

AN INTRODUCTION TO WATER-FINDING

by Will Hazell

Part 2. SITE DOWSING

THE 'SCANNING' OR 'DIRECTIONAL' METHOD

Although many water-finders map-dowse an area before visiting it, earlier dowzers would discuss the client's requirements, and then proceed direct to the area. In *Springs of Water*, Ben Tompkins describes how he 'covered the field in sections' by using the grid method shown in Fig 1.

'At the start of my career', states Tompkins, 'I had a tremendous lot of walking and searching, and found the work most exhausting.' He continues, 'I do not experience any difficulty from the presence of visitors, whether sceptical or otherwise; rather do I enjoy company and occasional conversation at work, as it relieves the monotony of searching and walking, sometimes for hours, without finding a trace of water.'

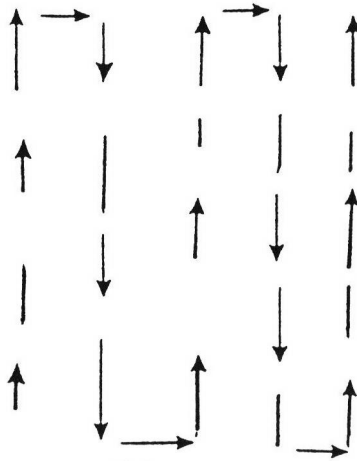


Fig 1.
The grid method.

After some years of experience, Ben Tompkins became aware that the V-rod he was holding would point to the left or right as though seeking to indicate where the underground stream flowed. He took note of this occurrence and developed it; eventually he noted that 'by crossing a property in a few directions, I am able to determine whether a spring exists; and so I start the important part of my work without unnecessary fatigue.'

To Ben Tompkins must be given the credit of being one of the first, if not the first water-finder, to use the 'scanning' or 'directional' method.

Many other water-finders now use this scanning method. K.W. Merrylees refers to a 'simple test to find out which way to go.' He states, 'The V-rod tells me the nearest way to the flow; this side or that side; and I start off in the direction indicated, usually saying out loud, "Is there any water where I am going?"'

K.W. Merrylees describes how he walked in the direction indicated until he obtained what he regarded as, 'my pattern of indication of water.' As he approached the centre of the stream, he noted how this pattern manifested itself; and when he crossed the centre line, he again noted that the pattern repeated itself on the other side.



Fig 2.
Locating mineral lodes.
(B. Roessler, 'Speculum metallurgiae politissimum': 1700).
Similar methods were used by water-finders to indicate flow of underground streams.

In his account of his work, Merrylees concluded, 'It is the lack of understanding of the flow pattern that leads to wells being sited on outer bands instead of the centre of the flow.' This concept of 'flow patterns' has also been discussed under headings such as, 'bands of influence', or 'parallels', or 'lines of force.'

Abbé Mermet's description of parallels

In *Principles and Practice of Radiesthesia*, the Abbé Mermet states, 'If there is any water on the site explored, the dowser, while surveying it, pendulum in hand, will come across the zone of its lines of force.'

The Abbé describes how the dowser will first meet the the 'Great Parallel' at point 'A' in Fig 3; the pendulum will start to oscillate in line with the flow. The dowser will then proceed at right angles to this parallel and will enter the '1st Zone'; when point 'B' has been reached, the pendulum will start to oscillate toward the stream. These oscillations will gradually become small circles, and finally change from circles to ellipses; finally, when the dowser reaches the centre of the stream, the pendulum will oscillate in-line with the flow.

