

# Discovery of the British Landscape Zodiac

---



*The discovery by Peter Dawkins of the landscape zodiac of ancient Britain, created by the Celtic Britons and enhanced and used by subsequent cultures.*

Author: Peter Dawkins

## The Discovery of the British Zodiac

The discovery of the landscape zodiac of Britain, or 'British Zodiac', took place in several stages over many years, starting in the 1980s. During this discovery time I have delved into history, geography, mythology, folk-lore, traditions, mysteries and wisdom teachings, and learnt from many sources, ancient and modern. Guided by my inner teacher and landscape angels, and using my own sensitivity, intuitive awareness, visionary ability, architectural training, geomancy and map dowsing, I have made a multitude of on-site explorations and pilgrimages throughout the landscape of Britain (and indeed, most of the British Isles).

By 'Britain' I mean Roman Britain, now consisting of England and Wales. By 'landscape zodiac' I mean an area of land in which the archetypal energy pattern called the zodiac or 'circle of life' is to be found underlying the landscape, either present purely as an energy form or, in many cases, recognised, marked, enhanced and utilised by human beings. 'Zodiac' is the Greek word for the Vedic word 'chakra', which is a wheel of energy or wheel of life. The landscape has chakras or zodiacs, just as human beings have them also. In fact, all life forms consist of chakras/zodiacs linked together in geometric patterns. Moreover, each chakra/zodiac has its own geometric patterns, some of which are fundamental.

It first became clear to me that there must be a landscape zodiac covering Britain when I was researching the landscape zodiac of Ireland. This was because of the special connection that exists between Britain and Ireland, and the fact that the Celts, like various other ancient peoples, had a habit of recognising and laying out zodiacs across the landscape as a vital part of their culture and civilisation.

It was also apparent because of my discovery that the traditional heart centres of Ireland and Britain – Uishneach and High Cross respectively – formed an almost perfect equilateral triangle when joined with Dunsinane, the sacred centre of kingship and thus geomantic (but not geographic) heart centre of Scotland. The discovery of the latter, which is not far from Scone, the place of crowning of Scottish kings, was by means of following the clues given in the Shakespeare play, *Macbeth* – a play about sacred kingship – plus insights and research.

These three sacred centres of these three countries – Ireland, Britain and Scotland – are the centres of their own auric circles of energy, all seemingly equal-sized and touching each other, thereby forming a beautiful and symmetrical Holy Trinity of lands. Each circle contains its own country with its own people and its own distinct culture, consciousness and purpose. In mythological tradition, these three countries constitute the three lands of the Hesperides known as the Blessed Isles. They manifest what is known as the Triple Goddess – the Maiden (Ireland), Mother (Britain) and Crone (Scotland).

Whilst the maiden goddess Bridget, or Bride, and the saint that bore her name, is very much associated with Ireland, in Roman Catholic tradition Britain is known as the land or dowry of Mary. Mary means 'Mother' – the mother of the child of light. Another version of the name Mary is Maia, one of the seven (or three) Pleiades ('the Sisters'). Maia is the daughter of Atlas and Pleione, and the mother of Hermes. Maia also represents all the Pleiades (or, in this instance, the British Isles) as one shining goddess.

In the myth of Europa and the Bull, from which the continent of Europe takes its name, this same Pleiadean goddess is referred to as Europa, 'the beautiful one', the mother of Hermes. That is to say, the three interlinked lands of Scotland, Ireland and Britain, collectively known as the British Isles, is the landscape manifestation of Europa. Mainland Europe is the manifestation of the Bull, or Zeus. (See Figure 1.)



**Figure 1: The Three Lands**

It was quite clear to me from this that all three countries must have their own national landscape zodiac, as a manifestation in geomantic terms of the spirit or angel of the land. It was just a question of whether the zodiacs existed only in potential, unrecognised, or whether they had been recognised and worked with in the past.

The history and mythology of Ireland made it absolutely clear that the Irish Zodiac had been well recognised and utilised, with the land being divided and laid out accordingly with four main provinces surrounding a fifth central province. The wealth of still-existing knowledge and corresponding evidence in the landscape of Ireland enabled me to reconstruct the layout

of the Irish Zodiac with not only its fourfold and fivefold divisions but also its twelvefold divisions or signs of the Zodiac. The challenge now was to see if the Britons had done the same in Britain. I felt very strongly that they had done so and that the clues were still there to rediscover it.

## High Cross

Knowing the sacred centre always constitutes the vital starting point in any such journey of discovery. Fortunately not only was the sacred centre of Britain known to the Romans, but it was also clear to see where it was – namely, where the two principal axial roads of Britain cross each other, which is at High Cross, where the Romans established a fort known as Venonis. Dr. Stukely described this place as situated at the intersection of the two great Roman roads, “which traverse the kingdom obliquely, and seem to be the centre, as well as the highest ground in England; for from hence rivers run every way”. The Romans drew the north-south meridian of Britain through High Cross, from St Catharine’s Point on the Isle of Wight to the mouth of the River Tyne, from where they set out the border of Roman Britain with the construction of Hadrian’s Wall.

High Cross is so named because the crossing of these two ancient roads, Watling Street and the Fosse Way, is on the high point or summit of a reasonably high hill that is not far from the present-day geographic centre of Britain. This hill covers a large area but slopes gently; thus, when seen from a long distance away, it is barely noticeable. However, when you stand on the top of the hill, you are presented with a 360° panoramic view (or would be if the present-day houses were not there) that stretches for miles around. This is in keeping with an archetypal heart hill, as recognised by the ancients, and is similar in this respect to the Hill of Uishneagh, the heart centre of Ireland. That is to say, in philosophical terms, from the heart one can see everything, but from elsewhere the heart remains relatively secret and veiled. In both countries, Ireland and Britain, the geography and geomancy fit the symbolism of the spiritual archetype in a beautiful way. In Scotland, where the terrain is dramatically different, the heart hill is likewise somewhat different.

Once the centre of the zodiac is known, the next thing to discover is the ecliptic circle and how it is divided geometrically, including especially the orientation of its main axis and its twelve zodiac signs. In this I was helped enormously by the existence of the two great roads, Watling Street and the Fosse Way, and the fact that the former was recognised in tradition and mythology as the sacred road or spine of Britain.

