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AN AERIAL INVASION: OR WHAT DID THEY SEE, SEVENTY YEARS AGO?

By Aleksandr Beletskiy, Historian (Kharkov) and Dr. Vadim Vilinbakhov, Candidate for Degree in Historical

Sciences (Leningrad)

(Translation from Russian, G.C.)

TEKHNIKA MOLODYOZHI, Moscow, No. 6, 1983.

Readers will recall that in FSR 29/3 (1984) we published the very interesting article "Newly Discovered 'Airship' Waves over Poland", by one of our American readers, Mr Thomas E. Bullard of Bloomington, Indiana. Our Consultant/Correspondent in the USSR, Dr. V.V. Rubtsov of Kharkov, has now sent us the text of a piece of equally interesting research by two Russian historians, a young Ukrainian named A.V. Beletskiy and the late Dr. V.B. Vilinbakhov.

Like Bullard's article, this Soviet contribution deals with the activities of unknown "aircraft" over Europe during the critical years 1912/1913 — that is to say, on the eve of the Great Disaster of 1914. As time goes by it is probable that more and more light will be thrown on the link that exists between the UFOs — or *some* of them — and the two terrible World Wars which were unquestionably designed to destroy Western Civilization and which, in some way as yet unfathomed (although we can *guess* at it!) they may actually have been preparing! EDITOR

LONDON: House of Commons. "Winston Churchill, replying to questions, stated that a flying machine had passed over Sheerness on the evening of November 1. Orders were given for searchlights to be directed at it. The craft did not land. No markings indicative of nationality had been observed."

ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA. "Mystery aircraft. The War Ministry and the Ministry of the Interior have both been looking into the question of the increasingly frequent flights of mysterious aeroplanes over the South-West. From enquiries conducted by the aviation societies and by the military authorities it has been established that these flights were not made by Russian airmen. The two Ministries are now gathering material for a circular which they will issue instructing all rural police forces to oblige any airmen observed by them to land forthwith, failing which they are to be fired upon."

BUCHAREST. During the period from January 1, 1913 to July 1, 1913, the Rumanian Government banned foreign aircraft from crossing the Rumanian frontier with a warning that any pilot violating the order and failing to land instantly, when commanded by signal from the ground to do so, would be fired upon by the armed forces.

VIENNA: The Army Corps commanders in Przemyśl and Lvov have decided to fire upon foreign aircraft, as these have been appearing frequently over Przemyśl and Yaroslav and Kraków during December and January last.

WHAT WAS GOING ON! WHO CAUSED THESE OFFICIAL NOTIFICATIONS TO BE PUT IN THE NEWSPAPERS? FOR THEY ALL RELATE TO THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR 1912 AND THE BEGINNING OF 1913, WHEN AVIATION WAS STILL IN A RUDIMENTARY STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT. EVEN THE MOST ADVANCED COUNTRIES ONLY POSSESSED A FEW DOZEN AEROPLANES OF VERY IMPERFECT CONSTRUCTION, CAPABLE OF FLYING ONLY SHORT DISTANCES, AND ONLY IN FINE WEATHER.

Even the very idea of any sort of strategic reconnaissance from the air had not yet entered the mind of anyone, and at the very most the only use made of aeroplanes and airships for military purposes would have been confined to the observation of troop movements in the field or for bombing.

So what, in those times, could have been causing

such intense unease in the capitals of Europe? An unease that even threatened to lead to serious diplomatic complications . . .

On November 22, 1912, the newspaper "Odesskie

Novosti" (Odessa News) carried the following:-

"Hitherto we have been familiar with demonstrations at sea and demonstrations on land, but now, for the first time, we are seeing German aerial demonstrations over England. Last October, a German airship of the "Zeppelin" type, obviously belonging to the German Air Force, suddenly appeared over the English fortifications at Sheerness on the Thames Estuary. It was travelling at a speed of some 90 km. p.h. above the Estuary, and then vanished in the direction of the English Channel.

