

# Touchstone

Surrey  
Earth  
Mysteries

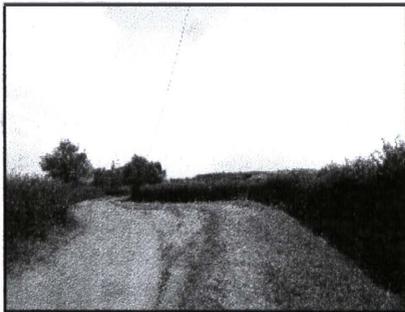


No. 95

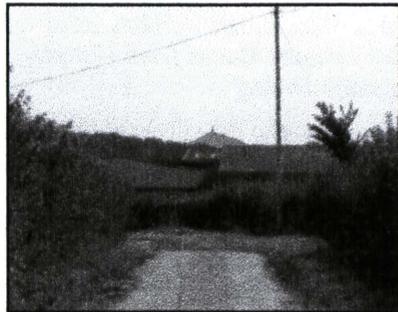
October 2011

## THE G-LINE - GLASTONBURY, STONEHENGE AND SOUTH NUTFIELD

When investigating an alignment of three holy wells with coincident tracks between them on the northern flank of the Polden Ridge in Somerset, I visited the site of the old church at Shapwick. Now like a large lay-by beside a small country lane (Northbrook Road), this church was demolished in the thirteenth century when the present church in the middle of the village was built. It was the site of one of the three holy wells, and was investigated by Professor Mick Aston of Time Team during his several-year-long Shapwick Project, and he found that the spring (not there now) would have emerged behind the east end of the church. There was a Bronze Age hut nearby.<sup>1</sup>



*The site of the old church at Shapwick*

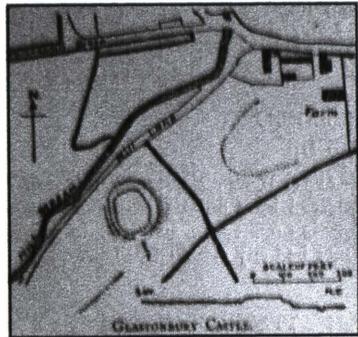


*Northbrook Road and Glastonbury Tor  
(image of Tor darkened to show on picture)*

I found considerable rod-spin at this site, seemingly indicating a powerful ley centre, and then noticed that the lane was in visual alignment with Glastonbury Tor to the east. Looking at the map, I found that the alignment also goes through Chalice Well and the Abbey Barn at Glastonbury. Later it was found to also pass through the site of Glastonbury Castle, which had been a mound about a hundred yards in diameter with a ditch, originally thought to be a motte but later decided to be a defensible palace of the Abbot of Glastonbury. Romano-British finds were discovered there, including an amphora.<sup>2</sup>

The *Victoria County History of Somerset*<sup>3</sup> has this description of the mound: "A short distance south of Glastonbury Station, in a field to the east of the road between Glastonbury

and Street, is a mount and base court fort with some special features. The surroundings have been altered by drainage, the making of the road and the diversion of streams, but it is clear that the east end of a ridge, which at that time was an island with a considerable depth of water on the east and south, a mount was thrown up and defended by a bank and ditch almost completely encircling it. The ditch continues between the mount and the base court and there is a slight bank on the scarp of the ditch on the base court side. The mount is low for its area; at present the flat top of the mount, which is 54 yards north and south and 36 yards east and west, is 4ft to 5ft 6in above the top of the ditch, but before the drainage of the area would be protected by water or marsh on all sides. Somewhat rapid streams now run to the north, south and east of the earthwork, and water would be deepest immediately to the east of the mount."

