

Volume 1
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THE CIRCULAR

A Newsletter Concerning

The Swirled Crops Phenomenon

And Related Subjects

Compiled from information collected on the

CIRCLE NETWORK

In This Edition:

What is TORRO?

Dr. Meaden and the strange Attractor

The Art of Circles: Part Two

P.D. Ouspensky on Symbolism

1990's Last Grand Design

Plus A Roundup of News

!! STOP PRESS !!

Corn Circle Riddle Solved
300 Years Ago

(See Page 26)

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A Privately Distributed Newsletter

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INTRODUCTION

by Bob Kingsley

I must be brief, to save space. So let me say straight away that in compiling **The Circular**, I'm constantly delighted at the high quality of craftsmanship shown by our contributors as they set their thoughts on the wing in these pages. The time dedicated to our subject must run into many hundreds of hours for each edition - and the articles in this third issue reflect a devotion to the pursuit of knowledge of which we can all be proud!

In this third edition of **The Circular**, you'll discover what **TORRO** is all about; Dr. Meaden explores the scrolls and triangles of Beckhampton; Phil Corker concludes his challenging article on the art of circles; we become pillion passengers on John Langrish's "old 350" as he weaves through the countryside in search of enlightenment; Dave Probert tries his hand at dowsing under the expert tuition of Richard Andrews, and Jenny Randles and Paul Fuller change their tune - or do they...?

There's news and views from three countries: Britain, France and the United States. We explore the timeless thoughts of P. D. Ouspensky - like us, he too sought to understand man's place in the universe, through the esoteric symbolism of ancient cultures.

Back in August, **The Circular's** mailing list comprised some fifteen names. In just four months it has risen to over eighty and is growing week by week. The **CCCS** monthly meetings see the hall at Kensington Central Library filled to capacity with people from every stratum of society; the **Earth Mysteries** shelf at my local **Waterstones** bookshop is creaking under the weight of recent circle-related publications; groups across the country are being formed and are organising various projects for 1991; and, perhaps most significantly, there are a growing number of TV documentaries that concentrate on the mystical beliefs of tribes, faiths and cultures rooted in the ancient past and what they can teach us for the future, all of which seem to me to be far more pertinent now than I might have considered them to be just twelve short months ago.

So it goes. Whatever the real truth behind the circles, their impact is far more profound than mere patterns in the cornfields. They have the ability to awaken ideas more precious than jewels, more refined than gold, more fundamental than words can readily explain. And for this, I give thanks for a life greatly enriched.

WHAT IS "TORRO"?

The Tornado And Storm Research Organisation and its Activities

**(From information produced by the TORRO Research Centre,
Geography Unit, Oxford Polytechnic. Used with permission.)**

TORRO was formed in 1974 when Dr Terence Meaden came to realise that only by means of a nationwide organisation specifically set up for the purpose would it be possible to determine with acceptable accuracy the extent to which Britain suffers from tornado damage each year.

The aim was to determine (a) the distribution and severity of British tornadoes, past and present; (b) the conditions of their development, so that, ultimately, forecasting of severe tornadoes and large tornado outbreaks would be possible; (c) estimation of return periods so that future tornado risk at any place may be established, especially with regard to the risk posed by very severe tornadoes for major structures such as nuclear power stations, suspension bridges, etc., and (d) to demolish the popular misconception that tornadoes occur infrequently in Britain, and so create a public awareness about the true dangers that do exist.

By 1975, with the involvement of Mike Rowe, TORRO had compiled a data-base totalling nearly 1000 British tornado incidents. This data-base was achieved through extensive searches of medieval chronicles (for the period before 1450 A.D.), the Royal Society's "Philosophical Transactions" (from 1665), the "Gentleman's Magazine" (from 1731) and the "Annual Register" (from 1758). After about 1860, tornado events were compiled from reports and articles in the growing number of meteorological journals such as "British Rainfall", "Meteorological Magazine" and the "Quarterly Journal of the Royal Meteorological Society" and later "Weather". After 1963, a major source of tornado reports has been the press cutting services which supply reports from local newspapers in which a property-damaging tornado incident often makes front-page news even though the event is ignored by the national media (mainly because, fortunately and fortuitously, very few people have been killed by tornadoes in Britain). Additionally, Mike Rowe has placed regular appeals for information in hundreds of local newspapers for information about recent and past tornado events.

With the launch of the "Journal of Meteorology" in 1975, the number of recorded British tornadoes began to rise as the journal provided a widely-known address for professional and academic meteorologists and weather-enthusiasts amongst the public to send details of possible tornado events. Indeed, through the journal, TORRO has encouraged readers to alert TORRO Headquarters in Bradford-on-Avon immediately of a tornado event. This has enabled TORRO to investigate tornado incidents within a few hours of their occurrence and to alert its network of observers and contacts. Since 1980, the involvement of Dr Derek Elsom of the TORRO Research Centre at Oxford Polytechnic has enabled many detailed site investigations of tornado damage to be undertaken very soon after the incident.

As the search for tornado events intensified throughout the 1970s, TORRO's information archives began to amass data on waterspouts and other whirlwinds (e.g. dust devils). This later expanded to include other local weather phenomena, often mentioned in association with tornado events but also of growing interest as challenging and often neglected research subjects in their own right. Damaging hailstorms and ball lightning were added to TORRO's list of interests. Also, remarkable falls/showers of unusual matter from the sky (e.g. hay, frogs, fish) were recorded since these were usually caused by tornadic or other whirlwind activity. Separate divisions within TORRO were established to co-ordinate the information collection and research connected with damaging hailstorms (headed by Jonathan Webb) and ball lightning (Mark Stenhoff). A division compiling a data-base of world weather disasters was also established (headed by Albert Thomas).

In 1975, Bob Pritchard of the London Weather Centre suggested that TORRO should cover conventional thunderstorm reporting too, with monthly reports being published in the "Journal of Meteorology". In 1984, the Thunderstorm division of TORRO, headed by Keith Mortimore and Adrian James, incorporated the 60-year old Thunderstorm Census Organisation (TCO), following the death of its founder Morris Bower. This greatly expanded the network of thunderstorm observers around the country and in continental Europe (especially the Netherlands and Belgium). Other divisions in TORRO also increasingly look to continental Europe to expand their information-collection and research activities.

In 1980 came an amazing discovery which triggered another important focus of study for TORRO. In August that year Terence Meaden's attention was drawn to two circular areas of damage in a field of oats below the Westbury Hills at Bratton in Wiltshire. These circles of spirally flattened crop triggered ten years of painstaking research into crop-field circles and allowed Terence Meaden to conclude that they were formed by an obstacle-induced plasma vortex whereby energy from a wind field gets reorganised and concentrated into a short-lived downburst of swirling vortical pressure which flattens out the circles upon reaching the ground. The Circles Effect Research (CERES) division was established to co-ordinate this rapidly expanding field of study. In 1989 alone, 300 such crop circles were documented and by 1990 the data-base totals nearly 1000 known circles.

In nearly two decades of its existence, not only has TORRO achieved major advances in the understanding of the nature, frequency, causes, impacts and responses concerning the tornado hazard in Britain but it has added greatly to an understanding of thunderstorms, lightning, ball lightning, hailstorms, point deluges and severe storms as well as the now famous discovery of crop circles. Regular summaries of collected information and reports on TORRO's research activities are published in the "Journal of Meteorology". In addition, progress made by TORRO in its studies are presented at conferences at Oxford Polytechnic, with the third [held] in June 1990.

- TORRO Research Centre, Geography Unit, Oxford Polytechnic, Oxford OX3 0BP. (Telephone Dr Derek Elsom on 0865 819761.)

NEXT ISSUE: "WHAT IS FOUNTAIN?"

LECTURE CIRCUIT

An Occasional Report, This Time Filed By Your Ace Reporter

Dave Probert

On Saturday 22nd September, along with about 25 other interested folk, I attended a "workshop" day organised by Richard Andrews - the well-known dowser - and the CCCS, particularly represented by Leonie Starr. This was at the Romsey Community School of Greatbridge Road.

The proceedings were started by Richard demonstrating that, even in the very room where we were sitting, there were two dowsable energy lines crossing just in front of the audience. He then showed many very interesting slides of circles taken over the last 7 or 8 years showing the progression that the phenomenon has been going through, up to and including 1990's fantastic events.

This started with single, simple crop circles, multiple ringed circles, others with incredible "floor" patterns and so on, showing how the satellites of the quintuplets had increased in size, and indeed how the whole formations had dramatically increased in their overall dimensions. We saw many excellent slides, most of which were, at the time, unpublished.

Richard then went on to explain how he can detect, by dowsing, energy lines running through and around the mysterious circles. His theory is roughly that patterns of energy build up in the fields between parallel energy lines and eventually "fire", resulting in a circle or, more recently, a pictogram.

At this point some confusion arose and it became clear that several people were unfamiliar with the principles of dowsing. This had been anticipated and we were all duly issued with a pair of dowsing rods (L-shaped pieces of stiff wire) courtesy of Richard's local dry-cleaning establishment! So, off we all tramped into the school field with our rods in front of us, having varying degrees of success at getting them to cross at the right locations, with Richard checking on us from time to time and pointing out where the genuine energy lines lay.

We returned to the classroom, some convinced, others dubious, to continue with more excellent 'photos - some being incredible details of centres of circles, others showing details of the pristine condition of plants in circles a few hours old, as yet untrampled by the hordes. He also explained that where circles can be left untouched by human feet, amazing patterns can emerge as the crop continues to grow, sometimes partly lifting from the horizontal at differing points along the stems.

He went on to explain that even as the crop circles have developed - radically throwing various theories up in the air - he has had to adapt his thinking over the past couple of years as even the energy lines and patterns can

change, sometimes daily. Particularly significant is that the lines which Richard has studied for some 20 years are growing stronger and wider, which may indeed have some bearing on the whole crop circle mystery. These lines

cover the whole world: patterns have been shown to change on the same day in this country and Australia, according to the dowzers.

Richard has in fact so much confidence in his theory that he has, in collaboration with 4 farmers, produced plans of energy patterns where he believes that sooner or later circles will appear in the exact locations he has dowsed. Certainly, if this proves to be correct, it may bring us all a little nearer to an answer to the crop circles.

A couple of interesting things that were also mentioned: firstly, that if a circle has been hoaxed, apart from the visual evidence, no dowsable pattern emerges. The second was very strange, inasmuch as Richard has left a tape recorder in various circles and says that on listening to the tape, nothing tends to happen until he leaves the circle; whereupon strange noises, knockings and buzzing sounds have been recorded, but fade away as he again approaches the circle. As yet there is no explanation for this effect.

The workshop went on much longer than planned. There was, of course, a lively discussion and many questions. A good time was had by all as they say, but I think many of us went home with more questions forming in our minds than we had had at the start. The puzzle goes on deepening at the moment, but one thing is certain: we must not ignore any effect or observation, no theory must go unnoticed, no thought unspoken.

Thank you, Richard Andrews, for an excellent workshop day. I'm sure we all went home a little wiser, and a lot more thoughtful!

SCROLL - TYPE CIRCLES,
THE BECKHAMPTON TRIANGLE
AND STRANGE ATTRACTORS

G. T. Meaden

From The Journal of Meteorology, Volume 15 No 152 October 1990

(Used with kind permission)

At Beckhampton, Wiltshire, the night of Tuesday-Wednesday 24th-25th July 1990 produced some amazing circle patterns in a wheatfield owned by Stephen Horton...It is possible that the appearance of one or more of the patterns was related to the occurrence of a self-luminous column or tube of light seen pointing to that field at 2.30am on the 25th (JMet, this edition, preceding article).

Altogether there are thirteen circles (some joined to each other by curving corridors) together with one of quasi-triangular shape and some other smaller geometrical elements of interest in themselves.

Figure 1 provides a sketch, not to scale, of two of the circles with just a few survey points showing. The circles are joined by a curving path thirty metres long. The bigger circle was clockwise outwards and the smaller circle clockwise inwards. Both circles had tufts at their centres. These elementary observations accord with vortex theory in which a ring vortex is envisaged as descending into a field before 'spinning up' again. This is not the first time that a curving arc has been seen. Last July there was a long curving path into a single circle in a field close to Cheesefoot Head, Hampshire, and on a smaller scale entry paths of a related type have been spotted elsewhere (1987 Bratton, 1988 Firs Farm, Beckhampton)...

