

In FSR's collection, THE HUMANOIDS (Futura Paperbacks, 1974) some of the cases will be found on the undermentioned pages, in Jacques Vallée's section, *The Pattern Behind the UFO Landings*:-

Quarouble Case (Marius DeWilde)	<i>Humanoids, p. 31</i>
Cenon Case	<i>Humanoids, p. 31</i>
Contay Case	<i>Humanoids, p. 30</i>
Mouriéras Case	<i>Humanoids, p. 31</i>
Chabeuil Case	<i>Humanoids, p. 32</i>
Prémanon Case	<i>Humanoids, p. 32</i>
Les Jonquerets-de-Livet Case	<i>Humanoids, p. 53</i>
Poncey-sur-l'ignon Case	<i>Humanoids, p. 36</i>

And, finally, how *very* interesting it is to note that, in the Prémanon Case of September 27, 1954, Messrs B. and B. are accusing four little children of having "bent" the grass, but not "trampled" it, in a circular, anticlockwise fashion. Clever kids! It seems that B. and B. managed to find only one of the children (by then a university student) but did not manage to find the other three children. But we in Britain know very well where the missing children are. They are in England, on the farms of Wiltshire and Hampshire, and still up to their old anticlockwise tricks too, as is proved by our recent reports on the great swirled rings in the cornfields! — G.C.

STOP PRESS

FIRST CORNFIELD CIRCLES IN HERTFORDSHIRE

Mystery

August 11, 1989 MERCURY M7

circles appear

MUCH HADHAM (N. Hertfordshire)

in wheat field

MYSTERIOUS circles, which cannot be explained by the country's top experts, have appeared in a wheat field at Much Hadham.

Partners Rodney and Richard Munday discovered two 10-yard wide circles in a field behind The Jolly Wagons, Widford Road, on their 180-acre Camwell Hall farm.

The wheat had been completely flattened, bent over at the base of the stem and was lying in a clockwise direction.

The circles were about three yards apart and one was slightly bigger than the other.

They were discovered at the weekend as the brothers, whose family have been at Camwell Hall since 1935, began to harvest their crop.

Mr Rodney Munday (41) said: "It's totally extraordinary. I have never seen anything like it.

"I can't see how it could happen."

They believe from the state of the flattened wheat that it could have happened up to two weeks earlier.

The brothers were puzzled that if the circles had been caused by a freak shift in air pressure, why the edges were not ragged or did not tail off.

They concluded it would have taken quite a force to flatten the wheat.

They also believe it was one of the first times that the mysterious circles had been discovered in the region.

Since they were first recorded in 1981, the number of circles found every year has been growing.

Initially there were just 25 in a year. Last year there were 250, and already there have been 250 this year.

Most have been in the Hampshire and Sussex areas.

Several theories have been put forward to explain them — including freak mini-cyclones, or the presence of underground workings or historic settlements.

More bizarre explanations include alien space-ships.

Mr Richard Payne, the senior policy advisor of the East Anglian region of the National Farmers'

Union said it could have been a result of chemical spraying over old workings in the exceptionally dry weather.

He added that it was the first case reported to the union in the region.

Mr Willie White, assistant technical adviser in the NFU's south east region, where most of the circles have been found, said: "There is absolutely nothing to explain what they are. It is really weird."



THE MUNDAY brothers in one of the circles.

AIRSHIPS OF THE 1890s

By Steven A. Arts (Nebraska, U.S.A.)

It is a long time since FSR published anything on the extraordinary UFO Wave over the United States in the years 1896-97. Long ago we devoted a lot of space to those events, but today there must be a great many folk among our newer or younger readers who may not even have heard about the curious phenomenon of the great "airships", carrying very powerful headlights or searchlights, which seem to have visited large regions of the United States in the last century. We shall therefore probably find an opportunity to carry a few recapitulations in the coming months. Meanwhile, two things seem to be quite certain about the UFO Wave of 1896/97 over the U.S.A. *Firstly, there does not appear to have been a single report anywhere in America of a craft of 'saucer' or 'disc' shape during those years (although there had been a notable one at Denison, Texas, in January 1875). And secondly, not a single one of the numerous reports from Americans who claimed to have seen the occupants of landed machines in 1896/97 referred to "small beings" or "big heads", although it is true that at least one account (on the Hamilton ranch at Leroy, Texas), referred to extremely unpleasant-looking creatures. Otherwise the encounter accounts — and there appear to have been quite a number of them — seem to describe very "normal" sorts of individuals resembling Americans in size and features. And every account of the craft seen seems to indicate something large and of the shape of an airship, or what we were later to call a dirigible or a "zeppelin". So, whatever and whoever it was that was examining the United States in 1896/97, it does not seem that they were anything like the small critters with big heads who are plaguing us at present.* EDITOR