These two roads were named and paved by the Romans, but were not initially built by them. The roads already existed when the Romans came into Britain. They were Celtic roads which, according to British tradition, were laid out in the 5th century BC by the famous high kings, Molmutius and Belinus. Molmutius was the great lawgiver who was referred to in later centuries as the British Solomon because of his wisdom. His laws gave the British people such basic freedoms as the right to free speech and to be deemed innocent unless proven guilty, which are still largely enjoyed today. Belinus was the son of Molmutius and renowned as the second founder of Caer Troia (Celtic London). They are recorded as building the original national road system. These were causeways or raised roads, not just trackways, and included

Sarn Wydellin (Irish Way), later transformed into Watling Street, and Sarn Fosse (Fosse Way). Watling Street was later turned into the A5 trunk road.

## Sarn Wydellin

Sarn Wydellin, which stretches from Holy Head in Anglesey to London (and further south), formed not only the spine of Ancient Britain but also what is referred to in myth as the Way of the Most Holy Head of Bran.

The connection of this important myth to Sarn Wydellin, and one of the reasons why this highway was designated as the spine of Ancient Britain, refers to Britain being symbolised as a boar, a design sketched out by its coastline and inland geography. What is now the land of Wales forms the head of the boar, whilst its body stretches across England from the River Seven border with Wales to the east and south coasts. (See figure 2.)



**Figure 2: The Boar of Britain & Way of the Most Holy Head of Bran**

Arthur, the god or archetypal spiritual king of Britain, was known as the Great Boar of Britain. The druids were known as (little) boars. The goddess Ceridwen, the partner or wife of Arthur, was referred to as the Great White Sow. She could fly through the air, and wherever she dropped a litter of piglets a mystery school of druids would spring up.

The spine of this Boar of Britain stretches from Snowdonia to London, the boar's crown and root chakra respectively. High Cross forms the heart of the boar. This spine is central to the myth of the great god Bran and his sister Branwen.

To cut a long story short, Branwen married the king of Ireland and went to live in Ireland. There, after several years and having given birth to a son, she began to be mistreated. When Bran heard of this, he went to Ireland with an army in order to rescue her and bring her home. After a great battle she was rescued and brought back to Anglesey, the home of Bran.

However, in the battle Bran had been mortally wounded. Before he died, he asked his five remaining followers to cut off his head, which would act as an oracle for them. Then, when the appropriate signal was given to them, they were to carry the head down to London, where they were to bury it under the Bryn Gwynt or White Mount (now supporting the White Tower of London). En route they were to stop each night at a Celtic castle or ring fort that guarded the sacred way, the spine of Britain.

Because the head was in those days a symbol of what was referred to later as the Holy Grail (i.e. Holy Vessel), these castles or ring forts were the originals of what became known as Grail castles and Sarn Wydellin (the Way of the Most Holy Head of Bran) as the Way of the Most Holy Grail. This myth formed the basis of later Christianised stories of the Holy Grail.

The first Grail king in the Christian story was known as Bron or Bran (i.e. named after the god). His castle was at Llangollen, on the original route of the Sarn Wydellin, where it can still be seen. The castle is known as Caer Bran or Dinas Bran. It sits atop an imposing hill dominating and guarding the River Dee valley at what constitutes a majestic entrance into the Welsh mountains. The story of Joseph of Arimathea and his sister (or daughter), who married Bron, is intimately associated with this sacred way, the Sarn Wydellin, as also is her descendant, the historical King Arthur.

It was this story and the positions of Llangollen and the City of London that gave me the clue as to where the ecliptic of the British Zodiac was likely to be located. Through trial and error, plus other clues, this proved to be true, although to determine it with absolute accuracy is still an on-going work.

One of the other clues given me is that in Welsh tradition the Prince of Wales is supposed to be born at Llangollen. This is not necessarily true of all Welsh princes, but it is of the one who is of the royal bloodline associated with the Grail myth. Since the primary emblem of the Prince of Wales is the white triple-plumed headdress, and since this is a symbolic representation of the three plumes of light known as the Dove, this informed me that Llangollen was a Dove or Holy Spirit centre.

The Dove is associated with two chakras in particular, the crown chakra and the alta-major chakra. The latter is also known as the Pan or Holy Spirit chakra, the centre of which is said to be located in the medulla oblongata, but its 'gateway' or entrance into the human body is at the nape of the neck, just below the skull at the back of the head.

Since Llangollen marks the nape of the Boar of Britain, it seemed to me that the myth and geomancy matched very well. Furthermore, since the neck is ruled astrologically by Taurus, the Bull, and the alta-major chakra is signified by the Pleiades (which is represented in some ancient zodiacs as a Dove), it seemed reasonable to conclude that Llangollen marked the Pleiades in the British Zodiac.

The other critical clue was the White Mound in the City of London, the terminating point of the sacred Way. Whilst looking at the map of Britain, it struck me forcefully one day how Sarn Wydellin, in its original route through the Welsh mountains from Holyhead in Anglesey to High Cross, more or less followed (as a twisting dragon line) the geometric straight line or ley line connecting Uishneach and High Cross, until at High Cross it turned dramatically off that line in order to go southwards to London. If the road had continued on the straight line, extended to the east, it would have come to the Gog Magog Hills outside Cambridge.

The Gog Magog Hills have been identified by various scholars as the probable site of the original Troy, before it was transposed to its Aegean position by subsequent migrations and travelling story-tellers. Homer's stories about Troy fit the north-western part of Europe far better than they do the Aegean, and the Gog Magog Hills and their surroundings bear witness of what would seem to have been an enormous and successful invasion of Britain in the Bronze Age. The hills also bear the name of the kingly representative of that conquering nation or nations, Gog of Magog, whom Brut (Brutus), the leader of the Celtic British race, overcame when he returned at the head of an army to reclaim what appears to have been the motherland of his exiled ancestors.