Next we mention the tuft-centred quasi-triangular shape, with sides 10-11 metres long, shown in figure 2. This was likely produced by the descent of a ring vortex which expanded in the usual circular fashion up to a diameter of eight metres. Beyond this a distortion of the circulating forces set in which led to a quasi-triangular shape with two rounded corners. However, formation of the third corner seems to have been affected by the presence of the tractor lanes. The flattening of the corn within these 'corners' was regular, being no more than an extension of the outward flattening initiated by the primary spiral-circle. Some non-scientists have tended to regard non-circular shapes like the quasi-triangle as wholly anomalous, but the triangle is nothing other than an imperfect circle. It is only to be expected that non-circles and curving paths should occasionally result from the vicissitudes of wandering vortices - that not all of the short-lived vortices are perfectly quasi-stationary during their brief moment of impact with the crop and ground.

Of the other unusual patterns noted in this field there was a mini-triangle with sides four to four and a half metres long and a rectangle four metres by one metre which displayed the characteristic 'combing' effect into the corn at its remote end in the way commonly noted for natural rectangles. The origin of these and some other small cropmarks in the vicinity seem to be linked to the presence of a tractor lane from which they exit. This serves to emphasise the role that tractor marks can play in modifying the earth's local electric field possibly by acting as 'strange attractors' for vortex descent and hence aligned circle-patterning on some occasions at least. We shall go into this in more detail in another paper, but for the present it is enough to say that multiple-circle alignment with tractor marks, where it occurs, is likely to have a perfectly intelligible, scientific explanation without recourse to the absurd 'alien intelligence' ideas being aired by certain anti-scientists.

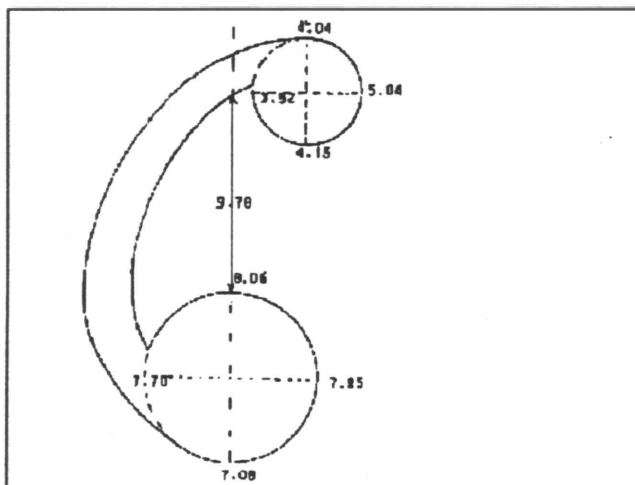
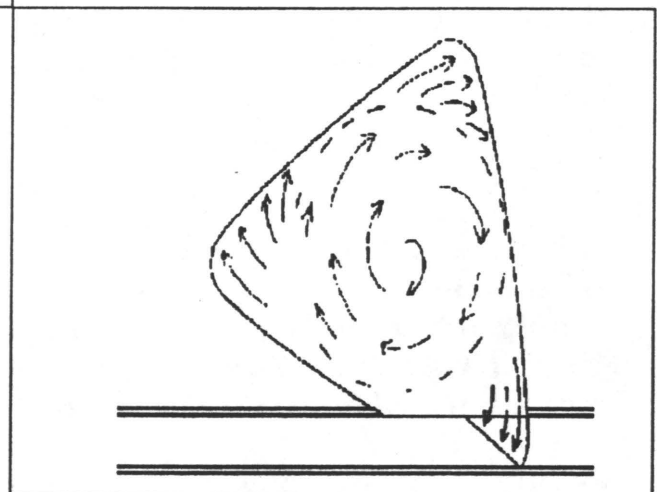


Figure 1. Plan of the circle pair linked by a curving corridor

Figure 2. The Beckhampton 'triangle' which is no more than a deformed vortex-circle.



- The Journal of Meteorology. Subscriptions (1990 rates - may be subject to change), including surface post, U.K. £45.00; rest of world £55.00; including airmail £65.00. For personal subscriptions from individuals deduct £25.00 from each of these rates. Subscriptions for students and senior citizens £15.00 only upon request. Published by The Artetech Publishing Co., 54 Frome Road, Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire BA15 1LD.

THE ART OF CIRCLES:

ACCIDENT OR DESIGN?

The Second of Two Article

by

Phil Corker

Patterns All Around Us

"Hundreds of people were telephoning and writing letters to us stating the now obvious fact that nothing in nature could have these effects", Colin Andrews writes in "Crop Circles: The Latest Evidence" (Bloomsbury). I can sympathise with this response, reflecting as it does my own feelings when I first became aware of the circles mystery a year ago, having read "Circular Evidence" ... "The symmetry, the symbolism, the artistic design, the aesthetic beauty, the sheer intelligence," I thought. "It just can't be natural."

But I hadn't looked closely enough at nature, at the patterns all around us. Crop circles can be natural, and I believe they are, for there are numerous examples in our world which display the same characteristics. The fact that we don't understand how circles are formed is evidence of our own limitations and not those of the natural world. Self-organisation in nature is evident in abundant forms, and a structured multiplicity of things rooted in a few elementary conditions is the order of the universe. I doubt that crop circles are an exception to this rule.

They may have originated hundreds of years ago, if not more, from the simplest of causes, but they have now established a place in the scheme of things and are ordering themselves to an ever-higher degree. Those who dispute this view must produce some archive evidence of complex formations pre-dating the 1990 pictograms. Such a discovery - especially if it related to an earlier century - would force a major reappraisal of the entire subject.

Exactly how and why natural forces gravitate towards patterns, instead of sloshing about in some amorphous swamp, is a question for physicists and mystics to answer. But this tendency manifests itself in a huge variety of ways: Patterson Maps, used in the analysis of atomic scattering experiments, often reveal highly organised symmetrical pictures. Traced sound waves on a vibrating steel plate produce beautiful mandala-like images. Even that most artificial of constructs, the computer, generates designs of artistic merit by quickly building upon a few basic models, a kind of high-speed evolution. Leaves, flowers, the wing-markings of moths and butterflies - all exhibit the same advanced state of design, the same "intelligence".

Our own art, our music, our architecture, displays this fundamental impulse to organise, to abstract from an unassembled mass of words, musical notes and assorted materials, an expressive complex of structured works.

In the world of inorganic matter, rock crystals materialise in many geometric forms. Organised, symmetrical, visually beautiful, they make nonsense of the old assertion that "there are no straight lines in nature". Supremely, there is one very specialised type of crystal which embodies all the qualities mentioned: the ice crystal, commonly known as the snowflake.

So, what's in a snowflake? Briefly, in the finest crystal of ice there is enough symmetry, artistry, design and "intelligence" to make even the most marvellous crop circle formation to appear crude and simplistic in comparison. Anyone who doubts this should inspect a copy of "Snow Crystals" by W. A. Bentley and W. J. Humphreys (Dover). Astonishment is guaranteed. Even so, I have not yet heard anyone say that snowflakes are spiritual symbols, coded messages from a distraught Earth Goddess, or evidence of an alien consciousness in our midst. Clearly, they are not - and neither, I believe, are crop circles, though I would like to think otherwise.

With the appearance in 1990 of long connecting pathways, boxes, keys, claws, curves and two triangles, the popular term "crop circle" has become something of a misnomer, though still a useful one. But the geometry of a circle is to crop circles what the hexagon is to the snowflake: a stage for a spectacular variety show of arms, branches, feathers, flowers and exquisite markings. While ice crystals can be divided into recognisable categories, their variations on a six-sided theme appear to be literally infinite. Though it is theoretically possible for two snowflakes to be identical, they have yet to be discovered. The diversity of snowflake configurations provides the best indication of the ever-expanding variety of crop circle patterns we can expect to see in the years ahead.

What distinguishes crop circles from snowflakes, and from all other similar organised forms, is their sheer scale and their speed of development, though it is impossible to say how quickly ice crystals evolved. There is also a small question of the nature of the energy involved in circle formation, which is the cause of so much mystery, speculation and bitter division. Those who scoff at the very mention of "energies" really aren't looking too far. It is not possible to flatten large areas of standing crops without exerting energy upon them. Even using feet and poles necessitates energy, though these methods tend to leave an awful mess as we have seen from known hoaxed circles.

The scientific community as a whole ought to be scratching its head at crop circles, for there is now enough anecdotal evidence to at least strongly suggest that the forces involved in circle formation are also responsible for atmospheric lights, electrical interference of many kinds, and, perhaps most significantly of all, for inducing altered states of consciousness in some cases. This last effect has profound implications for the subject of UFOlogy as a whole and for reported cases of alien contact and abduction in particular.

A Beautiful Hoax

What about the hoax theory? It's a legitimate question. Though I cannot, on balance, accept the "Total Hoax" theory, I do not believe it should be dismissed out of hand, any more than Meaden's vortex theory should be idly discounted. Meaden at least has the distinction of having formulated the only substantial hypothesis of circle formation, no matter how right or wrong it may be. Equally, nobody should overlook the possibility of an outrageous and beautiful hoax without first having regard for the long history of human ingenuity and resourcefulness, not to mention cunning and bizarre humour.

Anyone who seriously proposes the total hoax explanation must, however, face more serious problems than all the other theories put together. Here are just a few of them:

- *It would need to be explained not only how the hoaxer could create the intricate and damage-free floor patterns, but how the hoax has been perpetrated across continents and generations.*
- *What hoaxing method can convincingly produce concentric annular rings which are hundreds of feet in diameter, less than a foot wide and only lightly brushed into the corn, occurred at Bishops Cannings this summer?*
- *Would hoaxers really bother to create the many small "buckshot" circles, which are often remote, only a metre or so wide and sometimes superimposed on larger pre-existing formations?*
- *What about the dozen or so eye-witness accounts of circles being formed in a matter of seconds by some natural occurrence?*

This last question is the single most difficult problem which the total hoax hypothesis faces. Unless we regard all the witnesses as being deluded or dishonest, there is no way round it for the hoax merchants.

An Intelligence That Won't Tell

In the same way that serious questions must be asked of Meaden's vortex theory, they must also be directed at the claims of an intelligence behind the circles mystery. Simple questions, which should not be ignored. Of course, there is always the convenient reply that an alien and perhaps superior intelligence cannot be expected to behave in a way we would understand. Why not? If "it" is trying to communicate with us, and especially if it is more intelligent than we are, then it might well be expected to operate in a manner we could comprehend. Instead, it bombards us with a series of perplexing "symbols" before we have had a chance to even remotely grasp the first one. It's like trying to teach a child to read by throwing a book at it. If this alleged intelligence is trying to communicate with us than it is not doing it very intelligently.

In "The Latest Evidence", there is an extraordinary account by Pat Delgado of an event at Cheesefoot Head in 1986. Inscribed between two sets of tramlines

was the message "WE ARE NOT ALONE", with the words squashed together and the "N" in "alone" written back to front. What is extraordinary is that Delgado clearly sees this as the work of the same intelligence he believes is responsible for crop circles. If this is the case, it leaves one stark question: if this intelligence could write in plain English in 1986, why has it since proceeded to create hundreds of circles, rings and finally pictograms? The message can't be very urgent.

Of course, there is a much simpler explanation for this case: An Earthling Prank. Whoever hoaxed this message was more than likely making a jovial reference to the two single-ringed circles which already occupied the centre of the same field. They probably worked backwards from the field's edge to make sure they would fit all the words in. Operating in the dark and writing from right to left, they simply made an error and got the "N" back to front. They realised their mistake after it was too late, but did not make the same oversight when they came to the "N" in "NOT", which they wrote correctly. Delgado would no doubt dismiss me as a sceptic for taking this view, claiming there are still some questions to be answered about "known pertinent details" concerning this case. Why we aren't presented with these details is a mystery in itself. How can a reader be expected to form a proper conclusion when important information is being withheld?