The appearance of the airship produced understandable alarm in England and even caused a question to be asked in Parliament by the M.P.

Joynson-Hicks.

So far, the Ministry has given no reply to the question, but enquiries have established that many people saw the mystery dirigible . . . It goes without saying that such a flight by a Zeppelin to England and back demonstrates, first and foremost, the magnificent condition of the German Air Force, and proves that the German airships, in addition to their official records, also hold certain other unofficial records which are significantly higher. And this is a fact that is well worth thinking about."

Similar accusations against Germany in connection with flights by unknown aircraft continued to be published in the newspapers from time to time right up to February 26, 1913, when the German Government apparently decided to put an end, once and for all, to "ridiculous rumours", and published an official refutation. The report issued in Berlin ran as follows:—

"The German official authorities have to state, with the highest responsibility and authority, that aerial phenomena observed over Britain cannot possibly be of German origin. The German Government, as will be appreciated, is in fact anxious to disassociate itself from all these sorts of stories, and is inclined to regard the matter as potentially dangerous for Anglo-German relations.

The "Kölnische Zeitung" of this evening states that not a single German military or naval airship has ever made a flight over England and that not a single flight by a German airship could be the cause for these rumours. This official refutation

must unquestionably be accepted as such."

The writer of the article then goes on also to assert that no secret flight from Germany to England and back is possible. He says the locations of all the German dirigibles are known; and that all their movements are carried out in public; that every flight is observed by thousands; that it would be impossible for the German airships to pass un-

noticed over the densely populated areas of Bel-

gium and Holland; that furthermore in winter a flight to England and back could not possibly be completed between dawn and dusk; that a ship fitted out for such a secret flight would not be able to carry lights; and that, quite apart from all the difficulties listed above, it would be impossible for Germany to gain anything by such adventures, which could only provide material for those ill-disposed to her to use against her."

And, indeed, as the press at the time pointed out: "There are at present two obstacles that render such a flight impossible: namely the small radius of action of the airships and the danger involved." The German Armed Forces, at the beginning of 1913, possessed a total of four rigid dirigibles of the "Zeppelin" type, and every one of their flights was widely publicized in the press. The speed of the best of these four airships did not exceed 75 km. p.h., and, on the average, they were incapable of remaining air-borne for more than twenty-four hours without landing. That is to say: to fly to England and back in one night (leaving out any further travel over British territory) was totally unfeasible for those airships.

Consequently, taking into consideration the state of aviation technology at the time, one must concur with all the arguments adduced by the German newspaper.

It follows that we must also note that, in all probability, this refutation by the German Government was found entirely satisfactory by the British. Following upon its publication, the charges that Germany was involved in the mystery flights completely disappeared from the British press. But the flights by the "aerial phantoms" still continued, and the question of their origins remained an open one.

Around the close of 1912 and the beginning of 1913 there had begun to be numerous reports from the various parts of Europe — and moreover not only from Europe — about the appearance of the mystery flying objects, often observed by large groups of

evewitnesses.

Thus, on the night of December 24, 1912, over the village of Severzh in Warsaw Province, an aeroplane of unknown origin, with two lights, suddenly appeared and flew around overhead for a long time, finally vanishing from sight in the direction of the frontier.

On the evening of December 28, 1912, in the neighbourhood of Kamenets-Podol'sk, two aeroplanes with searchlights were seen.

And the New Year, 1913, brought a whole wave of similar reports. One report, from Dover in England,

said:-

"Some sort of flying machine, supposedly an airship, flew over the town before dawn on the morning of Saturday, January 4. The machine is said to have carried a light and came in from over the sea and heading towards the north-east. It was not possible to discern the shape of the craft... A very strong wind from the west was blowing at the time. Town Council employee John Hobbs said he saw the craft at about five o'clock in the morning. His attention was at first drawn by the sound of an engine, and, glancing in the direction from which the sound was coming, he saw a light travelling very fast and coming from the direction of the sea. As the machine passed over the town, the noise of its engine was clearly audible. It was also heard by a Mr Langley and by Police-Constable Percy."