Whilst looking at the map and the route of Watling Street with these matters in mind, it suddenly appeared like a clock face, wherein Watling Street formed the two hands. It seemed that one of the hands, which had been pointing to the Gog Magog Hills, had moved on to point at London, the British city founded by Brut that was known as Caer Troia (Seat of Troy), or Nova Troia (New Troy) by the Romans. This movement of the Watling Street clock hand from the site of Old Troy to that of New Troy covers a 30° arc – i.e. 1/12 of a circle or one sign of the British landscape zodiac (British Zodiac).

By now the layout and orientation of the British Zodiac was beginning to reveal itself in earnest, with High Cross at the centre, the ecliptic passing through Llangollen and the City of London, Llangollen marking the Pleiades, and the City of London marking the cusp of Sagittarius and Scorpio.

In the heavens this Sagittarius-Scorpio cusp approximately marks the centre of the Milky Way Galaxy, so somehow London was marking the heart of the Milky Way in terms of the British Zodiac. This seemed to me to make a lot of sense. Moreover, the line between Uishneach and High Cross, which extends westwards in Ireland to the holy mountain of Croagh Patrick and eastwards in Britain to the Gog Magog Hills and beyond, forms a diameter of the British Zodiac. It marks the Taurus-Aries and Scorpio-Libra cusps.

This, together with the other information, provided a basis from which I could lay out with some sort of accuracy the twelve-fold division of the zodiac. (See Figure 3.)



Figure 3: British Landscape Zodiac Equal Signs

## Cygnus, the Swan

The reason why I was able to determine London as being on the cusp of Sagittarius-Scorpio was because of the discovery of where Cygnus, the Swan, was located. This discovery took place as a sudden realisation one day whilst I was travelling home by car on the Fosse way and pondering on the significance of the cross of double, possibly triple, ley lines that I had discovered in that part of the Warwickshire countryside known as the Shakespeare Country, where we had been brought to live. This cross is marked by churches, stone circles, barrows, standing stones and other sacred sites. Stratford-upon-Avon lies within the area of this cross. It suddenly dawned on me that this cross was in the exact shape and configuration of the Northern Cross in the sky. The Northern Cross is also known as Cygnus, the Swan.

So here it was, in exactly the right place for Cygnus to be in the British Zodiac, when Llangollen marks the Pleiades and the City of London marks the cusp of Sagittarius-Scorpio. Not only did this confirm for me the layout and orientation of the zodiac signs of the British Zodiac, but it also suggested that the Baconian-Rosicrucian group behind the Shakespeare plays knew this geomancy and set up the story of the Sweet Swan of Avon accordingly. Other discoveries confirmed this later.

The main axis of this landscape Swan is orientated exactly north-south. This means that this landscape Swan is not flying along the meridian of the British Zodiac's Milky Way, as Cygnus does in the sky above. This doesn't necessarily matter, as the landscape scenarios do not

necessarily match the orientations or relative sizes of the imaginary shapes we give to the constellations in the sky. However, I was later to discover that in fact there are two Swans marked out in the Shakespeare Swan landscape, which illustrate the Gemini theme of the two twin Swans that are united in love and friendship, and who are known in mythology as golden-helmeted Spear-shakers or 'Shake-speares'. (William, from German 'wil-helm', means 'golden helmet'.)

In Hindu mythology the twin Swans are known as Ham and Sa, who together form the Hamsa Swan, vehicle of Brahma and Sarasvati. Fittingly, in this Shakespeare landscape, we were to discover later that the two Swans form the axes of a Solomon's Seal, the basis of a six-pointed Blazing Star, the Star of the higher Mysteries.

## The AA Points

The line from High Cross to London, which Watling Street more or less follows, forms the cusp of Sagittarius-Scorpio. This line, continued in the other direction (north-westerly), crosses the ecliptic at the place to which Orion's finger (or his stick/club) points, which is the cusp of Gemini-Taurus. Orion's finger is what is called in Christian symbolism 'the finger of God'.

The two ecliptic cusps at the ends of this axis of the zodiac – the Gemini-Taurus and Sagittarius-Scorpio cusps – are the 'AA' Alpha-Omega points of the zodiac. This is because the end of an approximate 26,000-year Great Age of 12 Ages, and the beginning of a new Great Age, is indicated in the Celestial Zodiac when the midsummer Sun is crossing the Gemini-Taurus cusp and the midwinter Sun is crossing the cusp of Sagittarius-Scorpio.

The Gemini-Taurus cusp, to which the 'finger of God' points, is the *Yod* or starting point of all Creation, with the ecliptic – the Sun's circular orbit around the Occult Pole, the centre of the Celestial Zodiac – being sketched out from this starting point. The Sagittarius-Scorpio cusp, near the Galactic heart centre, is the feminine counterpart, signifying the divine womb from which all things issue. The line between these two AA points, which passes through the Occult Pole, forms the primary axis or diameter of the zodiac, which I call the AA Line.

Right now, during the years 1980-2020, our midsummer Sun is passing over the Gemini-Taurus cusp and our midwinter Sun is traversing the Sagittarius-Scorpio cusp. This means that we are presently involved in the critical process of moving from one Great Age into the next. This gives enormous significance to London at this time, as it contains the Sagittarius-Scorpio cusp. Likewise it gives an equally enormous significance to the Gemini-Taurus cusp of the British Zodiac, which lies somewhere between Manchester and Liverpool.

I kept putting off trying to find the Gemini-Taurus cusp – the creative AA point of the British Zodiac – until I was given strong inner directions to do so. This occurred in May 2009 when my wife Sarah and I felt the time was right, and so we travelled to that area to see what we could find. Part of our preparation for this was googling for information about the area, wherein we discovered that a new sculpture called 'The Dream' had just been erected in the locality, which for reasons given below we thought might just be right and miraculously inspired from 'above'. When we did come across the sculpture, it far exceeded our hopes and expectations.



Standing 20 metres high on top of a hill in the now defunct Sutton Manor Colliery, near the M62 and adjacent to St Helens, Merseyside, 'The Dream' soars high into the sky like a gigantic white pillar. Moreover, it is erected on what seems to be just the right spot for all the symbolism and meaning involved for this AA point and the start of a new Great Age that is prophesied to be a Golden Age!