Beyond this dubious case, there is one specific and yawning credibility gap in the intelligence theory: here we are, looking back to the wonders of the last circle season, eagerly awaiting the revelations of the next, sitting it out for six cold months without a circle in sight. Why?

We are meant to have amongst us a sentient power manipulating our standing crops in order to convey something of vital importance: about the parlous state of the global environment, about imminent doom, about new world orders in a new age, or whatever. Why does it stop talking to us when the combine harvesters are rolled out of their sheds? We know circles have appeared in snow, frosted grass and on sandy beaches. Can such a powerful force really be incapable of disturbing the soil in freshly ploughed fields, the very same fields it has been visiting all summer long? Why does it hibernate? It all adds up to an intelligence that won't tell. It won't tell because it's not there.

If it is there, let it make some clean white pictograms at Alton Barnes and Cheesefoot Head when snow next covers the fields. Those who advocate the intelligent message theory and would charge me with Philistinism, should first address this question of the winter lay-off, which suggests overwhelmingly that the circles mystery is generated by a blind natural phenomenon grounded in some unexplored quarter of physics and closely related to seasonal factors.

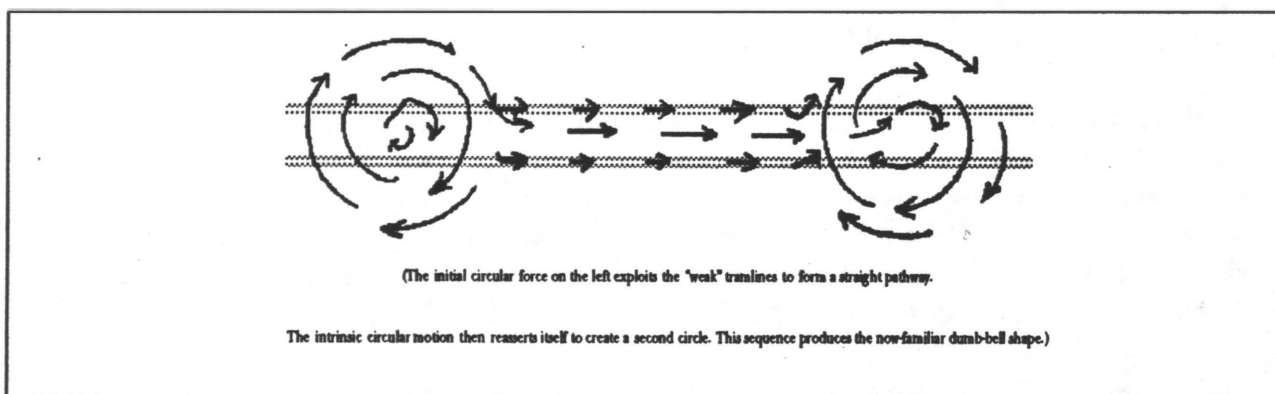
But what about the shapes? Certainly, some attempt should be made to explain the evolution of the huge variety of crop circle patterns we have seen in 1990. "Self-organisation" is at the root of it, I feel sure, but more needs to be said. I believe the key to the pictograms is the "breakthrough" of the long straight pathway, which in turn has provided the model for boxes, keys, claws and wings. I doubt if we would be seeing these peculiar features if it were not for the precedent of "linear flow", as opposed to the "circular flow" of ordinary

circles, which the straight pathway has set. But the straight pathway did not make its debut in 1990. The Whiteparish "panhandle" of 1987 (see "Circular Evidence") was an early forerunner of the recent complex formations.

The "panhandle" was a straight pathway, 14 metres long and two metres wide, which flowed down the tramlines from a single-ringed circle and halted abruptly. It was perhaps inevitable that the often-noted "gap-seeking" tendency of the circular motion which shapes crop circles would eventually "burst out", breaking the confines of its round enclosure to form a new feature. Perhaps it was equally inevitable that if this happened often enough a pathway would not terminate at a wall of standing crop but would eventually continue to the point where the initial swirling force regains its momentum to form another circle at the end, producing a dumb-bell shape. A repetition of this process would produce the basis of an Alton Barnes-type pictogram. If this were indeed the case, we could see the wonders of last summer as the sophisticated young cousins of the Whiteparish "panhandle".

The major influence on the patterns we see is the dominant shape of the fields themselves, the long straight lines which are formed by tractor tramlines and by the narrower spaces between the innumerable drills of standing crop, which in effect act as "mini-tramlines". Together they provide the lines of weakness which the phenomenon's inherent swirling force exploits. These lines are like the internal faces of a rock or the grain in a piece of wood, planes along which the material splits when a penetrating force is driven through. This is why we see so many large formations fixed precisely on tramlines or running parallel to tramlines.

Once this model was firmly established it became possible for other formations to reproduce it without using the field's natural "fault lines". The huge Allington Down pictogram (see "The Latest Evidence") cuts across the main tramlines at an angle of 45 degrees, but oddly enough is beautifully parallel to the tramlines at the field boundary. Ironically, by their agricultural practices, farmers have unwittingly shaped the bizarre and exquisite patterns which appear in their fields.



All this still leaves the two most important questions unanswered. What is the force which makes the circles and why is it on the increase? It seems probable that electricity in some form is responsible for the power behind circle formation. Electromagnetic radiation is central to various explanations, including Meaden's vortex theory. Piezo-electricity (pressure-generated energy in certain crystals) has been proposed as a cause, as has piezo-magnetism. But

even if any, or a combination of all these forces is responsible, it still doesn't tell us why the phenomenon is suddenly on the increase, like something from a John Wyndham novel.

I had intended to outline a speculative theory to explain the acceleration in the number and complexity of crop circles. It involves a heady mixture of the more controversial aspects of quantum physics, Rupert Sheldrake's hypothesis of "morphic resonance", and subtle but powerful links between the human mind and its environment, all of which are highly contentious and unproven. But, having read a number of circle-related publications recently, it would appear that the subject is suffering from a surfeit of wild hypotheses, and adding my own would only make matters worse. Suffice to say that in such a theory, any intelligence involved in the process of crop circle formation would be our own human intelligence.

Social Upheaval And Social Magnetism

I remember a beautiful evening in late June, standing by a field at Bishops Cannings, Wiltshire, chatting to a group of people, including the farmer. In the field were two huge overlapping ringed quintuplets, the subject of our eager discussion. Meanwhile, a series of the curious were stopping by the roadside and tramping across the field to examine the strange markings. Invariably, they would then make their way over to our group to ask the question we all ask each other, "What do you think they are?" It was amusing to see their response when they discovered the landowner was present, but he good-naturedly suggested they might like to contribute to the village church repair fund - a welcome contrast to the straight profit-taking of some farmers! This man was slowly restoring my faith in farmers, chatting easily about ley-lines, ancient sites and tales of the mysterious Wansdyke, looming behind us in the falling dusk.

Some people had told him of a night they had spent up on the hill, a night in which they had been alarmed by many strange noises and lights emanating from the ground. Having heard this and having since read John Haddington's "The Wansdyke Watch" in the first edition of "The Cereologist", I would think this location must be considered as a prime site for an intensive hi-tech surveillance operation in 1991.

The farmer was enthusiastic about the idea of circle proliferation being related to social upheaval. Was it mere co-incidence, he asked, that the escalation of circle numbers and complexity had taken place just before and just after the most profound social and political changes in Europe for over forty years? Couldn't this upheaval in human affairs be a direct cause of the beautiful patterns in his field? I've thought for a long time that circles were somehow connected to people, and the farmer's idea was an intriguing one. All the same, it has to be asked where the circles were in 1913/18 and 1939/45. Also, if contemporary circles are linked to current political events, why are they focused in a relatively stable England, when they ought to be scattered across the fields of Eastern Europe? Why aren't they appearing on the lawns of The White House, in the sands of Iraq and the hills of Kashmir?

There are many contentious aspects to the circles mystery, but one thing is beyond doubt: they are drawing people together from all walks of life, people who would not otherwise meet or exchange a word. They have captured our imagination and become a part of our culture. From Emmerdale Farm to pop videos and album covers, from News At Ten to the national press and beyond. Nothing in recent times has provoked so much excited speculation and wonder. Enthusiasts are forming groups and networks of information exchange. At the same time a steadily increasing number of books on the subject are being published, while among the scientific community it is gaining ground as a legitimate avenue for research, though some American scientists are apparently put off by the subject's fringe appeal.

In August I visited Pepperbox Hill, near Salisbury, to look for a particularly impressive formation I'd seen reported in the press. Much to my annoyance I was unable to find it, though I did happen upon another beauty by accident. I met a couple there and we stood on the brow of the hill, gazing down into the ripening field with its mysterious marks. We realised that if it were not for the formation below us we would not be speaking to each other. They said their son had called this effect "social magnetism". I cannot think of a better way to describe the attractive power of circles.

Dark Side Of A Circle

It seems no great mystery is complete without a conspiracy theory, and crop circles are no exception, with murky rumours on the grapevine. But the grapevine is not the most reliable source of information. Somewhere, between the roots and the shoots, the truth invariably gets trampled on. Yet there are whispers of a high-level cover up on the circles. Piecing the rumours together, it goes something like this:

With the remarkable spread of the circle phenomenon, the passing interest which the Ministry of Defence has shown over the years (in "Circular Evidence" there is an excellent photograph of an Army helicopter surveying a triple linear set of circles) has become something of a concern. The M.O.D. knows that some genuine and extraordinary unknown force is at work in the countryside, focused in an area which is home to some of its most important research and operational establishments. It needs to discover the nature and potential of this force before "somebody else" does. They also know that Terence Meaden's plasma vortices are not the answer to the problem, but at the same time his theory provides a convenient scientific smokescreen to deflect an alarming growth in public interest in the circles. For his part, Meaden is presumably happy for his version of the story to be promoted by the establishment.

Inescapably, the press and television have played a central role in the remarkable proceedings. Remember those heady weeks this summer, when circles were hitting the local and national newspapers and TV news bulletins almost daily? This culminated in an unprecedented spree of media coverage with the infamous and pathetically hoaxed circles at Westbury providing what initially seemed like a sensational stroke of luck for Andrews and Delgado at the outset of Operation Blackbird. In the following days some papers printed claims by people who were supposedly responsible for the miserable fakes. But who were the real culprits?

If you believe the garbled voice of the grapevine, it was the M.O.D. which organised the hoaxes, while at the same time giving the impression of co-operative technical assistance and advice to the Blackbird team. According to the vine, the M.O.D. subsequently confiscated tapes of two real circle formations, news of which was kept secret. If the M.O.D. hoaxed the Westbury circles with the aim of spiking the surveillance project, clouding public opinion and generally trivialising the subject in order to disguise its true importance, then its efforts were highly successful - at least, in the short term. After a glut of circles stories and the Westbury fiasco, a strange hiatus followed. Even the tendency of the media to suddenly switch its spotlights, combined with the emerging dominance of the gulf crisis, cannot properly explain the blanket of silence which seemed to fall over the circles, though they had not stopped appearing around the country. Whither the BBC...?

A scheduled appearance of Colin Andrews and Pat Delgado on the Wogan show was cancelled. Perhaps the reason for this was a technical one, purely innocent. Perhaps it was Colin and Pat who pulled out. Or maybe Terry suffers from circophobia. Who knows? In contrast, "Tomorrow's World" has since hailed Meaden's vortex theory as an important scientific discovery, while Jenny Randles - an advocate of Meaden's views - was given an easy ride on Radio Four's "Woman's Hour". Randles not only believes that the vortex theory explains the circles mystery, but that it also provides a comprehensive solution to the UFO problem, urging UFOlogists to now study meteorology instead.

Hang on a minute. Terence Meaden and Jenny Randles? This is an odd alliance to say the least. It's not that many years since Randles was publishing books like "UFO Reality" and "The UFO Conspiracy: The First Forty Years", giving credence to a long-term alien contact programme and a worldwide governmental cover-up on UFOs. If she now supports the plasma vortex hypothesis, she can hardly believe that electrified whirlwinds constitute an alien contact programme or that governments would see fit to cover up a freak weather feature.

