

aircraft was photographed in 1931 (see Part Two of this series).

There are numerous other phantom aeroplane reports from the 1920's and 1930's emanating from other parts of the world, and this suggests that the Scandinavian-style operation could have been repeated in Europe and North America.

Ivan T. Sanderson recently attempted to tie together the various reports of phantom ships and submarines over the years to support a speculation that some form of super-civilisation exists under the seas.³ Ray Palmer has for years advocated the concept that there is a hole in the North Pole and that some UFOs originate there. The 1934 Scandinavian wave can be used as new "proof" for any of these theories . . . and probably will be. It cannot, however, be easily accepted by those who believe in the extraterrestrial hypothesis. Those believers will undoubtedly dismiss the whole affair as the work of Germany or the Soviet Union even though anyone who is willing to spend an hour in a public library can learn that neither of those countries had the capability of launching and sustaining the Scandinavian overflights in 1933-34.

Only one basic fact can really be established from these reports: the ghostfliers originated to the North of the Arctic Circle and returned to that region.

Other Ghostfliers of the 1930s

In previous sections of this series we discussed typical phantom aeroplane reports from England and the United States. In his article *Over the Borderline*, published in *Unknown* magazine, September 1939, Fortean Eric Frank Russell cited many of the UFO events recorded in 1938. "In July 1938," he wrote, "an 'unknown aeroplane' flew over Croydon, London (*Daily Herald*), its noise fading eastward. Note that what passed over in the night was not necessarily an aeroplane, but definitely was a noise resembling that of a plane. Exactly one year earlier (*Daily Telegraph*) 'unknown planes' made strange mechanical noises in the darkness over Hendon, London."

Scandinavia was plagued by a long succession of UFO-type manifestations throughout the 1930s. Consider this item from the *Vastermanland Lans News*, October 10, 1936: "A strange light phenomenon has been observed over a meadowland in the area of Kanikebo near the community of Moklinta. Several times in recent weeks people have observed a reddish light, sometimes almost dazzling, on dark evenings between the hours of 8.00-9.00 p.m. The light rises slowly and increases little by little in size and strength until finally a clear glowing ball the size of a coffee-saucer is visible. Sometimes it dies out slowly, expiring completely only to rise again in nearby places. A scientist will investigate the area by aeroplane."

A month later the same newspaper carried this follow-up report: "November 10, 1936. Vasteras. No cause has been found for the mysterious 'light bodies' in Moklinta. Some of the residents are convinced the phenomenon is caused by the bones buried in the immediate vicinity and said to be thousands of years old."

Norway also shared the flap of November 1936.

81.) November 21, 1936. Harstad, Norway. Reports of a

mysterious light have arrived from several different places. The Norwegian Telegraphic Agency correspondent learned of the sightings during an interview with the Sixth Division. An inquiry into the reports is being conducted by the county constabulary. The division has also received a message about mysterious lights seen Tuesday evening outside Tromsø. There is every reason to believe that the observations are real. During the last sighting in upper Norway many people received mysterious radio signals. Earlier speculations that these signals were a Russian military code are disputed.

Radio Signals

Mysterious radio signals had accompanied the 1933-34 ghostflier activity. The *Hudiksvalls News* reported on January 1, 1934:

"Radio listeners in Umeå have been receiving conversations on their loudspeakers containing information about the ghostfliers, indicating their intelligence service is modern. The conversations are on the wavelength of a gramophone programme in Umeå and discussed meeting at a special point."

These "pirate" radio broadcasts were heard by others in Norrbysskar, Hedesunda, Nordmaling and Halsingtuna that month on the 230-275 and 900 metre bands. In some cases the phantom broadcasters spoke in broken Swedish.

The haughty *New York Times* was already in the early 1930s rattling its sabre for war, particularly against Japan, and it repeatedly cited "rumours" which were never mentioned in the Scandinavian press. On November 20, 1934, the *New York Times* carried a dispatch datelined Helsingfors, Finland, claiming that the ghostflier had "revived rumours of Soviet naval armaments on the Arctic coast." It also commented on the "equally deep mystery surrounding wireless signals, supposedly of a military nature, in the Arctic." These signals were "solved by Finnish radio experts," the newspaper said. "They located the sending stations on the German Baltic coast near Koenigsberg. The signals are believed here to have been in connection with German experiments to perfect military aviation." Then this brief item was tagged onto the ghostflier story:

"Berlevaag, Finnmark, Norway, November 19 (AP). The mystery of 'ghost' airplanes and ships at sea deepened tonight when it was reported two warships, not Norwegian, were observed last night from the outermost islands in the Arctic Ocean to the north."