The 'Dream' sculpture was designed by the Spanish artist Jaume Plensa, and stands on a high point of the old colliery hill and waste tip which is being converted into a park for to all to enjoy. The sculpture is coated in sparkling white Spanish dolomite, as a contrast to the coal which used to be mined deep in the ground beneath here. It has the face of a nine-year-old girl whose eyes are closed in meditation, dreaming a beautiful future. The whole concept represents light (the white sculpture) emerging from the dark (the coal mine), and of darkness transmuted into light, ugliness into beauty, conflict into peace. It is also a memorial to those who died in the mines, with hope for a better future.

When in India in 1992, some sixteen years before the 'Dream' sculpture was even dreamt of, I had been told by a highly revered Hindu Brahmin called Shastriji (Babaji's priest), that, in the Hindu tradition, a Kali Yuga or Dark Age is symbolised by a black lingam, whilst a Satya Yuga or Golden Age is signified by a white lingam. A lingam is a stone that represents the Central Pillar or Axis Mundi. It is a symbol of Shiva as the cosmic pillar of fire (agni lingam) or pillar of light (jyotir lingam) that is the Cause of all causes, existing without beginning or ending in the infinite and eternal Now. The equivalent of Shiva in our western tradition is Atlas, who is likewise represented as a Pillar of light. A sacred hill or pyramid is also used instead of a pillar to provide this symbolism. The 'Dream', then, was another wonderful confirmation of the reality of the British Zodiac and its continuing livingness and intelligence, and capacity to affect and inspire us all.

I began to wonder if there was an equivalent marker in London at the other AA point. My conclusion was that it might well be the Norman 'White Tower', built by William the Conqueror and from which the Tower of London takes its name. It stands on the Celtic Bryn Gwyn (or Gwynfryn), the 'White Mount' that is associated with the sovereignty of the land.

This mound, which is now almost totally obscured by the infilling, terracing and laying out of lawns that have taken place in succeeding centuries, was once a burial mound of great importance. Within it, the head of the British god Bran is reputed to be buried, along with that of Brut, the founder of London and Britain. Ravens, the symbol of Bran (whose name means 'Raven') are kept in the Tower of London for this reason, signifying the continued presence of the god (or of his mystique).

The position of the White Mound and White Tower of London does not appear to coincide exactly with the AA point on the map that I have constructed, but neither the map nor the geometry overlay can be entirely accurate because of map distortion and the scale of the map, meaning that the positions of rivers, roads and places are approximations.

This may not matter, as approximations are more the norm than the exception in geomancy on this large scale, because a geometric point in the archetypal pattern manifests itself not so much as a point but as an area of influence on the ground. Nature then responds with a

suitable natural power point (or points) within the area of influence, which humans can then recognise and use, or even set up our own man-made power point or points. Providing the positioning is approximately right, the most important factor of all is the power, function, purpose, symbolism and meaning of the power point in its relationship to the whole.

If the White Mound, and later the White Tower, was built to represent the 'White Pillar' and cusp of Sagittarius-Scorpio, then it would seem to have been built prematurely. However, there is a precedent for this.

During my 1992 visit to India, I had been informed by Shastriji that a white lingam had been erected in northern India by the legendary saint-king and emperor Bharata, as directed by Babaji, the idea being that it would represent hope for the future during the Kali Yuga – i.e. a little light kept alive in the darkness. Shastriji was insistent that I remember this story of Bharata and the white lingam, and told it to me three times. It is possible, therefore, that the White Mound was constructed for a similar reason and that the Bharata story was told to me so insistently in order that one day I would recognise the Mound (and Tower) for what it is, as also the Dream sculpture.

## The 13th Sign of the Zodiac

The traditional 13th sign of the zodiac is marked by Ophiuchus. This constellation, meaning 'Serpent Bearer' or 'Dragon Master', is both a Hercules and a St George figure, for St George, the Red Cross knight, is the master of the dragon. As the 13th sign it signifies the 13th seat at the Round Table, wherein can sit only the heir to the throne. The heir is the Grail knight, the one who has achieved the Holy Grail and thereby becomes a guardian of the Grail. The actual Sun-king, who is given the name of Arthur, is the principal guardian of the Holy Grail; hence he is known as the Grail king. When the king 'dies' and moves on to greater things, his heir succeeds him.

Ophiuchus is actually located in the zodiacal sign of Scorpio, and the reason for it being the 13th sign is that it signifies the start of a new cycle of time and initiation at a higher evolutionary level than before. In other words, the midwinter Sun has completed one complete circuit of the ecliptic and is now started on the next circuit.

Ophiuchus is paired with its complementary or 'twin' 13th sign (i.e. there are two 13th signs of the Zodiac), which is Auriga in the zodiacal sign of Taurus. Auriga, the Charioteer, is the 13th sign in respect of the midsummer Sun.

The heart of Ophiuchus is marked by Royston. Beneath the intersection of Icknield Way and Ermine Street, which marks the original heart-centre of Royston, is the Royston Cave. This cave, with its Knights Templar cave paintings, is of great significance. The serpentine Michael and Mary energy lines dowsed by Hamish Miller<sup>1</sup> cross each other in the cave. Above the cave, on the surface of the ground, is the Royse Stone, also known as Crux Roesia or Roisia's Cross. This is a stone cross erected by Lady Roisia at the crossing of the roads, which gave its name

---

<sup>1</sup> See *Sun and Serpent* by Hamish Miller and Paul Broadhurst

to the town that grew around it, first as Roisia's Town, then Roiston or Royston. Previously there had been a Roman altar to the goddess Diana at the crossing.

Significantly, Royston is the original home in England of the Hot Cross Buns custom. The Saxons made cross-buns in honour of the goddess Eostre, whose festival was celebrated at the Spring Equinox. Eostre is the dawn goddess of fertility, the light-bringer, goddess of spring. She symbolizes springtime, new growth and the re-birth of life and nature after the harsh weather of the winter months. At the soul level she signifies initiatic rebirth or resurrection. Her name, Eostre, is the origin of the name 'Easter', and the Easter egg signifies her egg from which new life is born. This symbolism parallels that of Eros, god of Love, who is born from an egg laid by Nox (Night).

