

(Extracts from a forthcoming book, to be published in 2008. These extracts are strictly copyright © R J Stewart and may not be quoted or copied in any form without written permission from the author):

A R HEAVER AND THE GLASTONBURY ZODIAC

Including: *The Language of the Initiates*

and: *Stellar Imprints on the Telluric World*

By R J Stewart © 2008

PART ONE: Theory, History, and Inspiration

A Short Introduction

This essay explores a tradition of mysterious prehistoric stellar alignments in the landscape of Somerset, primarily those associated with Glastonbury, but with reference to a greater context of other ancient alignments in Britain. This exploration is my interpretation of, and commentary and expansion upon, a short article written by the late Alfred Ronald Heaver (1900-1980), one of my mentors and initiators, who I have called poetically “the hidden Glastonbury adept”. ARH’s thoughts on the so-called Glastonbury Zodiac were written during the 1960’s, as a short summary of the substantial work of Mrs K E Maltwood, and privately circulated as a small pamphlet. We will explore the theme of the 13 Signs of the Glastonbury Zodiac, which is not centered upon Glastonbury, though Glastonbury corresponds to its designated Sign of Aquarius, as an intentional imprint upon the land, modeling and mediating cosmic forces. This essay is not “yet another” repeat of the Maltwood theories, but delves deeper into a perennial esoteric tradition. Having discussed this theme with ARH in the early 1970’s, and having received some aspects of his esoteric teaching on stellar alignments in relationship to the land and planet, I offer this essay as stimulus for further thought and research.

R J Stewart, 2008

The Glastonbury Zodiac revealed

Many people are familiar with the controversial idea of the *Glastonbury Zodiac*, which has become embedded in the ever growing body of New Age literature in recent years. British mystics and Glastonbury seers were writing about the Zodiac or, more accurately, about theories regarding ancient earthworks and prehistoric alignments in the Somerset Levels, long before the idea became popularized in its present form. We can find examples of such mysterious allusions dating back to the Middle Ages, in which the Somerset region is associated with sacred alignments and mystical theories .

Perhaps the most famous, oft-quoted and analyzed, least understood is the enigmatic statement in the fragmentary early chronicle of Maelgwyn (with a proposed date of circa 540 CE, though this is uncertain), quoted by several later medieval chroniclers, regarding the reputed burial of Joseph of Arimathea and the Virgin. Joseph's burial is described as being "above" that of the Virgin Mary at Glastonbury Abbey. The location of the burials is described in relationship to what appear to be topographical or geometrical proportion . *Et jacet in linea bifurcata juxta meridianum angulum oratorii, cratibus preparatis, super potentem adorandam Virginem supradictus spherulatis locum habitantibus tredecim.*" "He (Joseph of Arimathea) lies in a bifurcated line close to the southern corner of the oratory made of wattles over the adorable powerful Virgin by the aforesaid circle of thirteen inhabiting that place..." (1). This ambiguous statement has both an ecclesiastical or archaeological context, and a more esoteric telluric and geomantic context. The *circle of thirteen members* is an important motif that occurs elsewhere. At first glance this curious Latin chronicle has nothing to do with the modern idea of a proposed Glastonbury Zodiac, of course. But more will be revealed as we progress!

Zodiac? What Zodiac?

The phrase "Glastonbury Zodiac" is unfortunate, as the Somerset landscape alignments, proposed as being on a massive scale, are not a zodiac in the generally understood sense, nor are they centered on Glastonbury, though Glastonbury Tor forms part of one of the Signs. Strictly the subject matter should be called something like the *Proposed Pre-historic Constellation Alignments of Somerset*, but this seems complicated ! We will, however, return to this significant idea of stellar alignments, quite different from that of the Zodiac as generally understood

today, in various places in this essay. From this point on we will refer to theme as the Somerset alignments/Glastonbury Zodiac, with the proviso that the reader must understand that the alignments are not, and never have been, a zodiac in the popular sense.

Contemporary interest is rooted not in the remote past, but in the modern writings of Mrs K E Maltwood, in the late 1920's and early 1930's (2), who is rightly credited with starting the Glastonbury Zodiac enthusiasm that continues unabated to this day. It must be noted that she commented, back then, that people did not understand the difference between constellations or alignments and the zodiac, a comment cited by ARH that we will explore later.

A few sentences supposedly by Dr John Dee (16th century) are clearly forgeries, and may be discounted with wry amusement (3). The other major writer on the theme is Mary Caine (4), who produced a number of books following on from, and refining, the research of Mrs Maltwood. Ms Caine has also described another proposed set of stellar alignments at Kingston upon Thames, in Britain. This additional set of alignments, proposed by an expert devoted to the Glastonbury Zodiac theory, is significant, for it refers us to a more widespread tradition of pre-historic patterns worked into the landscape of ancient Britain. In other words, the Somerset Alignments/Glastonbury Zodiac, by any name, has a greater context. We will touch upon some further examples of this context shortly, for it is not possible to come into a deep relationship with the theme without understanding its potent context in the sacromagical structures of ancestral Britain and Europe. Regurgitating the work of Mrs Maltwood as a theosophical or New Age wunderkind is inadequate and superficial...especially as she understood that there was indeed a greater context to her inspirations.