As conspiracy theories go, it's an intriguing one. I can't say I believe it entirely, because I simply don't have enough facts available to me. At the same time, I can't believe the M.O.D. has no deep interest in the circles, or that the establishment takes Meaden's vortex theory too seriously.

Something Very Old

Throughout the 1980s, a handful of people were busy hunting, measuring and recording the relatively small number of circles and rings which were appearing. Principally, Terence Meaden, Colin Andrews, Pat Delgado and later Busty Taylor, spent countless painstaking hours of groundwork and aerial reconnaissance in their efforts to discover the secret of crop circles. Much credit should go to these four when we finally have the answer to the great circles mystery.

Of course, Meaden already has his answer, and so it seems does Pat Delgado. At the end of "The Latest Evidence", he outlines his "awareness" of how circles form, having made it clear that he believes some intelligent force is responsible: "What the energy is and who controls it will be explained at a time

considered to be more fitting," he adds mysteriously, having previously told us he has no wish to create an air of mystery.

Delgado's theory involves two functions, the first above ground and the second below ground. The surface priming function programmes each crop stem to shift in a certain direction, covering the area with thin "strokes" to create the shape of the formation before the crop has fallen. The subterranean secondary function then acts as a trigger mechanism to "fire" the primed area above it, causing the crop stems to move into their pre-designated patterns. This is an appealing theory, but if an intelligent agent is meant to be at the heart of it, as both Delgado and Andrews have asserted, it has a major flaw. The marked increase in small, randomly-placed "buckshot" circles, does not equate with a wilful act of circle-making. Why should this supposedly cognisant power put time and energy into producing trivial spots which appear utterly pointless and often disfigure huge and beautiful formations? This would be akin to an artist producing a masterpiece and then flicking splodges of paint all over it. Perhaps Delgado would say that buckshot circles represent an excess of energy aimlessly released, an effect of surplus power. But this doesn't hold water, as his theory first requires a selective act of location and programming. This means the many small circles, often only a metre or so in diameter and remotely placed, are as deliberately made as the masterworks of Alton Barnes, Hazeley Farm Fields and Pepperbox Hill. It just doesn't add up.

During a telephone conversation I had with Busty Taylor, I asked him what his beliefs were on the nature of the circle-forming agent. "It's something very old," he said, with his cards to his chest. If he's right we could rediscover something long forgotten about the world and about ourselves. Crop circles may well prove to be not only a golden opportunity for the broadening of our scientific horizons, but also an invaluable lesson in natural history.

Accident Or Design? In Conclusion

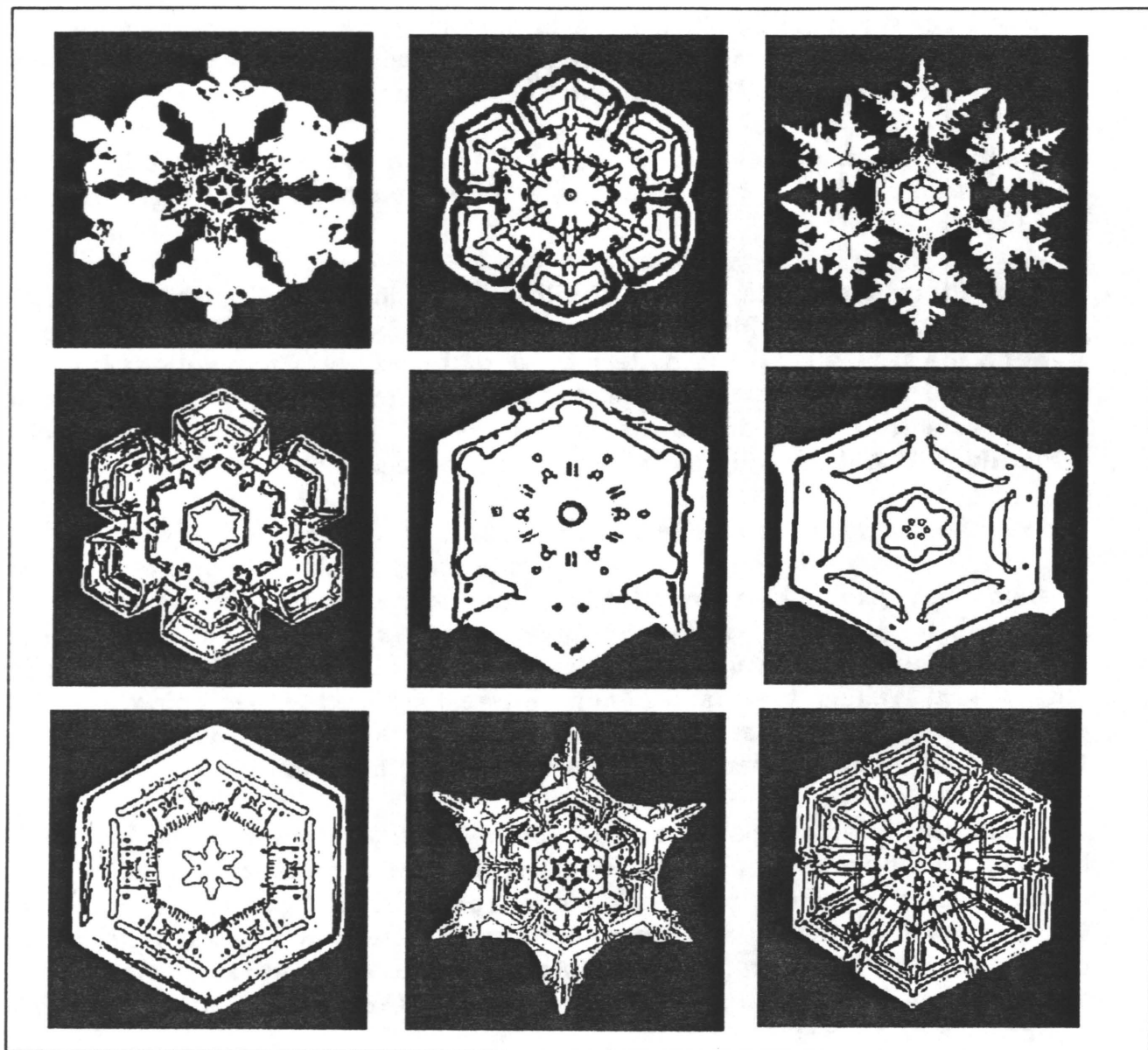
I sub-titled this article "Accident or Design" because on the face of it circles would have to be the result of either one or the other. But that's not necessarily so, and I believe it's both - simultaneously. They are accidental in the sense that they are a phenomenon arising from unknown natural conditions, as opposed to the deliberate secret code of an alien intelligence. They are also designed in the sense that they display the tendency of some dynamic natural forces to manifest in regular organised forms, such as snowflakes.

I have no hard evidence for these views, any more than others have hard evidence for theirs. I'm shooting in the dark like everyone else. Neither do I have any personal interest in the ideas I've outlined; they just happen to reflect my thinking on the subject. I'd much rather believe in the Andrews/Delgado/Wingfield version of the circles, which is a good deal more exciting and rather more hopeful, but I can't. At the same time I'll be perfectly happy to relinquish the opinions I've expressed if someone can produce a convincing alternative argument. For me, crop circles represent the highest order of landscape art, but, beautiful as they are, I believe they possess no intrinsic meaning. What meaning they do have is that which we project on to them. As such, they are "the wings of the soul," "Something sad and hurt," "a warning from the living Earth," and so on.

At the end of September I went back to Alton Barnes, on a cool and quiet afternoon. I knew the field would have been harvested, but I hoped some impression of the majestic pattern might be left in the stubble. Sadly, even the stubble had gone, ploughed under, and only a uniform expanse of brown earth remained. The grand formation had vanished with the summer, and so had the stream of visitors, the warm smell of ripening corn, the bookstalls and the 'photos and the t-shirts. Gone, too, was the helicopter, whisking people up and away over the fields in a frenzy of commerce and wonder. Fifteen quid for ten minutes in the sky, but worth every penny in my book. Now only the wind blew, and a solitary tractor churned up a distant field. My thoughts turned to next summer and what a new season might bring. Though the circles of 1990 had surprised and excited us time after time, I felt we had witnessed only a fraction of the whole.

Something tells me the circles story is only just beginning.

SNOW CRYSTALS



CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

With Network Contributors

There's now a small group of us getting together regularly down in Hampshire. We've had a couple of meetings and it's really great sharing the enthusiasm we each feel with others. Richard Andrews and George Wingfield came along - brandishing diagrams, photographs and dowsing rods - and we all gained much by being able to discuss our thoughts with them.

We hope to make ourselves as useful as possible to the CCCS - since the key to being properly involved in next year's circle season is, we feel, through the pooling of knowledge and resources at a local level on behalf of the greater organisation. At the present time our group is restricted to about a dozen people and it is anticipated that it will not grow much beyond this number. This is not to say that it is "exclusivist" in any way, but the problem of finding a suitable, regular meeting-place for a larger group has yet to be tackled. If we can successfully locate a hall or some such place where larger numbers can gather, I'll pass the details on through The Circular.

A number of new Circular recipients have been added to the mailing list since the last issue. We now have contacts in three countries - the U.K., the U.S.A. and France.

Thierry Pinvidic of Paris, France, writes: "Though it is said either by Andrews and Delgado or by Dr. Meaden that crop circles exist in foreign countries and not only in England, all the material I've gathered on this specific point shows that only a few of them look like the English circles. And some of these few cases seem to be the work of practical hoaxers (i.e. the Gulf Breeze circle [-Florida -bjk] and the Billy Meier circles in Switzerland).

"As for the 3 cases in France (Aix eu Provence, St. Soupplets & Wallers [-?bjk]), the shape is very different. The Aix case actually deals with a meteorological phenomenon (probably a tornado) but has not the clear-cut shape observed in the English circles. The St. Soupplet case is a result of thunder and lightning. The shape is vaguely circular but it has nothing to do with the English cases. The Wallers case is far more interesting at the beginning: clear-cut edges, geometrical shape. But it appeared to be the result of a landslide due to the presence of an archaeological structure under the ground...

"In May, we tried to make circles without leaving traces in a barley field in Fleville, near Nancy, France. But we failed and we left several traces of access to the circles. In June we employed a specialist of 'special effects' usually working for the cinema and we asked him to design in a wheat field a huge quintuplet with 2 rings (one clockwise, the second anti-clockwise). He did so within one hour (a shape 70 metres wide!) in the presence of a Court Usher ("Huissiere de Justice").

“Our current opinion is that the crop circles are man-made. The main problem is to know for what purpose such a lot of circles have been made during 10 years. We have not the answer, and, almost we are not dogmatic. So if another explanation fits the problem better than the man-made explanation we will surely be glad to accept it.”

Thierry has offered much of his material to The Circular; I am grateful for the offer, Thierry. Please send me as much as you can - even if it is written in French, I'll do my best to find a translator!

Another new recipient, Peter Breingan in Bristol, has this to say: “I have been doing some limited dowsing, especially in stone circles... I am convinced (as far as I can be with dowsing, which can play tricks if one is not extremely careful) that many stone circles have the same or very similar energy characteristics as do the crop circles. (I know that Richard Andrews & several other dowsers think this also.) I tend to believe maybe crop circles did once appear in ancient times - but this is something we shall only discover from the circle-maker(s).”

I've had a couple of meetings with Richard Andrews, and we discussed dowsing in some detail. It is a process with which I've not had much experience; my own results are inconsistent, but I'm still very impressed with Richard's findings and hope to coax him into providing us with an article for a future issue. Richard is a man of great depth, and his experiences have led him into areas of research that have much to say about our spiritual inter-relatedness with the Earth that we would be wise to consider. This is essentially his work and so I will not attempt to speak on his behalf. (However, I've put together a few related thoughts in an article entitled “Talking with Angels” to be included in a future issue.)

Now to America. I have a disc-jockey pen-friend who lives in Wichita, Kansas, by the name of Randy Morrow. He and his mother, Judy, often write to us, and in the last letter we received, dated September 20th, Judy wrote: “Just last night on our local news was a story about a strange ‘circle’ that had appeared in a field near here and reference was made to the circles appearing over there [in England -bjk] last summer...What I saw hardly resembled a circle. Randy said they explained that was because all the people interested in UFOs had trampled all over and around it...”

