

Touchstone

Surrey
Earth
Mysteries



No. 96

January 2012

A SIGHTING STONE AT WELLS

There is a standing stone with two holes pierced through it on the lawn outside Wells and Mendip Museum, adjacent to Cathedral Green, and the presence of iron fixings on the side led to the idea originally that it is only a relatively recent gatepost. However, Barry Lane, Hon. Curator of the Museum, has recently researched the matter and thinks it is likely to be a prehistoric standing stone:

Another stone with a view, or the origins of the Hokerstone at Wells and Mendip Museum.

In 1949 Honorary Curator Herbert Balch moved a pierced standing stone to the front garden of Wells Museum from a site on the golf course at Tor Hill, east of Wells. His colleague Dean Armitage Robinson persuaded him that it had been moved to this site from the Cathedral Green by the clerics of the cathedral, and relegated to become a gatepost. Little has been found to support this view and Balch's original thought that it was prehistoric is more likely to be true. Furthermore it is suggested that the stone was carefully erected on Tor Hill so that its pierced hole provided a view of the nearest highest point on Mendip - Pen Hill, where there is a Neolithic long barrow.



Description of the pierced stone

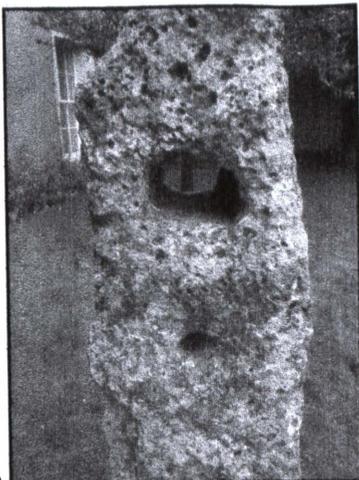
The stone stands about 1.60 m high and has been roughly shaped from Chilcote limestone. Its overall height would appear to have been about 2.30 m. It has two holes pierced through it, one large and sub-rectangular (100 x 130 mm) at a height from the ground of about 1.15 m, and another much smaller circular drilled hole (20-30 mm diameter) that is not often noticed. This hole runs diagonally through the stone. In addition there are two iron pintles set into the stone with lead that were clearly added

to convert it into a useful gatepost, probably in the 19th century. These too are visible on the right hand side of the stone at heights of 0.33 m and 0.80 m from the ground. The stone is noted in the Somerset Historic Environment Record with the number 24790.

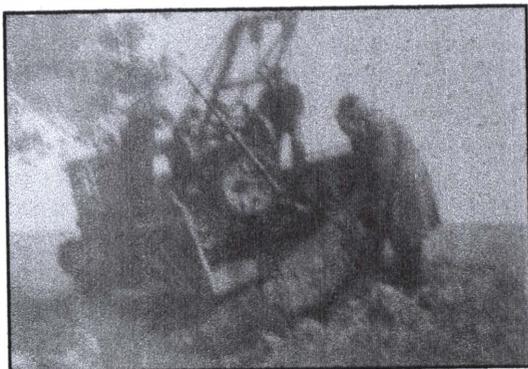
Historical background

As early as 1924 Herbert Balch, later founder of Wells Museum in 1932, recorded his discovery of this stone as follows - "Further, on the trackway which passes under the camp (King's Castle earthworks) at its western end, there is a gatepost which appears to have been a pierced stone before it was pressed into use as a gatepost. It has a large aperture artificially made through it, and such stones are well known in connection with prehistoric sites.

They are said to have been used in certain ceremonies connected with burial, and other rites of prehistoric people". He made this announcement at an evening meeting of the Wells Natural History and Archaeology Society when the recent find of human bones from the Golf Links were on show. Balch speculated that the bones were from "a burial of an occupant of the camp above, possibly in the Bronze Age or earlier".



The two holes in the stone



The stone being removed from Tor Hill, 1949

The stone in its position on Tor Hill, with Herbert Balch, 1949

Balch appears to have consulted his friend and historian Armitage Robinson (Dean of Wells Cathedral 1911-33) who suggested another origin for the stone. He linked it to one recorded in a number of 14th century manuscripts in the Cathedral Library called the "Hokerstone" which appears to have stood somewhere on Cathedral Green. Eventually Balch was given permission to relocate the pierced stone to the front lawn

of the museum in 1949, where it now stands.