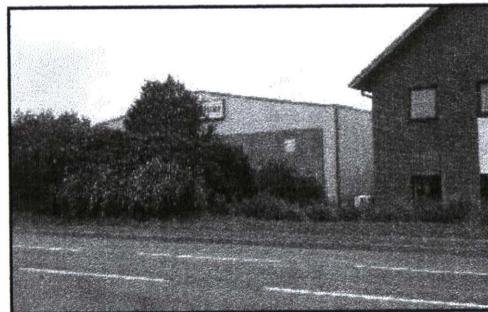


*Glastonbury Castle, from Victoria County History*

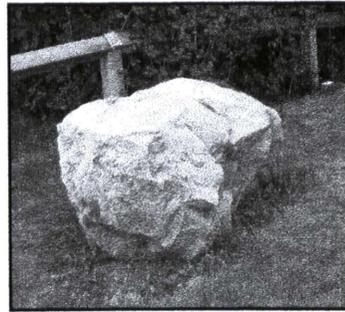


*The present Shapwick Church*

Coming back into the village of Shapwick and the main street, which is in alignment with Northbrook Road, it was seen that the present church was set quite a way back from it, so assumed it must be off the line. However, when dowsed the line was found to be very wide, 42 paces, and the church was taken in by the edge of it. This makes it the second widest ley so far found, just under half the width of the E-line. I dubbed it the G-line (for Glastonbury).



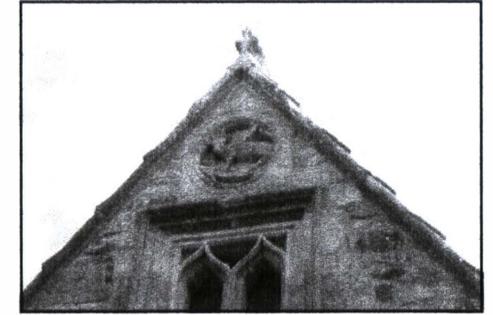
*Clump of bushes at Glastonbury Castle site*



*Stone at one end of the site*

In Glastonbury, I was not expecting to find any trace of Glastonbury Castle, as descriptions found on the web said it had been levelled in 1974 after rescue archaeology preceding

industrial development. However, there was a clump of bushes on the site which did seem to have some trace of earthworks, and stones which could have been part of an earlier structure, including a large one seemingly set up at one end. The ley dowsed as 40 paces wide there.



*Abbey Barn, Glastonbury Church-like architecture and decoration of Abbey Barn*

The Abbey Barn, which the line passes through, is now the Somerset Museum of Rural Life and is a very well-built for a barn, almost to the quality of a church, and considerable head-hum was felt there. It has carved emblems of the four evangelists at the top of each of the walls, and there is a mason's mark on the inside near the door. The line continues from here to the Chalice Well, where it was found to take in the lion's head fountain precinct and the new Arthur's Court, but came just short of the wellhouse itself, which is now buried and has the well lid on top with its vesica piscis shape designed by Frederick Bligh Bond. But this would be taken in when the line doubles in width at sunrise and sunset, as all leys seem to do. Across the lane, the line goes through the White Spring building before going on to the chapel tower on the Tor. Bob Shave, on checking the line, found it does not go through the ruined chapel on the Tor, but north of it on the slopes. However, the other points on the ley check out, and this feature was noticed in other ley points he has investigated, particularly on the E-line.

Ann Pennick reports of tunnels from the Abbey Barn<sup>4</sup>: "Two new tunnels have recently been uncovered at Glastonbury, both running out from the Abbey Barn, a medieval tithebarn situated between the Abbey and the Tor. A correspondent was present when the tunnels were accidentally discovered. First, a heavy vehicle crashed through the road at the corner of the main entrance to the Barn. A large tunnel appeared, running towards the refectory area of the Abbey, but it was quickly filled in with rubble by contractors who were then engaged in repairing the Barn's fabric. The tunnel most definitely followed a straight course, but because of the zeal of the contractors the passage has now been reconsigned to oblivion. The second underground trackway was also found by the builders and similarly dealt with. According to the charge-hand on the construction team, this tunnel was behind the Barn and was angled directly at the Tor. It too was of considerable size. The existence of these tunnels, midway between and leading towards the two most sacred sites of the area, is good evidence of a vast subterranean complex beneath Glastonbury, as befits a place of such ecumenical

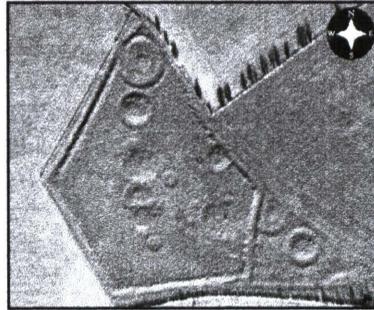
and mythological complexity."