A list of references to books, websites, and other publications is offered at the end of this article, focusing on those resources that are less light-weight, though the subject is open to much valid (and invalid) criticism. Thus the references listed are nothing more than my own proposals for further research, and none of them can be called definitive, by anyone. I have tried wherever possible to exclude references that are clearly derivative or merely copyist, as so many people want to jump on the Glastonbury bandwagon!

Is there really a Glastonbury Zodiac?

The patterns of the Glastonbury Zodiac, or more accurately, the Somerset stellar alignments, have been attributed to many origins: misinterpretation and coincidence, aliens arriving from other galaxies, angels, ancient ancestral earthworks, Sumerian astronomers, blatant forgery, and so forth. No clear answer has ever been proven, and no doubt people will continue to argue and write about it for many years to come, rather than simply visit the Somerset Levels and engage in spiritual meditation.

My own stance could be called “conservative mystic” arising as it does from my inner and subtle or spiritual experiences over many years visiting sites in and around Glastonbury and the surrounding Levels, from as early as 1971 to the present day. Much of this essay is founded upon my deepening understanding of ancestral and stellar spiritual potentials attuned to the land itself, given a greater context than focusing on one single example. This type of understanding can only be found through a combination of meditation, information, and inspiration. It cannot come from text or media alone, no matter how helpful such sources may be. It was a mysterious inspiration that started Kathryn Maltwood upon her path, as we shall discover shortly.

That there is something valid and significant in the idea of spiritual power vested in the ancient alignments of the Somerset Levels, including the Glastonbury area, I have no doubt. Whether or not the evidence for a Constellations/Zodiac theory is as neat and tidy as popular presentations declare, I am uncertain. In this stance I find myself in agreement with John Michell, who wrote in his influential book *The View over Atlantis* (London, Sphere Books Ltd., 1973). that for many people the Glastonbury Zodiac is "aesthetically correct" but "a poetic rather than a scientific truth." A more recent book by John Michell is a comprehensive study of many aspects of Glastonbury tradition, including some of the prominent features of the landscape: *New Light on the Ancient Mystery of Glastonbury* (5). This book is an essential resource for anyone studying the Glastonbury traditions, ancient and modern.

John Michell and I both lived in Bath for many years, where I had a house in the ancient temple precinct and over the hot springs, and he resided only a short walk away. Bath, Aquae Sulis, is another ancient sacred site of international renown, also in the county of Somerset, though it was briefly annexed by the county of

Bristol for a few years in contravention of enduring history. Bath, like Glastonbury, has many significant prehistoric alignments and landscape modifications on its surrounding hills.

There is more to this idea of the ancients shaping the land than archaeology, and I aim to explore and reveal some of the *esoteric themes from the hidden tradition* that were embodied by the late A R Heaver and others, and into which I was initiated in the early 1970's. This tradition offers us perspectives that move consciousness beyond merely scrutinizing maps and summarizing obscure theories as if they are fact or unchallenged dogma.

In the following pages I briefly discuss some of the potential problems with the current Zodiac theory, while supporting overall its primary claim, which is that there was something, some vast, inspiring, and intentional pattern, imprinted and constructed in Somerset in prehistoric times.

A R Heaver, the Hidden Glastonbury Adept

The Somerset alignments are explored here through commentary upon, and interpretation and expansion of, a short article written by my spiritual mentor the late Alfred Ronald Heaver, the hidden Glastonbury adept. I have called ARH "hidden" for several reasons, the most obvious being that few people, even in Glastonbury, have heard of him, despite his profound influence on many spiritual seekers, including myself, from the 1930's to the time of his death in 1980. Unlike the late W Tudor Pole, one of the highly "visible" Glastonbury adepts of the early 1900's, ARH did not seek publicity, hold press conferences, or write books. After his death, a subtle veil was drawn over the memory of ARH, until it was made clear to me a few years ago that some of his influence must be openly acknowledged, as the spiritual tasks he had set for me in my young adulthood were about to move into a new phase. Much of this background is described in my book *The Sphere of Art*, Volume 1 (6).

ARH's thoughts on the so-called Glastonbury Zodiac were written at some time before or during the 1960's, and privately circulated as a small pamphlet. During the early 1970's duplicated copies of this text were available from ARH's home in Keinton Mandeville in Somerset, and some copies found their way into the Maltwood archive on Vancouver Island in British Columbia, where it is listed in

the catalogue. Another item catalogued in the Maltwood collection is easily overlooked: "*Glastonbury's Mysterious Wheel of Life*" by Robert J. Scrutton, from *The Modern Mystic and Monthly Science Review*, March 1947. This magazine was edited, produced, and often written for some years by A R Heaver. Thus while the text that we will examine shortly was duplicated from the 1960's to the 1970's for visitors to ARH, his interest in the subject began earlier in his life, and he was sponsoring articles on the theme at least as early as 1947. This may be the R J Scrutton who wrote books on Atlantis and related themes during the early to mid-twentieth century.

The short article on the Glastonbury Zodiac/Somerset alignments by ARH, which is quoted in this essay in stages with commentary, can only really be understood in the light of his verbal statements on the subjects of Ley lines and the Somerset alignments/ Glastonbury Zodiac. I was fortunate to receive such direct statements from him in the early 1970's, which influenced aspects of my own spiritual explorations and my subsequent writing of books such as *The UnderWorld Initiation, Earth Light, and Power Within the Land* (7).

