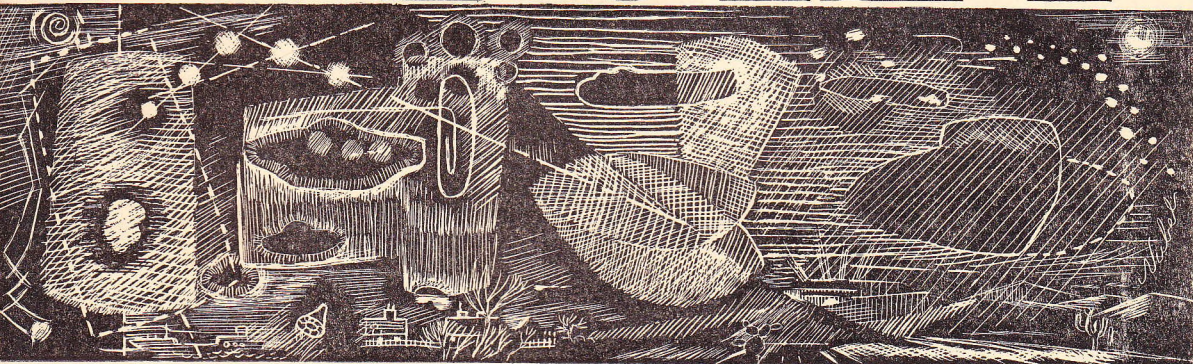


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BUFORA



JOURNAL

AND BULLETIN

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The BRITISH UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

Founded 1962

AIMS:

1. To encourage and promote unbiased scientific investigation and research into Unidentified Flying Object phenomena.
2. To collect and disseminate evidence and data relating to Unidentified Flying Objects.
3. To co-ordinate UFO Research on a nation-wide scale and co-operate with persons and organisations engaged upon similar research in all parts of the world.

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THE BUFORA JOURNAL AND BULLETIN

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Autumn 1965

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Winchester, Hants.

EDITORIAL

The United States Air Force announces that of all the UFO reports it has investigated during the last 18 years, 663 are inexplicable in terms of conventional objects or natural phenomena. I think we may state with confidence that, of these, 600 relate to UFOs within our own specialised usage of the term, i.e. to objects looking and behaving like flying machines of an unknown and advanced type. If we assume that this total of 600 represents only one-tenth of the UFOs actually sighted over the U.S. in the 18 years since 1947 ; if we further assume that the World total of sightings in the corresponding interval of time was ten times greater again, we arrive at a grand total of 60,000 UFO sightings throughout the Globe during the so-called "Flying Saucer Era."

It is an impressive total but one which affords little comfort to those who cherish the romantic notion of skies crowded with UFOs. It means that, over 18 years, an average of about 9 UFOs per day have been seen throughout the Earth. Of course, there are many more UFOs seen at some times and in some places than this average would suggest. That does not alter the fact that, in many areas, UFOs are seen only at widely scattered intervals, or not at all.

Early in July, a spokesman for the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena, one of the two major private UFO Investigative Organisations in the United States, said that 20 UFOs had been reported throughout the World in the previous fortnight. I have made an independent check, on the basis of such sources of information as are available to me, with the result that I feel justified in stating that the NICAP spokesman's figure was of the right order of magnitude. However, to judge from the many minor pro-Flying Saucer publications received, the total "bag" for the two weeks should have been given as anything from 200 to 2,000 :

To prove my point, I quote from a perfervid Japanese journal :

"Hundreds of Mother-Ships and Saucers appeared
one after another on June 24th. 1965"

Whew !

Some members of BUFORA have criticized my rather outspoken observations on the subject of Flying Saucer Cults and the weird beliefs of the "lunatic fringe" of our subject. Let them ask themselves what the reaction of any balanced person, whether scientist or layman, would be to a statement like the above.

Reports of sightings of genuine UFOs invariably produce a varied crop of observations of stars, planets, balloons and a hundred-and-one other things which well-meaning persons mistake for UFOs. Usually, too, there is a sprinkling of deliberate hoaxes, launched by publicity-hounds, psychopaths and seekers after the "quick buck." Generally speaking, the bigger the "flap" the wider will be the assortment of trash and humbug following in its wake. It is the unenviable task of the UFO-researcher to seek a few pieces of grain in a mountain of chaff !

Anyone who wishes to weave religious beliefs around Flying Saucers is perfectly at liberty to do so, whether or not he or she is a member of the British U.F.O. Research Association. However, the Association is committed to a policy of **scientific** study of UFO phenomena and I should be failing in my duty to the membership if I did not, on occasion, draw attention in this "Journal" to the fatuity of the kind of beliefs which are behind statements like the above-quoted "gem" from Nippon.

May I end this Editorial on a personal note? This is the third issue of the "Journal" which I have edited and all three have been produced in a little over four months, in order to make up for lost time and set the record straight. I am acutely conscious of the defects of these productions and beg the indulgence of readers towards what may be described as "emergency issues". From now on, I trust, the return to the normal Quarterly basis will enable me to sponsor a "Journal" with a slightly more polished appearance.

AN EXCERPT from the LECTURE BY MR. ANTONI W. SCACHNOWSKI at the 'POLISH HEARTH' CLUB IN LONDON, on 30th MARCH, 1963, ENTITLED
'FLYING SAUCERS OVER CENTRAL EUROPE'

'HUNGARY'

In this country interest in U.F.O's started in 1950. Since the Autumn of that year until the summer of 1956 every year there was a considerable crop of U.F.O. sightings. Various newspapers and periodicals carried articles about U.F.O's in a manner tentative rather than sarcastic. There were also reprints of Russian articles about life in Outer Space.

After the heroic Hungarian uprising, many refugees from there, - now living in the West, - described some of the incidents with U.F.O's.

In 1953 there were observed numerous flights of U.F.O's along the Roumanian frontier. At the locality of Cyoma many people sighted a saucer-shaped U.F.O. at daylight - which flew so close to the earth that apparently some shapes of the 'crew' in it could be seen through the portholes.

North-East of Debrecen similar low-flying U.F.O's were seen by villagers.

There was a rumour of a landing somewhere in the district of Hajdubaszormeny.

Large Lake Balaton and the surrounding country had U.F.O's-flaps on many occasions.

In the Spring and Summer of 1955 Fishermen saw U.F.O. hovering over the surface and almost touching the water. After each of these incidents clusters of dead fish were noticed floating about. Jet-fighters were seen quite often in chase after U.F.O's over Nagykanisza towards the Jugoslavian frontier. And we know about similar encounters of the Jugoslav Air Force over Zagreb, Rijeka and Pula. These were reported in the Western Press at the time.