When drawing the G-line on a small-scale map of Southern England, I found to my surprise that it also seemed to go through Stonehenge, and this checked out using the latitude and longitude site <http://www.movable-type.co.uk/scripts/latlong.html>, which Bob Shave discovered and has used to check points on the E-line. At Stonehenge, it is close in angle to the Lunation Triangle line of Robin Heath and John Michell<sup>5</sup>, but it is not this line; it is a few degrees off it, and passes some way south of Lundy. It also, in Glastonbury, runs south of John Michell's Dod Lane ley, which goes through St. Benedict's Church, along the axis of the Abbey, then along Dod Lane. This line also, however, goes to Stonehenge. Alfred Watkins, in *The Old Straight Track*, also describes an equinoctial ley through Stonehenge<sup>6</sup>, going through Sutton Veny cross-roads, the south edge of Quarley Camp and several tumuli. But this also is not the G-line, although once again close.

The G-line itself, on the Salisbury and the Plain map, goes through Tytherington Church and an enclosure of barrows known as the Coniger, near Winterbourne Stoke. The church is described thus on the Heytesbury parish web site<sup>7</sup>: "This tiny chapel dedicated to St. James, traditionally associated with the Empress Maud (or Matilda), daughter of Henry 1, who at the age of 12 had in 1114 been married to the Emperor Henry V of Germany, and after his death had married Geoffrey of Anjou. During the period of her connection with Heytesbury, Maud endowed 28 acres of land at Tytherington, common pasture for 10 oxen, 2 cows, and 2 horses, together with a manor or dwelling for two chaplains to serve this chapel. The chapel dates from the early twelfth century, and is one of the oldest churches in Wiltshire. Like Knook Church, long subordinate to Heytesbury Church, its ancient walls give one a feeling of the continuity of worship over 900 years, whilst its small size and the simplicity of its design add a sense of the simplicity of the Christian Faith."



*Tytherington Church*



*The Coniger, near Winterbourne Stoke*

The Coniger is a group of barrows enclosed in a later bank and ditch which is pentagonal on shape, and has been used as a rabbit warren, as the name suggests. It is described on a website<sup>8</sup>:

"The picture above is from Google Earth and it shows a cluster of Bronze Age barrows a mile or so to the west of Stonehenge at Winterbourne Stoke. What is unusual about these

barrows is that they are surrounded by a ditch in the shape of an irregular pentagon, something that was dug by the Saxons around the sixth century AD, around 2,000 years after the barrows were put in place.

"One afternoon, we were wandering around admiring the wildlife, the nearby river and the pastoral beauty of the sprawling farmland, when I was shown the squat barrows and the well-defined Saxon enclosure. From memory, a section of the ditch had previously been excavated and it had been found that the ditch and bank dated from the Saxon era, although there was no evidence of habitation or defence of any kind. For some reason, the people of the time had chosen to devote their energies to constructing a curious ditch around some ancient funeral mounds from another culture that had been in place for millennia before the arrival of the Saxons on these shores."



*South Nutfield Church*



*Compton Church*

But another surprise was yet to come. On plotting the G-line on the Surrey OS maps, it was found that it goes through South Nutfield Church in Surrey, one of the points on the E-line. This was checked with the ley checker site. It was found to be powerful when visited in 1991, as well as being on the Hurt Wood Line, a ley following a very long straight track across that wood, visited in the 1980s.

These are the findings about the church, when I visited it with Eileen Roche in 1991<sup>9</sup>: "We then went to Christ Church at King's Cross Lane in South Nutfield, the point where the E-line crosses the Hurt Wood Track line. The church had a clock on the tower, and a notice on the door directed us to a house opposite where a small girl provided us with the key. Outside, I dowsed for the Hurt Wood line and found it, but Eileen got an incorrect answer from her dowsing. Checking with the compass, these were the results:

"Outside, the E-line dowsed as 183 paces wide along the pavement opposite the church. There seemed to be a strong pull down a footpath at the side of the church, but this was not investigated. Inside, the church felt very powerful, especially by the altar and at the font. I had strong head-hum by the altar, Eileen had goosepimples. A notice told us that a Clarissa Woolloton, whose photo was displayed, had had something to do with causing the church to be built in 1888 - similar to South Holmwood. In spite of a notice offering church histories, none were to be found."