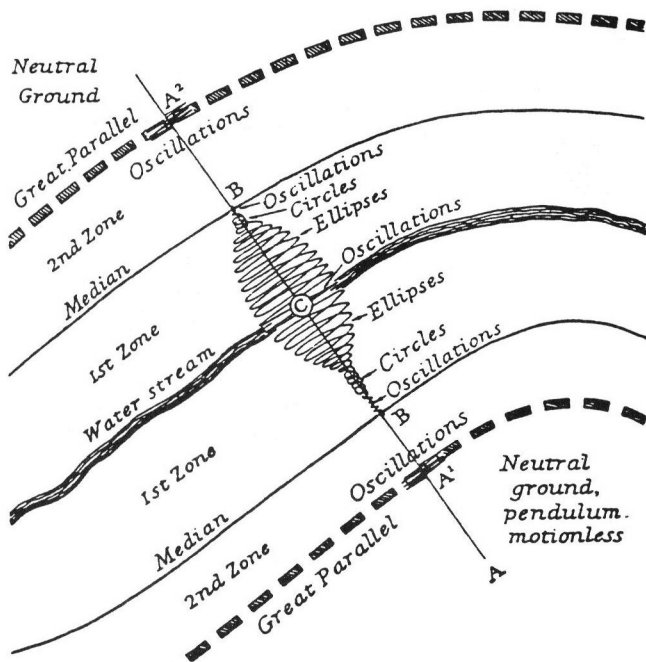


Fig 3.
The detection of water.
(Ex. 'Principles and Practice of Radiesthesia' by
Abbé Mermet. Included by permission of the publishers).

Diverse opinions regarding 'parallels'

Although the theory of parallels appears reasonable and has won support, not all dowzers agree. 'It is somewhat disconcerting to know', states Col. A.H. Bell, 'that one successful dowser finds certain bands of influence in connection with a stream, but other successful dowzers are quite unable to do so.'

In his book *Dowsing*, W.H. Trinder states, 'I must warn you that in addition to the two parallel lines (the mark the banks of the stream), there are on each side, other parallel lines at some distance from the stream.' Another eminent dowser, George Applegate, writes, 'A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. This is true enough when it may lead to a well being sunk on one of the parallel lines, and not on the stream itself.'

An alternative point of view is clearly presented in *Dowsing: One Man's Way* by J. Scott Elliot; he writes, 'I have carefully avoided any recognition of any form of bands in my dowsing, and look on them as a dangerous nuisance. If looking for water, I deal directly with the edges of the stream itself only, and avoid anything to do with bands.'

Relationship between direction of flow and parallels

'The rod lifts when I am going against the stream', states W.H. Trinder, 'and dips when going with it.' G. Applegate also agrees: he writes, 'I find the rod rises when I am going against the flow, and dips if I am walking with it.'

By applying this check, the water-finder ensures that he is dowsing over the stream, and not over one of the parallels. 'When you are going along their line (one of the parallels)', states W.H. Trinder, '*there is no movement of the rod* as there is when walking along the stream itself.'

K.W. Merrylees confirms this statement when he writes, 'If the direction of flow is from the direction in which I am facing, the rod lifts. If I walk along this indicated direction and the rod lifts, then it indicates that I am truly on the stream. The outer trios (of parallels) produce no indication with this test.'

THE TRIANGULATION METHOD

The triangulation method shown in Fig 2 of *Part I* (Journal No. 250) is also used in site dowsing. While asking a question such as, 'What is the nearest direction to the stream?' the dowser holds the V-rod in the search position and stands at one edge of the field.

He then pivots around until a dowsing response takes place; he will then insert pegs to show the direction he is facing.

The next action is to move a short distance along, and repeat the operation. The point indicated where the lines cross is the optimum position for the bore.

Ability to 'sense' where the water is flowing

Some water-finders assert that they can scan an area and 'sense' the flow of an underground stream. 'Several times', states Cyril Wilson, 'I have had the experience of feeling the direction of water in my body, and I have not needed to use the rod.'

In *Water Finding and the Divining Rod*, Samuel Childs records 'The fact is that certain persons, of whom I happen to be one, do possess an extraordinary capacity for detecting the presence of underground water.' In his book he includes details of the success he has achieved, and of the many people and Councils for whom he has found water.

In *The Independent*, 12-8-95, an article on dowsing shows Sheila Hedges holding a V-rod while dowsing on a Devon farm. The title reads, 'Sheila can look at a field and know roughly where the water is before she has even used the rod.' B.S.D. Members who have met Donovan and Margaret Wilkins will know that they also have this gift of locating water.

DEPTHING

"Depthing is the most difficult and debatable issue in professional dowsing." J. Cecil Maby. *The Physics of the Divining Rod*.