After the uprising - to display any unorthodox interest was very risky. Therefore, if somebody had seen something - he kept it to himself. The Press scarcely referred to U.F.O's and, of course, no research organisations were formed. But lately there have come into existence at least two private U.F.O. Research Groups, and many single individuals, that keep in touch with researchers in Poland and through them with us (i.e. A.P.U.F.O.R.C.).

One of the Hungarian Groups endeavoured to publish monthly mimeographed bulletins but this was stopped - officially by a stoppage of the supply of paper and refusal by the State-owned Presses to do anything.

Nevertheless, we learned from them that in the years 1959/1960 numerous flights of U.F.O's were observed. In Easterly direction : over Retsay, Paszto, Eger, Hajdubaszormeny, to Roumania over Careii-Mari, Bistrita, Roman, Husi and further towards the Black Sea.

There was also another Eastwards route of flights ; Over Zoldegers, Lake Balatan, Kiskunhalas, Szeged, and again over Roumania towards Ploesti and Constanza.

There were also Westward flights of U.F.O's - over Szentes, Kaloska, Lake Balatan, Zoldegers and towards Austria.

Yet another line of flights heading South-West over Miskolc, Eger, Budapest, Lake Balaton, Nagykanizsa, to Jugoslavia, over Zagreb and Rieka.

The district of the Lake Balaton seemed to be particularly popular with U.F.O's. Many other localities were mentioned but I don't want to bore you with all these names and directions. They are, however, important for the application of 'Orthoteny'.

'CZECHOSLOVAKIA'

In that Country, although there were people who have seen flights of U.F.O's on many occasions (Particularly over the Highlands), silence was kept about it for a long time. Until 1957 nothing was published on this subject - not even in the popular press. This silence was broken by an article entitled - "Letajici Talire - A Tisk" which appeared in the official organ of the Czechoslovakian Air Forces - "Kridla Wlasti".

But private civilian interest in the U.F.O. problem had to keep quite still, until 1959. In that year, Czechoslovakian Press carried many articles about "Tungusian Meteorite" (1908) Life in Outer Space, and about U.F.O's. Now there are private groups of U.F.O. researchers in Prague, Pilsen and Morawska Ostrawa. Czechoslovakian Meteorological Observatories and stations in the Carpathians conducted some interesting observations of U.F.O. activities. Their Air Forces had some close encounters. There was apparently a fatal one - similar to the case of Capt. Mantell of U.S.A.F.

There exists in West Germany an American organisation called 'Free Europe'. Its main goal is to reach the populations of these Central and East European Countries, with news and information from the West - despite the 'Iron Curtain' and Communist regimes which were jamming 'Free Europe's' radio programmes.

In this 'tug of Cold War' - 'Free Europe' started to use balloons carrying leaflets. These balloons - which were of considerable size - were sent to glide along the air currents over Czechoslovakia and Poland. The Air Forces of both countries had orders to shoot them down. There is circulating, a story that during one of these operations, shots were fired at a U.F.O. (instead of a balloon) somewhere near Litomerice. The two M.I.G.'s did not return from the pursuit, to their base. Later a wreckage of one plane was found and the body of the pilot. But the other jet, with its occupant, was never located. It was just missing

U.F.O. Researchers are accustomed to accusations that they mistake balloons for 'Flying Saucers'. If this rumour is true - we have a reverse case. A case where a U.F.O. is presumed to be a balloon. And what is the cost of such a mistake ?

Since that time, Czechoslovakian Air Forces are taking U.F.O.'s seriously. Apparently special consultations between the Air Forces of Czechoslovakia and Poland concerning the U.F.O. question were conducted. The Polish Air Forces have been treating the problem of U.F.O.'s seriously for quite a long time.

But this is another story

A. W. Szachnowski

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PUBLIC MEETING AT WARMINSTER

A Meeting called by Mr. Emlyn Rees, Chairman of Warminster Urban District Council, was held in the Town Hall on August 27th. 1965, at 7.30 p.m. Upwards of 300 persons crowded into the Hall and several hundreds more thronged the stairs and corridor and overflowed into the street outside. About three dozen pressmen were present and the scene was dominated by an I.T.N. camera crew, complete with portable arc lights.

All these people came to hear a public discussion on the mysterious sights and sounds which have been reported from the Warminster district in recent months.

Mr. Rees chaired the Meeting and the speakers were Dr. Geoffrey Doel, BUFORA's Chairman, who introduced Dr. J. Cleary-Baker, BUFORA's Evaluation Officer and the Editor of this JOURNAL ; also the Rev. Lewis Inge.

Dr. Cleary-Baker gave a summary of the UFO enigma and ended his talk by suggesting that the local people should form a "Listening Post." He also suggested that UFOs were alien craft, operated by a higher order of intelligence than ourselves.

Rev. Inge, who is Chairman of the Salisbury Plain Astronomical Society, told how he operates a satellite tracking-post within 10 miles of Warminster, subsequently transmitting the results of the observations to the Satellite Tracking Centre at Slough. Introduced to the Meeting as the "opposition," the Rev. Inge in fact made it clear that he supports fully the scientific investigation of UFO phenomena.

A Mrs. Attwell told how she had been very frightened by a strange and eerie sound, accompanied by the apparition of a "brilliant star." A local reporter in the Press Gallery said he knew of 49 witnesses to the sounds, which have killed birds and affect adversely animals and human beings. Eight children had been scared by the "Thing" at various times but their parents had requested that their names should be published.

Two representatives of the Aetherius Society gave their own highly-coloured interpretation of UFOs from the Press Gallery. A black-suited young man, claiming Ministry connections, tried to maintain that cigar-shaped UFOs result from the igniting of rising columns of methane gas!

The Meeting ended about 10 p.m., inconclusively as was to be expected.

Most organs of the Press gave reasonably accurate and fair reports of the proceedings. A T.V. programme in the following week spotlighted some of the issues and personalities involved.

Lionel Beer.

REPORT ON WARMINSTER

There is no doubt in my mind that the mysterious aerial sights and sounds reported frequently of late years in the vicinity of the little Wiltshire town of Warminster, are due to the activities of Unidentified Flying Objects operating over the area. The phenomena occur within a radius of approximately 14 miles around Cley Hill, an isolated eminence situated SW of Warminster and towering more than 700 ft. above the level of the surrounding countryside. A beacon blazed on the summit of Cley Hill when the Armada was coming. It is a prominent landmark and as such might well be chosen as a centre on which to "home" by the crews of aerial craft desirous of overlooking Salisbury Plain, on the verges of which it is.

There are desolate areas on the Plain which would afford a UFO opportunities to land or take-off without being observed. More important, the Plain is the site of the Ministry of Defence Research Establishment at Porton, of the Rocket Testing-Range at Larkhill and of other Military installations. Such installations seem to interest the UFO-denizens.

It is to be regretted that only about one third of reported observations of UFO phenomena around Warminster are available. The majority of reports were made to a local investigator, a Mr. David Holton. Mr. Holton, with what I can only describe as a strange lack of scientific propriety, has declined co-operation with BUFORA and claims to have burned his files on the affair.