Thus ARH's summary of the Glastonbury Zodiac/Somerset alignments should not be taken at face value, and the stellar alignment or zodiac theory acts as a springboard here for further esoteric insights and proposals, offered as encouragement for future spiritual work by others yet to come. I believe that ARH wrote and printed his article as a simple resource and reference point for visitors, something that would enable him to talk directly about esoteric matters, without having to repeatedly outline and answer questions on the often misunderstood Glastonbury Zodiac theory as popularized by K E Maltwood and her followers.

In other words, ARH's article can be treated as a Qabalistic text, in which a *written source* is only made truly clear by an *oral teaching* and further meditation and interpretation. As I received some of the oral teachings and have meditated long upon the sacred sites of Somerset (both spiritually and in bodily fact, on the earth and grass, in the mud), I feel qualified to write this deeper level of interpretation for the 21st century. Thereafter it is up to you, the reader, to meditate upon and follow if you will, the insights offered here.

The Virgin and the Levels

While my outer reasons for writing this essay are to explore and clarify a popular theme that has become increasingly trivialized in recent years, my inner or deeper reason is more precise. During my first meeting with Ronald Heaver (ARH), early in the 1970's, I had a vision, in meditation, of the Virgin Mary holding not a child as we see in so many images and icons, but a sheaf of wheat. At that time I was in my early twenties, and had no idea of any real significance to this vision, which I discovered later has a stellar connotation. When I described it to ARH he shrugged it off as something typical and to-be-expected, hardly worth commenting upon (!). Such was often the way with the older generation of British spiritual teachers, who regarded visions as merely normal, and would not allow enthusiastic students to inflate their young egos with assumptions of grandeur or uniqueness. Everyone has visions, most reject and forget them, and only a few follow them to their mysterious end. ARH was more interested in where I might be going long-term on my path than in anything that I coincidentally saw along the way. The student was expected to deliver some proof of his or her spiritual perceptions, but it had to be at a deeper level than merely visionary. I have related elsewhere what that deeper level was in my case (6).

Subsequently I discovered that my vision was of one of the reputed Glastonbury Zodiac signs, and that the sanctuary of silence in which I had that vision was said to be on that very sign of Virgo, bearing a sheaf of wheat. This alignment and image is described somewhat enigmatically by ARH in the text which follows shortly, but at that time I had not the faintest idea of it. Thus, some 35 years after my original vision in meditation, I have been inspired to write this essay, as someone who was there, and received certain insights on the subject, both directly from ARH and in my own meditations, and as one who has undertaken research at the sites themselves.

In the 1970's , I traversed the Glastonbury Levels many times with friends, including the late W G Gray, a renowned British Qabalist and occultist (also one of my mentors) and his wife Roberta (an expert on Celtic lore, and a strict mentor), the musicians Lee and Janet James, who appear on my first album, *The Unique Sound of the Psaltery* recorded by Decca in 1973 (7), my first wife Laraine, and others . Together with these friends, I visited the proposed stellar alignments and

other ancient sites, often with difficulty. In the village of Mark, for example, our car was attacked by village youths, who tried to turn it over, while we were in the ancient church...outsiders are not popular on the Levels, even to this day. Most of our difficulties were of a more vegetative or liquid nature, struggling through narrow gaps in ancient hawthorn hedges, falling into hidden drainage ditches to emerge soaked and helpless with laughter, or sinking slowly into the endless boggy ground of the Levels.

It must be emphasized that the type of imagery described above, of the Virgin with a sheaf of wheat, relates to ancient mythic representations of the observed constellations in the night sky, rather than to the typical popular zodiacal attributes found in contemporary astrology. One of the problems with our subject is that many people, misled by popularization, expect, talk, and even write about, a zodiac somewhere around Glastonbury, where, in fact, none is to be found. Thus there is an accumulated overlay of wishful thinking and inaccuracy with regard to the Glastonbury Zodiac.

It is tempting, of course, to be over-protective of our British Mysteries at this time of increased exteriorization . During tea one afternoon in Glastonbury with Geoffrey Ashe, the Arthurian historian and Marian expert, he reminded me with graceful authority that the spiritual mysteries of Glastonbury and Somerset are far more than any current fashion, and that those who try to jump on the Glastonbury bandwagon, often from afar, inevitably exclude themselves from the greatest gifts that are freely available.

Visible signs of Invisible Forces

Alfred Ronald Heaver (1900-1980) talked to me about the Glastonbury Zodiac, ley-lines, and telluric planetary forces of transformation in the early 1970's. He stated that the alignments comprising the so-called Glastonbury Zodiac were a visible set of surface signs, laid down in ancient times by those masters of earth and stone in ancestral cultures, as entry and exit points for an *invisible* network that wove in and out of the center of the planet. Thus the Somerset alignments/Glastonbury Zodiac are part of that mysterious tradition of earth energies, associated in various ways with the popular theory of "ley lines". Not, however, ley -lines running straight along the surface, but lines passing directly into the center of the earth, and emerging again at another point. The popular idea

of ley-lines uses the image of the straight line between points A and B, but the true pattern of the energy flow is a triangle AXB, with its lowermost point X in the stellar core of our planet Earth.