And from Canada, courtesy of Una Dawood in Swindon (part of Alan Rayner's group), a newspaper report from The Orange County Register, Sunday September 30th: “Alvena, Saskatchewan. - Like a whirling dervish from nowhere, something poked four large holes in a wheat field near Tweedsmuir, Saskatchewan. The largest ring is 21 yards across...Three days after the finding in late August near Tweedsmuir, north of Prince Albert, a smaller ring was found in a field near Alvena, 45 miles north-east of Saskatoon.

At about the same time, six similar rings were reported in fields across southern Manitoba, one each in St. Francis-Xavier, Rosser, Niverville and Lockport, and two in Petersfield. The same crop circles are appearing almost weekly now across the prairies as farmers complete their harvest. A new series of rings appeared last week in Meath Park, Saskatchewan...

"Mike Shawaga, a farmer near Alvena, was swathing his bumper wheat crop early on the morning of August 31st when he discovered his own enigma. 'My son - he's 15 - he says it's the aliens,' Shawaga, 57, said with a chuckle. 'Me? I don't know. Our family's been farming here since 1907. My father - he's 80 - he's never seen anything like it.'

"Darrell Roth, publisher of the local Landscapes Weekly, said, 'After seeing this, I believe in UFOs.' The four Tweedsmuir circles range from 16 to 21 yards in diameter, within 165 yards of each other, and show no trace of human mischief... 'It has to be a spaceship,' Roth said. [Oh dear! -bjk] 'The prank theory has been totally ruled out here. We're pretty arrogant if we think we're the only intelligent life form in the universe.'

"Christopher Rutkowski, co-ordinator of the UFOlogy Research Centre of Manitoba in Winnipeg, has investigated this summer's sudden outburst of rings in the province with his four colleagues. 'In Manitoba we have three theories,' Rutkowski said. 'They're either a hoax, a UFO or some unknown meteorological or weather phenomenon. All the rings have appeared in wheat fields, not in barley, flax or hay.'

"Most of the Saskatchewan rings run clockwise, while Manitoba's run counter-clockwise. But some rings, such as those in Shawaga's field and those at Tweedsmuir, are made up of concentric swirls that are alternately clockwise and counter-clockwise."

The article goes on to explain what we in this country are already familiar with, that is, the vortex theory. (In America, they prefer to describe them as a form of "dust-devil".) It concludes with Rutkowski's words: "Sure, we get the odd twister around here, but it would have to stick around for a long time to make a thing like that."

Una also offered me a loan of her video-copy of an American TV news magazine item, run on ABC's "20/20" programme. By coincidence (!), Richard Andrews also has a copy of it and so I saw it when I visited with him!

More good wishes for the continuing success of our newsletter came from Colin Andrews. Thanks, Colin. (How about an article?)

From Terence Meaden: "Your Circular is looking quite interesting and newsy. However, do not be surprised to hear that I disagree with a lot of statements in it, all of which I would challenge but for lack of time." Dr. Meaden has kindly granted permission for occasional articles from his Journal of Meteorology to be reproduced here, which helps to balance our outlook, so thanks also to you, Terence.

Alan Rayner's "Beckhampton and District Crop Pictogram Monitoring Group" produce a monthly newsletter which I find most interesting. There's news about forthcoming meetings and other items, such as indications that Dr. Meaden's cropwatch meetings next year will commence on 14 or 21st June; the Mutual UFO Network based in Colorado is investigating circle reports in

America as well as UFO activity, and claiming there's a government conspiracy to cover up evidence. Also news that Sandy Reid's observation of a crop-circle forming in Scotland has now been cast into doubt. From Kansas City (near my pen-friend - another coincidence?), a newspaper cutting concerning a single circle, less than 12 feet in diameter. Must be the one Randy and Judy reported to me! Alan Rayner also notes that several counties in Britain have been visited this year, as well as the Netherlands and Germany - but not, apparently, France or Wales. We all wonder why these places should be off the visiting list.

Questions are posed for a future group meeting, which we would all do well to ponder:

A. Is the "circle maker" intelligent or not?

B. If there is an intelligent message behind the phenomenon, what do you think it is?

C. Why now?

D. What next?

E. What can or should we do - if anything?

Alan Rayner can be contacted at 66 West Overton, Wiltshire SN8 4ER. (0672 86315.) And thanks, Alan, for the splendid review of *The Circular*.

Whitley Strieber, through his wife Anne, sends us best wishes from New York. I'm hoping that we'll be treated to his thoughts on the subject when he has time.

New recipient Edward Nye asks for map references for all occurrences reported. Whew! Sorry, Edward, but I'm not able to fulfil your desire right now, but watch this space! To keep you going for a while, here's a few references from Alan Rayner's newsletter:

Alton Barnes - 114 626 11/12 July

Milk Hill - 093 637 11/12 July

Lockeridge - 122 646 20/21 July

Beckhampton - 083 685 25/26 July

Kennetts - 110 673 26/27 July.

Now to Jenny Randles and Paul Fuller, who are often accused of using the Meaden vortex as a scientific catch-all for both circles and UFOs. (Some dedicated UFOlogists seem to take the view that Jenny and Paul are "selling out" to the scientists by doing this and that the scientific community should be kept well away from UFO research. Many feel that scientists are no more than professional "debunkers" whose objective training makes it impossible for

them to accept any UFO hypothesis that doesn't relate to their own particular field.)

Replying to a correspondent who wonders why she (Jenny) insists on involving scientists in attempts to explain the UFO mystery in the October issue of "Northern UFO News" (#6 for six, from 37 Heathbank Road, Cheadle Heath, Stockport, Cheshire SK3 0UP), Jenny discusses the reasons why she believes that some information regarding UFOs and circles *can* be referred to the scientific fraternity without compromising the integrity of genuine UFO investigation.

Jenny says, "We DO have a responsibility to direct UFO evidence - when it is relevant - toward mainstream science. That is why I have been so interested in the crop circles (which, with reservations, I still believe are explained by extending the boundaries of known atmospheric physics). It is why I concede that we should belatedly acknowledge the contributions to UFOlogy in terms of phenomena such as ball lightning and optical effects spelt out by so-called debunkers like Philip Klass and Steuart (sic) Campbell.

"Where they may have been at fault, and where there is a danger regarding the Meaden vortex theory for crop circles and UFOs, is in trying to use the discovery to explain everything away.

"It may be that from 'Crop Circles: A Mystery Solved' Paul Fuller and I will stand accused of that. However, I stress the title was NOT our proposal (we called the book 'The Alien Delusion') and we see its problems. For the record, I think the vortex that Meaden has identified is a key to many unexplained UFO cases in various categories (especially traces, car-stops and physiological effects) - but it is positively NOT a universal panacea. It reduces the 5% of unexplained cases, I believe, but it probably will NOT eliminate them altogether, because the UFO phenomenon is a catch-all term for a range of different unidentified events and experiences.

"Paul and I are NOT alleging that the Meaden vortex is THE answer - just an interesting (probably significant) part of it; although in terms of 'solving' the basic crop circle mystery things might be different. We would URGE people not to argue that we have all the answers. My paper at the Sheffield Conference did not discuss 'the death of UFOlogy' because the Meaden vortex has killed it off. Rather I was suggesting the name UFOlogy is too tied to one theory (the ETH ['Extra Terrestrial Hypothesis' - bjk]) for it to be other than a millstone.

"Having said that, [the correspondent's] point cannot be ignored. There remain baffling cases - of which the object seen at Skelmersdale is certainly one. IF reports like this are bona-fide (and as we all know the likelihood that they are all hoaxes is almost nil) then we need more than mere atmospheric phenomena to solve the riddles. It MAY be that certain atmospheric phenomena, via strange states of consciousness, are able to offer up clues. However, none of us can rule out that something different (or stranger) lies behind a few percent of the cases and - however strongly we may disagree with that perception as an individual - we have a responsibility to examine and debate ALL options."

Does this contradict a previous statement, made at the TORRO Conference in July 1990? Jenny (and Paul Fuller) stated: "We have published a book which dispels all the recent media hysteria surrounding the crop circles and which applies Dr. Meaden's challenging new theory to those remaining unexplained [UFO] cases. ... We believe that [Meaden] has discovered a novel atmospheric force which clearly accounts for a major part of - and possibly all of - the unexplained UFO evidence including its more bizarre aspects. **Quite simply, we suggest UFO research in its own right is now dead and has become part of meteorology!**" (Circles Research 1, p. 108. Their emphasis. These Proceedings have been re-issued as a hardback book entitled "Circles From The Sky" in which there are additional pages and an index.)

Well, whatever the sense of it, maybe Paul Fuller's words can clarify the matter. He writes: "Believe it or not I share many of the reservations being expressed by your contributors about Meaden's vortex theory and I too look forward to seeing how he explains the so-called 'pictograms'..."

"I hope that...the second issue of 'The Crop Watcher'...will explain the dilemma that Jenny and myself face. Our problem is that we have nearly twenty eye-witness accounts of crop circles being created by wind vortices or accounts where witnesses claimed that they saw wind vortices at locations where crop circles had just appeared or appeared very soon thereafter. The second issue of 'The Crop Watcher' carries a list of 14 of these accounts and asks the question 'If these people are not seeing wind vortices creating crop circles then critics of Meaden's theory must explain exactly what they ARE seeing!' [That's not a question, Paul, it's a statement, but one that I think we would all agree with! - see later comments. bjk]

"Noticeably these eye-witnesses are NOT seeing wind vortices creating 'pictograms'; thus I accept the validity of the scepticism being expressed by some of your contributors. Nevertheless these accounts are largely consistent and deserve to be debated. Is it possible that Meaden's theory could account for the simpler formations whilst other theories (eg hoaxing) might be required to account for the more complex patterns (which actually make up only 2 or 3 percent of the known evidence)?"

In a later letter, Paul continues the theme about the list of 14 eye-witness accounts to be listed in issue 2 of his newsletter: "This [list] will be a real eye-opener for some of our critics, but the major problem with these accounts is that no-one is saying that they are seeing 'pictograms', they are only seeing singles and doubles forming. I accept your point [made by me in a letter - bjk] that the mechanics of Meaden's meteorological vortex remain somewhat obscure, but this is partly because we are under so much pressure that it is proving difficult to get our side of the research into print whilst we deal with the media and the phenomenon itself.

"I'm certainly aware of a great deal of evidence that has not yet been published that makes the meteorological mechanism almost overwhelmingly true for the simple patterns; having said that, **I'm now aware of evidence which makes his theory utterly untenable for some of the more fantastic formations!** Perhaps we have 2 crop-circle phenomena???" (My emphasis -bjk.)

In conclusion, Paul says: "...I should stress that our book 'Crop Circles: A Mystery Solved' should have had a '?' at the end of our title, but our publishers utterly refused to allow this and forced us at the point of a gun to omit the '?' ... I know no-one will believe us when we say this but it is true nevertheless..."

(In issue 2 of The Circular I drew attention to a list of meteorologists, published in an un-named circle newsletter, that was intended to show that there is, indeed, support for Meaden's theory in the meteorological field. It seemed to me that it could have been made clearer just who amongst that list was either present at the TORRO Conference in July, or who was a member of TORRO, or both. The list was in "The Crop Watcher".

Paul has asked me to point out that the list was not "unbiased", but that this fact had been pointed out in its "Crop Watcher" introduction; my own observation, Paul judged, had not taken this into account. I concur that being an associate of Meaden does not automatically invalidate the view held by that associate. The thrust of my argument was not, in any case, to dispute the credentials or question the views held by the names in the list, and I am happy to set the record straight. "The Crop Watcher" is available from 3 Selbourne Court, Tavistock Close, Romsey, Hampshire SO51 7TY, priced at £1.25 per issue or £7.00 for six issues a year. Cheques payable to "The Crop Watcher".)