"Many professionals are amazingly accurate in their estimates; so close to the mark are they, that one is compelled to conclude that they employ some fixed and reliable formula." S.N. Pike. *Water Divining*.

"There are many methods of finding depths; but dowzers (especially professionals) are not inclined to give away their secrets. The problem of explaining methods is rendered difficult because reactions are individual; a method that will suit one person may not suit another." W.H. Trinder. *Dowsing*.

"All dowzers work in their own particular way. You are on your own."
P. Hyatt.

The Bishop's Rule

In the year 1770, the Bishop of Grenoble and the dowser M. Bleton devised what became known as 'The Bishop's Rule.' Bleton inserted a peg at one edge of the stream; then while holding the V-rod in the 'search' position, he walked out at right-angles to the stream, and stopped at the point where a dowsing response occurred; he inserted another peg at this point.

The distance between the two pegs, 'D' and 'H' in Fig 4 was accepted as equal to the depth of the stream. This method was proved reliable, and many dowzers accepted it.

An earlier reference to the same method has been recorded in *La Verge de Jacob* by Jean Nicolas in 1693. (An English translation is held in the British Library, London).

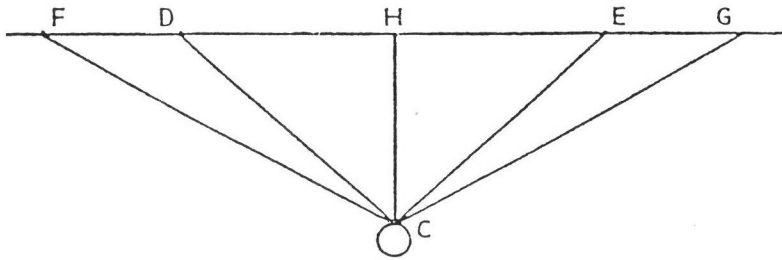


Fig 4.
 Depth and quantity.
 'C' is the underground stream.
 'C' to 'H' is the depth equal to distance 'H' to 'E' or 'H' to 'D'.
 The distance 'D' to 'F' (or 'E' to 'G') is referred to as the 'zone of quantity'.
 (Ex. *Dowsing* by W.H. Trinder. Included by permission of the B.S.D.)

Jean Nicolas writes, 'When we have found the width of a source, mark with a peg the place where the movement of the V-rod began to be felt; then slowly walk from this peg until the movement of the V-rod has ceased; mark this place with a second peg. Measure the distance between the pegs, and the depth will be found to be equal to this.'

He then instructs the dowser to repeat the operation on the other side of the stream 'to assure oneself that the trial just made is not defective.' The two measurements must be equal.

Although the Bishop's rule is often quoted, some water finders have expressed doubts regarding it. J. Cecil Maby in *The Physics of the Divining Rod* states, 'The Bishop's rule assumes that a definite beam of rays emerges from the subterranean object at an angle of 45 degrees to the ground surface, hitting the latter at a distance equal to the depth. But it has time and again been found unreliable in practice, except perhaps where a wet surface layer acts as a transverse conductor.'

Guy Underwood has stated, 'It (the Bishop's Rule) was liable to produce inaccurate results, especially by under-estimation.' Although we may be reluctant to criticise, there have been eminent dowsers who have referred to the Rule; for instance, in *The Problem of Depthing*, K.W. Merrylees states, 'That this method (the Bishop's Rule) even in the most experienced hands, may be most inaccurate is sometimes admitted.' And A.C. Williamson in *Dowsing in the field* writes, 'Where there is diversity of strata, and particularly where there are thick beds of clay, this method is of little value in estimating depth.'

'A more accurate means of predicting depth', states Williamson, 'is known as the Point-Depth method which was invented by Major R. Creyke, who had a considerable reputation as a geologist and a dowser.'

The Creyke Point-Depth method

The 'point' used by Major R. Creyke in his method of depthing consisted of a metal rod inserted into the ground at the centre of the stream band. 'This rod acts as a radiating point', according to Major Creyke; 'and while it is in position, radiations from other objects will not be felt by the dowser.'