The Hot Cross Buns custom is associated with the sacrificial death that leads to resurrection (i.e. rebirth in a more spiritual or enlightened form), wherein the person who gets the burnt cross-bun is the divinely chosen sacrifice. The custom is very old. The Ancient Egyptians offered cakes to Isis that were imprinted with a pair of horns, symbolic of the Osirian ox. When the ox was sacrificed, the cakes were offered on the altar. The Greeks offered cakes to Artemis, which were called 'bous' (ox), alluding to the ox-symbol marked on it. The Babylonians offered cakes to Ishtar. The Romans offered cakes to Diana, whose festival was observed soon after the Vernal Equinox. Like the Greeks, the Romans ate cross-bread at public sacrifices. Christianity adopted the pagan equinoctial festival of Easter, together with the cross-bun and Easter egg symbols, and married it to the lunar Passover festival held on the first full moon after the spring equinox, which celebrates the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus.

That Royston was the main focus in Britain of the cross-bun custom is entirely suitable for it marking the heart of Ophiuchus. Ophiuchus signifies the resurrected soul – the one who has mastered and raised the kundalini dragon within his or her self, thereby transmuting the natural soul or psyche into a spiritual soul and bringing about Illumination. The heart of such an initiate is symbolised by the rose. St George, the Red Cross knight, symbolises this state of being. The dragon symbolises both his kundalini and his lower or natural soul which his spear of light raises and transmutes. St George is the Rose Cross knight, for the rose as well as the red (or golden) cross is his symbol.

The egg in which the initiate is incubated, dying in order to be reborn or renewed in a more glorious state of being (or dissolving psychologically, like a caterpillar in its pupa in order to become the butterfly), is provided literally by the Royston Cave – a bell or bottle-shaped cave carved out of chalk. All the indications are that this was a grain store used as a cave of initiation, especially by the Knights Templar who painted a whole schema on the cave walls depicting both the lesser and the greater mysteries of initiation in a historically symbolic form. These paintings were created by a band of Templars in England in 1314, after the Templar Order was suppressed by Pope Clement V in 1312 and their last Grand Master executed in 1314. This small band of Templars used the cave for 33 years, from 1314 to 1347, sealing the entrance to the cave with a mill stone and bricks in 1347.

33 is significant, because the full number of degrees of initiation resulting in resurrection is 33. It is a kabbalistic number, referencing the Tree of Life which, to climb it, requires 32 steps

or degrees. The 33<sup>rd</sup> degree is 'going beyond', which is resurrection or rebirth into a higher state of being and consciousness. Jesus, for instance, was 33 when he died on the cross and was resurrected. Solomon's Temple stood for 33 years before being destroyed and later rebuilt in greater glory. This scenario is acted out symbolically by Freemasons in what is called the Holy Royal Arch Degree, wherein the 'Lost Word' is raised out of the subterranean crypt or cave into the daylight of knowledge – knowledge of the Word, which is illumination.

The Royal Arch Degree is based on a story of the underground crypt beneath the ruined Solomon's Temple being discovered by those who had returned from Babylon to rebuild the temple. This underground crypt had originally been the grain store of Araunah the Jebusite, sited adjacent to (or beneath) the threshing floor that was purchased by King David. It was on this stone threshing floor that David built an altar, where he offered a sacrifice to mark the founding and dedication of the temple that his son, Solomon, was to build.

Whereas the Gog Magog Hills mark the left hand of Ophiuchus, where it grasps Serpentarius, the Serpent or Dragon, Ophiuchus' right hand, which also grasps Serpentarius, is marked by St Albans. The town is named after the traditional first Christian martyr of Britain, St Alban, whose home was in Verulamium, the Roman town that preceded the medieval town and abbey of St Albans that was built on the site of the saint's martyrdom.

St Alban is also reputed to be the founder of English (British) Freemasonry. This story was echoed many centuries later by that of Sir Francis Bacon, who was given the unique title of Viscount St Alban (i.e. named after the saint, not the place), whose family home was at Gorhambury, a country estate that incorporates a large part of Verulamium. Bacon is reputed to have been the head of the Rosicrucians and refounder of Freemasonry, from which modern Freemasonry has developed, and so the origins of both ancient (Craft) and modern (Speculative) Freemasonry are associated with St Albans. Bacon also appears to have been the real or chief author of the Shakespeare works, who collaborated with the actor Shakespeare, as symbolised by the myth of the Gemini (i.e. immortal author, mortal actor), and of St George and the dragon.

In an extraordinary display of divine providence, the new stars or supernovae which appeared in 1602-4, which the Rosicrucian fraternity declared marked the opening of the tomb of their 'Father' ('CRC'), were located in the constellations of Cygnus and Ophiuchus/Serpentarius. Translated to the British Zodiac, these new stars of 1602-4 appear to have their earthly counterparts marked by Stratford-upon-Avon and St. Albans!

## The North Pole Star

Like the solstitial Suns, the North Pole Star is a primary marker of time. At present the North Pole Star (Polaris) is the star Arcas, the seventh star of the seven bright stars of Ursa Minor (the Little Bear), which marks the end of the Bear's tail. In earlier traditions the constellation was known as the Sheepfold and also the Place of Peace, symbolised as a Dove.

The star Arcas represents the famous shepherd-king of Arcadia, a Christ figure who stands as the divine shepherd at the gate of the sheepfold, ready to open it for his sheep at the end of the age (i.e. the Great Age). The AA Line from the AA cusp of Sagittarius-Scorpio to the AA

cusps of Gemini-Taurus, which passes through the Occult Pole, also passes through the star Arcas. When our Celestial North Pole coincides with and therefore is marked by Arcas, then our midsummer Sun is in the process of passing over the Gemini-Taurus AA point, signalling the end of a Great Age and the start of a new Great Age of c. 26,000 years. This is the great moment in time when the old dies and the new self is born, resurrected from the old. For this reason, a Great Age is also known as the Phoenix Cycle.