I look forward to reading those eye-witness accounts, but there are some thoughts that spring to mind even before reviewing them:

1) It is said by scientists that the Meaden vortex is a new, as-yet little-understood phenomenon of atmospheric mechanics; that it has **never before been observed** until quite recently;

2) To my knowledge, there have been no eye-witness accounts recorded by a **qualified scientific observer** actually out in the field, and therefore no reference against which to check the reports made by **scientifically unqualified** observers - at least, to what would, in any other field of research, be to scientists' satisfaction;

3) Can any observations made by ordinary folk, who - out for nothing more than, say, a pleasant stroll - suddenly find themselves confronted with an unusual event, be said to be **scientifically** satisfactory? Many people have trouble recalling the correct sequence of unexpected events in something as relatively unusual as, say, a shooting or a bank-robbery. There may be as many interpretations as there are witnesses. How much more confused, then, will their observations be of something that happens so rarely as to have been previously unseen?

4) The argument, that observations of strange phenomena in the sky - made by people unprepared for the event - are only misinterpretations of other things, has often been made when attempting to explain the UFO mystery. It is said that these observers are, as it were, culturally indoctrinated to perceive these events from a UFOlogical point of view, instead of being able to see things as they really are. This is a good point - but it works both ways. The constant insistence, made this time by scientists instead of UFO cultists, that what is being seen is a vortex, may prepare those who have come into contact

with this idea through the media to **expect to see just such a thing**. There are many who, casually glancing through their newspapers and giving the subject no more than a passing thought, have reached the conclusion that a vortex is responsible. There are probably just as many who think it is all an elaborate hoax because of this same association of ideas - made, perhaps, through a chance encounter with just one newspaper article or silly-season TV news item. Should they be fortunate enough to be in the right place at the right time, their minds will snap back to that report conjecturing a vortex and seek to associate the two things for convenience - and peace of mind.

It is only natural to find those who support the vortex theory using every means at their disposal, every shred of potential evidence, to put their views across and underpin their findings. But it should be remembered that what we are dealing with is - for our age - an entirely new and perplexing phenomenon, and that the human race now moves through life using a different set of parameters for defining reality than did our ancestors.

It seems to me that the time taken - or allowed - to digest information can be measured in inverse proportion to the amount of information available - and we have more available now than perhaps ever before. Generally, people want - expect - instant answers to their questions, immediate results for their efforts. If those being questioned cannot give a satisfactory answer straight away, they can be erroneously perceived as being "indecisive", unsure of themselves, somehow lacking conviction; anything they say is therefore not to be taken as "Gospel". It is easy, then, to fall into the trap of dogmatising one's views for fear of ridicule.

I'm pleased to see that Jenny and Paul **are** prepared to keep an open mind about things - for such is the conclusion I draw from their most recent statements recounted above. Just in case anyone thought that they were die-hard "debunkers", it should be clear that they have modified their views and don't mind acknowledging the existence of evidence - even if the rest of us haven't had the chance to review it for ourselves - that seemingly contradicts their initial conclusions.

I would recommend "Crop Circles: A Mystery Solved" (hardback version published by Robert Hale, price £13.95) as essential reading for all circle enthusiasts. Despite displaying an obsession with criticising the research of other investigators, it contains work of much value.

This critical obsession is - sadly, I think - continued in "The Crop Watcher", which has won little or no support from the circle enthusiasts with whom I've been in contact. I venture to make a suggestion: Paul and his editorial team might do well to think again about this policy.

The feeling is best summed up by Ray Cox of Halesowen who, continuing the theme of his letter (The Circular Vol. 1, No. 2), says: "I was premature - or perhaps out of date - when I said that I hoped that antipathies over crop circles might be avoided. There's light years of difference - opposite polarities, we might say - between groups like Fountain International and their journal and 'The Crop Watcher'. I find it rather ironic that the latter, with the intention of

being objective and scientific, is the one journal which seems so cynical, and somewhat overboard with clever humour. Even if he is in error with a few points in 'The Cereologist', John Michell does not deserve the harsh attack made upon his journal in 'The Crop Watcher'. He is a respected writer of long standing of the Earth Mysteries and holistic school, concerned with the re-emergence of the old, traditional world-view..." (There will be more from Ray in a future issue.)



"The struggle to explain flattened corn circles, diversely attributed to aliens, wind and hoaxers, is now known to have taxed great minds more than 300 years ago, writes Toby Moore.

"Fairies, rutting deer, moles and urinating cattle, then the popular explanations for the phenomena, were dismissed in 1686 by Professor Robert Plot, a Fellow of the Royal Society and Professor of Chemistry at Oxford University. In his work, the Natural History of Staffordshire, he searched for 'some higher principle' and concluded weather conditions produced the effect."

"Two modern authors, Jenny Bandles and Paul Fuller in 'Crop Circles: A Mystery Solved', have reached similar conclusions. They hope their work will end the 'circle season' with its attendant 'nonsense about alien visitors'..."

" 'Scientific study has been up against this the whole time,' Mr Fuller said..."

"On the cusp of the age of Restoration, Prof Plot was torn between a rigorously scientific explanation and conceding that the circles could indeed have been caused by 'the Fairies so much talk'd about'. He said: 'They may indeed occasion such Circles.' He also noted that contemporary scientific opinion thought the repetitive plodding of animals was a likely cause.

"However, Prof Plot concluded lightning caused the circles. 'They must needs be the effects of lightning, exploded from the clouds most times in a circular manner.' He argued that the energy in the cloud 'wherein it was pent' would naturally be forced out in a conical manner 'so as at due distance to become a Circle and in that form to strike the Earth.'

"Sometimes the lightning would be forced out in the shape of a rectangle to form a corresponding shape on the land.

"His conclusions are strikingly similar to those of Dr Terence Meaden...who, after a decade of research, is the leading scientific authority on crop circles. He also believes weather conditions, and wind energy in particular, cause them."

[-b]k note: Prof Plot worked at Oxford University, which is where much TORRO research is conducted. I am surprised it took so long for this information to come to light, given the connection and the digging into historical records that must have been conducted by now. And is Prof Plot referring to Crop Circles? Or "Fairy Rings/Circles"? In any case, lightning and wind vortices are worlds apart. Our circles are not connected with lightning.]

THE NATURE OF SYMBOLISM

From The Work Of P. D. Ouspensky

P. D. Ouspensky (1878 - 1947) was born in Moscow. His books "Tertium Organum" (written 1912) and "A New Model of the Universe" (written 1914) revealed his stature as a thinker and his deep preoccupation with the problems of man's existence. After his work with G. I. Gurdjieff between 1915 and 1918 his interest centred on the practical study of methods for development of consciousness in man.

This extract is taken from "A New Model of the Universe" and is reproduced here with kind permission of the publishers, Arkana, an imprint of Penguin Books.



 "Oswald Wirth, in his book 'Le Symbolisme Hermetique' (Publications initiatiques), speaks of the language of symbols in a very interesting way:

" 'A symbol can always be studied from an indefinite number of points of view; and each thinker has the right to discover in the symbol a new meaning corresponding to the logic of his own conceptions.

" 'As a matter of fact symbols are precisely intended to awaken ideas sleeping in our consciousness. They arouse a thought by means of suggestion and thus cause the truth which lies hidden in the depths of our spirit to reveal itself.

" 'In order that symbols could speak, it is essential that we should have in ourselves the germs of the ideas, the revelation of which constitutes the mission of the symbols. But no revelation whatever is possible if the mind is empty, sterile and inert.

" 'For this reason symbols do not appeal to everyone, cannot speak to everyone. They especially elude minds which claim to be positive and which base their reasoning only on inert scientific and dogmatic formulae. The practical utility of these formulae cannot be contested, but from the philosophical point of view they represent only frozen thought, artificially limited, made immovable to such an extent, that it seems dead in comparison with the living thought, indefinite, complex and mobile, which is reflected in symbols.

" 'It is perfectly clear that symbols are not created for expounding what are called scientific truths.

" 'By their very nature the symbols must remain elastic, vague and ambiguous, like the sayings of an oracle. Their role is to unveil mysteries, leaving the mind all its freedom.

“ Unlike despotic orthodoxies, a symbol favours independence. Only a symbol can deliver a man from the slavery of words and formulae and allow him to attain to the possibility of thinking freely. It is impossible to avoid the use of symbols if one desires to penetrate into the secrets (mysteries), that is to say, into those truths which can so easily be transformed into monstrous delusions as soon as people attempt to express them in direct language without the help of symbolical allegories. The silence which was imposed on initiates finds its justification in this. Occult secrets require for their understanding an effort of the mind, they can illuminate the mind inwardly, but they cannot serve as a theme for rhetorical arguments. Occult knowledge cannot be transmitted either orally or in writing. It can only be acquired by deep meditation. It is necessary to penetrate deep into oneself in order to discover it. And those who seek it outside themselves are on the wrong path. It is in this sense that the words of Socrates “Know thyself” must be understood.

“ In the realm of symbolism one must not attempt to be too exact. Symbols correspond to ideas which by their very nature are difficult to embrace, and which are quite impossible to reduce to scholastic definitions.

“ Scholastics bring to the ultimate analysis only words, that is to say, something entirely artificial. By its very nature a word is an instrument of paradox. Any theme can be defended by means of argumentation. This is so because every discipline deals not with realities reaching our consciousness by themselves, but only with their oral representations, with the fantasies of our spirit which often allows itself to be deceived with this false coin of our thought.

“ Hermetic philosophy is distinguished by its being able to move away from words and to immerse itself in the contemplation of things taken by themselves, in their own essence.

“ And there is nothing surprising in the fact that under these conditions philosophy divided into two streams. One had its origin in the logic of Aristotle and maintained the possibility of arriving at truth by way of reasonings based on premises regarded as incontestable.

“ This was the official philosophy that was taught at (ordinary) schools, whence the term “scholastic”.

“ The other philosophy followed another direction, always more or less occult, in the sense that it was always cloaked in mystery and passed on its teachings only under the cover of enigmas, allegories and symbols. Through Plato and Pythagoras this philosophy claimed to have come down from the Egyptian Hierophants and from the very founder of their science, Hermes Trismegistus, whence it was called “Hermetic”.

“ The disciple of Hermes was silent, he never disputed nor did he try to convince any one about anything. Enclosed within himself, he was absorbed in deep meditation and finally by this means penetrated into the secrets of Nature. He earned the confidence of Isis and entered into relations with the true initiates. Gnosis opened to him the principles of the holy ancient sciences, from which Astrology, Magic and the Cabala were gradually formed.

“ ‘These sciences officially called “dead” all refer to the same subject, to the discovery of hidden laws which govern the universe. And they differ from the official science of physics by their more mysterious and transcendental character. These sciences constitute the Hermetic philosophy.

“ ‘This philosophy is further distinguished by the fact that it was never content to be purely speculative (theoretical). As a matter of fact, it always followed a practical aim, seeking for actual results; its problem was always concerned with what is called the Realisation of the Great Work.’

“In the book ‘L’Imposition des mains’, Oswald Wirth writes on the same subject:


“ ‘A special reason explains why theories which were so famous in the Middle Ages and down to the 18th century have lost credit in our eyes. We have lost the key to the language in which these theories were expressed. We have quite a different way of speaking. In past times people did not pretend to assume that they used strictly exact terms about everything. They considered that approximations were quite sufficient, because the pure truth was fatally inexpressible. The ideal truth will not allow itself to be confined to any formula. It follows from this that in a certain sense every word is a lie. The inner side of thought, its fundamental spirit, eludes us. This is the Deity, which continually reveals itself and which nevertheless allows itself to be seen only in its reflections. For this reason Moses could not see the face of Jehovah.

“ ‘It follows from this that when it is necessary to express transcendental ideas one is forced to have recourse to figurative language. It is impossible to do without allegories and symbols. This is not at all a matter of choice, very often there is no other way of making oneself understood.

“ ‘Pure thought cannot be transmitted, it is necessary to clothe it with something. But this clothing is always transparent for him who knows how to see.

“ ‘Therefore Hermetism addresses itself to those thinkers who are compelled by an inner voice to go into the depths of all things and remains incomprehensible to those who stop at the external meaning of words.’