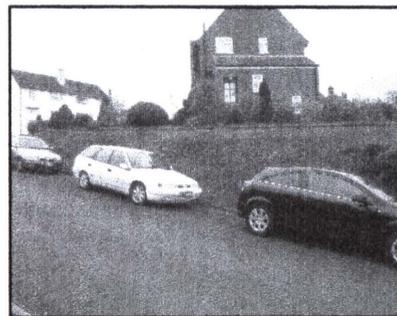
Historical and archaeological background, landscape context

There is no evidence to support the theory of Dean Robinson that the stone originally came from Cathedral Green. The most likely origin of the name "hokerstone" is from the OE "hoc" meaning "hook", "bend" or "corner", which is confirmed by its location "at the corner of the churchyard". However there is absolutely no documentary record of the clerics moving any such stone from Wells up onto Tor Hill. There is therefore every reason to believe that Balch removed it from the place where it was originally erected.

The probability that the orientation of pierced holes may have been a deliberate act has recently been noted on Mendip with two other standing stones, also thought to be of prehistoric date. The first at Westbury Beacon where a waterworn hole is directed at Wavering Down to the west and also Pen Hill to the east. The second is the Yarberry stone below Christon where a significant crack in the top of the stone frames Crook Peak. It seems that there may be some significance in the connections formed by these standing stones from Yarberry to Crook Peak, Wavering Down, Westbury Beacon, Pen Hill and the Wells Museum pierced stone site on Tor Hill.

Barry Lane

When in its original position on Tor Hill, the large hole would have faced north, in the direction of the Pen Hill long barrow, as Barry Lane noted. The small hole would have faced north-west, in the direction of another long barrow west of Priddy, with a cairn at Ebbor Gorge in between. These two alignments seem to be good leys.



The bank at Churchill Road, Wells - coincident with the large hole ley

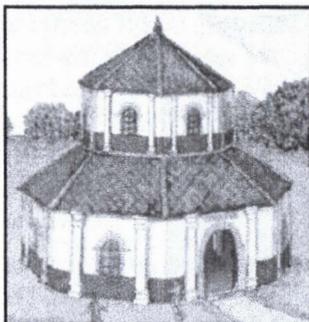
The large hole ley, pointing north, dowsed as 26 paces wide and comes on to the 1:50000 map at a multijunction with a bridge over the Brue on the Fosse Way. It then goes through a multijunction at Parbrook and crosses the St. Michael Line (the straight one) at a cross-roads at North Wootton. Then it passes through the site of the Museum stone on Tor Hill, and is then coincident with a stretch of Churchill Road which has a considerable bank on one side, and goes through what appears to be a mound at the end. This is not marked on the map as a mound and may be something quite recent, but was an unusual feature in the garden of a house. It crosses the Cathedral axis ley (which runs up the nave) at Knapp Hill. (That line also goes through St. Cuthbert's and St. Thomas's Churches and continues to Beacon Hill, near Shepton Mallet, with its prehistoric sites). From Knapp Hill the line continues to the long barrow at Pen Hill, which is 45 metres long by 15 metres wide and is to be found in a little fenced enclosure, just to the south of the summit of Pen Hill. There are

extensive views to the south and west from here, with the Somerset Levels, Glastonbury Tor, the Bristol Channel and Brent Knoll all visible, with Exmoor and



Pen Hill Long Barrow

the Quantock Hills beyond. The hill is now also dominated by a tall television mast which is visible for many miles around. The line carries on from the barrow to the twelfth century church of St. Mary at West Harptree with its Norman tower (although the body was rebuilt in 1864). Collinson's *History of Somerset* of 1791 gives its value in 1292 as 13 marks.



The Romano-British temple at Pagans Hill, reconstructed from excavation evidence. From Wikipedia.

The ley then continues to Pagans Hill, Chew Stoke, where there was a Romano-British temple of the third or fourth century, mentioned in *Mendip - a New Study* by Robert Atthill. This is described as the largest so far located in the area except for Bath. The temple site is not marked on the map so its precise position is not certain, but due to the size as mentioned the line almost certainly goes through it. The book also says that the earliest settlement evidence in the area is coincidentally also on this hill, in the form of a ditch beneath the temple. From here the line continues to pass through the summit of Dundry Hill, Bristol, where there is another television mast.