In the British Zodiac, Lichfield seems to be the closest marker of the star Arcas. Lichfield has an interesting 'head' story connected with its saint and founder, for it is where the head of St Chad is said to be buried. In the British tradition, the head is associated with Bran. Indeed, Lichfield replaced the Romano-Celtic settlement of Wall on Watling Street (the Way of Bran's Head). Built c. 700 AD, one mile due north of Wall, Lichfield quickly became a prime religious centre and contains one of the most beautiful cathedrals in England.

Interestingly, a few miles west of Lichfield is Shugborough Hall. Here, in the gardens of Shugborough, is the mysterious 18th century relief wall sculpture of the 'Shepherds in Arcadia', echoing a picture painted by Poussin in the 17th century and made famous because of its connection with the Rennes-le-Chateau mystery and the Rosicrucians. At first glance the relief looks as if it is a representation of Poussin's painting; but, when looked at more closely, a large number of differences between it and the painting can be seen. Besides all the underlying sacred geometry and symbolic meanings, the relief appears to cryptically identify the cusp of Gemini-Taurus and the start of the new Great Age. Being so near Lichfield, the subject of the relief is highly appropriate.

Between Shugborough and Lichfield, on the highest point of Cannock Chase, is the British hill fort known as Castle Rings. It is clearly more than just a normal hill fort, as its size is huge. Its elevated site is dramatic, although now largely surrounded with trees. It forms one of the 'Castles of the Most Holy Head of Bran', and is linked to Watling Street (now the A5) by a north-south route that is clearly processional, going directly north from Watling Street to reach the fort. That is to say, anyone leaving Bran's Way (Watling Street) to approach the fort would journey directly north, guided by the North Pole Star that would be seen shining in the sky over the fort on a clear night.

## The Equal and Unequal Signs of the Zodiac

Although most people know the Zodiac as being divided up into twelve equal signs or segments of the circle, each one spanning 30° of the ecliptic, there is also a second way of dividing up the Zodiac that was used from ancient times and is equally important.

This second way is known as the unequal sign Zodiac and is complementary to the equal sign Zodiac. The unequal sign Zodiac divides the circle into twelve segments according to the relative sizes of the zodiacal constellations that lie on the ecliptic. The equal sign Zodiac is fixed; the unequal sign Zodiac is moveable (because stars are in constant movement). These two ways are like twins and form the 'Double Truth' of which life is composed and which the ancient Egyptians called the Maati. The Hall of Judgement in Egyptian mythology, for instance, is the Hall of Maati, the Hall of the Double Truth.

The unequal sign Zodiac is still based on the AA Line or major axis of the Zodiac, which links the Sagittarius-Scorpio and Gemini-Taurus cusps, and passes through the Occult Pole and the star Arcas, our present North Pole Star. This AA axis is fixed and determines both divisions (and indeed all the geometry) of the Zodiac.

On one side of this AA axis the signs of the unequal sign Zodiac are more or less as they are for the equal sign Zodiac except for Sagittarius, which is larger than the other five constellations on that side, and which therefore makes the sign of Capricorn a bit smaller than the others. On the other side of the AA Line the constellations of Leo, Virgo, Libra and Scorpio are all relatively large, whilst the constellations of Cancer and Gemini are small. Because of the slight movement of the stars over the course of millennia, coupled with the various perceptions of the precise shapes and sizes of the constellations, the divisions between the constellations is semi-variable or semi-flexible in many instances. This flexibility forms the complement to the fixed nature of the equal sign Zodiac, thereby making the Double Truth. (See figure 4.)



Figure 4: British Landscape Zodiac Unequal Signs

It is important to recognise both types of division of the Zodiac, and in the British landscape zodiac both are brought into play. Like the AA axis, the line between the cusps of Aries-Taurus and Scorpio-Libra forms another diameter of the British Zodiac that is the same for both the equal and unequal sign Zodiac. When extended westward to Ireland, this line connects High Cross, the heart of Britain, with Uishneach, the heart of Ireland. However, in the unequal sign

Zodiac it is particularly noteworthy that the line between the cusp of Sagittarius-Capricorn and the cusp of Leo-Cancer forms a north-south axis of the British Zodiac. This was used by the Romans to mark out Roman Britain. Then the line between the cusps of Virgo-Leo and Aquarius-Capricorn forms another diameter of the unequal sign Zodiac which the Fosse Way follows. This line is known as the Sphinx Line, and is fundamental to recognising what is called the Masonic Compass.

## The Masonic Compass

The highly symbolic geometric pattern known as the Masonic Compass is formed by joining Regulus, the star marking the heart of Leo, and Al Zimach, the star marking Virgo's ear of corn, with both the Occult Pole and Deneb, the bright star marking the tail or root chakra of Cygnus. What is called the Sphinx Line forms the axis of the Compass, which passes from the star Deneb through the Occult Pole to the junction between the constellations of Leo and Virgo. The Sphinx is an imaginary creature composed of a lion's body and a woman's head, hence the name, the Sphinx Line. (See Diag. 5.)