“S. Guaita says in his book, ‘Au Seuil du Mystere’:

“ ‘To enclose all truth in spoken language, to express the highest occult mysteries in an abstract style, this would not only be useless, dangerous and sacrilegious, but also impossible. There are truths of a subtle, synthetic and divine order, to express which in all their inviolate completeness, human language is incapable. Only music can sometimes make the soul feel them, only ecstasy can show them in absolute vision, and only esoteric symbolism can reveal them to the spirit in a concrete way.’ “ 

- P. D. Ouspensky, “A New Model of the Universe”, first published 1934. Arkana (through Penguin) 1984, pp.217-220.

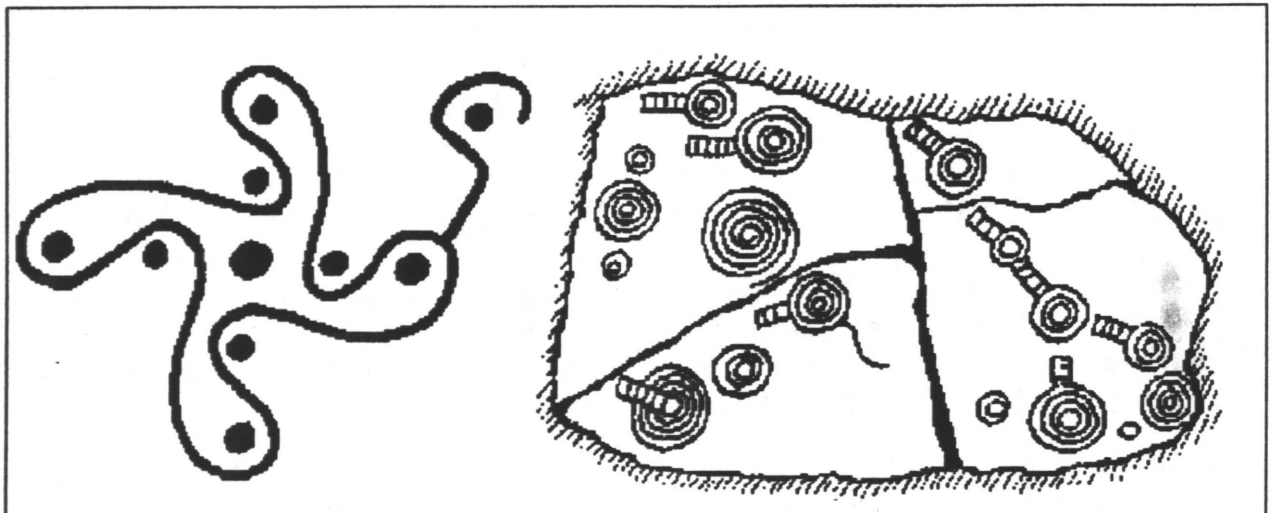
FIELD WORK

CROP CIRCLES INVESTIGATION:

A PERSONAL APPROACH

John F. Langrish

It was probably around 1965, at the impressionable age of eight years, that my interest in the mysteries of the Earth began. We were living within easy walking distance of Ilkley Moor and the Cow and Calf rocks in Yorkshire. I spent many wonderful hours exploring these rocky acres, sometimes stopping to ponder over the strange 'cup and ring' and 'swastika' stone carvings. I was at an age when I liked to have an answer to everything, but no adult seemed able to explain these ancient symbols to my satisfaction.



Then came the UFOs. I don't remember the date, year or time, just that it was mid-sixties and a bright sunny day, with a blue almost cloudless sky. My mother, sister and I were out walking on Ilkley Moor towards The Tarn from White Wells (a solitary building, housing what are known as The Roman Baths). I chanced to glance up to the sky and immediately noticed two objects high above us. They were circular and shining brightly with reflected sunlight. The undersides looked like shallow truncated cones with fluted edges. There were no exhaust or vapour trails visible and the objects appeared to be stationary.

Excitedly, I called out to my mother, frantically pointing to the shapes far above us. Alas, she couldn't see them. As I desperately endeavoured to direct her gaze, they suddenly accelerated away with incredible velocity. From being stationary they had vanished from sight within a second or two! The sighting was never reported, but I am certain that what I saw were not conventional aircraft/satellites/balloons etc. The seed had been sown ... For me at least, there was something in this UFO business and I longed for another sighting ... However, I was destined to wait until 1978 before those hopes were fulfilled.

This second sighting took place during a train journey from Brindisi on the south-east coast of Italy, to Paris. The railway follows the coast for many miles before heading inland. I reckon we had been travelling about an hour when I looked out of the west-facing windows of the carriage. Directly opposite was a most strange object, hovering over the parched landscape. This was in broad daylight, but the object didn't look shiny; if anything, it looked matt-black. There were no details visible, nor lights or vapour trail, just a black shape silhouetted against the hazy sky. It was a longish rectangular shape in the vertical position. The top looked square, but the bottom tapered from the right side down to a sharpish point on the left. It was rocking slightly from side to side, from a point which I judged to be about one third of its length down. Apart from this, there appeared to be no other movement. I pointed out the object to the strangers with whom I shared the carriage compartment and they all saw it (at least I knew that I wasn't imagining things!). We all observed the UFO for several minutes until it was too far behind the train to be seen.

I have had no further UFO sightings, although a very vivid dream from about 1979 comes to mind. It was a real nightmare from which I was thankful to awake. In the dream, the city of Coventry (where I then lived) was being attacked by hundreds of strange-looking spacecraft. Each one looked like two spheres connected together by a long straight shaft. They were flying in huge formations with up to twenty or thirty in each drove. They came over at a constant height and at a constant speed. In the darkness they shone like satellites and repeatedly bombed the city. I awoke in a very disturbed state, thanking God that this had been but a dream.

A lot has happened since 1979; the symbolic dumb-bell shape which appeared in my dream has now appeared in the corn fields of southern England for all to see. Though I would hasten to add that I don't for a moment believe that these crop formations are caused by alien space invaders. The Earth is a strange and wonderful place and I believe it is far more likely that the forces responsible are rooted to this planet as strongly as the crops they flatten. I would also go as far as saying that what we are witnessing today was also witnessed by our prehistoric ancestors. Like us, they were enthralled by such events, making their own records in earth and stone. This explains the similarity in design of ancient rock carvings from around the world, originating at around the same time.

Looking back over the last few years I find it almost unbelievable that I knew nothing of crop circles until 1989. Even after the amazing events of 1990 there are still probably millions of people who are completely ignorant of their existence. This fact becomes easier to comprehend when one considers the quality of coverage given by the popular press. The subject has been misrepresented and associated with ridicule to such an extent that genuine interest from the lay-public has not developed, or at best been quenched. I was living near Winchester in 1989, when in early summer I received a phone call from a friend in Swindon. Pat sounded excited and told me he'd just seen a most incredible news feature on the television. The report on BBC Bristol's 'Points West' programme had been about a group of swirled circles which had appeared in a wheat field. Aerial film shots were included, showing a group of several circles laid out like a crucifix ...

Well, that was where it all started for me. I phoned the producer of the programme and (not without difficulty) established the approximate location of the circles. An hour's motorcycle ride later had me in Swindon to pick up Pat. We roared out of town on the old Honda twin, heading south up the escarpment towards Avebury. It was a wet blustery day and as we slowed down to take the tight bends within Avebury's henge, a thought came to mind. I was wondering if there might be some connection between these old circles of earth and stone and our destination, the mystery circles in a field just a few miles to the west. (I was at this time unaware of the 1988 circles at Silbury Hill.)

I remember well the strength of wind that day; we took the full brunt of it as we headed west on the A4 from Beckhampton. The old 350cc bike was struggling to maintain 45mph. After a while we spotted the Cherill White Horse and pulled over. We didn't know exactly where the circles lay, but figured that from the elevated position of the Horse we would see them. On foot we began to climb the slope, glancing back across the fields every now and then. About half way up we began to see some marks in the field directly opposite. Excitement grew as we climbed higher, by now oblivious to the wind and rain. We soon reached a point where our view of the field left us in no doubt: below were the circles Pat had seen on television. Standing in silence and gazing down on the sight for a minute or two, there seemed little else to do other than to go down and take a closer look. What we saw was quite dumbfounding, as mysterious and intriguing as the ancient henge at Avebury, but manifested here slap-bang in the present.

We stood in the pouring rain, staring at the circles for some time, not another soul in sight. It suddenly dawned on me how incongruous the road seemed, just a few hundred yards away. The occasional car sped past, the driver's attention fixed upon it, unaware of our presence or that of the circles in the corn. What could motivate anybody into producing this thing as a hoax? If it was done as a joke, then surely it would have been positioned such that it could easily be seen. A more obvious choice would have been the field immediately below the White Horse, or in a place visible from the road. Heads reeling with unanswered questions, we left the field and made a quick reconnaissance from the top of Silbury Hill before retiring to the Waggon and Horses to soak up some warmth and a beer.

I had heard about Andrews' and Delgado's 'Circular Evidence', but had been unable to obtain a copy until September 1989. On reading it I was absolutely amazed to discover how many circles had occurred within a few miles of my home. But alas, it was by then too late to view any of that summer's formations. I resolved, however, to make my own observations and records for 1990. The reason I decided to undertake a private study - apart from sheer curiosity - was largely due to the fact that the Andrews-Delgado team had apparently discarded what seemed to be an important part of the puzzle. Their book gives only vague (if any) information about the locational relationship between circle sites, or of that between circle sites and other topographical features. Somehow I felt that these relationships might be relevant. I was furious to discover if there was any connection between the location of corn circles and that of ancient sites of tumulus mounds, barrows and other earthworks.

I equipped myself with a six-metre pole (five broom sticks) and a compact motor-wind 35mm camera. A mini 'design project' soon provided a pull-string operated (bell-crank) mechanism with which to release the shutter. The pole was calibrated in decimetres, to double as a measuring rod, enabling easy operation for the one-man team. During the spring of 1990 I made regular visits to Cheesefoot Head to check the fields, but saw no circles. Beginning to think that a watched pot would never boil, I stopped looking for a few weeks. It was during that period that the first two formations occurred! One by one I surveyed the formations as they appeared and spent a small fortune on films and photographic processing. At Winchester Reference Library (despite warnings of copyright abuse), photocopies were made of a 1968 edition of O.S. sheet SU52 NW (six inches to one mile). This map provides good coverage of certain ancient sites which have long since been destroyed. More recent editions omit the vanished features, only marking the position of those which still exist. At least four tumuli and three earthworks have fallen before the plough in the vicinity of corn circle activity at Cheesefoot Head.

Surveying the locations of the 'Pictograms', as they were now being called, to within a reasonable degree of accuracy, proved to be a somewhat difficult task. I ought to admit that my methods were crude at best (does anyone out there have an old theodolite to donate to a worthy cause?). I quickly learnt that tramline intervals (and wheel track gauges) vary considerably from field to field. They cannot be used to measure distances to field boundaries with any reliability. I had to wait until after harvest, in some cases, to establish distances to within a satisfactory degree of accuracy. It was then possible to take measurements across tramlines without causing damage to crops. Back in the early summer though, I had to be content with a certain amount of 'guessology'.

Plotting the locations of the pictograms on my map was a time-consuming business. I started working on this task at about 9pm one evening in early July. As the work progressed I soon began to find linear relationships between the pictograms and the ancient sites in the area. Where I could draw a straight line between three (or more) sites, I did so. Excitement quickly mounted as I drew in line after line, all of which involved pictograms and ancient sites (mostly tumuli). I became so absorbed by the task that I failed to notice the passage of time. Dawn was rapidly approaching and I hadn't slept! This was no time to shed any tears over lost sleep, though. My attention was fully occupied by the map before me. Spreading out across it was a complicated web of lines. Some corn circle sites were intersected by three or more lines, as were certain tumuli, but there were other points in the network where two or more lines intersected over no obvious feature. Could these be the sites of corn circles from previous years? Or were these places yet to be visited by the phenomenon? These questions were burning in my mind. An inspection of the area had to be made at once.