While holding the V-rod in the 'search' position, the dowser walks outwards from the rod at any angle within a 50 degree arc (Fig 5). 'At a certain distance away from the stream', stated Major Creyke, 'the rod will lift sharply; a couple of feet or more beyond, the lift will fade out; and the counter pressure applied to the rod will make it flip down. The spots where these reactions occur should be marked, and their distances from the 'point' measured.'

As an example, the figure of 57 feet is given for the first measurement, and is regarded as the depth to the top of the stream; the figure of 60 feet is given for the depth to the bottom of the stream.

'If the stream band (the width of the stream) is narrow, and the depth band is wide', stated Major Creyke, 'the flow of water is along a steeply inclined fissure.'

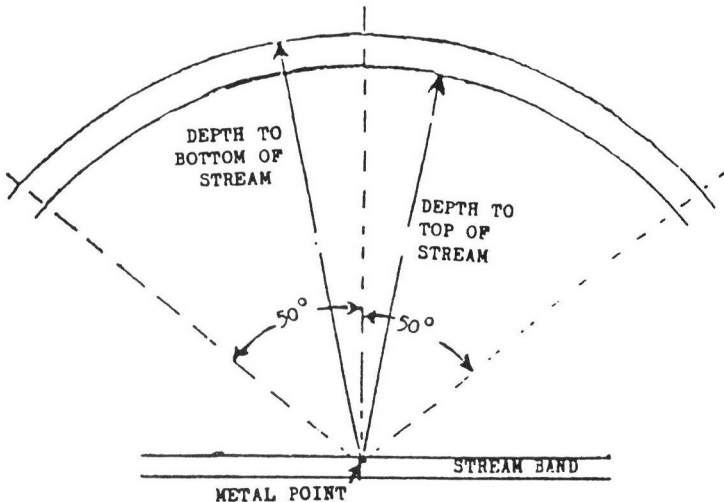


Fig 5.
The Point Depth method devised by Major R. Creyke.

Experiments have been made with various rods of copper, zinc, iron, and a special alloy known as mumetal; this is a magnetic permeable nickel-iron alloy. It has been stated that the 'lift' of the V-rod is sharp when a soft-iron point is used; but an even sharper lift occurs when a mumetal point is used. The rod is half-an-inch in diameter, and as long as the average walking stick; about six or seven inches of the rod are inserted into the ground.

'The Point-depth method is the most reliable method known' stated J. Cecil Maby. And another eminent dowser, A.C. Williamson has stated, 'I use the Point-depth method; it is the results that count; and these can be very good.'

The Louis Probst 'stretched wire' method

The theory that waves emanate from a stream forms the basis of both the Probst method of depthing, and the Bishop's Rule. In the Probst method, a wire is affixed to a spike inserted at the centre of the stream band; this wire is then taken out at right-angles to the stream, and is supported clear of the ground by a series of rods.

After concentrating his thoughts on the flow of the stream and its depth, the dowser holds the V-rod in the search position and stands astride the wire; he then walks outward slowly in crabwise fashion until a dowsing response occurs; he marks this point, and then measures the distance between it and the spike at the centre of the stream; this distance is equivalent to the depth of the stream.

The wire is regarded as a good conductor of radiations from the stream. Good results have been achieved by dowsers using the Probst method; but some criticisms have been made; for instance, a drum of wire and a series of support posts are required; and there is also the time needed to erect these posts and secure the wire.

The count-down method

A clear account of the count-down method is given by Cyril Wilson in his paper *Water Divining*; he writes, 'If you cannot use the Bishop's Rule when dowsing on a site, you can stand over the water and count down. I take my pendulum, and when I am working over water, it (the pendulum) will start revolving directly I am over the centre of the water.'

He continues, 'As I start counting down in metres, the pendulum will keep revolving until I have counted down to the level of the water, *as if my feet were in the water*. Then it will change to the direction which to me means negative. (I must stress that this works for me, but it might not work for other people).'

Some dowsers start the dowse by asking, 'Is the stream at a depth of more than 20 feet?' This ensures that they are not dowsing for surface-drained water. If a positive response occurs, the dowser will increase the figure by an agreed amount until a change in the direction of rotation takes place; when a decided change occurs, the number indicated will be the estimate of depth.