On January 18, a report from Kamenets-Podol'sk said that "for the third day in succession a shining spot of light had appeared over the town. As people watched it, it appeared to be changing shape. Then it gradually descended towards the horizon in the direction of the Austrian frontier."

"On January 28 a flying machine was seen over Liverpool (England) and it was not possible to identify it. A resident of the ? ("Klabmur") area said that between 7.20 and 7.30 p.m., he saw an unknown flying object, travelling at some 25 m.p.h., right overhead. It carried a blinding light. Five other men who were in the house at the time also saw it."

"An aeroplane with two searchlights flew over the town of Belostok in Russia during the night of January 30. It 'probed' the town several times with a searchlight, which remained concentrated for a particularly long time upon the railway station."

"On February 6 an aeroplane with several large searchlights of different colours was seen over the junction at Slobodka. After circling around a few times, it flew away."

"On the same day, another mystery aeroplane landed near the village of Karpinena, in the Kishinevsk district. As policemen watched, it took off and flew away westwards."

"On February 22, 1913, soon after the English steamer 'City of Leeds' had left Grimsby bound for Hamburg, the captain, Captain Landy, and the Second Officer, Williams, saw what seemed to be some kind of flying craft straight overhead, moving towards the direction from which they had come. The Moon was bright and they observed the machine well for the space of two minutes."

Between 8.20 and 8.30 p.m. on February 25, 1913, coastguards at Hornsea (Yorkshire) saw an unknown flying machine with a bright light. Considerable excitement was caused in Hull by the arrival of a flying machine, taken to be the same one that had been seen earlier at Hornsea. Groups of residents of the centre of the town watched the craft moving around for more than an hour, after which it vanished towards the west. Its lights were clearly visible, though at times they looked like dim red spots.

Again there was a sighting over Liverpool of what witnesses were inclined to believe was a dir-

igible. It was seen between 8.40 and 8.45 p.m., and then disappeared in the direction of ? (SIFORT, =? Seaforth?) Eyewitnesses said that they could clearly hear the sound of its engine. When first noticed, the craft was at a great height, and its lights looked like a bright star. But the assumption that it was a star was dispelled when, very soon afterwards, the shape of the machine could be discerned. It flew around over the district at high speed, vanishing finally towards the northern suburbs of the town."

"On the evening of Feburary 28, 1913, an aeroplane with three passengers appeared over Mardarovka in Russia. It remained overhead for twenty minutes and then vanished." In March 1913, discussing the continuing flights of mystery aircraft, the Russian newspapers reported:—

"Once again, a whole series of telegrams from various stations on the South-Western Railway report the appearance of a mystery "aeroplane". This time, the telegrams are so categorical and so consistent that they have to be believed. Only this time it is obvious that we are talking about an Austrian dirigible, because searchlights cannot be fitted on to an aeroplane, and all these telegrams, corroborating each other, report that "the aeroplane shone searchlights on the station."

"The telegrams were received from these stations: Gayvoron; Henrichovka; Gaysin; Zhmerinka, plus also others. From Gaysin, N.C.O. Ol'shanskiy telegraphs: "The aeroplane appeared during the hours of the night. Starting from the direction of Gayvoron to the south, it proceeded as far as Gaysin and then turned back towards Zhmerinka in the south-west. It lit up the whole place. At the same time, far away, another aeroplane also appeared, coming from the Austrian frontier, in the north-west. When the second aeroplane appeared, the first one moved off and disappeared. The second one returned suddenly and flew about on its own, cautiously, and very high'.