From the aerial photograph on the Bing (Multimap) web site, the church seems to be oriented along the G-line. It is not old, however - it was built in the nineteenth century. In fact, the whole village only dates from the coming of the railway - the old village and church is Nutfield to the north. The Exploring Surrey's Past website<sup>10</sup> gives this information: "The parish of Christ Church, Lower Nutfield, was created in 1888 out of the parish of Nutfield, with a further 180 acres, the manor of Hamme, a detached portion of the parish of Bletchingley, being added in 1890. The church and vicarage were built in 1888 on land formerly part of a close called Mill Lands. The land was most probably given by Sir Henry Edwards who had purchased the close as part of Hale Farm in 1883, though the grant itself was made by Clarissa Woolloton of Nutfield".

The line does, however, pass through another church not far away which is nearly a thousand years old; Compton Church, near Guildford. It runs to the south of, and parallel with the Hog's Back ridge west of Guildford. Compton Church is described thus by Simon Jenkins<sup>11</sup>: "This is one of the most interesting and curious churches in all England. The oldest parts (the tower and chancel arch) predate the Norman Conquest (1066), while the Normans built the nave and chancel. In the later twelfth century, the extraordinary and unique two-storey sanctuary was built, fitted into the existing structure of the chancel. The timber balustrade to the upper sanctuary chapel, from about 1180, is said to be the oldest decorative timberwork surviving in Britain. About the same time, the nave was greatly enlarged, with new aisles. The font dates from the same period. In the middle ages, all wall surfaces would have been painted, but all that is left is the patterning above the chancel arch depicting steps up to heaven (Jacob's Ladder perhaps)."

#### References

- 1 The Holy Wells of Shapwick, by Sister Elizabeth Rees, Polden Post, May 2010
- 2 Glastonbury; The Mound. <http://homepage.mac.com/philipdavis/English%20sites/3267.html>
- 3 The Victoria County History of Somerset (1913) in Wells Cathedral Library
- 4 The Underground Tunnels of Glastonbury, by Ann Pennick, 1977. <http://www.castleduncan.com/forum/index.php?/topic/1158-the-underground-tunnels-of-glastonbury/>
- 5 The Measure of Albion, by Robin Heath and John Michell
- 6 The Old Straight Track, by Alfred Watkins
- 7 Heytesbury parish web site. <http://www.heytesburyparish.co.uk/HistoryTytherington.htm>
- 8 The Coniger. <http://www.eternalidol.com/?p=286>
- 9 Surrey Earth Mysteries Group website. <http://www.spacevoice.fsnet.co.uk/semg/eline.html>
- 10 Exploring Surrey's Past. [http://www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk/GetRecord/SHCOL\\_7631](http://www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk/GetRecord/SHCOL_7631)
- 11 England's Thousand Best Churches, by Simon Jenkins

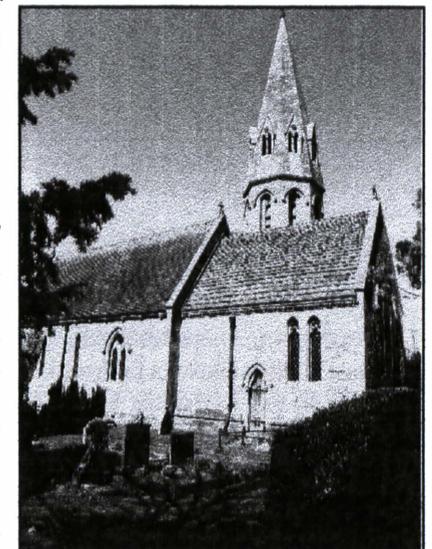
## THE POLDEN HOLY WELL TRACK LEY

*This was written before the discovery of the G-line*

There are three holy wells in alignment on the lower northern slope of the Polden Ridge in Somerset. It is interesting because of the number of stretches of straight and mean-following track following the alignment. It runs parallel to the one between Puriton and Pawlett churches described previously; that follows the Roman road on top of the ridge. The ley dowses as 20 paces wide - a fairly wide one, although none of the wells, unfortunately, has water now.