I have, however, about 30 reports collected independently.

My investigations suggest that the celebrated "Warminster Sound" is in fact a combination of two distinct sounds.

Firstly, there is a dull crunching noise, resembling that heard when maize or gravel is tipped on to a concrete surface. This is interspersed with sharper cracklings like "atmospherics" on a radio. I believe this arises out of some form of electro-magnetic interaction between a low-flying UFO and the ground and that the circumstance suggests the presence in this part of Wiltshire of subterranean deposits of ferromagnetic material.

Sounds like "innumerable stones colliding" were reported from Pignerol and various Alpine communes in April 1808, accompanied by the appearance of luminous objects in the sky. See Rept. B.A., 1854-68.

The second element in the "Sound" is a persistent humming, which rises to an intolerable and high-pitched whining as the UFO passes directly over the auditor. This, I think, is caused by an altitude-finding device on the UFO. I will venture on a prediction. If the "Sound" is heard in the Warminster area during a snowfall, marks like the famous "Devil's Footprints" of 1855 may be seen in the snow afterwards. (See, "The Case for the UFO," by M. K. Jessup, pp. 153 - 158).

All who have heard the "Sound" describe it as eerie and even alarming and one of two ladies who heard it in West Ashton Spinney in 1962 became ill as a result of the experience. There are a number of instances of game and poultry apparently stunned by it and in Mid-April 1964, in Five Ash Lane which joins the hamlets of Crockerton and Sutton Veny, it demonstrated lethal properties. A gamekeeper, going his evening rounds, heard the "Sound" and saw a flock of pigeons, which had been roosting in a nearby wood, fly up in terror and directly into the track of the "Sound" as it approached. Several of the birds dropped dead to the ground.

The "Sound" seems to possess beam-like properties, or else to be inaudible to some persons. On one occasion it was heard at Gillingham in Dorset, in association with the passage of a luminous object in the sky. Three persons saw the object but only two of them heard the "Sound."

The Gillingham case is one of three on file in which the "Sound" was accompanied by the visual observation of a UFO. There was an observation coinciding with the onset of the "Sound" at Buckland Dinham. On August 11th. 1965, around 4 a.m., a lady residing in Warminster was badly frightened by the "Sound" but was able to look out of her bedroom window and saw, moving very slowly in the sky, an enormous, brilliant, star-like object.

The "Sound" was heard in several places throughout the area very early on Xmas Morning 1964, a little before Dawn. Warminster's Postmaster was awakened by it. A lady cycling to Church for the early morning Service was thrown against a wall by its "savage sound vibrations." Personnel of the 1st. Bn. Welsh Regiment, in Knook Army Camp, were roused by it.

At the time of writing, the latest report of the "Sound" is of its bringing to a halt a car driven by a former Army officer. The incident happened at Calloway Clump near Warminster. Not only did the "Sound" stop the car, it also caused the vehicle to jolt and jump violently, so that its wheels left the ground! The former Army officer, a veteran of World War Two, was rocked on his feet by violent air vibrations when he alighted to ascertain the cause of the stoppage. "I sensed something fantastic and oddly sinister in the air," he said afterwards.

Visual observations of UFOs in the Warminster area are now quite numerous and the list is continually augmented by fresh sightings. Cigar-shaped objects appeared over Heytesbury on June 3rd. 1965 and over Warminster itself in the following months. Discs were seen above Stonehenge on August 25th. Ovoid UFOs, apparently rotating, hovered over Crockerton and Warminster on the evening of July 7th. and again over Warminster on August 18th. I have quite a number of accounts of brilliant star-like objects.

In almost every case, my records show that the UFOs seen were either hovering or moving very slowly. This is what one would expect, on the assumption that they were "homing" on Cley Hill, since a precipitate passage might result in the target being over-shot.

Two of my cases, from Westbury Road outside Warminster in 1963 and from Chapmanslade on the evening of August 20th. 1965, deal with twin lights, seen moving rapidly and at a low altitude across the countryside. This is by no means an unknown phenomenon in UFO records and I recall, particularly, a series of reports from a rural district of Norfolk in 1908, when such lights were often seen.

On November 11th. 1960, at night, an Army officer and four soldiers in a camp at Warminster, watched a dazzling white UFO which hovered for a short time in the sky above the town, before moving off at high speed leaving a trail of sparks behind it. This was two days after an "Honest John" rocket, the first of its kind to be fired in this Country, had been launched from the School of Artillery's rocket-range at Larkhill on Salisbury Plain.

The celebrated Charlton "crater" of July 1963 fell near the perimeter of our circle around Cley Hill. I have no doubt that this and associated UFO phenomena may be regarded as part-and-parcel of the same "complex" of happenings now under review.

A young Warminster resident took a photograph of an aerial object on the evening of Sunday, August 29th., 1965, which, if genuine, is truly remarkable. The photograph shows a slightly flattened disc with a hemispherical, cabin-like projection on top, the whole crowned by a knob-like protuberance. I am keeping an open mind on this matter for the time being.

My thanks are due to the Fleet St. UFO Study Group, for kindly making its Warminster Report available to me. I am also indebted to my friends Mr. and Mrs. F. D. Harding for conveying me to Warminster for the Public Meeting on August 27th. and to our President, Mr. Knewstub, for his Report on the Heytesbury "cigar" of June 3rd.

J. C-B.

UFO REPORT FROM CAISTOR, ST. EDMUNDS, NORFOLK - 9th. June, 1965.

Summary of Report :-

Date : Wednesday, 9th June 1965
 Time : Between 4.45 & 5.5 p.m., B.S.T. Duration of sighting estimated at 20 seconds.
 Place : Caister St. Edmunds, nr. Norwich, Norfolk.
 Witness : Chauffeur to a leading Civic Dignitary in the District. His name is on file but is withheld at his own request.

Object was seen while witness was driving his employer's car away from the Caister Country Club, as the car turned into the road from the drive of the Club. It was hovering above a lawn enclosed by hedges and a wall. Scene of the sighting is adjacent to a 15th. Century Hall and near the position of the Roman Town of Venta Icenorum. After a short time, the object shot vertically upwards at high speed and vanished into a patch of cloud.

Witnesses estimated that the object was 100 yards distant from him and about 40 feet in diameter. It was slightly oblate, light-grey in colour and resembling a clam or a spinning-top with a flattened bottom. It emitted a low humming sound.

No other witnesses could be traced by BUFORA investigators. Insofar as they can be checked, meteorological and other details given by the witness in completing a Sighting Report Form are correct.

EVALUATION :-

The witness is a man of good repute, whose job demands qualities of judgement and cool appraisal of unexpected situations. He does not seek any publicity and he admits to having read about UFOs, which is in very refreshing contrast to the unbelievably abysmal ignorance of these which would-be hoaxers usually profess! There is no valid reason to suspect a hoax here.