A long or major ley line, with several intersection points of sacred sites, religious centers and so forth, such as the one often proposed from St Michaels Mount in Cornwall, through Glastonbury, to the north-east of England, would be a complex series of triangles as follows: total line A-G (for example). Thus we can project a major triangle A-X-G where X is the planetary core. But also triangles AXB, BXC, CXD, DXE, EXF, FXG, with intermediate triangles AXC, BXD, BXF, and so forth. If this pattern is drawn out with all its permutations, for the ley line cited above, or any of the other longer lines passing through several sacred sites, as is often proposed for the energies of the British landscape, what is generated is a self-iterating pattern, like the fractal images that are generated in computer graphics. This pattern is due to the self-iterating properties of the cosmos, which have long been described in mathematics, but only recently presented as visual patterns on our screens. Try it! It gives some remarkable meditative insights regarding the relationship between sacred sites. Especially try to draw and visualize it in a spherical design, rather than as a flat circle. The Earth is not flat.

The implications of a telluric or UnderWorld ley-line theory are substantial, and very different to the simplistic straight line or network modeled on the Victorian railway system or, later, on the idea of electrical circuits. I have developed this idea substantially in my own books and in the classes and workshops that I teach; not as an intellectual theory alone, but through new methods of spiritual meditation, vision, and ceremony. *The nearest star is just beneath our feet*: no spaceship is required to travel to it, for we already live within its light and power, the Earth Light that permeates all life on our planet. Many of our ancestral pre-historic sites, earth-works, stone circles or alignments, chambers, and modifications of natural features in the land, are associated with the telluric forces that rise up from the central fire, the star still burning in our earth. Furthermore, they act to connect this Earth Light to the Constellations, often but not exclusively, through human mediation. Only through subtle understanding of such mediation can we grasp the implications of vast patterns shaped into the land by our ancestors.

While well-known and unknown ley-lines are all, esoterically, the surface side of a telluric triangle, the Somerset alignments/Glastonbury Zodiac comprises a huge circular pattern, some thirty miles in circumference and ten miles in diameter. Its telluric shape is therefore a cone with 13 segments, moving into and emerging from the planetary core. We will explore the further implications of this shape in Part 2, and there are some practical methods of meditation, vision, and changing consciousness associated with the concept in *The Sphere of Art* (6).

With the Somerset alignments, therefore, we have something more complex than a straight-line- ley-line theory, yet having significant connections to it. While the patterns of the Somerset alignments /Glastonbury Zodiac were first detected and described by Mrs Maltwood, and artistically refined by Mary Caine, the telluric theory briefly described above, and throughout this essay, comes to us from a deeper and older initiatory stream. I hope to reveal some currents of that stream to you, the reader, but there must also be your own dedicated follow-through, in meditation and practical work. *In Appendix One, you will find some guidelines for Visionary work with our theme, but these will not become fully effective unless you read and absorb the ideas in the main text first.*

Empedocles, the British Tradition, and the UnderWorld

The overall concept of planetary energies rising to the surface, especially at places with traditional associations with stellar forces, such as sacred sites, gorges and chasms, volcanoes, or springs and wells, is found in the metaphysical philosophy of Empedocles (490-435 BCE). Empedocles is one of the earliest significant philosophers of telluric and Earth based spiritual metaphysics, and we are fortunate to have examples of his threshold texts. Threshold texts are those that describe a tradition or body of teachings previously preserved unwritten: thus they offer this previously oral tradition as text for the first time. Most of the Matter of Britain, the ancient Brythonic or Celtic traditions of Britain Wales and Ireland, is preserved in threshold texts, whereby traditional tales and poems are fixed for the first time in a written version.

The tradition associated with the Somerset alignments is typically regarded as stellar, yet, as in the philosophy of Empedocles and the British esoteric traditions, it has another level of UnderWorld forces in association with stellar imprints from the cosmos, bringing Earth Light and Star Light together. This tradition has been

embodied in my own work on Earth magic and UnderWorld transformative spirituality. The idea of telluric fire as a spiritual force was first described to me by A R Heaver, around 1972 or 73, matching and confirming my own unformed intuitions and spiritual researches into UnderWorld themes. Thus my meetings with ARH deeply influenced my subsequent spiritual life, including the direction taken by published works and classes.

How can we see the pattern?

The Somerset alignments/Glastonbury Zodiac, like the mysterious Nazca lines in Peru and other proposed large scale alignments world-wide, cannot be seen fully from the ground. Mrs Maltwood, seeking confirmation of her inspirations, commissioned aerial photographs of the Somerset Levels in the 1930's, and though some aspects of her interpretations of the photographs have been seriously called into question by more recent cartographic and topographical research, they are still the basis for all derivative published work on the alignments now called the Glastonbury Zodiac, including that of Mary Caine who seems to have inherited the theme directly from Mrs Maltwood.

General publication in recent years appears to be simplistically copied from the earlier literature of Maltwood and Caines, by people who have *never seen* the Glastonbury Zodiac. Nor do they seem, if I have read their words aright, to have meditated at its key physical locations. The idea may be fun or sound mysteriously impressive, but true comprehension or direct involvement seems to be rare. Thousands visit Glastonbury Tor, Wirral Hill, Chalice Well and a few other well known locations, some of which are, and some not, part of the proposed alignments/Zodiac. But who, among those who write about it superficially today, copying from Maltwood and Caine, has meditated at Pointers Ball, or invoked the hidden power of the stellar Virgin at Wimbles Toot? We will discover more about these locations when we examine the article by ARH which follows shortly.