Coming in a generally north-westerly direction, the alignment goes through the two old churches at East Lydford, both of which are now disused. Of the older medieval one Phil Draper writes: "To the north in meadows by the Brue lies a couple of broken table tombs and a pile of stones, fenced off and overgrown, which all mark the spot of the medieval church of East Lydford. Pevsner and the Ordnance Survey do not mention it. In the stones seems to be a small piece of standing wall, a number of dressed stones, some fluted stone sections and some inscriptions. What lies underneath is anyone's guess." This is marked on the map as Church with antique script, but not the church symbol.

The other church was built in the nineteenth century. In 1870-72, John Marius Wilson's *Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales* described East Lydford like this: "The old church stood in a low meadow, and became very dilapidated. The present church was built on another site, in 1866, at a cost of nearly £3,000, all defrayed by the Rev. J. Moss; is in the early English style; comprises nave and chancel, with a bold S porch; and has a tower at the N side of the chancel-arch, square in the basement, octagonal above, and surmounted by a spire about 100 feet high." This church too is now disused, but both sites are on this ley.

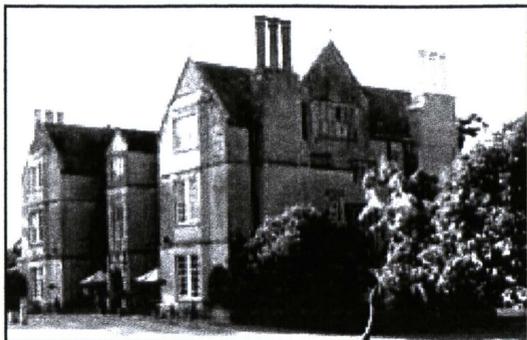


*East Lydford Church*

The ley continues along a short stretch of coincident road to a cross-roads at Butleigh, and about a mile of mean-following track leading from it. It then goes through Street to the cross-roads at Walton and then to another old church site at Shapwick. This is a village on the Poldens which is famous as the place where the Neolithic wooden Sweet Track sets out northwards across the Levels. It is also associated with King Ina and the site of the murder of Indractus and his companions, pilgrims to Glastonbury.

The ley passes through the site of the old church at Shapwick, which is also the site of the

first holy well on the alignment. It is described in *Holy Wells of Somerset* by Jeremy Harte as having been mentioned in a paper of the same name by Dom Ethelbert Horne in the 1920s, historian and titular Abbot of Glastonbury. The parish church was rebuilt on a different site in the 13th century; a holy well was on the original site. A "pump room" with a bath was still standing in 1914. It was dry when Horne visited, as the draining of the land had diverted the spring, but he speculated it could be the well connected with St. Indractus. The site resembles a large lay-by in the road which passes it; the aerial picture on Bing (Multimap) gives no indication of its presence, although the Somerset Historic Environment Record



*Shapwick Manor House*

says that in 1966 the church site showed as a distinct platform and had a heavy scatter of stones. The farmer at the time had said that fragments of carved and moulded stone had been unearthed in the past, and roofing tiles of Devon slate found there are reportedly in Taunton museum. There are still stones scattered there.

The line then passes through Shapwick Manor House, originally a moated site

and a retreat of the Abbots of Glastonbury. It is not the site to the north called a moat on the map; Professor Mick Aston of Time Team fame did a long several-year project at Shapwick and found that the manor house was moated and was the site.

The well is not mentioned in the HER account of the old church, but another not far from here does have an entry; this is at Bathing House Copse to the north-east, and is on the ley from Wells Cathedral to the Swayne's Jumps stone line on the Polden Ridge.



*Edington Holy Well*

There is a minor road and track to Catcott past Kents Farm; two stretches of this are mean-following of the ley. Near Kents Farm there is a house called "The Hermitage" and a minor road "Monks Drive". From Catcott there is a further footpath, to the next holy well, at Edington; the last part of this track is coincident with the ley.

The well is now dry, though Jeremy Harte quotes from Dom Ethelbert Horne: "The well is in a clump of trees by the roadside, on the left hand side as one approaches the village from the station. The water gathers in a well-made stone tank about three feet square, the top of which is level with the surrounding ground. It is covered with two stone slabs, one of

which, at the date of my visit in April 1915, had been removed, and the tank was half full of decaying leaves as a consequence. The water was three feet in depth, and ran out through a stone spout.