The small hole ley, pointing north-west, dowsed at 16 paces wide, and comes on to the map to cross the St. Michael Line

at Knowle Hill. There is no mound marked there, but the name suggests the possibility that there once was. Then it continues to the church of St. Michael and All Angels, Dinder, situated just behind Dinder House (although Collinson's *History of Somerset* gives the dedication as All Saints, and gives the building's value in 1292 as 6 marks). Originally Norman, a dragon head carving that is set above the south chapel window is all that survives of that building.



Dinder Church

The ley then goes through the site of the holed stone on Tor Hill, and then crosses the Cathedral axis ley at a very recently erected stone, which its position suggests was

subconsciously sited. This is the Paray Stone, erected in 1986 at the entrance to Hawkers Lane. It was unveiled by the mayor to celebrate the twinning of Wells with Paray le Monial in 1979. As mentioned in a previous *Touchstone*, the present location of the stone, possibly by subconscious siting, is also on another significant ley, one of the two leys running diagonally through the Cathedral and seeming to form a St. Andrew's cross. This ley goes through several tumuli on Mendip and Shipham Church.



Clump at Stoberry Park



Priddy Long Barrow

After this the line goes through a Scots pine clump at Stoberry Park, adjacent to a lane called Little Entry, and on to a cairn to the north of Ebbor Gorge, and the long barrow west of Priddy, an ancient settlement site near Shipham and skirts a moat at Nye.

The temple site on Pagans Hill has a very interesting description on Wikipedia:

"The temple was situated on a promontory overlooking the River Chew. It was excavated by Philip Rahtz between 1949 and 1951. In addition to the foundations of the temple a well (17 metres deep) and several ditches were found which contained small artifacts showing occupation of the site before the Roman period including pottery of Iron Age type, and a coin dating from c335-7. Evidence of continuing use after the Roman period is provided by a bucket and an exotic 7th century glass jar found in the well.

"It was originally thought, on its discovery in 1830, to have been a beacon, for signalling between adjoining hill forts.

"It was a double-octagonal temple building and comprised an inner wall, which formed the cella or sanctuary, surrounded by an outer wall forming an ambulatory, or covered walkway. The outer portico measures about 56½ feet in diameter, the inner cella about 32 feet across. All walls were about 3 feet thick. Along each wall were two features described by Rahtz as buttresses but were more likely to have been pilasters, as their small size would render them ineffective as wall supports. Warwick Rodwell suggests that the ambulatory would have been cross-vaulted and the pilasters used as external supports for this. This would allow for a good deal of natural light to circulate the building and give an aesthetically balanced look to the structure. The ambulatory would then give the illusion of a labyrinth of side chambers running off from the central area.

"The site formed a large pilgrimage centre including guest houses and priest's house as well as the octagonal temple and holy well.

"The temple faced east and was first built in the late-3rd century, possibly to the god Mercury. After the collapse of the original building another temple was built, which again fell into ruin. The final rebuild, after about 367 included the addition of an internal screen. The building finally collapsed in the 5th century. The site of the temple is on the aptly named Pagans Hill, although any link to the site in the naming of the road has been lost in the mists of time.

"Amongst the artefacts found in the well approximately 15 meters west of the temple foundations, was an unusual sculpture of a dog with collar. The statue was in four sections, measured 63 cm in height overall and was made of Doulting Stone, a limestone, as still quarried today at Doulting Stone Quarry. This was a votive sacred well 56 feet deep, with a number of cursing tablets placed within it as in Bath, the traditions appears to have continued into presumably Christian occupation. although no deity is incited."

ERRATUM ON THE G-LINE

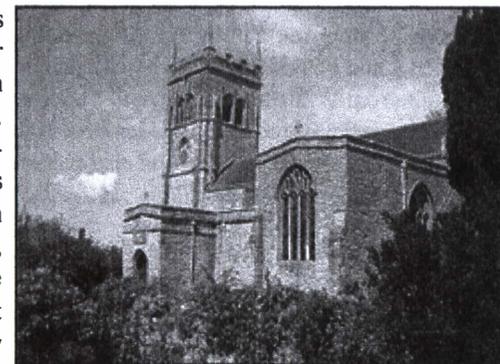
When Bob Shave checked the bearings of each of the points on the G-line as described in the last issue of *Touchstone*, he found they all had the same bearing except for the points in Glastonbury, including the Tor chapel, which all seemed to be off the line joining all the other points from Shapwick to Surrey. On checking, I found I had made a mistake in plotting the line on the 1:50000 map of the area including Shapwick.