I can discover no grounds for any assumption of hallucination. The object did not resemble any type of conventional aircraft and certainly no known natural phenomenon could counterfeit such an appearance. In my view, we are here dealing with a perfectly genuine UFO visitation.

In cases of near-landings there are often marks visible afterwards upon the grass and other vegetation beneath the spot at which the UFO hovered. The absence of such tokens in this instance suggests that no landing was contemplated and that marks, when they are encountered, are due to some kind of gaseous emission from the UFO, connected with cushioning its descent. Here, perhaps, the UFO's occupants brought their craft low in order to observe some surface feature, or maybe for a reason quite frivolous. It is probably a mistake to assume that "enterprises of great pith and moment" hang upon every UFO descent to a low altitude, as it would be to assume the same concerning all examples of low-flying by terrestrial aircraft.

I regard this as one of the most interesting and veridical UFO reports, from a British source received for some time past.

J. C-B.

METEORITES

Between the orbits of the planets Mars and Jupiter there lies a belt of pieces of rock ranging in size from masses about 500 miles in diameter down to microscopic particles of dust. Due to the perturbing effect of the major planets the orbits of these particles are changed and these changes bring a great number of them near to the earth. Except for the larger asteroids, as the objects are called, they are invisible except when they enter the earth's atmosphere where the heat generated by friction with the air causes them to glow or even explode. Because of their size the majority of particles burn away before they have gone very far, but there are exceptions and the larger pieces may reach the earth's surface, when they are called meteorites.

The largest known meteorite is at Hoba West, South West Africa and it is a block measuring nine feet by eight feet and weighing about 60 tons.

The most enigmatic object from space is surely the famous Tungus meteorite which fell at 0015 G.M.T. on 30th June, 1908 at a point about 40 miles from Vanovara, Siberia. Nothing is reported to have been seen of the object before it landed, but the resulting explosion was heard 380 miles away and was equivalent to about 30 million tons of T.N.T. Dust thrown up by the explosion enabled the light to be visible as a bluish glow in the sky on the nights of 1st and 2nd July as far away as Jena, 3250 miles distant. A tribe of Tungus nomads had moved their camp from a site only seven miles from the spot where the object fell, but they had left their reindeer behind. On returning to the area nothing remained of the animals but a few charred carcasses. It is estimated that eight million trees were devastated over an area 30 miles in diameter.

Despite the obvious dimensions of the object the site of the explosion was not located until 1938 when a shallow crater two miles across was found in the marshy soil, and recent evidence suggests that the catastrophe was the result of a comet colliding with the earth.

Not all meteorites entering the earth's atmosphere cause such chaos, although the total mass falling to earth each day is about one ton, and 25 times that amount of matter is burnt up as meteors. It is possible for one observer to see an average of ten meteors per hour each night, and on particularly active nights this number may rise to 50 or more.

Broadly speaking there are two sorts of meteors, the sporadic and the shower types. As the name suggests the sporadic meteor enters the atmosphere alone, and this type is usually the most spectacular, often coming to earth as a large meteorite. The shower meteors are groups of particles in orbit around the sun which enter the atmosphere in a relatively close bunch and usually burn away as impressive sparks. Such groups move in relatively fixed orbits and it is possible to predict when their path will intersect that of the earth, and thus we can say that on, say, August 12th the number of meteors seen will increase due to the Perseid group of particles, and so on. Sporadic meteors are generally half stone and half iron in composition, the so-called stony-irons, whereas shower meteors are usually 100 per cent stone. Approximately 95 per cent of meteorites are stones, 5 per cent are irons, and the remainder are stony-irons.

Probably the strangest of all meteorite bodies to be found are the tektites. These are glassy-looking objects found in certain well defined areas of the earth's surface. Their shape may be very irregular or remarkably symmetrical and, ranging from a few milligrams to one pound in weight, their colour is black or dark green. Analysis shows them to be composed of iron, aluminium and other metallic oxides, and it is found that they have been subject to two separate heating processes, one slow and the other intense. One theory to account for their existence is

that they are particles thrown out by eruptions on the lunar surface, entering the earth's atmosphere as meteorites. Tektites are found in Australia, where they are called australites, in Czechoslovakia, moldavites, and in Texas, bediasites, and it is thought that each particular field is associated with one particular volcanic eruption on the moon. Tektites are found in one or two other areas but there are none in the British Isles.

The possibility of confusion between a meteor and a UFO proper is lessened if the observer bears in mind one or two of the characteristics of meteoric activity :

1. The motion of a meteor is between 7 and 45 miles per second, for evening and early morning meteors respectively.
2. Their flight paths are usually of the order of one second or less.
3. They become visible at heights of around fifty miles and disappear at about 40 miles, although there are considerable divergences.
4. They move in straight line paths in any direction.
5. They are usually seen as a swift streak of light, with the following notable exceptions :

Fireballs are bodies often as bright as full moon, and on passing they may leave a trail lasting several minutes. A familiar description of the objects attributes them with a distinct green colouration. They often explode violently throwing down fragments.

F. Malcolm Bull

THE SCORRITON AFFAIR

On June 7th. 1965, between 10.30 and 11 p.m., Mr. E. Arthur Bryant, who is an ex-Prison Officer and now a groundsman at the Municipal Old Folks Home at Paignton in Devon, was sitting in his cottage which is situated near Hawson Farm in the hamlet of Scorriton. He became aware of a humming sound like the noise of a ship's turbine. Going outside, he saw a blue lighted object, of the apparent size of a pea held at arms length, approaching in the sky from a SW direction, over an adjacent hill. The object passed directly over the cottage and a curious noise resembling that made by a slamming door, (with an echo), was heard at this juncture. The course of the object was not uniform - it made two quick deviations from its route but each time came back quickly on course.

Running around the cottage, Mr. Bryant saw the blue object descending a few fields away. The humming ceased as it vanished down to earth and was not heard again at any time.

Next morning, Mr. Bryant went to the spot where he estimated the object had come to earth. He found foliage singed and withered in the vicinity and in a lane several pieces of metal of somewhat unfamiliar appearance. The burned foliage was on trees and bushes at a height of about 15 feet and extended for some 50 feet along the length of the hedgerow bordering the lane.

Grass in an adjoining field was scorched over an oval area and there were three circular burn-marks arranged in a triangular formation, each being about 6 feet from the others.

If the blue object had taken off from this field and continued on the SW - NE course it was pursuing when seen by Mr. Bryant, it would have passed close to a fir coppice as it departed. The firs in fact were scorched and twisted in what, in that event, would have been the object's direct line-of-flight.