Time—and the historical record—vindicated both Germany and the Soviet Union as possible sources of the ghostflier phenomenon. Years earlier, in 1921, the *New York Times* fussed over the appearance of a "Bolshevist aeroplane" which circled Paris. "For some obscure reason" the French meteorological office issued a notice to the press stating that, "An aeroplane flying at a great height passed over Paris about 9.45 on March 5, making a semi-circular tour of the city from the southwest to the west-north-west side. As it went the plane left behind it a trail of smoke which at times resembled a ribbon and at other times a featherlike cloud." (Sounds like a contrail.) "A mystery is being made as to why meteorological experts should wish to know about this airplane, but they are apparently very anxious to learn its type and characteristics, its exact trajectory, its height and speed between 9.45 and 10 o'clock and, lastly,

the direction and speed of the wind at the altitude of the flight," the *Times* continued, March 19, 1921.

The German press rattled their swords on November 24, 1936, when the newspaper *Der Angriff* published a front-page story, complete with maps, claiming that the Soviet Union was building sixteen military airfields on the Kola Peninsula, far north of the Arctic Circle in a desolate, thinly populated wasteland with virtually no military value. The Germans warned that 300 military planes would be based there and might be used to invade Scandinavia. Where the Russians would get 300 planes in 1936 to base in that part of the world was not explained. Perhaps the Russians were also seeing ghostfliers and had become alarmed over the possibility that some foreign power was invading their territory from the north.

Early in 1937 our friendly ghostfliers were busy from northern Norway to Vienna, Austria. On Thursday, February 11, 1937, the crew of the fishing boat *Fram* started out from Kvalsik, Norway, at 9.00 p.m. Just outside of Kvalsik there is a cape with high hills separating it from the mainland. As the *Fram* circled this cape, they discovered a large aeroplane resting on the water. Thinking the plane was in trouble, the captain changed his course and headed for it. Red and green lights were glowing on the machine, but as the boat approached, the lights were suddenly extinguished. Then the plane was quickly enveloped in a cloud of smoke, and it vanished!

At noon the next day, according to the *Berliner Borzen Zeitung* and the *National Zeitung*, a mysterious aeroplane circled over Vienna, Austria, at high altitude, exciting speculations that it was of Czechoslovakian or Russian origin. A few days later, the phantom pilot revisited the fort at Boden, Sweden. It returned still again that April. In May, a government hearing on the status of the ghostflier was held in Umeå, Sweden. A representative named Lindbergs demanded that a new investigation should be held. But the Minister of Defence pointed out that extensive investigations had already been held, that special searchlights and listening apparatus had been mounted in the sighting areas, and that all the results had been negative. (It all sounded depressingly familiar.)

In September 1937, "unfamiliar aeroplanes" repeatedly buzzed the Swedish naval installation at Karlskrona. The minister of Defence explained at an inquiry that he had no answer to the mystery but could only confirm that "a foreign machine had flown over the restricted military area." As usual, the plane carried no insignia or identifying marks. On October 24, 1937, the six-man crew of an unnamed fishing boat near Mylingslykten outside of Hammerfest, Norway reported seeing a very large aeroplane resting on the water. As they neared it, it suddenly turned on bright lights and took off, passing so close to their vessel that they feared a crash.

Aftermath

In February 1969, Mr. Åke Franzen, the Stockholm researcher who uncovered and translated many of the reports used in this study, telephoned Dr. Tage O. Eriksson of the Research Institute for National Defence (named on page 554 of the Condon Report) to discuss

the 1934 wave. Dr. Eriksson cordially invited Mr. Franzen to drop by his office.

"The conversation was not as fruitful as I expected," Mr. Franzen reported. "He said that all the articles in the newspapers at the time [1934] were only imagination and mass hysteria. Dr. Eriksson's own explanation of the phenomenon was hot air balloons!"

"I told him about Major Porat and General Virgin [two of the officials named in the '34 accounts] and he said the newspapers had distorted their statements.

"I asked him if there exists any official files on these 1934 reports and he denied it.

"He agreed with Dr. Condon and his report on UFOs and said he had met two of the Condon committee in the U.S.A. last summer and that they were very reliable people."

I regret that I must disagree with Dr. Eriksson. I believe that the 1930s reports form an important body of evidence in the UFO puzzle, and that the ghostfliers' grey, unmarked aeroplanes were "hard" objects of a most extraordinary nature. I have spent many long, tiresome hours in the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library trying to uncover historical evidence to support the obvious answer . . . that the planes were of mundane origin. Such evidence does not seem to exist.