"On March 8, 1913, two telegrams were received from the South-Western Railway Administration: The first said: 'A large balloon flew very slowly, and very low, over the station at Rakitino at 7.30 a.m.' The second telegram said: 'An aeroplane flew over the station at Belozer'ye at 9.00 a.m. and landed. It remained there for five minutes, and then flew away.' Following upon the increased number of these sightings of unknown machines in the S.W. Railway Region, the Railway authorities have given orders for increased watchfulness. The Police too have issued special orders."

The foregoing is just a small portion of the reports from that period so crammed with them. The main thing that these reports tell us is that as a general rule the mystery flying objects were seen during the hours of darkness. This fact alone proves convincingly that what we are dealing with here are not ordinary aeroplanes and dirigibles, inasmuch as in those times night-flying was extremely rare, due to the imperfect state of the technology.

It is a known fact that, during the period that we are considering, aviation was in its so-called 'instrument-less' flying stage of development. Any emergency flight at night or in difficult meteorological conditions involved insuperable problems for the pilots. In the absence of any clear reference-points on the ground, and having no navigational instruments, pilots are subject to illusions as to their position in Space, what is up and down, and so on, all of which often leads to accidents. This is why, even at the start of World War II, not all pilots were allowed to make long night-flights.

Moreover, a point deserving of our careful consideration is the fact that this wave of reports of sightings of 'mystery aeroplanes' occurred at precisely the most unfavourable time of the year for flying —

namely the winter.

In the overwhelming majority of the cases we note that 'lights', 'searchlights', etc., are mentioned — and these were only occasionally present in those days on

only the biggest dirigibles.

It is characteristic that the duration of the sightings shows a wide range of variation: from estimates of a few minutes up to several hours. In some of the reports the great altitude and unusually high speed of flight are stressed. And we note that there were various strange manoeuvres that the enigmatic machines performed: sudden sharp turns; sharp upward or downward 'jumps'; periods of hanging stationary in the air; brief landings on the ground (in the darkness, and in winter to boot!)

Although at the beginning of 1913 the world altitude record for aeroplanes was 5,610 metres, and the speed record was 174 km.p.h., the majority of the airoraft at that time, including those of the military forces of the European States, were extremely

primitive.

The power of their engines was 50-70 l.c. and their speed not more than 75 km.p.h., and their 'ceiling' was 1,200 metres. The best of the German dirigible airships at that time had a 'ceiling' of 3,200 metres and a

top speed of 75 km.p.h.

Consequently, the entire complex of details, now becoming preciser for us, shows that the characteristic features of the mystery flying objects do not correspond in any conceivable way with the level of technical development of flying at the start of this century, and proves that the terms "aeroplane" or "dirigible" were being employed by the eyewitnesses only as an analogy with what were our 'new', 'fashionable' methods of travel as existing at that time. In vain do we seek, even in a single one of the newspaper accounts, for such a statement as: "One evening he saw an unknown machine in the field, with two people...

and when he approached it, he perceived that it was an aeroplane".

And to that we have to add that in 1913 in all probability the majority of the eyewitnesses had themselves never yet had an opportunity to see actual aeroplanes and dirigibles in flight, these being quite rare in those days, and only knew of their existence from the newspapers or from hearsay.

On the basis of all of this, we can state with absolute certitude that the objects which had startled people with their flights through the skies in 1913 simply could never by any means have been dirigibles or aeroplanes, but were something totally different.

There were, incidentally, people who said as much even at that time, which sometimes led to extremely sceptical and in point of fact false denials.

Thus, on March 5, 1913, the newspaper "Odesskie Novosti" ("Odessa News") published a notice under the title "AERIAL PHANTOMS", in which it said:-