I kicked the old 350 into life and pointed it in the general direction of Cheesefoot Head. I wanted to look at the 'Punch Bowl', as this field claimed the most of my mysterious crossing points. Full of anticipation I raced up the A272, standing up on the foot-rests to view the first pictogram field. Nothing

new there. I throttled back as the grove of trees on the left began to thin out. It is at this point that the motorist gets a first glimpse of the Punch Bowl field. But my early morning enthusiasm was to be snubbed by nature: a quick glance over the left shoulder revealed a thick blanket of mist hanging in the valley. I couldn't even see the crop!

It took about four or five hours to check all the other 'node point' locations I'd identified during the night. Most of this had to be done on foot as they were well away from roads. I found no new crop formations. By the time I returned to the Punch Bowl the mist had cleared and I viewed the field from the road verge. I scanned the crop but saw nothing new (I have since learnt from circles investigators Lawrence and Beckett that a small 'grapeshot' circle did appear, though I failed to notice it); the large 'roundel' stared blankly back at me as I surveyed the scene. Disappointed and extremely tired I returned home and slept like a log.

I was destined to wait until the 14th of August before I actually found a pictogram on one of my node points. For me, such a find made every minute of waiting worthwhile!

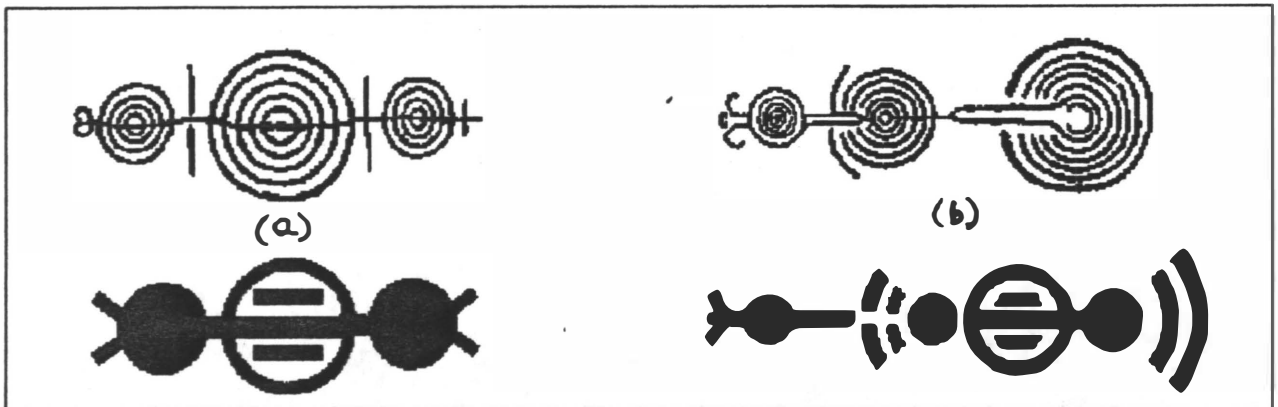
I had just returned from a three-week holiday in Scotland, expecting all the Winchester fields to have been harvested. Fortunately this was not the case and a few fields still fostered standing crops. One such field enclosed a node point. I wondered if a pictogram could have manifested itself there during my absence. Eagerly I proceeded to a tumulus mound that commands a good view on the field ... Eureka! There was definitely a new formation in the crop! What's more, as far as I could judge, it was in close proximity to my node point, just one of the positions I had examined on that July morning. A very approximate reference to this location is O.S. 273 528 - however, I work to much closer limits. Plotting of lines was done on a reduced photocopy of a six-inch map, which comes out at four inches to the mile. Assuming the width of a pencil line to be 0.5mm, then this is equivalent to a line width on the landscape of 8.7yds. Taking into account various errors incurred, especially that of accurately surveying and plotting pictogram sites, it is more probable that I have worked to around plus or minus 20m.

On closer inspection the new pictogram proved to be something special, a new generation ... an 'Encircled Box' formation. Little did I know (at that time) of the far more complex partner, which had by then been reduced to smouldering stubble in the neighbouring field (network contributor Dave Probert has surveyed this - see diagram [b] below). The usual procedure followed, with the taking of photographs and measurements. I had by this stage built a crude theodolite, with which it is possible to measure magnetic bearings to within about one degree. These are indicated on the plan of the formation, reproduced here. I have purposely omitted dimensions from the drawing, in order to keep it uncluttered.

They are as follows: North circle dia.: 9.3/9.8m (clockwise); South circle dia.: 9.05/9.5m (clockwise); Ring outer dia.: 14.2m (anticlockwise); Ring width: 1.2m on east side, 1.1m on west; Overall length (not including 'ears'): 35.3m; Central pathway width (superimposed on tramlines): 2.2m (N to S); East

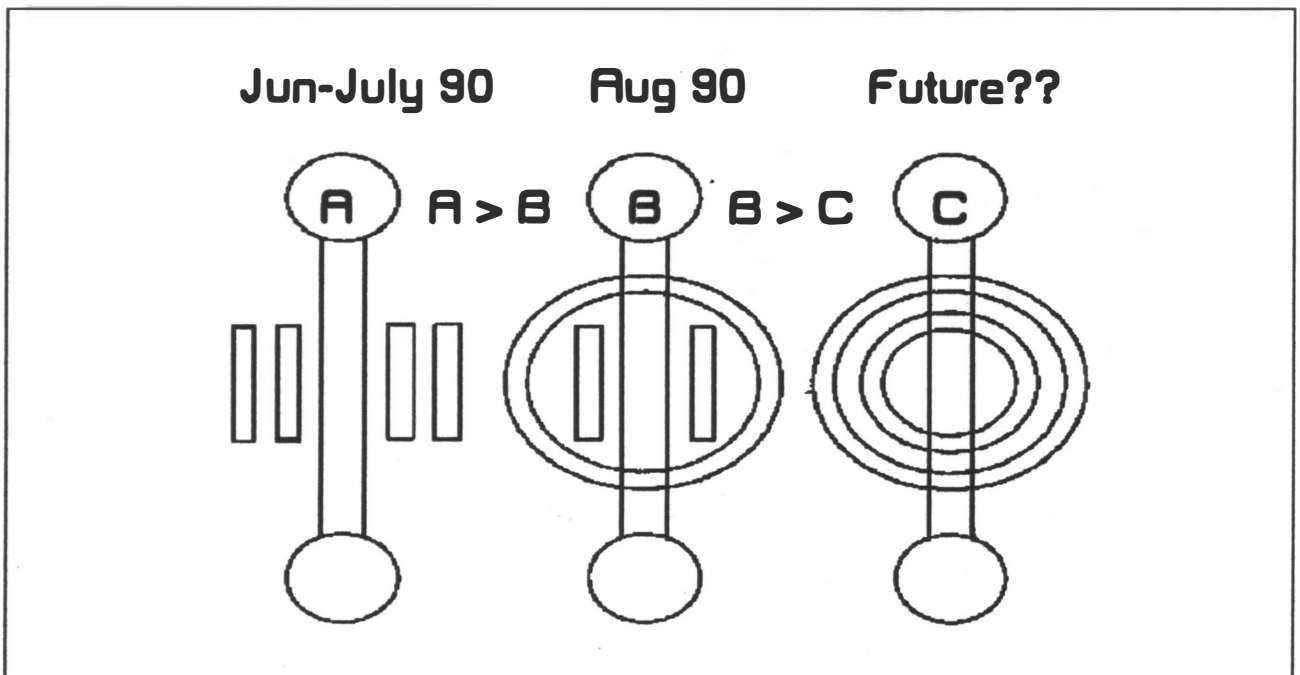
35.3m; Central pathway width (superimposed on tramlines): 2.2m (N to S); East box: 6.3m x 1.1m (N to S); West box: 6.7m x 1.2m (N to S); Box offset from edge of central pathway: 1.4m; 'Ear' length: 3.1m to 3.5m (radially outwards); 'Ear' width: 1.05m. (Details in brackets indicate the direction of lay of the crop.)

I would like to draw the reader's attention to the similarity between this pictogram and a Warramunga Australian Aboriginal totem design (a), which I recently 'rediscovered' in the book 'Earth Magic' by Francis Hitchin. On the same page of the book, directly under the Aboriginal design, is a representation of a cup and ring marking from Cochno, Scotland (b). This design is similar in many respects to the other encircled box pictogram mentioned earlier, which lay in the next field to the west!

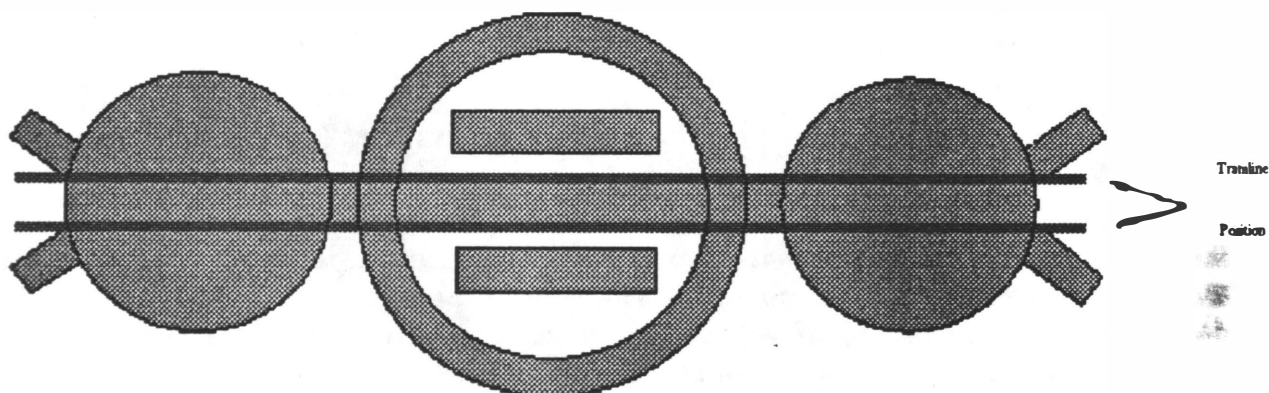


According to Richard Andrews, who dowses the energy patterns at crop circle sites, the ring encircling the boxes of this type of pattern replaces what would have been the outer boxes of a four-boxed configuration. If this is correct, and a process of evolution is taking place, then it is logical to suppose that the inner boxes might also evolve into a ring in future events. This development, when or if it occurs, would bring crop circle patterns even closer to the Aboriginal and ancient Scottish designs.

EVOLUTION OF BOXED PICTOGRAM



**PICTOGRAM AT OS 273.528 AS SEEN ON 15th AUGUST
1990 (LONGWOOD)**



DRAWING NOT TO SCALE

John F Langrish 1990

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Another bumper-bundle issue draws to a close! I don't know whether the next edition will be as action-packed as the first three; as yet I have no complete "Field Work" articles, although I do have one or two diagrams - but they don't have any notes to go with them. So if you have any material you'd like to submit from your 1990 observations, I'd love to hear from you.

Ray Cox sent me a book review of "The Crop Circle Enigma". I didn't include it, Ray, because I figured that just about everyone who receives The Circular would purchase their own copies of the book as soon as they could, regardless of anyone's review! However, I'll be using the other article you submitted in the next issue.

I've got some more Ouspensky lined up for issue four, this time dealing with the relationship between dimensions - how a world of four dimensions corresponds to our world of three, by imagining how our world might look to a being who lives in only two dimensions.

There'll be a few thoughts of my own (if there's room!) which deal with the concept of "Angels" as perceived by the Essene Brotherhood - the strange and enigmatic sect of which Jesus was reputedly an initiate, and which may shed light on the nature of the energies dowsed at circle sites.

Finances: I thought you'd like to know how your donations of stamps, cash and cheques have assisted in supplying The Circular across the continents, so here's a basic breakdown:

DONATIONS RECEIVED SINCE AUGUST 1990:	£53.01
EXPENSES (Postage, envelopes, etc) :	£88.02

Current deficit (to 05/12/90) :	(£35.01)

Your contributions make a difference, so many thanks to you all.

Next Issue due out: End of February 1991

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THE CIRCULAR

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EVENING STANDARD

MONDAY 23rd JULY 1990



"Any sign of the blighter who's making circles in my cornfield?"