The flow was slight, and the water itself of a greenish milky colour, with a strong and horrible smell of sulphur. The spring looked neglected, and does not seem to be held in such repute". Horne also quotes an earlier source: "...a perpetual spring, which contains sulphur and steel. It is very cold, and has been found efficacious in scorbutick cases".

The HER also reports: "The well was restored in 1937 and consists of a large square enclosure with walls up to 1m high. Water flows from the centre of a semi-circular structure on the S wall, into a covered channel which empties into a nearby drain. The well was still active in 1977, with a strong smell of sulphur dioxide."



*Track on the edge of a field*



*Track under disused railway bridge, Chilton Polden*

A well-maintained public footpath leads across fields and along a track under a disused railway footbridge to the final well site, at Chilton Polden. Jeremy Harte quotes Ethelbert Horne: "There is a spring called the Holy Well on the Western boundary of the parish, marked on the OS map and said by Kelly's Directory to have healing properties - but he had great difficulty in finding it in dry weather. It is said to have been used for eye troubles".

The HER reports of this well: "On the W boundary of the parish is a spring named Holy Well. There is no doubt that this is a traditional holy well, although the dedication seems lost. A breeze-block pump house now occupies the site of the spring. Marked as "sulphur" on the OS 6" sheet."

Like Horne, I could find no trace of it on the ground - the map marks it, but seemingly as a small pool and not as a building. The pump house was nowhere to be seen on the spot marked on the map, which was just in the middle of a field. There are no further ley points on the line.

## NOTES AND NEWS

### A forgotten church on the Brent Knoll line?

There seems to be a strange rectangular outline on the front lawn of the vicarage in Puriton in Somerset where I live. It is like a very low bank, and it is the area where there was a garden area for the adjoining school (now closed and become a private house). But despite this I still wondered why such a use would create such a rectangle. Surely the earth would just be turned over - there would be no need to create a boundary of this kind? I had never seen one on any other allotment I have known. I had a strong feeling it was something older - and as the rectangle was aligned east-west it seemed possible that it was a church. (It is parallel to the present church a few doors down at the end of the road).

However, the present church itself is old. It is mentioned in the Domesday Book, having the apparently unique honour of the patronage having been given by William the Conqueror to St. Peter's in Rome as a thank offering to the Pope for his blessing on the invasion of England. So the site goes back at least to Edward the Confessor's time, although nothing is left of this original Saxon church, the earliest fabric in this building being thirteenth century. But it could be earlier.



So if this shape on the lawn was a church, it was even earlier, and taking it back this far would take it into times when there were Danish raids, and there was a fierce battle with the Danes nearby.



*The lawn rectangle (contrast increased to show on picture)*

Digging at various places on the lawn revealed quite a lot of burnt masonry, with a few small pieces of what appeared to be fragments of a plastered wall. So I wondered, if this was a church, could it have been burnt down in those troubled times? Showing the burnt pieces to Laura Burnett, the Finds Officer of the Somerset Portable Antiquities Scheme, she said that this quantity of burnt fragments seems to indicate a burnt building.

There were also bone fragments found, and a corroded large-headed nail which could be a coffin nail. If it was a church, it would have had a churchyard. I am continuing investigation, hoping to find some religious artefact which might confirm the speculation.

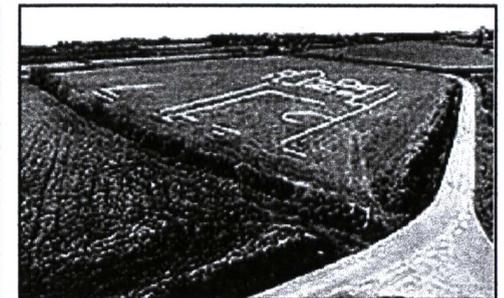
The present Puriton Church is a ley centre, with a ley coming from its benefice partner church at Pawlett and running along the Polden Ridge through the Swaynes Jumps stones as described in an earlier *Touchstone*. This lawn seems to be on a ley through the present church going northwards to the prominent hillfort of Brent Knoll and East Brent Church, the summit of Bleadon Hill and a motte and bailey near Weston-super-Mare.