In recent months there have been new UFO waves in the same areas of Scandinavia, and new reports of phantom ships and submarines off the coasts of Norway and Sweden.⁴ Apparently whoever visited the Arctic Circle so mysteriously forty years ago *is still there*. Perhaps Ivan T. Sanderson is correct when he suggests that the navies of the world have been far more involved in UFO research than our Air Forces. It is well-known that the U.S. Office of Naval Research has been interested in UFOs for years and maintains huge, expensive and mysterious installations in the Pacific.⁵

In these articles I have been obliged to summarise a good deal and have presented only a few of the many reports on hand. It has been necessary to skip over much material, such as the fact that approximately 25% of the known ghostflier sightings occurred at 6.00 p.m. Nor could I waste space on the obvious fireball and meteor reports that turned up in our material. It is quite possible that more thorough investigations in Scandinavia will reveal new reports which will clarify the whole situation . . . although I doubt it. It would help if willing researchers would scour the newspapers in their own areas for this period and send their findings to FSR. I wouldn't be at all surprised if the ghostfliers had been everywhere at once.

NOTES

¹ See *Analysis of 8,260 UFO Sightings* by Dr. Jacques Vallée, FSR May/June 1968. Dr. Vallée states, ". . . the number of reported UFO sightings per million people in American states rises very rapidly when population density decreases".

² See *Reports From Sweden* by Åke Jonsson, FSR March/April 1968, for details of the 1967 UFO wave in these same areas of Sweden. Several of the communities named by Mr. Jonsson, such as Vilhelmina, Storsele, and Sala also produced reports during the 1934 wave. Closer examination might demonstrate that the 1967 objects followed essentially the same "routes" as the 1934 ghostfliers. The

(Continued on Page 28)

MYSTERY AEROPLANES OF THE 1930s Part III – The Landings

John A. Keel

ON Wednesday, January 10, 1934, the Scandinavian "Ghostfliers" reportedly landed in several isolated areas in northern Norway and Sweden, according to *Dagens-Nyheters* (Stockholm) and the other newspapers* which were closely following the wave of mystery aeroplane sightings. Item 20 in our catalogue is datelined January 11, 1934, from Skellefteå, Sweden: "A report was received from the village of Norsjo, Monday evening, describing a bright light which was visible over the entire area. It was exceptionally strong and moved over the southern horizon. A man employed by the Royal Telegraph Service in Norsjo watched the mysterious light over the swamp at Kvammar. He saw it from his car on the highroad. The police searched the swamp during a violent snowstorm but found nothing . . . An unconfirmed rumour from Anderstjarn, south of Norsjo, tells of a landing by the ghostflier on the ice. Some traces were found after the machine was seen."

The "unconfirmed rumours" were quickly replaced by substantial eyewitness reports which prompted the Norwegian government to dispatch the cruiser *Eagle* to the landing sites.

22. January 11, 1934. Trondheim, Norway. Two landings of ghostfliers were reported from northern Norway, Wednesday evening. One machine landed near the island of Gjeslingen, outside Rorvik, and the other at a place called Kvaloj in the area Namndal. The report from Gjeslingen says that the people there saw a great beam of light and heard the sound of a strong engine. The machine landed and remained on the water quietly for an hour and a half. Its light went out after it landed but the general opinion of the witnesses was that the object was still there. The second ghostflier took off 15 minutes after landing at Kvaloj and vanished southwards.

27. January 13, 1934. Oslo, Norway. An attempt to catch the mysterious flier ended in failure on Friday. One mysterious flier was seen to alight near the island of Sleipskar on Friday evening. The island is only a few kilometres south of Gjeslingen, where one of the machines was seen to land the day before.

Earlier in the evening beams of light and engine roars were reported in the same area. When the aeroplane was seen to land on the water a message was sent immediately to Rorvik. The cruiser *Eagle* was docked there. Unfortunately, a pilot was not available when the message was received. These waters are too dangerous, because of the many reefs, for a ship to sail them without a pilot.

People all over Rorvik saw the mysterious aeroplane between two and three in the morning. It seemed to be heading towards Sweden. Around 10.00 p.m. the plane flew over Isfjorden, near Adalsnas. It was a biplane, equipped with pontoons, and vanished over Romsdaksfjorden. Five persons witnessed its flight. It was at high altitude.

28. January 14, 1934. Rorvik, Norway. Two aeroplanes have landed near Rorvik, reported the police of the state.

One landing place is situated near Vikna, Kvalpsundet, and the other at Oksbosen in Flatanger.