I had originally found the alignment to Stonehenge by plotting it on a small-scale map, then checked the points with the longitude and latitude checking web site. Because of the visual alignment of the Tor along Northbrook Road, I drew a line on the 1:50000 map from the old church site to the Tor chapel, and it is this that aligns the Castle and Chalice Well sites, and does seem to be a ley, but is not the G-line. Northbrook Road makes a slight turn before reaching the site of the old church.

On getting Bob's findings I checked the line on the small-scale map and found that the line does not go through the Glastonbury points I mentioned, but some way to the north, and in fact passes through the Lady Chapel of Glastonbury Abbey, the site of the "vetusta ecclesia", the "old church", reputedly the oldest church in Britain, with its legendary association with Joseph of Arimathea and even possibly Jesus, who according to various legends visited Britain when young (see <http://www.ahsoc.fsnet.co.uk/uxella>). The Roman church in the city of Calleva at Silchester would have been older, (unless the legend of the Glastonbury building having been built by Jesus was true - which would have been before the Roman invasion of Britain), but has not been definitely identified as a church.

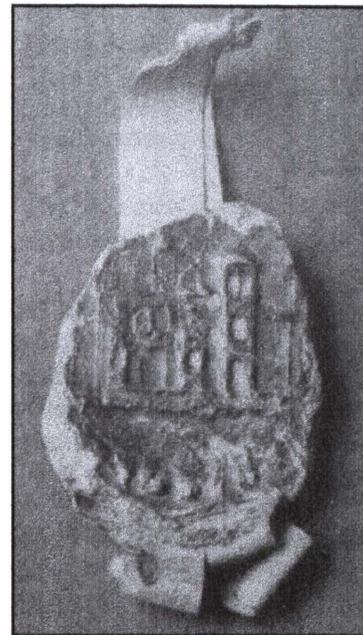
The Lady Chapel has the correct bearing to be on the G-line, and this line on the 1:5000 goes

through the following points: cross-roads at Spaxton, possibly church in Bridgwater (will be checking this) main multijunction in Bridgwater, Chedzoy Church (St. Mary's, 13th century, but there is evidence of a church here in 1166 when it was given along with the parent church in North Petherton to Buckland Priory), clump on Ball Hill, Stawell, Righton's Grave crossroads, church and old church site at Shapwick, Lady Chapel at Glastonbury Abbey, coincident with part of Stone Down Lane. on the northern edge of Tor Hill, cross-roads Pilton Park.



Chedzoy Church

Collinson's *History of Somerset* in 1791 mentions of Chedzoy church that it has "the ends of several oak backed bench ends curiously carved with different devices, a lamb bearing a cross and trampling on a lion, a flying dragon with a tail twisted round a circular girdle buckled and bearing the date 1559, and a large W in a wreath with a serpent twining round it". This history also says "in the village Roman coins have often been discovered, and in 1701 several earthen urns and a fibula were found near the church".



The Glastonbury Seal

The *Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological Society* for 1936 has the only known picture of the Old Church at Glastonbury Abbey as it was before it was burnt down:

"A charter of Robert of Winchester, Abbot of Glastonbury from 1171-1178, has recently been discovered at the county record office at Gloucester. The chief interest of the document lies in the conventual seal of Glastonbury which is attached to it. The seal gives what appears to be the only known representation of Glastonbury before the great fire of 1184. It shows the monastic church viewed from the west. In the foreground is the vetusta ecclesia or wattle church; a smallish building with western turrets each topped by a small "pepper-box" cap.

"As far as can be seen the roof is pyramidal with dormer windows to let in the light. It is

interesting to note the similarity of the wattle-church to the stone Lady Chapel which succeeded it and it is clear that the latter is intended to be a copy in stone of its predecessor. It is certain from William of Malmsebury's description of the wattle-church, that this ancient chapel had been covered with wooden boards and with lead. This description both bears out the representation of the seal and also accounts for the singular buttresses of the present Lady Chapel which appear to imitate wooden posts. Signs of the pyramidal roof of the Lady Chapel may still be seen on the turrets - turrets whose shape is markedly similar to those shown on the seal.