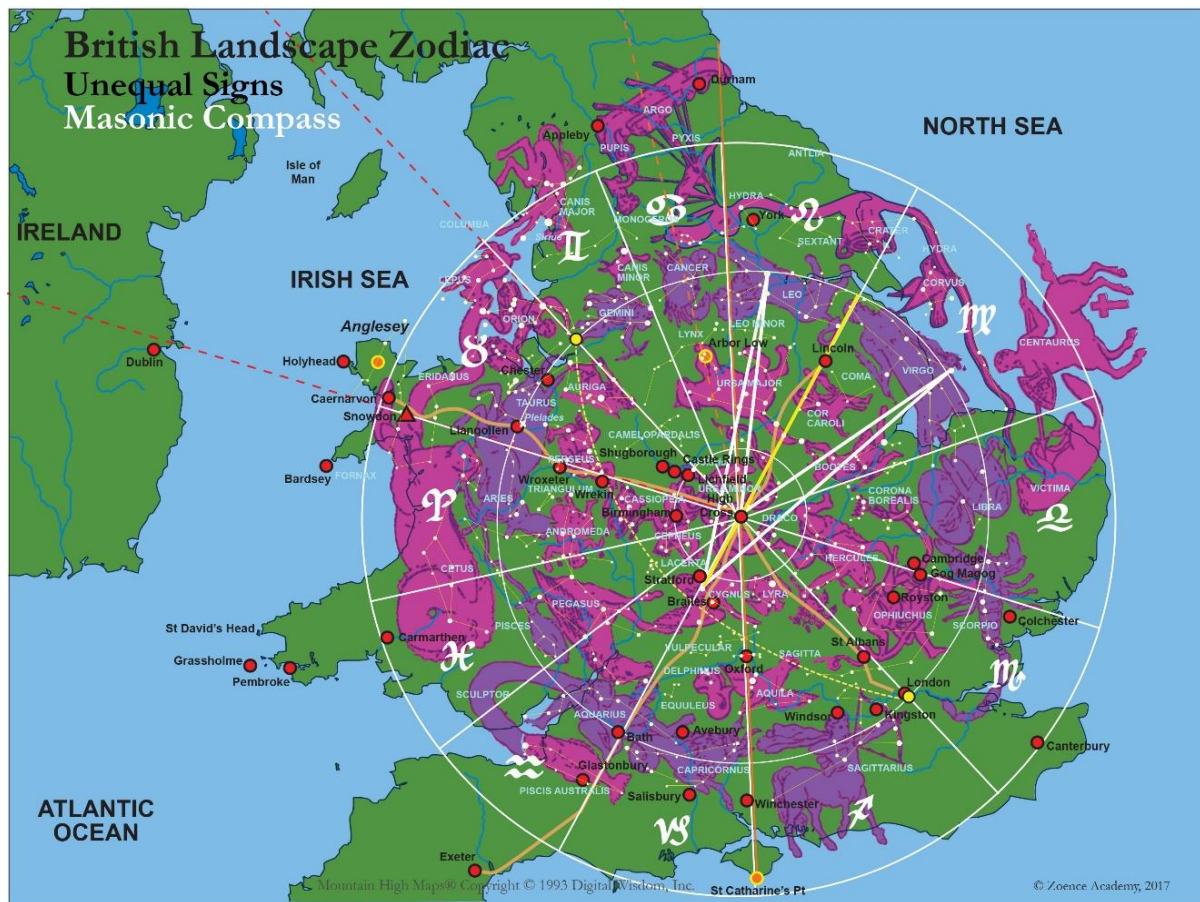


Figure 5: British Landscape Zodiac - Masonic Compass

The Sphinx Line and Masonic Compass symbolise the mystical marriage of king and queen, male and female, spirit and soul. They are the two aspects of Christ referred to as the Lion of Judah and Son of the Virgin, the former being the immortal Son of God and the latter being the mortal Son of Man.

The Gemini myth also tells this story, which is paralleled in Hindu tradition by the myth of Ham and Sa whose loving union produces the Hamsa Swan, vehicle of Brahma and Saraswati. Like Ham and Sa, the Gemini are symbolised as swans, born of Leda and the Swan (Zeus), and hatched from swan eggs. Because of their love for each other, the Gemini brothers become the immortal-mortals known as 'Spear-shakers'. Their mythology lies behind the mystery of Shakespeare, 'the Sweet Swan of Avon'.

When I drew out this Masonic Compass on a map of the British Zodiac, with the stars of the Northern Hemisphere marked on it, imagine my surprise and delight when I discovered that the upper point or apex of the Masonic Compass seemed to fall close to Stratford-upon-Avon! To me this was stunning, as well as further confirming the geomantic aspect and importance of the Shakespeare-Bacon or Rosicrucian work and how it is guided.

Stratford-upon-Avon is the nearest metropolis to the position of Deneb, but the closest prominent natural feature likely to have been used by the Celts as the terrestrial marker of Deneb is Meon Hill. 'Meon' is an ancient British word meaning 'middle'. The hill stands on its own at the northern end of the Cotswolds and is crowned with a British multivallate hillfort. It has always been considered particularly special and sacred, especially to the Huicca, the tribe referred to as the wisdom bearers, whose territory this area used to be.

However, another contender for the more exact position of Deneb is Loxley, a small village lying between Stratford-upon-Avon and Wellesbourne. This was the birthplace and home of Robert Fitz Odo (c. 12th-13th centuries), a knight who lived in Loxley Manor and whose gravestone lies in the churchyard of Loxley Church. This Robert is associated with the Robin Hood legend, with him being said to be Robin himself. There is no existing factual evidence that Robert Fitz Odo was ever an outlaw or a knight or Robin Hood; however, the location of his home would seem to be the prime cause of the association.

The story of Robin Hood and Maid Marion is related to the zodiacal symbolism of Leo and Virgo, and the Sphinx Line that passes through Lincoln to Loxley. Robin's 'Merry Men', a term that actually means 'Mary's Men', were dressed in Lincoln green, the colour of the goddess Virgo. Marion is another version of Mary. The name of Robin Hood is related to the Christ symbolism of the robin, whose breast (according to the song) is dyed red by its blood that is shed as a result of the arrow shot by the sparrow. Robin is the hooded (or veiled) king – the lord of nature, king of his Mary's men and of Sherwood, the 'Shining Wood'.