"Ever since dirigibles appeared in the world, the English have started to suffer from a peculiar persecution mania. Throughout the past five years not a single month has passed without the victims of this psychosis discovering some dirigible flying, nobody knows why, over the industrial towns of the United Kingdom. It goes without saying that, every time, the mysterious flying machine turns out to be a Zeppelin. Each time, the London press sees a threat in these happenings, screams that it is being attacked by the perfidious Teutons, and demands that its government take decisive measures. But, when the matter is investigated, the nefarious "zeppelin" turns out to be either simply a mirage resulting from a disordered imagination, or some entertaining balloon such as the British sportsmen release into the air after very festive occasions. And so it is again now. A few days ago, somebody in England saw, "with my own eyes" some monstrous cloud flying over Dover during the night. Next day somebody else saw it at Yarmouth, and on the day after that it was seen again — at Cardiff. And, once again, the whole of the press sounded the alarm. Arrangements were made for investigations, the eyewitnesses were questioned, and it turned out that in actual fact nobody had seen any dirigible; somebody had once merely seen some sort of light in the sky. And, since nobody believes there can be lights in the sky, then it is clear that it was a German dirigible. What point there would be for a dirigible to be flying through the skies at night, naturally nobody thinks of that. But the objective has been attained. The British Government, scared by the phantoms in the sky, decided to introduce a bill in the House of Commons for the development of a new air force along the lines of the German one. One may take it that now the nightly excursions of the Zeppelins to England will cease." Alongside of such rash and superficial explanations,

however, attempts began to be made to clarify the origin of the mysterious aircraft more seriously and from a scientific point of view. Let us look now at another article, "The Mysterious Flying Machines", published in issue No. 136 of the newspaper "Kievskaya Zhizn'" ("Kiev Life"), of March 12, 1913. There we read:-

"During recent days, and especially in the newspapers of the south-western part of Russia, there have been frequent reports of the appearance of various flying machines of Austrian and German

origin.

In the March issue of the French journal "L'Astronomie", which we have just received, there is a curious explanation for this phenomenon. Mr Ivan Osemblovskiy of Belgorod, in the Province of Kursk, had sent the journal a report with a comment that the public are being led into error by the appearance, in the West, of the bright planet Venus, which many people take for a searchlight. In support of the view that this surmise is well founded, "L'Astronomie" goes on to say, for its part, that in April 1905 ships were sent out from Cherbourg to search for a balloon carrying a searchlight. later, it was realized, it wasn't a balloon but ... the planet Venus.

And could not the recent report from the shores of the Sea of Okhotsk about a mystery aircraft also turn out to be the same thing - i.e., the manifestation of ignorance about natural phenomena?

There is no need to be surprised about our ignorance. In almost every issue, the French journal "L'Astronomie" reports on similar ignorance in France and in other countries.

A report of the St. Petersburg Telegraphic Agency from Berlin, dated February 26, 1913, probably involves the same error. According to this report, the "Kölnische Zeitung" (Cologne) has published a semi-official note refuting the English newspapers' reports of night-flights by German dirigibles to Britain. From certain details in this note one gets the feeling that the reports in the English papers derive from this very same phenomenon."

In conclusion, the Director of the Observatory, A.G. Skobson writes: "I can state that the planet responsible for this illusion is visible in the evenings after sunset already from December onwards and at the present time is attracting many people to the observatory of Countess Panina, where one glance through the tube suffices to permit one to grasp the nature of that mysterious heavenly body and see how much it has in common with the searchlight of

an airship".

Well, it would have all been very nice if everything about the "aerial phantoms" of 1913 could indeed have been explained away so easily and so simply. But today the business is seen to be far more complex than that, and one that yields to no simple and so very

light-weight an explanation.

For, fundamentally, the reports of late 1912/early 1913 were nothing unique, or devoid of previous or of subsequent analogies. However strange it may sound, those reports were essentially very ordinary.