Mr. Bryant told nobody of his observations and on the next day conducted a further search at the site. He found on this occasion a small, turbine-like fitting with curved blades, which was lodged in a sapling in the hedge. He also picked up a glass phial containing "silver sand" and a piece of paper on which two words were written in what he supposed to be Russian. In fact, the words were in Classical Greek script and were : "Adelphos Adelpho," meaning : "Brother to Brother."

Mr. Bryant noticed that the metal fragments he collected glowed in the dark. These and the other "finds" passed into the possession of a local amateur astronomer, Mr. Hedley Robinson. To date, BUFORA has been unable to obtain a sight of them. We have also been unable to ascertain the result of Geiger counts said to have been taken at the landing-site by Mr. Robinson.

A few days after the incident at Hawson Farm, swallows, which settled on telegraph-wires near the scene of the "landing," fell dead, with wings outstretched in a most unusual posture. Cause of the deaths not ascertained.

Dr. Doel, BUFORA's Chairman, visited the site and interviewed Mr. Bryant on August 27th., accompanied by the Publicity Officer, Mr. Lionel Beer. The above account derives mainly from their observations. Some of the scorch-marks on foliage were still visible at the time of their visit and were found definitely to be due to heat and not to blight or other agency.

The blue object was observed independently on the night of June 7th. by a student in Exeter who wrote to a local Journal about it.

EVALUATION :

The first observation which occurs to me - no doubt as a result of recent preoccupations - is that an object proceeding on a SW - NE course from Scorrilton would arrive eventually somewhere in the vicinity of Warminster in Wiltshire. The first fortnight of June was one of considerable UFO activity in that area.

I have little doubt that we are here dealing with a UFO and not, as some have suggested, with a secret military device. The Authorities do not test secret missiles or other flying devices over inhabited areas, where, aside from the obvious Security risk, damage to property and danger to persons and livestock might result from a mechanical failure. They have no need to do so with many suitable testing areas available to them.

On the face of it, we seem to be dealing here with a UFO landing like a number of others on record, due to a mechanical or instrumental failure in the UFO, necessitating a descent in order that the defect might be rectified. It is not easy, however, to account for some of the "stage properties" involved.

Perhaps the simplest explanation of the metal fragments and the turbine-like fitting, is that they fell off, or blew off, the UFO in the last stages of its descent. The crew might well decide to leave them lying around, rather than conduct a nocturnal hunt for them, over strange territory and at the imminent risk of encountering some of the local natives who might have witnessed the landing.

It is the enigmatic message in the phial which has me "stumped" completely! I do not imagine that the UFO-denizens converse in Classical Greek, or suppose that we do, or that they have developed the seaside holiday craze of depositing messages in bottles and dumping the bottles for strangers to find and puzzle over.

Sand is a preservative agent and the paper in the phial is described as yellowed. May it not be that paper and phial have nothing to do with the UFO but were dislodged from some hiding place by its precipitate descent? Have we here some relic of a sentimental schoolboy prank of long ago? Long enough ago, that is, to carry us back to the era when Greek was a compulsory subject in the curriculum of any good private or public school. It is as satisfactory an explanation of the message as any I have been able to devise.

J. C-B.

NOTES & QUOTES

"Flying Saucer Review."

We are often asked for details of this excellent and authoritative publication, contributors to which include most leading English-speaking UFO authorities and which gives the sceptics a fair hearing. The Editor is Mr. Charles Bowen and the "Review" is published c/o John Watkins, 21 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Rd., London, W.C.2. The "Review" is not connected with BUFORA but we recommend it most heartily as an outstanding and invaluable Journal for the UFO-researcher.

Photographs of Mars.

The U.S. Mars Probe, Mariner 4, has relayed back to Earth an excellent series of pictures of the Red Planet, taken during the near-approach of the Probe to Mars on July 15th. No canals! Instead, a crater-pitted surface very much like that of the Moon. It seems most unlikely, on the basis of this and other converging lines of evidence, that anything more than simple and primitive life-forms can ever have evolved on Mars. Of course, this does not rule out the possibility that alien intelligences from elsewhere may have built an operational base on the planet.

"The Cumberland Spaceman."

This is the rather grandiose title affixed to a photograph taken one June day by a Mr. J. Templeton of Carlisle. I examined a copy of this photograph very carefully and concluded that the "Spaceman" looming up behind Mr. Templeton's pretty little daughter was in fact no more than a lens-reflection of a woman wearing her hair in the style known as a "page-boy bob." However that may be, there seems no justification for the charge of £2 which Mr. Templeton is making for copies of the snap. I am also amazed to note, from the advertisement that, "The Russians believe that we came from Venus." I should like to know the basis of this claim. I should also like to know, in view of the equivocal wording of the advertisement, whether a Venusian origin is imputed by the Soviets to the "Spaceman" or to Mr. Templeton!

"Gee" & "Newton" Ride Again!

I thought the Frank Scully tale of a saucer full of dead little men, had died when the rascally pair who had imposed upon Scully's credulity were accused in Denver, in 1952, of a confidence-trick involving the attempted sale of a piece of war surplus junk, valued at 4 dollars, as a valuable electronic device priced at a fantastic figure. Apparently it did not. It has popped up again in an Italian UFO journal. This time, the saucer was dredged up from the North Sea off the German coast, (no dates or details), with a Dr. Loberg as principal actor in the drama. May I suggest that the saucer be weighted-down and sunk again as quickly as possible?

Bizarre . . . !

"To resolve any doubts about alien creatures taking over in space, Cooper and Conrad had to produce the two one-dollar bills they were given just before blast-off at Cape Kennedy, to prove they were the same men who went into orbit."

'Daily Express', August 30th. 1965.

No News is Good News?

Official communiques have been issued in Chile and the Argentine Republic, confirming the sighting of a UFO in the Antarctic on July 3rd. (See Summer 1965 issue of this JOURNAL, page 18). The UFO was witnessed from a British Base in the area also - but where is the British communique? The Press seems to be dropping its old, weary "heavy avuncular" attempts at

humour and to be treating the subject of UFO's with at least a modicum of seriousness. Dare we hope that Whitehall will soon wake up to the fact that the British Public - which pays the salaries after all - is interested in these strange sky phenomena ?

J. C-B.

B.U.F.O.R.A. MEETS DAN FRY

Dr. Fry, who likes to be known as Dan Fry, hold a Ph.D. from St. Andrews University College of London. He is author of the books : "Steps to the Stars", "The White Sands Incident" and "Atoms, Galaxies and Understanding". Founder President and Editor of UNDERSTANDING INCORPORATED. He has helped develop several parts for the guidance system of the Atlas missile, while holding the position of Vice-President in Charge of Research at Crescent Engineering and Research Company of California. He previously worked for Aerojet General Corporation of White Sands Proving Grounds, New Mexico. He holds a top security clearance pass and has been concerned with the manufacture of the first atom bomb to be exploded and latterly space missile development.