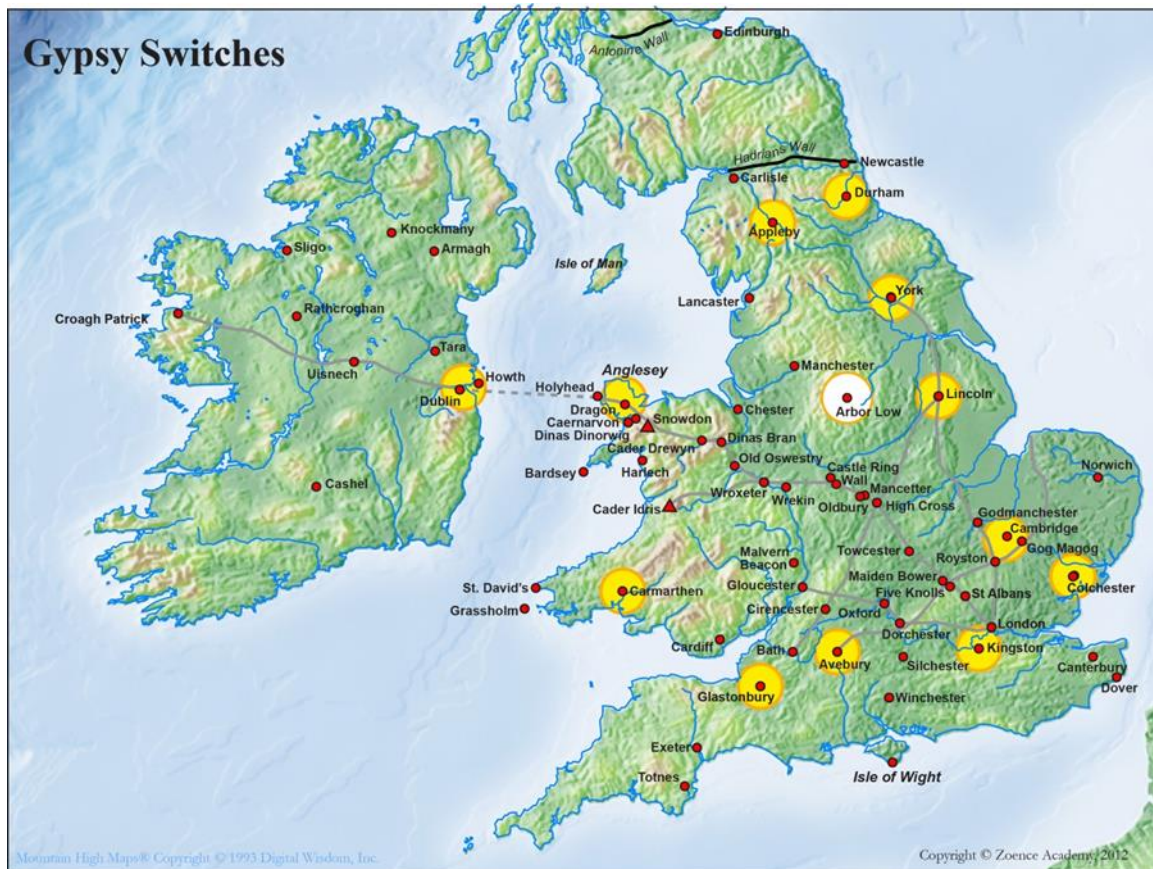
## The Gypsy Switches

All this was further confirmed during my research and discoveries by news of the Gypsy Switches, which I heard from Anthony Thorley who had, in turn, been informed by Jill Harris (previously Smith). Jill had been given the information by an old gypsy, together with a map of a gypsy circuit around Britain called 'The Gypsy Switches'. She had then undertaken the journey round the circuit herself in the 1980's, in a horse-drawn gypsy caravan.

A 'switch' is a journey taken by the Romany gypsies, named after the horse whip they use, which is called a switch. Right up until the 1920's, during each year the gypsies used to travel in their horse-drawn caravans around Britain in a great loop or 'circle', spending nearly one



month at each of 12 main stopping places. Every one of these places was associated with a sign of the zodiac of Britain. (See figure 6.)



**Figure 6: The Gypsy Switches**

The zodiac signs on the gypsy map related to and closely matched those of the unequal sign British Zodiac that I was in the process of discovering, the only difference being that the gypsy map identified the centre of the gypsy circuit as the Arbor Low stone circle in Derbyshire. Also, the gypsy circle was distorted, and included an extension to Dublin in Ireland. The purpose of the latter, apparently, was so that the gypsies could obtain the best horses possible, which at that time were bred in Ireland and which they traded at horse fairs around the Gypsy Switch circuit. Except for these two differences, the pattern of the Gypsy Switches matched the pattern of the zodiac signs that I had tentatively discovered for myself in the British Zodiac.

It seemed to me that the gypsies, who only arrived in Britain from the 14th century onwards, must have learnt about the British Zodiac from Celtic folklore and those natives of Britain that retained this knowledge. This knowledge the gypsies then adopted for their own purposes. The Dublin distortion was almost certainly for practical reasons, whilst the Arbor Low centre seemed to me to be either a deliberate red herring so as to protect the real centre, or else a pointer to something else.

Later I was to realise that Arbor Low marks the head of Ursa Major, the Great Bear, which esoteric tradition associates with a major source of guiding light for our world. Greek myth records Ursa Major as being Callisto, the mother of Arcas, the shepherd-king of Arcadia, whilst

in India, from whence the Romanies came, the seven bright stars of Ursa Major are associated with the Seven Rishis and rays of wisdom which illuminate our world.

In addition, Ursa Major was known to the Britons and early English as Arthur's Wain or Chariot. Sometimes, such as in the *Mabinogian*, Arthur is actually identified with Ursa Major and called Arth-Uthyr, 'the Wonderful Bear'. For all these reasons Arbor Low would have made a good centre for the gypsies, even though it was not the true centre (Occult Pole) of the British Zodiac.

The Gypsy Switches consist of the following twelve places:

- Avebury (Capricorn & Winter Solstice)
- Glastonbury (Aquarius)
- Lampeter (Pisces)
- Anglesey (Aries)
- Dublin (Taurus)
- Appleby (Gemini)
- Durham (Cancer & Summer Solstice)
- York (Leo)
- Lincoln (Virgo)
- Cambridge (Libra)
- Colchester (Scorpio)
- Kingston-on-Thames (Sagittarius)

Two of the local Gypsy Switch landscape zodiacs – the Glastonbury or Somerset Zodiac, and the Kingston Zodiac – have been well researched and publicised. The first person to do this in respect of the Glastonbury Zodiac was Katharine Maltwood, although John Dee, the Elizabethan magus, indicated that he was also aware of it. Mary Caine was the first person to discover and make public the Kingston Zodiac in modern times, although there are strong indications that the Tudors, such as Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, knew about the Kingston Zodiac and made use of it in the locations of their palaces. Some of the other local landscape zodiacs are in the process of being discovered, researched and recorded.

Although a great deal of the British Zodiac has now been discovered and tested out, of which some results have been presented in this paper, there clearly remains more to discover, as per normal.

Copyright © Peter Dawkins, 2012, revised 2025.