A level of trivialization and glamour has crept into the concept of the Glastonbury Zodiac, it has become “cool”, so people *must* quote it in some way or other. We should remember, however, that the ideas rooted into the proposed alignments/Zodiac were around, albeit in older forms, long before the New Age movement of the mid to late 20th century: it is mainly to these foundational

concepts and inspirations that I will refer, as they link us to perennial spiritual insights and wisdom rather than to contemporary fashion.

Trivialization of the ancient mysteries is somewhat frustrating for those of us who have combed the Levels, climbed the hills, struggled through hedgerows, been confronted by baffled and irate farmers and (like myself) had the privilege of hearing about the stellar alignments in Somerset, now called the Glastonbury Zodiac, from masters such as A R Heaver. For ARH and no doubt for other earlier mystics, the Glastonbury and Somerset alignments and earthworks embodied the OverWorld and UnderWorld aspects of the Arthurian and Arimathean Mysteries. I have published on these themes elsewhere, over a number of years (7), and they are the subject of a new book (volume 2 of *The Sphere of Art*) to be published in 2009.

Our theme is that of the 13 Signs (not 12) of the Glastonbury Zodiac, not centered upon Glastonbury, though Glastonbury Tor corresponds to part its designated Sign of Aquarius, examining the pattern *as an intentional imprint upon the land, modeling and mediating cosmic forces*. Such spiritual forces may have connections to other alignments in Britain, also of 12 or 13 members or components, including smaller mysterious constellated or wheel-like ritual burials at Glastonbury, Bath, and elsewhere at early Christian and pre-Christian sites; we will return to this theme again, and the observant reader will have spotted the connection to the obscure Latin quote at the beginning of this essay.

Maps, Stars, and the Language of the Initiates

While a determined person can still follow Mrs Maltwood or Mary Caine, combining visionary insights from maps with dogged footwork and car trips down baffling country lanes, the number of people who have visited the entire Zodiac of locations and proposed stellar signs in Somerset is still small, even today. Some who attempt to write on the subject seem to have little real idea of how truly obscure the alignments are.

In addition to the alignment theme, we will explore what is sometimes called *The Language of the Initiates*, without which we will not be able to understand parts of the article by ARH, deriving as they do from earlier mystical traditions. Through this process we will attune to some of the mystical insights available

from the signs/alignments themselves, and the reader should follow through in meditation, vision, and ultimately by visiting appropriate sites, by which I mean the Somerset alignments, not websites!

Somerset's Pre-Historic Zodiac Circle: by A R Heaven

This short article, quoted here in extracts from the version in my possession, is on the surface nothing more than a minimal summary of the work of Mrs Maltwood, with much omitted. The later work of Mary Caine does not seem to be referenced, possibly because it had not been published at the time of writing, or because ARH did not consider it as significant as Mrs Maltwood's inspired breakthrough. I am unable to comment further on this absence, but books by both writers are listed in the Bibliography. The purpose of ARH's article was not to add to or criticize the work of Mrs Maltwood, but to provide a basic background, in brief, for people to study quickly. It was a summary...or was it? Perhaps it was more than a summary. The language of the initiates, a highly concentrated multi-level interleaved way of writing and speaking, provides our clues.

Like many of the older generation adepts, ARH did not wish to repeat himself or answer simplistic questions when there were deeper matters to be dealt with. His more esoteric conclusions and intimations were given verbally, with great economy of words and succinct phrasing, and we will explore and expand some of these conclusions as we progress. Thus this short text by ARH is an *outer form* that was created to give anchoring points for an *inner teaching*, a method well known in Qabalistic tradition.

ARH was imbued with mystical Qabalah, partly in terms of esoteric Christianity, and, more significantly in our present context, in terms of the Fire Temple with the associated Semitic pre-Christian prophetic tradition; this system of insight and inspiration played a major role in his life. In the esoteric traditions, this Fire Temple lineage is said to have arisen in ancient Atlantis, a glyphic island civilization first described by Plato. There is a significant description of this civilization offered by Dion Fortune, in her book *Avalon of the Heart* (7) in which she describes her visionary memories of Atlantis. At this stage of our exploration we are focusing on connections of a different kind, but we will return to the Atlantean tradition later.

Arthurian Inspiration for the Glastonbury Zodiac

Before we go on to examine ARH's summary of Mrs Maltwood's work, we should briefly introduce something *not* mentioned in his article. Its absence is curious, as it is central to Maltwood, and a theme close to ARH's heart: the Matter of Britain. Mrs Maltwood came to her first inspirations regarding the Somerset alignments /Glastonbury Zodiac as a result of studying Arthurian literature. She felt that the Arthurian mythos was written deeply into the land of Somerset, and this is what led her to study maps and find ancient earthworks and thus propose that modifications of the landscape were undertaken in pre-history. Only after her inspired opening to mythic understanding of the land did she work on detailed cartography and eventually commission aerial photographs.