"To the south of the wattle-church is shown the bell-tower of Abbot Henry of Blois; this stood in the "holy cemetery". Further to the south may be seen what appears to be a building and may well be a representation of one (if not both, the seal is very damaged here) of the famous "pyramids" or large standing crosses which excited the wonder and interest of visitors from the days of Malmesbury to those of William Worcester and Leland. These crosses stood to the south of the wattle-church.

"No seal aims at giving more than a mere symbolic representation of the building it portrays - but the discovery of this early piece of Glastonbury forges without doubt another link in the story of the abbey".

BOOK REVIEW

**The Bones of Avalon, by Phil Rickman. Corvus Books, London, 2010.
ISBN 978-1-84887-272-1**

Many years ago I bought and enjoyed the book *Mysterious Lancashire* by one Phil Rickman; then some years ago I became aware of his fine series of novels dealing with Merrily Watkins, the "deliverance consultant" (aka exorcist) which are laced with references to earth mysteries subjects. *The Bones of Avalon* is a stand-alone novel which I somehow missed earlier - the title might be enough to attract some people's attention, and those already familiar with the author's fictional work will not be disappointed.

Without wishing to spoil the plot too much, it concerns Elizabethan mage John Dee visiting Glastonbury in order to find out for his queen what happened to the bones of King Arthur when the Abbey was dissolved. Glastonbury itself thus has a leading role in the action, and the famed zodiac also has a part to play in this intricate tale. The book is enjoyable and well worth taking the trouble to find... Phil's website suggests this is the first of a new series and I await the next installment with anticipation.

NormanDarwen

NOTES AND NEWS

Two moots at Avebury

There are to be two moots at Avebury this spring. The first is organised by the Network of Ley Hunters and will be from Friday 23rd to Sunday 25th March, and the meeting point on each day will be the bus stop outside the Red Lion at Avebury. No booking needed.

Friday 23rd March. 2.00 p.m. Laurence Main will lead a walkdowsing the Michael and Mary Earth Currents west of Avebury.

Saturday 24th March 10.35 a.m. Michael Dames will organise the following:
A performance of the traditional English "Plough Jag" play. This describes a line, straight as a furrow, between the supernatural powers and the mundane work involved in the start of a new agrarian cycle.

Consideration of the henge stones as animated characters.

Visits to the Swallowhead and Waden Hill springs, and an account of their Underworld and fortuitous solar alignment.

Field walk over the G.55 early Neolithic site.

West Kennet Long Barrow and the due North-South line.

The topographical "pig in the middle" and the related Palisade.

Tan Hill, Adam's Grave and the escarpment crest.

Sunday 25th March. 10.00 a.m. Laurence Main will lead a walk.

The other moot is of the Society of Leyhunters and will be at the Village Hall at Avebury on Saturday 14th April and a walk on Sunday 15th April:

Saturday 14th April, Village Hall, Avebury, 12 noon to 6.30

Speakers:

Bob Trubshaw - Singing up the country: the songlines of Avebury and beyond.

Nicholas R. Mann - Avebury Cosmos: the Neolithic World of Avebury Henge.

Anthony Thorley - The Great God Lugh and the Enchantment of Olympic London 2012.

Celia Gunn - A Twist in the Coyote's Tail: the Rebirth of a Native American Tribe.

Sunday 15th April - a stroll round and about the Avebury landscape with Peter Knight.

Contact Jon Lord, 2, Blacksole Road, Wrotham, Kent, TN157DB.

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<http://www.leyhunter.com>

The Invisible Pyramids

Ancient Egyptian settlements and tombs pinpointed by satellite images

Seventeen "lost" pyramids are among a vast haul of underground structures found in a survey of Egypt using satellites high above the Earth. More than 1,000 tombs and 3,000 ancient settlements have also been revealed using infra-red images. Archaeologists followed up with excavations and the first digs have confirmed some of the findings.