A V-rod may also be used when depthing. The dowser holds the rod in the 'search' position over the centre of the stream band while asking questions similar to those when depthing with a pendulum. The rod will either dip or rise when the depth to the stream has been reached.

There is always a possibility that another stream may be flowing beneath the first one. Cyril Wilson states, 'Just after the swing of the pendulum has changed direction and become negative, it will again become positive and continue rotating until you are down to the second fissure.'

Using the body as a measuring scale when estimating depth

'Dowsing is a very individualistic art', states Col. W.H. Bell; therefore you may not be surprised to learn that the depth of a stream has been estimated by using the height of the dowser as a measuring scale.

According to Abbé Mermet, when the pendulum is held at a height corresponding to the depth of a stream, it (the pendulum) will respond by indicating the 'serial number' of water; that is, the pendulum will oscillate for seven times; then it will rotate seven times; and finally, it will oscillate again for seven times.

The Abbé states that if the pendulum starts rotating when held at eye level, the corresponding depth of the stream is 40 to 50 metres. If the pendulum moves when held at waist level, the corresponding depth is 100 metres. Movement of the pendulum when held at knee level corresponds to a depth of 250 metres, and movement at ankle level corresponds to 300 to 400 metres depth.

'Each dowser must work out his own scale of equivalents', states W.H. Trinder; he suggests that the dowser should locate a well of a known depth, and then decide for himself/herself the relevant scale. According to Trinder, if a response occurs when the pendulum is held at chest level, the depth is approximately 40 feet. If a dowsing response occurs when the pendulum is held high, the depth of the stream is not great.

ESTIMATING FLOW

Some water-finders use the counting method to estimate the flow or yield of a stream. They start by thinking about the flow, while they allow the pendulum to swing freely; then while maintaining a relaxed attention, they start counting according to a scale of equivalents that have previously been agreed; for instance, one rotation of the pendulum may indicate an increase of 200 gallons per hour flow.

When a change in the movement of the pendulum occurs, the figure reached at this point is accepted as equivalent to the flow.

Using W.H. Trinder's flow method

In his book *Dowsing*, W.H. Trinder refers to the 'isocles triangle method' of determining flow. According to Trinder, there is not only a 'zone of depth', 'H' to 'E' on Fig 4, but there is also a 'zone of quantity', 'E' to 'G'.

The instructions are, 'Step the distance 'E' to 'G', then multiply the number of paces by ten. This will give the approximate number of gallons per hour at which the stream is flowing.' He continues, 'It is a very old method, but for a rough and ready one, it is extremely useful.'

'If the distance 'F' to 'H' is great, and the distance 'E' to 'G' is small', states Trinder, 'it is most likely that the depth will be great, and the quantity will be small; therefore in this case, it would not be worthwhile sinking a bore.'

'Knowledge regarding depths and strengths of currents', states Major C.A. Pogson, 'is simply gained by years of observation and practical experience.'

QUALITY OF THE WATER

Using the Mager rosette

With the pendulum held in the right-hand, and the Mager rosette (Fig 6) held between finger and thumb of the left hand, stand over the centre of the stream band, and allow the pendulum to rotate in a 'positive' direction.

Note the response that occurs as you move your hold from one segment to the next. An increase in the speed of rotation may be regarded as a positive response.

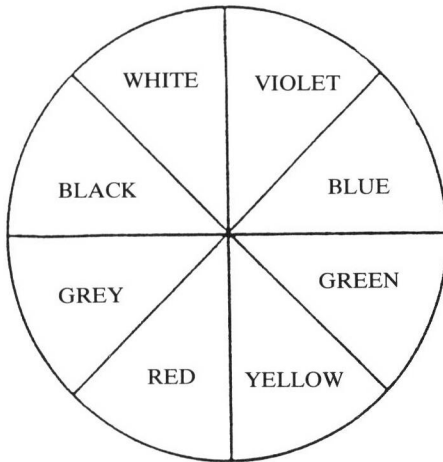


Fig 6.
The Mager Rosette.

As the interpretation of a dowsing response depends on the individual, there may be some variations regarding such interpretations. One arrangement is: *Violet* indicates pure and wholesome water; *Blue* means that the water is suitable for animals; *Grey* is allied with pollution; *Black* indicates that either lead or another metal is held in the water, and therefore the water is not potable.