Mrs Maltwood's inspiration is significant for us, in an esoteric context, as we are not talking about hard science or precise archaeology but poetic, mythic, and spiritual forces. Providing this is understood, much can be gained from the idea of the Somerset alignments /Glastonbury Zodiac, but if we demand that every jot and tittle be accurate and scientifically proven, we will gain little but disappointment or materialistic cynicism. Nor am I suggesting that we subscribe to a level of naivety such as has pervaded the spiritual revival of the 20th century, but rather that we find a balance between two simple and easily accepted acknowledgements:

- 1 That there are indeed ancient earthworks and alignments in the Glastonbury Levels.
- 2 That they have long been a source of mythic and spiritual inspiration.

The first cannot be denied by the most hard-line of archaeologists, while the second is known from at least as early as the Middle Ages to the present day.

The two premises above are the essence of what Mrs K E Maltwood had to work with, and she found her source of inspiration at first in Arthurian legend. That there were ancient alignments and massive earthworks in the Somerset Levels had been known in some form or other for centuries, in both folklore and literature, with obvious features such as Brent Knoll, Burrowbridge Mump, and (of course) Glastonbury Tor, being writ large upon the open flat landscape, much of which would flood to this day without the ancient sea-walls and drainage channels or *rhines* that were first established by the medieval monks.

Mrs Maltwood was the first to publish a theory that some of the ancient Somerset structures, usually those less obviously visible than the prehistoric sites listed above, certainly less famous, but on an immense scale, formed up as Constellations revolving, so to speak, around a locus or center.

There are some inherent problems when this theory is offered as hard evidence of a “complete” system, not the least of which is the simple fact that five thousand years ago, the period typically quoted for original construction of alignments or their shaping through modification of natural features, the Levels were mainly under water. Many of Mrs Maltwood’s and Mary Caine’s conclusions on natural features and alignments also run up against some hard facts, such as boundaries and edges to the proposed figures that are historically modern, and some features that could not have been present millenniums past for a variety of reasons that are hard to dispute. Nor do we have to dispute them or support them in full, for we are going to move in another direction altogether.

For the purposes of this essay, I do not think that it is necessary to either prove or disprove every tiny detail. The two positive acknowledgements listed above are sufficient in themselves, and they cannot be disproven: *there are indeed ancient alignments and earthwork structures in the Somerset Levels, and they have been the source for mythic and spiritual inspiration from the most ancient times, when mysterious anonymous ancestors first built them, to the present day.*

I think that it is not unreasonable to provisionally accept, or at least sympathetically consider, the proposal that some of these alignments were built or modified from natural features in a pattern on a grand scale. If the proposed Glastonbury Zodiac was the one and only curious theory or proposed example of such ancestral molding of the landscape on a large scale, then it would indeed be difficult to accept. However, this type of prehistoric sacromagical construction and modification of the landscape is known elsewhere in Britain, and in various locations in the ancient world; indeed, many other examples are known to archaeology, though their origins and purpose are widely debated. This wider picture makes the likelihood of *intentional alignment* of earthworks and modified hills in the Somerset Levels, including the proposed Glastonbury Zodiac which is known to include proven ancient sites, somewhat greater, and potentially more acceptable. In brief: the Glastonbury Zodiac is not alone.

So while I am not a strict proponent of everything published and discussed about the Somerset alignments/Glastonbury Zodiac, I am certain that the root concept is based upon a reasonable set of inspirations and insights, and in this essay I aim to show why this may be the case. But my “proof” will not be cartographic or from aerial photographs: as far as I am concerned, these are just the icing. It is the cake that we must consider here, and, even more than the cake itself, the recipe and the hands that first shaped it, and the fire that caused it to rise in the oven. In this process, we will delve ever deeper into the esoteric and cosmic aspects that are hidden behind the theory of stellar alignments, especially in Part Two of this essay.

A deeper perspective will be meaningless without the explanations and interpretations of this Part One, so let us proceed now to extracts from ARH’s short article, and to my commentary upon the hidden aspects of his text, which seems, on the surface, to merely summarize the basic work of Mrs Maltwood, yet contains certain esoteric themes.

From time immemorial...

From : Somerset’s Pre- historic Zodiac Circle: A R Heaven, circa 1965.

From time immemorial it has been known that modeled in the hills and landscape near Glastonbury in Somerset there existed a pre-historic Zodiac circle. It was not, however, until aerial photography became perfected commercially in the 1930’s that the lay-out of this vast Solar Calendar with its giant earth-effigies became plainly revealed for all to see. Indeed, it is only when viewed from the air that the enormous Circle, ten miles wide in diameter and thirty miles in circumference can be observed comprehensively in full completeness...

Why, we might wonder, does ARH say that the alignments, as a zodiacal circle, have been known “from time immemorial”. He cannot be referring to published theories, as Mrs Maltwoods’ was the first of such, no earlier than the 1920’s at the earliest. As a highly educated and intelligent man, he knew full well that there are no prior sources, least of all anything going back through “time immemorial”. Why would a man of deep integrity, such as ARH, open his text with what appears to be a fraudulent assertion? To answer this question, and others that will

arise frequently as we interpret the short article by ARH, we must explore some insights into *the language of the initiates*.