Our Chairman, Dr. G. G. Doel, convened a meeting at 8 p.m., The Kings Arms, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1., at three days notice. We regret that it was only possible to contact London members whose telephone numbers we knew.

We had great pleasure in welcoming Dr. and Mrs. Fry and their friend Mrs. Lucille Colyer of of Palm Beach, Florida.

Dr. Fry told us that \$300,000 had been allocated in the U.S.A. to determine statistically the known facts about our galaxy. Scientists in many fields were approached and their conclusions indicated that it must contain many millions of inhabited worlds. Our own solar system is in an outer spiral and was probably one of the last to be formed. Therefore systems at the centre of the galaxy could well be two million or so years ahead of us in development. Only sixty-two years ago, Orville and Wilbur Wright managed to coax their 12 horse-power man-carrying box kite a few feet off the ground and now we have spacecraft which orbit the earth every ninety minutes at about 18,000 m.p.h. If we continue to increase our speed of travel at the same rate for another sixty years, Dr Fry estimated that we would be travelling at 9,000,000 m.p.h. In the third sixty year period we would approach the 'light barrier' at this rate of progress. This barrier is mathematical and philosophical rather than natural. No doubt we will penetrate it with little more effort than was required for that early aeronautical bogey man, the 'sound barrier'.

Consequently how far could other inhabited worlds have advanced in two million years ? How many space-craft would they have built ? The number is enormous, and a conservative estimate shows that 10,000 could have been in the vicinity of Earth since the birth of Christ.

Dr. Fry's talk was very interesting but some of us felt that it was more suitable for American audiences.

Questions followed and Dr. Fry was asked to relate the 'White Sands Incident', which happened to him on July 4th, 1950 at the White Sands Proving Ground.

They were testing the largest ever rocket in static firings, which had 100,000 lbs. thrust. It was a very hot evening and the air conditioning was ineffective in the old wooden buildings. Dan had missed the last bus to town, so decided to cool down by going for a walk. He turned off on a little used road on the base. About three quarters of a mile along he heard something heavy landing about seventy feet away. It crushed a large bush but landed softly. The object

was 30 feet across and about 15 feet high, having the appearance of being plated with platinum. Dan saw no opening, and when he plucked up enough courage, found that the surface was hard but perfectly smooth. He then heard a voice, which sounded as though it came from a loud speaker. He dived for cover under the nearest bush. Dan thought that he heard the voice chuckle, so decided that it must have a sense of humour. He then asked questions to which he received answers and was told that this was an empty sampling craft. The voice offered him a ride and Dan felt that the operators were not trying to prove anything to him. He therefore entered the craft.

The flight lasted about thirty minutes, with a speed of 8,000 m.p.h., between White Sands and Washington, during which time he observed the lights of several cities. He was then returned to White Sands. When Dan got out, an orange band appeared around the centre of the craft and it took off. It occurred to Dan that his giant rocket motor was just a piece of junk in comparison. Next day he revisited the spot and saw where his footprints had suddenly ended and started again in a different spot.

As he was under the curtain of security and feared to lose his job, the story remained a secret for a long time.

Lionel Beer.

UFO REPORT FROM QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA -23rd. MAY, 1965

Summary of Report :-

Date : Sunday, 23rd. May, 1965.
 Time : 12 o'clock Midnight, approximately.
 Place : 'Retreat' Hotel, on the Eton-Nebo Road, about 42 miles from Mackay, Queensland.
 Witnesses : Mr. J. W. Tilse, Hotel licensee and commercial pilot with 11,500 hrs. flying experience ; Mr. Eric Juden ; Mr. John Burgess.

Object was moving around at a distance of about 300 yards from the Hotel and at one time seemed to be approaching the witnesses. It hovered at treetop height and then rose and flew off swiftly in a north-easterly direction. It disappeared gradually in the distance, diminishing to a mere speck of light. Duration of the sighting was 30 - 40 minutes.

Object described as looking like an upturned saucer, the upper part jet black in colour. Diameter estimated at 30 feet. There were three triangular legs or supports projecting below the body of the object, tapering away from the body. At the top of each leg was a brilliant globular light which seemed continually to 'expand and contract.' There were from 20 to 30 other lights, less brilliant, around the object's central zone, apparently below a platform-like projection which girdled it. A slight noise was heard, (not specifically described in the published reports). There was an orange glow around the object.

Mr. Tilse later photographed a circular area, 20 ft. in diameter, above which the object had hovered and which exhibited scorch-marks on grass and trees.

The Regional Director of Civil Aviation in Brisbane, Mr. Seymour, expressed belief in Mr. Tilse's narrative on the grounds that the latter is an experienced pilot. Mr. Seymour added that the R.A.A.F. would probably investigate the report as was usual in such cases.

Details from "Sunday Mail" and other local news sources.

EVALUATION :-

It seems obvious that no natural phenomena or conventional object would answer to the rather detailed description which the three witnesses give of the saucer-like-thing which they watched. Nothing in their accounts suggests that collective hallucination was involved. The only alternative to acceptance of the report at face-value seems to be to ascribe it to deliberate hoaxing on the part of the men.

Mr. Tilse is, clearly, a responsible citizen with a reputation to lose, both as hotel licensee and pilot. Would he risk this for the sake of a brief interlude of notoriety and any nebulous advantage which might accrue to him from a possible access of visitors to his hotel? Would he in pursuance of such a scheme, place his reputation in the hands of two of his guests by suborning them to lie on his behalf? It is, to say the very least, improbable. Hoax is as untenable as hallucination as an explanation of the report.

The area in which the sighting occurred is a rather wild and sparsely-populated one - in fact "saucer country" to the extent that the entities piloting these devices appear to favour solitude and privacy on the occasions when they approach the ground. The fact that the tripod landing-gear was extended, also the rather erratic movements of the UFO, suggest that a landing was in contemplation by those piloting it. As in other cases, when it was realized that there were witnesses present, the decision to land seems to have been abandoned.

The "scorch marks" on grass and trees in the projected landing area are interesting. From my observations at the celebrated Charlton "crater" in 1963, I believe that a UFO descends on jets of compressed gas, which steady the machine and cushion its descent. The shape of the leg-like projections in this Australian case, tapering away from the body of the craft, suggests that the "legs" may actually be the nozzles through which the gas is emitted. They may also serve as supports in a more conventional sense when touch-down occurs.

This is one more to add to an increasing list of near-landings of UFOs. Such incidents are being reported more and more of late and it is interesting to speculate what, if anything, this tendency foreshadows.

J. C-B.

WHO ARE MEMBERS OF BUFORA ?

Misunderstanding seems occasionally to arise concerning the status of persons who are members of a Member-Society affiliated with the Association.

Individual members of BUFORA complete its membership application-form, are accepted as members by the Committee and pay the annual subscription of one guinea, as laid down in the Constitution.

No other persons whatsoever are members of BUFORA, except the members of its National Advisory Council, who are the representatives of the Member-Societies and enjoy the rights and privileges of membership *ex officio*.