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THE sightings started in the Sacramento (California) area, in November of 1896. One of the very first sightings, recorded in the newspaper *Sacramento Bee* of November 18, shows a difference. Voices are heard, but speaking English.

Titled "*Voices in the Sky*", the paper's account states:

"Startled citizens last night living at points of the city along a rough diagonal line, yet far distant from each other, declare that they not only saw the phenomenon, but they also heard voices issuing from it in mid-air — not the whispering of angels, not the sepulchral mutterings of evil spirits, but the intelligible words and the merry laughter of humans.

"At those intervals where the glittering object, as if careless of its obligation to maintain a straightforward course, descended dangerously near the housetops, voices were heard in the sky saying:

'Lift her up, quick! You are making directly for that steeple.'

"Then the light in the sky would be seen obeying some mystic touch and ascending to a considerable height (sic), from which it would take up again its southwesterly course."

The article goes on to give some other details, and refers to a man purported to be the inventor of just such an airship, and planning to fly it from New York to California.

Another section of the story relates the tale of one Charles Lusk, cashier of the Central Electrical Street Railway Company, who saw the airship. He, too, heard a voice saying:

"Well, we ought to get to San Francisco by tomorrow noon."

Carmen of the tram lines said they saw the airship, which was balloon-shaped. They considered it a balloon.

A Mr. G.C. Snyder, in the same article, claimed the airship was definitely not a meteor.

"I assure you," he is reported to have said, "there is no joke about this matter, so far as I am concerned. Last evening, about ten minutes before 7 o'clock, I saw a light, which was above, approximately, Twenty-seventh and P Streets, sailing in a southwesterly direction. It rose and fell and swayed from right to left as if it were being propelled by some motor power. It was a white light, and was not a star or a meteor, I am certain of that."

That south-westerly direction, mentioned twice, would, of course, take the airship in the general direction of San Francisco.

Two days later the *Sacramento Bee* copied an article published originally in the *San Francisco Chronicle* about the airship reports gaining popular attention in

that city.

Asked the *Chronicle* story:

"Are there up in the sky four jolly and intrepid human travellers, paying their last respects to Mars, singing quartets to Venus, and saluting the planets generally within hailing distance, or are the people of Sacramento affected with the disease known in polite society as "illuminated staggers"?

"That is the question."

Was it, though? Observers of the modern UFO sightings will notice a somewhat nasty turn of events here. The story suggested that the Sacramento witnesses of the airship were drunk. A subtitle of the above article was: "Freemasonry of Liars, Suggests Prof. Davidson."

People who saw the mysterious lights in the sky were accused of drinking too much. Airships were thought to be kites, balloons, the planet Venus, the star Sirius, hoaxes, fakes, or, in another vein, ships from an advanced civilization on Mars.

The man who claimed they were from Mars said:

"In my investigations of this subject, it would seem that this visitor is from our neighboring planet Mars. We know, from the evidence of scientists and astronomers, that Mars is millions of years older than the Earth."

Elsewhere in his impassioned letter to the *Sacramento Bee*, he says:

"The speed of our Martian ships is very great, and can be regulated to the rapidity of a thousand miles a second."

Real heady stuff, to say the least. What was this aerial phenomenon that had folk talking for nearly a year, from California to Maine?

It was what modern observers would call "unidentified flying objects", or "UFOs" for short. Back then they were called 'airships'. The above quoted letter was dated November 24, 1896!

'*Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*', dating back to about that period, defines airships as being "balloons".

These airships could not have possibly been balloons. What balloons, especially in the 1890s, could travel at an estimated 200 miles per hour, in one case that's on record?

There are similarities to modern UFO sightings, as one would expect, but there are many differences as well.

Another trend is visible in an article from the newspaper *Sacramento Union* of November 20th. They have started using nonsense humor, perhaps in an effort to downgrade the reports.

"The man who is alleged to have heard the chorus