The Language of the Initiates

ARH was born in 1900, and died in 1980. He was of that generation of esotericists and mystics that inherited their vocabulary from a “hidden” tradition. It was not the vocabulary that is found in modern books on spiritual themes, but another that has to be understood in both a cultural and a mystical context: I will offer some insights and interpretations, stage by stage, as we proceed. I was fortunate to be taught, in my teens and early twenties, by people who had imbued this older British mystical tradition, and I am sadly aware that much of it has passed away. Only if we understand the phrases and vocabulary of the British mystics of earlier generations, of which ARH was one of the last, will we be able to grasp the hidden implications of his short article.

The implication here, with the old-fashioned phrase “from time immemorial”, and elsewhere in the article, is of an *esoteric* or *hidden tradition*. This tradition is precisely what Mrs Maltwood attuned to unconsciously and inspirationally when she explored the idea of the Arthurian mythos being placed, in a significant pattern, upon the land of Somerset. That ARH does not mention this Arthurian theme, so central in Maltwood, in his article is what sometimes called “negative evidence”, for it formed a major part of his spiritual philosophy, based as it was upon the fusion of the Arthurian and Arimathean Mysteries in Britain. For ARH, and for others initiated into this living spiritual tradition, including myself, the deeper Arthurian and Arimathean teachings were to be taught by word of mouth, but more important, to be *embodied* as living spiritual practices. I believe that he completely passed over this aspect of Mrs Maltwood’s work not because he repudiated it, but because he wished to mediate its spiritual essence more directly to those who visited him. Indeed, I received this mediation, and work with it to this day.

The Arthurian Mythos in Somerset

The concept that inspired Mrs Maltwood’s vision of the stellar alignments in Somerset is one of legendary personae and actions associated with relatively small localities. In her work these legendary personae were the Arthurian characters of

medieval romance. Mythic association with the land is by no means a new or unique theory: it is found worldwide in many folkloric and sacromagical traditions. There are numerous places in Britain that have suggestive ancient earthworks, shapes, and alignments, traditionally associated with legendary personae and their myths, tales, or songs. In some examples (rare today) there are, or were, traditional folk rituals associated with both the locations and the personae.

By way of comparison, I can offer something from my own experience of tracing mythic patterns associated with an ancient sacred location, where such a process had not been undertaken by any other modern researcher. When I lived in Bath (between 1971 and 1996), I mapped a remarkable pattern of alignments in the hills surrounding the city and its central ancient Romano-Celtic (and older) temple sites and hot springs. By doing so I found a suggestive pattern, in the surrounding hills and uplands, that seems to constellate around the hot springs and temple site in the deep valley below. Some years later I found connections between Bath and the Saxon Celtic town of Malmesbury, both being on the River Avon, both having a similar Founder legend, and both sharing certain sacromagical associations. These connections ramify, surprisingly, into the Glastonbury legends, but that relationship must be reserved for a future volume!

The author John Michell, who was also living in Bath in the 1970's, reprinted a significant antiquarian book, *The British King who tried to Fly*, by H Levis (8) My own books *The Myth of King Bladud*, and *The Waters of the Gap* (9) commissioned by Bath City Council, referred to the idea of a substantial sacred site embedded and shaped into the landscape there, far greater than the central isthmus formed by the river Avon, and the famous hot springs. My detailed mapping of the constellated locations, including earthworks, standing stones, dolmens and early churches (presumably on earlier pagan sites), has never been published. I cite this here because I believe that even today, in a Britain greatly despoiled by modernism, there are still mysteries of the landscape to be discovered. So rather than think of K E Maltwood as a one-off visionary who created an unlikely or contentious enigma, we must think of her in a greater context of the mystical land of Britain, and the pre-historic ancestral shaping of that land, for which there is much hard evidence from conservative archaeology, in addition to the more esoteric researches that scientists prefer to ignore.

Mapping Myth to the Land

Mapping myth onto a locality is a persistent tradition in many cultures, though our main interest here is in British tradition . In the 12th century, Geoffrey of Monmouth mapped the *Prophecies of Merlin*, ranging from minutiae of British history to cosmic cycles of creation and destruction, onto various small locations in Wales, drawing upon an existing bardic tradition (10). Likewise Arthurian and Merlin legends are mapped onto parts of Wales and Lowland Scotland from the Middle Ages onwards...an extinct volcano in the city of Edinburgh, for example, is called King Arthur's Seat. In Cornwall and Brittany legends of Arthur and Merlin and the Knights of the Round Table are attributed to specific locations on the land, revered for centuries in folk tradition, many of which turn out to be ancient earthworks, stone alignments and prehistoric sites associated with springs and wells, when they are visited and examined. We could cite such examples in detail for many pages, but the reader can research this theme relatively easily for his or her self, as published sources have been known from earlier centuries to the present day, in a variety of forms and interpretations.

Thus the phenomenon of mapping mythic themes onto a landscape is significant, widespread, and by no means limited to the Somerset and Glastonbury examples. To take the examples associated with Glastonbury out of this greater context, and pretend that they are unique, is a disservice to the ancestors who created many sacromagical alignments all over Britain and Ireland.

A simple summary of the myth-mapping process is as follows:

- 1 Certain mythic characters are preserved in the folk or collective memory, and are eventually entered into early threshold works of poetry and literature, created at a time when high oral tradition, that of the bards and poets, is being replaced by written text. The folk memory and low oral traditions continue unabated thereafter, as ongoing streams. In more recent years such folk oral traditions have substantially diminished, and are best known to us today through historic literature and derivative or academic studies of ancient texts, and through popular re-workings of older sources.