In actual fact, although the objects have been compared to all manner of things — that is to say, other than "aeroplanes" and airships - throughout the whole known history of mankind we encounter reports similar to these. With no particular difficulty, they are to be found in the works of the classical writers of Antiquity, in old annals and chronicles, in the accounts of navigators and travellers, and in books and newspapers of the 16th to the 19th centuries. In particular, in late 1896 and the early part of 1897, a wave of reports of "mystery aircraft" swept across the whole of North America, where millions of people saw them. And after 1913 similar sightings also went on. For example, in the years 1933-34, the appearance of "mystery aeroplanes" produced an absolute panic throughout the whole of Scandinavia. Just as in 1913, the "aeroplanes" carried out their flights at the most inclement time of the year - in winter. Violent snowstorms, tempests, and dense fogs are frequently mentioned in many of the reports. But, despite that, the enigmatic objects still carried on their manoeuvres very near to the surface of the Earth or of the sea, circling around above villages, above ships, above railway stations, illuminating them all with their powerful "searchlights". Sweden, Norway and Denmark repeatedly sent up fighter aircraft to try to intercept the objects in the air, and the governments of these three countries also carried out special investigations on a wide scale, but all were unsuccessful. Numerous similar reports are also still occurring today.

All of which provides a sufficiently strong basis for us to view the 1913 sightings reported above with entire confidence, and to see them as neither journalistic "scares" nor mass-hallucinations nor hysteria. All those reports definitely reflect some objective reality concealing a "something" that is still unknown to us.

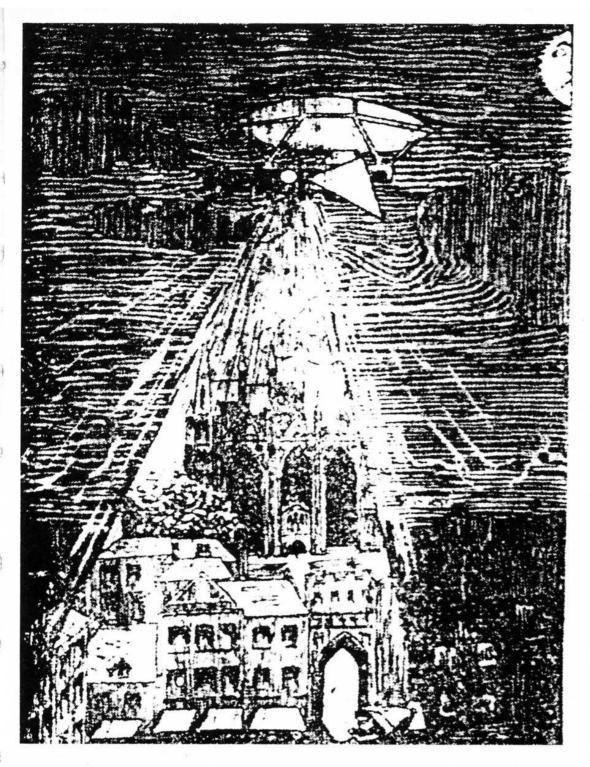
... Concealing something that Science is going to

have to get acquainted with.

The sky phenomena of 1913, in their basic features, correspond entirely with all the other sightings, made earlier or later, and they must consequently all be studied together as part of the whole complex of questions relating to anomalous phenomena in the atmosphere, the hydrosphere, and the Universe. Only in that way will this interesting enigma finally arrive at its due and proper settlement.

NOTE BY EDITOR, FSR

Curiously enough, I am able to supply an interesting piece of personal comment on these matters. As a child, I lived in East Anglia, that part of Britain which



What did P.C. Kettle see?

—another old mystery revived

The contemporary artist's impression of what P.C. Kettle saw in the air above Peterborough.

received the brunt of the German aerial attacks, and I actually watched the shooting down, by our airmen, of two of their great Zeppelins — awesome scenes indeed. During World War I, and in the years following it, I frequently heard the old people in the East Anglian villages chatting together about the Zeppelins, and it was sometimes said: "Well, of course, you know that they were over here often, BEFORE 1914!"

Needless to say, no German airship or aeroplane was ever over Britain before 1914, and documents published by both governments show conclusively that such was the case.

