES, 96, Mansfield Road, London NW3. 2HX.

NORTHERN EARTH MYSTERIES, 170, Victoria Avenue, Hull, HU5. 3DY.

STONEHENGE VIEWPOINT, 2821, De La Vina Street, Santa Barbara, Calif, 93105, U.S.A.

THE PIPES OF PAN, 69, Cranbury Road, Reading, Berkshire.

FOLKLORE FRONTIERS, 5, Egton Drive, Seaton Carew, Hartlepool, Cleveland, TS25. 2AT.

WORD SPIRIT, Basement Flat, 23, Upton Park, Slough, Berkshire, SL1. 2DA.

THE LEY HUNTER, P.O. Box 5, Brecon, Powys, Wales.

CIRCLE, Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572, U.S.A.

MAGONIA, John Dee Cottage, 5, James Terrace, Mortlake Churchyard, London, S.W.14. 8HB.

EARTH FORCE, 12, Lynmouth Drive, Gilmarton, Lutterworth, Leicestershire.

Our thanks to all exchange publications, especially those who have mentioned us.

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