The research team used satellites 700km (430 miles) into space which are equipped with powerful cameras that can pinpoint objects that have a diameter of just 1m (3 feet). The technology works by combining infra-red imagery with high resolution photography to "see" beneath the sands, revealing hidden mud brick structures - the typical building material of ancient Egypt.

Egyptologist Dr. Sarah Parcak, from the University of Alabama, led the work. She told the BBC: "For me, the "Aha" moment was when I could step back and look at everything we'd found. I couldn't believe we could locate so many sites all over Egypt.

She was followed for a BBC documentary on her journey to Egypt to see if excavations backed up the satellite images. They visited Saqqara, where the authorities carried out test excavations after learning Dr. Parcak had seen evidence for two potential pyramids. In Tanis, the outline of a structure of a 3,000 year old house matched the satellite images almost perfectly.

New technology will give scientists a much bigger perspective on sites, said Dr. Parcak. "Indiana Jones is old school. Sorry, Harrison Ford, she added.

**Hayden Smith, Metro, Thursday May 26th, 2011
from Lionel Beer**

THEORIES ON THE STRUCTURE OF LEY ENERGY

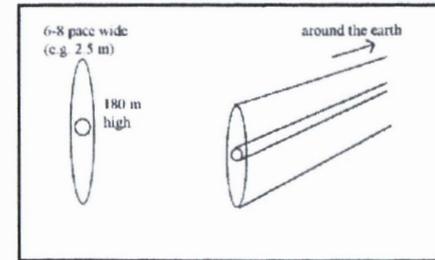
by Rienk Noordhuis

For some years now I have been using the system and theory of ley width and I have found it to be highly consistent and valid. I have been wondering what could be the significance of ley width. I would like to add to the discussion about leys with the suggestions that are following. I suggest that ley width may not only indicate the actual size of the ley but may largely depend on its position in a vertical direction. I would also like to suggest that leys are flattened enormously in the vertical direction, but contain a more dense core with the highest intensity of energy of about 6-8 paces wide. Obviously I have no proof and I only want to add to the discussion.

From reading and experience it became clear to me that important ley centres often have wide leys such as those of twenty paces. Hence, it could be concluded that these are important on a regional, national or even larger scale. My experience of these leys in the landscape is that they give you a sense of space and timelessness, and they run along places of beautiful scenery. Apart from a general sense of well-being, I have not experienced vibrations, that I have sometimes felt on smaller-sized

leys, such as those of 6-8 paces. In *Beginnings* (by Jim Goddard), overground leys are mentioned as suggested by Tom Graves, and also the ley detector gave various reactions at different heights in buildings. Observing the behaviour of swallows made me believe that overground leys may indeed exist. Flocks of swallows were usually associated with 10-25 pace leys when in the sky. Nesting and sitting swallows were also associated with more narrow leys, e.g., 6-8 paces wide.

The 6-8 pace leys could be the ones closest to ground level with their core -30 to +30 metres below or above ground level. When their core is near the ground it can be felt as vibrations or with the detector. These leys will be good leys on the map because they are related to ground level. 5-4 pace leys (and



narrower) are running below the surface making them important to nature spirits as etheric underground tunnels, and to ruminants because they depend on a strong earth influence for good digestion. Leys of 10 pace and wider are completely above ground level and their energy reflects like a shadow on the landscape beneath and it is this shadow that is measured ("sparks" may be spread over a very wide area).

The wider the ley, the rarer. Overground leys then are a fairly unusual phenomenon (could these keep mountain chains together?), and underground leys are innumerable but become more important to us when near the surface. The deeper in the ground the lesser the influence. The above are only suggestions and I realise that when leys run through hilly country and mountains their width should perhaps vary more than one or two paces (this depends on the distance they are flattened in the vertical plane).

Finally I would like to illustrate my model by proposing a ley that is at its thickest 6-8 paces horizontally with a dense (but flattened) core and stretching over about 180 metres in the vertical plane. I have included doubling at sunrise and sunset for leys that are on or overground. What happens at ley centres? Perhaps the leys cross at different heights through a vertical cone of energy that is receiving and giving away both cosmic and earth energy. This is open for discussion. Also, the actual width of the ley could vary, of course, as well as its stretching in the vertical direction. Is the ley system and perhaps other systems (such as grid patterns) the "saving work" which keeps the earth together? Weakening it could cause severe disruption.

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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:**