But, as we all know now, there were highly interesting reports of 'airships' over Britain long before the outbreak of war in August 1914. For a good example, just take a look at FSR Vol. 6, No. 4 (1960) and study the account of the 'airship' that scared the stuffing out of Police-Constable Kettle when, at 5.10 a.m. on March 23, 1909, it flew low over the city of Peterborough (in East Anglia) and lit up the whole place with its vivid searchlight. Another policeman, in an entirely different part of Peterborough, also reported that he saw it and, like P.C. Kettle, heard the sound of its engine. The whole story will be found in the files of the local newspaper, Peterborough Citizen & Advertiser, of March 24 and March 27, 1909, from which this contemporary artist's impression is taken. G.C.

"CLEAR INTENT"

In the Editorial to FSR 31/6 we asked our European readers to be good enough to keep us informed regarding any references in the media of their countries to the book "CLEAR INTENT", and two further reports about this have now reached us.

The Editor of the Flemish SVLT Bulletin, organ of the Belgian Studiegroep Voor Vreemde Luchtverschijnselen of Antwerp, writes to point out that already, as early as their issue No. 4/14 of April 1985, they had devoted a paragraph of twenty lines to the book

And our second correspondent is Dr. Dieter Staschewski of Stutensee- Büchig, West Germany, who wrote on December 1, 1986, that in October 1984 Herr Michael Hesemann, Editor of the Germanlanguage publication MAGAZIN 2000, had likewise published an announcement and a brief comment on "CLEAR INTENT". (Apparently the only reference to it yet in Germany.)

We are much obliged to our two correspondents for this information.

Meanwhile, as regards "CLEAR INTENT" itself, we are advised by its authors, Lawrence Fawcett and Barry Greenwood, that so far a total of some 14,500 copies of the book have been sold. They also say that, in view of the expected publication in the USA of two extremely important new books on UFOs in 1987,

Prentice-Hall Inc. are considering the possibility of re-issuing "CLEAR INTENT".

We understand that the titles of the two important new books are as follows, and we urge our readers to look out for them:—

- (1) THE INTRUDERS by BUDD HOPKINS
- (2) COMMUNION by WHITLEY STREIBER (We learn furthermore that the author of this secondnamed book claims to have had remarkable experi-

ences with alien beings - experiences that are still

going on.)

We understand furthermore from the authors of "CLEAR INTENT" that, despite the undoubted skill with which the American media have given the impression of late that the UFOs are no more, and our subject is dead and done with, this, as we all know over here in Europe, is very far from the truth. In particular we learn that we can expect some startling developments soon, particularly in connection with the Bentwaters/Rendlesham Forest Case. — G.C.

UFOs, ATLANTIS, FORTEANA, CRYPTO-ZOOLOGY, GHOSTS, ARTHURIANA, etc. Send for Catalogue. EXCALIBUR BOOKS, 15 Rockport Road, Craigavad, Co. Down, Northern Ireland BT18 0DD.

MORE PICTURES OF THE MYSTERY CIRCLES

In completion of our selection of pictures from the fine series made by Mr Chris Wood, Staff Photographer for the *Express Newspapers*, we give here two more examples of the "swirled rings", so that FSR may contain a reasonably balanced and representative chronicling of the whole problem to date.

The previous photos that we have published were from the years 1981 (FSR 29/1); 1983 (FSR 29/1 and 31/6); and 1985 (FSR 31/5).

This time, they relate to the year 1984, the first photo being of the site at White Horse, Bratton, near Westbury, Wiltshire (51° 16 N., 2° 11 W.) and the second being of a site lying *directly* south of there, namely Cley Hill, near Warminster, Wiltshire (51° 12 N., 2° 11 W.).

ADDITIONAL NOTE

We have just received from Mr Pat Delgado his comprehensive Summary on the fresh mystery circles discovered in Britain during the year 1986, which we hope to publish in the very near future. We can promise that, as Mr Delgado says, this Report for 1986, covering no less than nine sites, will outshine all other years so far. He says that ever since the mid-1970s there has been a steady progression in the numbers of the circle sightings, their group configurations, and the intricacies of circle construction. — G.C.