- 2 The mythic characters of (1) have some kind of glyphic or pattern-generating relationship. The Round Table is no doubt the best known or classic British

example of such an interactive set of relationships, possibly related to earlier legends of the *Fellowship of Bran* and the *Assembly of the Sacred Head* described in the Welsh medieval *Mabinogion*(11). A much later but significantly similar model would be the Rosicrucian Vault of the Elders, drawing upon mythic and folkloric tradition, arising out of an initiatory stream of European mysticism during the Renaissance. All of the above have significant UnderWorld aspects, and are frequently associated in tradition or early texts with precise geographic and geomantic locations that can be visited to this day.

3 The interactive pattern of mythic characters is, therefore, associated with specific locations, usually in a fairly small region, and often has stellar attributions or connections. In the 12th century Merlin texts referred to above, and in parts of the *Mabinogion*, a medieval text, but each deriving from older sources, we have both overtly stated and semi-concealed references to celestial patterns, entities, and influences, *in association with named locations in the land*, often highly localized and of no seeming grand significance. This model has many examples in early literature and in folkloric traditions.

4 The dynamic interactions of the myths and folktales can be mapped, by an inspired reader and researcher, onto the topography of a region, as such stories are associated with that region for many centuries in both oral folkloric tradition and confirmed from early written sources. Mrs Maltwood's work is a more complex and visionary statement of exactly this process. She did not invent it, fake it, or prove it first. It was already widespread before her remarkable insights and visions came to her, yet we have her to thank for the current theory of the Glastonbury Zodiac/Somerset alignments.

If we jump, for a moment, to the Middle East, the same pattern is found with both the Jewish and Christian myths, often deriving from other earlier religious mythic and cultural sources as is well known, wherein the land itself has a sacred quality and is associated with adventures that are, in themselves, spiritual allegories. Both the Old and New Testament are full of such interactions of myth, place, pattern, and personae. Indeed, this theme is at the foundation of so many religious and mythic traditions, beliefs, and observances worldwide, that can be easily researched, that there is no need to list them here.

Historically untrue, but mythically correct

Thus when ARH writes, in the lines quoted above, that the so-called Glastonbury Zodiac was known “from time immemorial” this is historically untrue, as he himself would have openly agreed, but mythically and, in an esoteric context, correct. In the poetic vocabulary of the older generations of adepts, in the language of the initiates referred to above, something “known from time immemorial” implies an enduring tradition handed down through the generations, rather than hard scientific evidence. Such a tradition may be folkloric, textual, or esoteric and hardly known in general publication. We will return to this theme again, but let us move on to the next extract from ARH’s article:

...One of the unique features of this ancient Zodiac is that the heads of the effigies all face westwards whilst the bodies remain revolving around the central point upon which they appear to pivot...it could be described more accurately as a Circle of Constellations rather than one of (zodiacal) Signs. As in the List compiled by Ptolemy , Scorpio expanded to include Libra is portrayed as a single sign, while two further constellations, Hercules and Orion are included, thus making thirteen Constellation-signs in all.

All of the above is adapted from Mrs Maltwood, and it refers us back to the idea that *the Constellations of the Heavens imprint the Land on Earth*. Few people understand that the zodiac is an abstract or idealized system, and therefore cannot be the source of this imprint. A stellar imprint comes from the visible stars, the constellations, and not from a theoretical model. Our modern presentation of the zodiac is a model of convenience, an abstract or a simulacrum that does not relate accurately to the starry patterns as seen and felt. The Somerset constellation alignments seem to be based on observation, rather than an idealized model, and upon an early set of constellations, shaped into the land at some remote time. But by whom?

Astronomer architects from Sumeria

ARH now makes a very grand statement, that would be ridiculed by materialist scientists or archaeologists, for he says:

An examination of the evidence available indicates that Astronomer-architects from Sumeria gave their name to Somerset. Some five thousand years ago they

came to design these enormous effigies, portraying them in permanent form so that their symbolism might be preserved in perpetuity for posterity...neither Stonehenge nor the Great Pyramid of Gizeh rival in wonder the achievement of these colossal earthworks forming as they do a panorama of the Celestial Plan and designed to represent the Dome of the Starry Firmament of the heavens inverted upon earth.

What is the evidence that ARH refers to here? It is certainly not textual, historical, or found anywhere that is accessed through normal research. And why would Sumerians come to Somerset? To the hard scientist, archaeologist, or historian, this is all piffle and wishful thinking. But if we consider it in terms of the enduring esoteric traditions, several interesting concepts and connections come to the surface. Once again, we must have a key to the phrases and vocabulary of the British mystics specifically, and of the Western esoteric tradition in a broader sense, to grasp what is being offered here. The clues are as follows:

- 1 Astronomer architects
- 2 Sumeria
- 3 Stonehenge or not Stonehenge
- 4 Gizeh or not Gizeh
- 5 the Celestial Plan
- 6 the Dome of the Firmament inverted upon Earth.

Far from being crazy poetic assertions, each of these 6 points has a significance and a hidden set of meanings and connectives, in the language of the initiates.

We will explore and expand each of the 6 points shortly! (TO BE CONTINUED.....)