Membership of a Member-Society does not entitle a person to describe himself or herself as a member of BUFORA, or to vote at General Meetings of the Association.

Any member of a Member-Society or of a Branch Organisation of BUFORA may, of course, by application to the Committee and payment of the annual subscription, become a member of the Association as well as of such Branch Organisation or Member-Society.

Members and Member-Societies should be in possession of a copy of the BUFORA Constitution and should consult it when in doubt as to any such points as those dealt with above.

Copies of the Constitution are obtainable from the Honorary Secretary,
price 1/- plus 3d. postage

BAVIC AS A PERMANENT ALIGNMENT

P. K. Haythornthwaite

The subject of orthoteny has changed considerably in character and emphasis since the publication of Aime Michel's original book on the subject, 'Flying Saucers and the Straight Line Mystery'. In this book, Michel demonstrated the existence of geometrical patterns of straight lines, which could be drawn through the sightings of a given 24-hr. period when these were plotted on a map. Although these networks undoubtedly appear rather impressive at first sight, subsequent work, particularly by Jacques Vallée, (1) has shown that they are in large measure explicable on the hypothesis of a random distribution of sightings. Statistically, the 5, 6, or 7 point lines seem the most significant.

There is little doubt that the best way of dealing with the problem of the statistical significance of orthotenic alignments is a method of 'simulation' with a computer, as used by Vallée. Analytical calculation is made difficult by the fact that the number of alignments to be expected from a set of randomly scattered points will depend on the shape of the bounded land area we are considering. (As an exaggerated example of this, consider an extremely long, thin island. Provided that this island is sufficiently narrow, all points falling randomly on it will be considered to lie on the same line.) However, most of us are not in a position to make use of a computer, and so we are forced to use analytical methods. Of these, probably the most satisfactory is that developed by D. H. Menzel. (2) As his criterion for a 'straight' line, Menzel uses the concept of a corridor of arbitrary width; any point lying within this corridor is said to lie on the line. This contrasts with the definition of Alexander Mebane, which is in terms of angles. (3) Menzel has derived his equations at some length, and so they will merely be quoted here.

Menzel calculates that the expected number of m-point lines, $N(m,n)$, obtained from a random set of n points is given by

$$N(m,n) = WP(m-2, n-2) = W \binom{n-2}{m-2} f^{m-2} (1-f)^{n-m}$$

where f is the mean fraction of points falling within the corridor, or the probability that a given point will fall in the corridor. Since we are dealing with random points, f will be given by the ratio of the area of the corridors to the total land area considered, or rather, by the mean value of the ratio for all possible corridors.

$P(m-2, n-2)$ is the probability that, having defined the position of a corridor by means of two of the n points, $(m-2)$ of the remaining $(n-2)$ points lie within it. W represents the number of independent corridors. (6) If there were no alignments, this would simply be the number of all possible pairs of the n points, that is $\binom{n}{2}$. Where there are alignments, the number of independent corridors will be somewhat less than this. For instance, if $n=3$ and $m=3$, that is three aligned points, the number of non-overlapping corridors is obviously one only, and not three as given by the formula. In fact,

$$W = \binom{n}{2} - (\text{SUM})_m^n = 3 \frac{(m-2)(m+1)}{2} N_o(m, n)$$

where $N(m,n)$ is the observed number of m-point lines.

Let us now apply these relations to the famous BAVIC alignment of 24th September, 1954. On this day, from midnight to midnight, there were a number of 10 sightings, of which 6 lie on a line stretching from Bayonne to Vichy. Vallée has calculated the 'best' great circle line through the 6 points by the method of least squares, and has worked out the errors of the actual points

from the line. (4) The greatest errors are

Vichy	-0.835 km., the + and - signs indicating that the points
Gelles	+0.786 km.

are on opposite sides of the theoretical line. The 6 points will thus fit into a corridor of width 1.621 km. To be conservative, for the purpose of this calculation we will take the corridor width to be 2km.

Taking the area of France to be 545,000 km. sq. and the total length of BAVIC across France to be 895 km., the ratio of the area of the BAVIC corridor to the area of France, $f = 2 \times 895 / 575000$ or 1:300. The mean length of all possible corridors in France will be somewhat less than this; Menzel suggests that it is about 460 miles (735 km.). However, the values obtained for $P(m-2, n-2)$ increase very rapidly as f increases, and to take this mean corridor length would probably underestimate the probability of the 6 point line. To be very cautious in this calculation, we will take the very large value of f given by BAVIC itself.

Putting $n = 10$, $m = 6$, and $N_0(m, n) = 1$, we obtain
 $W = 45 - 14 = 31$ Independent corridors, and

$$P(m-2, n-2) = \binom{8}{4} \left(\frac{1}{300}\right)^4 \left(\frac{299}{300}\right)^4 = 1.24 \times 10^{-9}$$

Hence, the expected number of 6 point corridors of 2 km. width is
 $N(m, n) = Wp(m-2, n-2) = 38.4 \times 10$

This is approximately the same as the probability of obtaining the 6 point corridor. Thus, this probability is of the order of 1 in 25 million.

This very low probability is partly due to the fact that such a large proportion of the sightings for 24th Sept., 1954 lie on BAVIC, but largely due to the very small deviations of the points from the 'least-squares line, with consequently small corridor width. As we have already noted, the value of P is very sensitive to changes in the value of f .

The apparent unlikelihood of BAVIC being the product of random sightings has led to consideration of the possibility that this line has more than ephemeral importance.

Aimé Michel in particular has put forward the view that BAVIC is an alignment of permanent significance. (5) In support of this contention, he mentions the fact that, when prolonged around the globe, the line runs through all the areas which have experienced sightings 'waves' similar to that in France in 1954. The one exception to this is the 1957 wave in the United States, and this was notable for the absence of the 'great cloud cigar'. In addition, in France itself, the line has been the scene of continual UFO activity, says Michel, and quotes the 1962 sighting at Vauriat in support. (The tiny village of Vauriat was found, after a great deal of searching, to be only 200 metres away from the path of BAVIC).

The significance of Michel's first claim is hard to judge: the second is also hard to test without full data for all French sightings for the last few years. However, it is possible to some extent to investigate the permanence of BAVIC for the limited period of the 1954 wave itself, as a considerable amount of information is given in Michel's book.

Using this data, one thing stands out fairly quickly. If we expect a large number of sightings to be positioned on BAVIC with the accuracy of the sightings of 24th Sept., 1954, or Vauriat, then we are doomed to disappointment. ~~On the other hand, there does seem to be a~~

This does not seem to be a problem which is soluble in any very neat fashion, but in estimating the following figures, an attempt has been made to be conservative in fixing the number of sightings.

