

DID UFOs STOP A WAR?

By W. R. DRAKE

IF the histories of mankind are re-examined, many strange incidents hitherto baffling may be resolved by the acceptance of intervention by UFOs. Such an event in the year A.D. 776 was chronicled by an unknown French monk in the *Annales Laurissenses* and paralleled by the *Annales Eginhardi*, the latter compiled by Abbot Einhard, the contemporary biographer of Charlemagne. These works in Latin are printed in Migne's *Patrologiae*, Tomus CIV dealing with the ninth century; as far as the present writer knows, his own translation is the only English version extant. From his capital, Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen), Charlemagne (742-814), the "Light of the Dark Ages," had created the Holy Roman Empire, including the future France, Germany, Italy and Austria, and united Christendom into one community, a glorious, imaginative, super-national state. The Emperor's many subjects rebelled against imperialism and Charles was constantly warring to suppress national revolts over all his vast domains. A literal translation of the *Annales Laurissenses* for the year A.D. 776 reads:

DCCLXXVI [A.D. 776]

"Then our Lord, Charles the King, went forth into Italy to assault the lands around Foruli, Hrodgaudus was killed, and our above-mentioned King Charles (Charlemagne) celebrated Easter with the citizens of Tarvisium. The citizens captured at Foruli, with the citizens left behind at Tarvisium who had rebelled, he distributed them all among the French, and again with prosperity and victory he returned to France. Then a messenger arrived announcing that the Saxons had rebelled and massacred all their hostages, and had broken their solemn oaths. They had pacified the castle at Aeresburg by evil and sinister ingenuity, thereupon persuading the French to leave, so that when Aeresburg was abandoned by the French they destroyed its walls and fortifications. Advancing from there they sought to do likewise at Sigiburg. The French with the aid of God opposed them courageously so they in no way prevailed. (But to pacify the garrison within the fortress, they (the Saxons) were unable to destroy them as they had done the others in the other castle, so they began to

prepare their forces and catapults to capture it by valour. God willing, the balista of stones, which they had set up, did more damage to themselves than to those living in the fortress. Now when the Saxons perceived things were not going in their favour, they began to erect scaffolding from which they could bravely storm the castle itself. But God is good as well as just. He overcame their valour, and on the same day they prepared an assault against the Christians, who lived within the castle, the glory of God appeared in manifestation above the church within the fortress. Those watching outside in that place, of whom many still live to this very day, say they beheld the likeness of two large shields reddish in colour in motion above the church (*et dicunt vidisse instar duorum scutorum colore rubeo flammantes et agitantes supra ipsam ecclesiam*), and when the pagans who were outside saw this sign, they were at once thrown into confusion and terrified with great fear they began to flee from the castle. The whole multitude in panic were driven to take headlong flight, some killed others indiscriminately, glancing back in panic then hurling their spears, which they carried by their shoulder, at those fleeing before them; others were struck by blows among themselves, and by the divine retribution judged down upon them. How the goodness of God for the deliverance of the Christians had worked upon them, none could relate, but the greater the Saxons became terrified by increasing fear, so much more were the Christians comforted and they praised the omnipotence of the Lord, Who had graciously extended his power over His servants.)

"And as the Saxons took flight from there, the French harried them, slaying them as far as the River Lippy. The castle was saved and the French returned victorious. And when our Lord, King Charles, came to Worms and heard of all these events, he began a meeting of the people held with public acclaim. After the council had met, with the aid of God, by swiftness and great enterprise, he suddenly stormed the Saxon strongholds and defences. The terrified Saxons all assembled at the place where the Lippy rises, coming from all parts they surrendered their country in a bond given by all present; they

solemnly swore to become Christians and to submit to the laws of our Lord, Charles the King, and of the French. Then our Lord, King Charles, together with the French, rebuilt the castle of Aeresburg and another castle (Lippstadt) over the Lippy; there the Saxons came with their wives and innumerable children; the multitude was baptised and they gave hostages, which our Lord, King Charles, demanded from them. When the above-mentioned fortresses were complete, they were handed over to the French troops stationed there as garrison. Our Lord the King returned to France and celebrated Christmas at Haristallio and Easter at Nimwegen."

Migne, *Patrologiae*, Tom. CIV, Saeculum IX, *Annales Laurissenses*, p. 404.

The wild Saxons defying God and men were massed to overwhelm the fort when suddenly they were paralysed by the appearance of two reddish-coloured "shields" flaming and vibrating above the church; the pagans stared in wonder then they fled stabbing and killing their own comrades in panic, terrified by this visitation from the skies. What apparition could have thrown the German hordes into mad flight? How would our own Air Force experts explain this sighting away? Was it the planet Venus? Wild geese? Meteors? Could it have been a "temperature in version"? If only the Saxons had used thermometers, they need not have run for their lives. But, of course, this was just an hallucination, that familiar hallucination recorded so often in the Classics, the same hallucination that in A.D. 312 converted Constantine and all his army to Christianity, the hallucination that persists in haunting so many observers today, this damned hallucination hundreds of years old, which officially still cannot exist. The Saxons, knowing nothing of flying saucers, stampeded back to the Fatherland, their souls so shaken by those flaming shields above their heads that they flocked with all their families to embrace this Christianity, which could work such wonders, and humbly surrendered themselves, their hearths and their homes to Charlemagne.

Only seventeen years later, in A.D. 793, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* complained: "In this year terrible portents appeared over Northumbria and miserably frightened the inhabitants; these were exceptional flashes of lightning and fiery dragons were seen flying in the air." Even

the learned Cicero eight hundred years earlier felt aggravated by those globes of fire in the heavens, which sent the Senate scurrying to scan the Books of the Sibyl.

That unknown monk, quietly and laboriously penning his beautiful Latin script in his cell, accepted the flying "shields" without surprise. Were not such signs from heaven set down in the Holy Scriptures, the very substance of his faith? Had not the Venerable Bede across that cold North Sea fifty years earlier written his *Ecclesiastical History* full of similar prodigies? These fiery "shields" were Messengers from the good "Lord" above. Our chronicler hints that at the time of writing many eyewitnesses were still alive. How his pious soul must have marvelled at their miraculous tale so often told! His clear, colourful description conjured up that vivid image burned on his brain. He has chosen his words with deliberation, rejecting "clipeus," the small oval shield carried by the lightly-armed soldiers, and stressing instead "scutum," the large quadrangular shield made of wood covered with hides borne by heavy infantry.

Charlemagne was the most enlightened ruler of his times; the rough education of his youth dissatisfied his questing spirit. At the age of forty, despite the imperial cares of all Europe, he had himself tutored in the Classics, the Sciences and Astronomy by Alcuin, that gentle scholar from York. The Emperor was so struck by the resemblance of the Pole Star constellation to a wagon, that he gave it his own name; even today it is sometimes known as "Charles's Wain." He fully believed that the Saxons had been routed by heavenly wonders. Indeed, the Emperor was later to have cause to rue such UFOs, for his biographer, Einhard, reports that in A.D. 810 a ball of fire fell from the clear sky with a great light speeding from east to west and startled the Emperor's horse to throw him to the ground. The old man's armour bruised his limbs and thereafter Charlemagne walked with a limp.

The flying "shields" over Sigiburg in A.D. 776 continue the regular pattern of UFO sightings from the annals of Ancient Greece, Rome, Israel, Britain, Anglo-Saxon England, Medieval Europe down to our own twentieth century. The description penned by that monk twelve hundred years ago tallies exactly with reports by our jet pilots today.