Using a sample to test quality of the water

'If you carry a sample of what you are looking for', states G. Thomas, 'the V-rod will go down only for that particular sample.' The theory is that the radiations from the water must be identical to those emanating from the sample; otherwise a dowsing response will not occur.

'When I go looking for water', states Cyril Wilson, 'I carry a bottle filled with water; not just water from the tap or from a cistern that is used to collect rain water; but the kind of water I am likely to find in the area I am dowsing. I hold the bottle in one hand while I am dowsing with the other.'

When discussing the role of a sample in dowsing, the Abbé Mermet refers to 'a line of sympathy' that is set up between two bodies of the same nature. 'If I am looking for water', states the Abbé 'I hold in my hand a tube containing water.'

Using the counting method to test quality

While holding in your mind the number ten as the optimum equivalent of pure water, allow the pendulum to rotate freely, and ask a question such as, 'What is the equivalent number for this water; is it ten, nine, eight, or lower'. Note the point when a change occurs in the movement of the pendulum; this indicates the degree of potability.

Using coloured rods to determine quality of water

An interesting account of how coloured rods may be used to determine the quality of water is based by W.H. Trinder on Henri Mager's book, *Water Diviners and their Methods*. Trinder describes how he prepared and used eight rods painted with colours ranging from pale lilac to deep violet.

Trinder would start by holding the lilac No. 1 rod against one arm of the V-rod, and walking across the stream band. If a dowsing response occurred, this indicated that the water was 'exceptionally pure'.

If there was no response, Trinder would substitute the No. 2 rod, and repeat the operation. If there was still no response, he would carry on substituting the rods until a positive response indicated the degree of potability.

Apart from this set of rods, there were two or more rods; one coloured dark blue and violet in spirals, and one plain, dark blue. Trinder states, 'If the V-rod rised when either of these is held, the water is organically polluted.' He continues, 'If you get a reaction while you are holding a dark grey rod, the water is definitely dangerous, and it is not worth wasting money on sinking a well.'

Using a pendulum to determine quality

'Stand in the centre of the stream band', states W.H. Trinder, 'and allow the pendulum to gain a strong gyration (in a positive direction); then hold it over the upturned palm of your left hand. If the gyrations increase, this indicates that the water is acceptable; but if a change of direction occurs, this means that the water is definitely harmful for you to drink.'

STRATA

To determine strata, you may use methods similar to those used when deepthning a stream; J. Cecil Maby used the 'Creyke Point-depth' in which a metal rod is inserted into the stream band.

While holding a V-rod in the search position, and 'carrying in hand different rock samples', Cecil Maby would then walk outwards from the stream until a dowsing response occurred; this would indicate the depth to the top of the stratum. According to Cecil Maby, this method gave 'a fair idea of the likely changes of strata and their thicknesses.'

In a letter to the B.S.D. Journal No. 72, G. Applegate stated that he always relied upon 'the geological evidence in forming such calculations'; but he would like to know of 'a reliable method of calculating the thickness of the varying strata.' (Write to the Journal Editor if you know of any such method).

The need to know about strata depends on the dowser's knowledge of the area; for instance, in a mountainous district, the dowser may rely on the experience of the driller regarding equipment needed; but where there may be sandstone or clay, a more detailed assessment must be made.

'The first thing to do when looking for water is to look for clay', stated the eminent dowser, H. W. Lea-Wilson. 'A stream may be 15 feet under clay in one place, yet some 50 yards away, that stream is free from overhead clay.'

According to Cyril Wilson, 'No dowser should dowse without gaining as much knowledge as possible of the geological background of the site.'

CONCLUSION

'In 1933, the B.S.D. came to life' stated the Editor, Col. A.H. Bell; since that date, many water-finders have reported the many successes they have achieved. Only a few of the methods they have used have been discussed in this paper; doubtless in 1996, many readers of this Journal will wish to outline the methods they have used. The present Editor looks forward to receiving such contributions. Meanwhile, thanks are given to the several experts who have been generous in providing the data on which this paper has been based.