The question we are asking here is whether, given BAVIC as defined on 24th Sept., 1954, a significantly large proportion of all the other sightings of the French wave also lie on BAVIC or rather, on some corridor of arbitrary width parallel to BAVIC.

In Michel's book a total of approximately 265 sightings are mentioned individually, of which 10 occurred on our 'definite day', leaving 255 to play with. Of these, I find that 31 lie within a corridor extending 20 km. either side of BAVIC, 219 do not lie within this corridor, and 5 appear as though they might lie within the band but so far their positions have not been accurately identified. For the purposes of this calculation these latter points will be counted as lying off BAVIC.

As derived by Dr. Menzel, given a corridor, the probability that m out of n points will lie in it is given by

$$P(m,n) = \binom{n}{m} f^m (1-f)^{n-m}, \text{ with the notation as before.}$$

In this case, $n = 255$, and $m = 31$. With the length of BAVIC 895 km. as before, we obtain $f = 1/15$, and so the number of sightings expected in BAVIC on a random distribution of points is $nf = 255/15 = 17.0$.

The observed number of sightings in the corridor, 31, is thus nearly twice as great as we would expect from chance alone. We could now calculate the probability of this sighting distribution occurring on a 'chance' hypothesis from the formula above, but the arithmetic is very tedious. Since in this case n is quite large, and f quite small, the answer may be found very approximately from tables of the 'Poisson Distribution'. Such a table gives the probability of obtaining 31 or more points in the corridor from a random scattering of 255 points as 0.0015. This is an approximation to the true value, but shows that the observed distribution is significant probably at least at the 1% level: that is, it would occur less than one in a hundred times by chance alone.

This calculation should not be treated as conclusive, but it at least does not reject out of hand the idea that there is something a little out of the ordinary about the BAVIC corridor.

Aimé Michel has suggested (5) that sightings to be expected along a permanent great circle line are

- (i) Landings of UFOs within 20 km. on either side of the line.
- (ii) Sightings of many objects at once.
- (iii) Sightings of objects performing zig-zag manoeuvres.

Let us see whether there appear to be more landings on BAVIC during the French wave of 1954 than might be expected from chance; that is, are there a significantly greater proportion of landings on BAVIC compared with rest of France? Taking only those sightings for which Michel gives descriptions in his book, and only those which are definitely on or off BAVIC, the following figures are obtained.

	On BAVIC	Off BAVIC	TOTAL
Landings	8	49	57
Non-landings	18	114	132
TOTAL	26	163	189

Compare these figures with those to be expected if the proportion of landings to non-landings does not differ on or off BAVIC.

	On BAVIC	Off BAVIC	TOTAL
Landings	7.8	49.2	57
Non-landings	18.2	113.8	132
TOTAL	26	163	189

The agreement is remarkable. At this point one could apply the chi-square test to determine the probability that the discrepancies are due to chance but the agreement is so close between observed and expected that the effort is not worth-while.

The results obtained with multi-object sightings and zig-zag sightings are similar, and so there seems little evidence in the sightings of Autumn 1954 to suggest that there is a predominance of the three mentioned types of sighting on BAVIC. This might, of course, be a consequence of the short period of time that we are considering.

- | | | | |
|----|---|--|------------|
| 1. | Vallee, J. | 'The Menzel-Michel Controversy'. | FSR 1964/4 |
| 2. | Menzel, D. H. | 'Orthoteny - A Lost Cause'. Part II | FSR 1965/4 |
| 3. | Mebane, A. | Appendix of 'Flying Saucers and the Straight Line Mystery', by A. Michel | |
| 4. | Vallee, J. | 'Recent Developments in Orthotenic Research' | FSR 1963/6 |
| 5. | Michel, A. | 'Global Orthoteny'. | FSR 1963/3 |
| 6. | For a detailed discussion of the concept of independent or mutually exclusive corridors,
see Seeviour, P. M. 'Foundations of Orthoteny'. | | FSR 1965/2 |

OBITUARY

It is with the deepest regret that we announce the death of Mr. V. W. Smithson on September 29th. after a short illness. Those of us in BUFORA who knew and worked with 'Val' will greatly miss his mature advice and wise council in the Executive Committee and his most valuable work as BUFORA Treasurer.

We extend our sincere condolences to his family in this sudden bereavement and would like them to know that we shall always remember and thank 'Val' for all his work on our behalf.

BUFORA will miss him sadly.

G.D.

GREAT UFO SIGHTINGS OF THE PAST — 1

YEAR : 1200 A.D.

"In the same month of December, a little before the Nativity of the Lord, there appeared by night in the Province of York five moons in the heavens, at about the first watch of the night. The first appeared in the North, the second in the South, the third in the West and the fourth in the East, the fifth in the middle of the first four, having with it many stars : and this latter one, with its stars, made the circuit of the four moons previously mentioned five or six times. The phenomenon appeared in sight.....for a period of 1 hour".

Roger de Hoveden.

The above extract from de Hoveden's "Chronica" is an excellent introduction to this series of major UFO sightings of days gone by. It really appears that the UFOs were on parade over Yorkshire on that long past night just before Christmas in the year 1200 !

It seems that four luminous UFOs, resembling moons in the view of the (doubtless) terrified watchers, took up positions in the form of a square, one at each end of the cardinal points of the compass. A fifth UFO occupied the centre of the square and it was surrounded by a host of small, starlike points of light - perhaps the sort of remote-controlled satellite discs which we know as Foo-fighters. The central UFO, with its retinue of attendants, then proceeded to "review" the UFOs forming the square, actually making the circuit on about half-a-dozen occasions.

The precision and detail with which these phenomena are described, which is in contrast with the sloppy sort of reporting one is all too apt to encounter today, tells strongly in favour of the veridicity of the narrative. Natural explanations seem to be "out" and one need not remind readers that the U.S. Air Force was not conspicuously active over Yorkshire in the 13th. Century. As for lighted balloons, the local meteorologists, if any, were probably engaged upon the evocation of the devil as an aid to the framing of their predictions. (It is to be hoped that, if this were so, they arrived at better results than the modern representatives of their tribe - they could scarcely have arrived at worse !)

Modern instances of UFO manoeuvring and "square-bashing" have been recorded. It is difficult to conjecture the reason for such displays. They could have a military or a ritual significance, or they could be connected with UFO propulsion or with signalling. It is just one more instance of a mystery within a mystery.

SOUTHERN REGION U.F.O. RESEARCH GROUPS' CONFERENCE

The "Oxford Mail" of May 10th. last contained an excellent article on this Conference which took place at Oxford on the previous Saturday. Written by Anthony Wood, it was objective, constructive and very different from the usual stodgy, plum-pudding sort of would-be humorous stuff which Fleet St. is apt to churn out when UFOs are the subject of a report.

The caption to the article was : "The things from outer space." Below was an unflattering photograph of your Editor.

It is to be feared that the wicked have linked photograph and caption !