### A Roman villa at Chertsey, near the Egham-Chertsey branch road?

I have recently had a short article published in *Addlestone Historical Society News* (which I edited for 24 years) on a crop mark seen on the Multimap (now Bing) aerial picture of Chertsey, at Abbey Mead near the site of the once powerful abbey. It was very similar in pattern to the Roman villa found by Time Team at Tockenham in Wiltshire in 1994, and it is adjacent to the point where the Roman road I investigated meets two others independently thought to be Roman (Ferry Lane and one through Chobham). (See the *Egham and Thorpe Virtual Roman Museum* at <http://www.egyouth.fsnet.co.uk/romanegham>). Chertsey is not normally thought of as a Roman settlement although a number of Roman finds have been made there. This could be because such evidence has been overlaid by that of the powerful abbey. The Egham-Chertsey branch road is not straight, although made of straight sections, some of which seem to be aligned with leys. I found two pieces of Roman brick near the branch road where a significantly banked section runs along a field boundary off Stroude Road, Egham.



*The cropmark at Chertsey (contrast increased to show on picture)*



*Site of Tockenham Roman Villa*

## MEYN MAMVRO

**Ancient stones & sacred sites  
in Cornwall**

*Earth Energies \* Ancient Stones \*  
Sacred Sites \* Paganism \* Leypaths  
Pre-history and culture \* Megalithic  
Mysteries \* Legends & Folklore*

Sample £3

Annual Subscription £9

from:- 51 Carn Bosavern, St. Just,  
Penzance, Cornwall, TR19 7QX.

Web site: [www.meynmamvro.co.uk](http://www.meynmamvro.co.uk)

\*\*\*\*\*

Also available: EM Guides to  
ancient sites in Cornwall, 'Pagan Cornwall:

Land of the Goddess' &

'In Search of Cornwall's Holy Wells'  
'Megalithic Mysteries of Cornwall'

Details from the above address

## **THE HIDDEN UNITY and BEGINNINGS**

*The Hidden Unity* looks at the strange phenomenon of subconscious siting of ley points, and notes that places of worship, of all religions and all ages, tend to predominate on leys. The environmental and philosophical implications of this are discussed, and the apparent necessity of worship but irrelevance of doctrine. Two ley centres are given as examples, and investigated in depth - the Shah Jehan Mosque in Woking and the Guru Nanak Sikh Temple, Scunthorpe. There is an appendix by Eileen Grimshaw on the significance of the Pagan religion to this study. Illustrated with photographs, maps and line drawings. **£2 plus 30p p&p from the Touchstone address. Please make cheques payable to J. Goddard.**

*Beginnings* is about a series of potentially useful discoveries, mainly made by Jimmy Goddard over a period of about twenty years, but having some overlap with discoveries made by others. For various reasons, the investigations are all in their early stages, and some have not been continued. They include earth energy detection, natural antigravity, subconscious siting, ley width, and the solar transition effect. There is also a chapter on cognitive dissonance - a psychological factor which seems to have been at the root of all bigotry - scientific, religious and other - down the ages. The booklet is concluded with an account of the discovery of leys by Alfred Watkins. **£2 plus 30p p&p from the Touchstone address. Please make cheques payable to J. Goddard.**

### **EARTH PEOPLE, SPACE PEOPLE**

In 1961, Tony Wedd produced a manuscript *Earth Men, Space Men*, detailing many claims of extraterrestrial contact. It was never published, and I had thought it was lost, though it has recently been located - Tony had given it to Timothy Good. To try to make up for the loss in a much more modest size, this booklet was prepared. As well as giving details of some of the more prominent contact claims, there are articles on the history of the STAR Fellowship and some of its personalities, evidence for life in the Solar System and investigation into extraterrestrial language.

**£2 plus 30p p&p from the Touchstone address. Please make cheques payable to J. Goddard.**

### **THE LEGACY OF TONY WEDD**

This CD-ROM is an electronic form of the travelling exhibition Tony planned, using his voice, writing, photographs and drawings to illustrate his research and findings in the fields of flying saucers, landscape energies and lost technology.

**£12 from the Touchstone address. Please make cheques payable to J. Goddard.**

---

**TOUCHSTONE is the newsletter of the Surrey Earth Mysteries Group. £4 for four quarterly issues from J. Goddard, 1, St. Paul's Terrace, Easton, Wells, Somerset, BA5 1DX. Please make cheques payable to J. Goddard. IF YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS DUE AN "X" WILL FOLLOW THIS SENTENCE:**