The duty-cruiser *Eagle* left the harbour at high speed for a close investigation, but an accident occurred as the ship neared the landing site. The cruiser ran aground. A salvage vessel was sent from Rorvik but the *Eagle* disentangled itself under its own power.

The search for the aeroplane was futile, but people on the nearby islands still seriously assert that an aeroplane had landed at Vikna.

Futile hunt

The ill-fated *Eagle* never did catch up with the ghostflier. Nor did the Swedish Air Force squadron which was sent to northern Sweden to track the planes down. Police and army units turned out repeatedly in the flap areas in futile attempts to locate the planes and their possible bases. Some of the eyewitnesses said the planes were equipped with pontoons or skis, and several reports described formations of two or three planes.

36. January 15, 1934. Skellefteå. For the past two months a person in Skellefteå has been watching three aeroplanes flying in formation over the area. One plane usually flies in front of the other two and at a slightly higher altitude. It looks, says the observer, as if the lead plane directs the others with light signals. The witness asserted that this has been going on for a couple of months and the aeroplanes' routes follow the railways in the area.

Classic UFO-style "searchlights" were a common feature in many of the reports, and, like modern UFOs, the objects frequently visited rugged mountainous regions. The lights, accompanied by engine noises, were widely seen over the Nedelpad (Sweden) area on Thursday, January 11. One group of witnesses said a phantom plane circled over the mountain of Bykullen that night and the mountain top was "bathed in light". Approximately thirty minutes later it appeared over Tyndero on the sea coast.

There was a brief lull in the sightings in mid-January 1934. Then, on Sunday, January 22, the planes returned with a vengeance and were widely seen throughout northern Norway and Sweden. At 10.00 a.m. there were daylight sightings over Vindeln and Viriajam. "The plane flew over at low altitude on a course towards Norway. No marks or insignia of any kind were visible," according to one report. At 6.00 p.m. the busy pilot entertained the people of Bengtsforsen, Jamtland and Indal, circling as he splayed his bright lights about the countryside. At midnight, a group of 30 soldiers near the fort of Boden reported seeing the object. Authorities were upset over the repeated appearances of the ghostflier over the "restricted" Boden area. That same night the residents of Repvag, Norway, "saw an aeroplane

flying in circles at very low altitude."

The next day, January 23, 1934, Finland received its first visits from the ghostflier when he roared over the village of Kemi at 6.00 p.m.

48. January 25, 1934. Vasa, Finland. Two workmen saw a mysterious aeroplane in Laitakaro, near Kemi. It came from the north of Finland following the Kemi-Rowanjemi railway. The workmen had no ideas about the identity of the craft. On Tuesday, two aeroplanes were observed. One of them was visible about Kemi and the other appeared over the little village of Kuivakangas. A blinding light swooped over Kuivakangas for a brief moment and when the machine veered to the right a green light was visible. The plane then flew over Tornealy to Boden on the Swedish side.

The Finnish Air Force dispatched two planes to the Kemi area to search for the ghostflier. Meanwhile, some Finnish witnesses were reporting huge three-engined planes, and the crew of a Norwegian freighter claimed a rare occupant sighting.

Ghostflier pilot observed

53. January 28, 1934. Oslo, Norway. The following report comes from Tromsø on the Norwegian seacoast.

The freighter *Tordenskiold* returned to Tromsø from Kabelvag on Saturday. The Captain, Sigvard Olsen, and a sailor, Olsen, relate the following: "When they had left Tromsø last Tuesday and were on their way home, a plane appeared suddenly in front of the vessel. He was following a course straight towards the ship. When he reached only a few metres from the ship, the plane turned to the right and flew directly over it. A beam of light swooped over the deck, turning darkness into broad daylight for 15-20 seconds."

The plane was a great greyish machine exactly like the French plane *Latham* which Roald Amundsen used on his last expedition. In the cabin of the craft Captain Olsen saw a person, probably the pilot, dressed in some sort of "anorak" [hooded jacket]. He wore big glasses and had a hood over his head. The machine had no marks or insignia. It circled once around the vessel and then vanished.

Despite the fact that the combined armed services of Norway, Sweden and Finland had been mobilised to track them down, the ghostfliers continued to ply regular courses and indulge in blatant manoeuvres at low level over the towns and villages of northern Scandinavia. They were, in fact, *too deliberate*. It was apparent that the planes were meant to be seen. And they flew in the most severe weather, when all conventional planes were grounded.

52. January 28, 1934. Haparanda. The personnel of the Haparanda newspaper watched for several minutes, around midnight Saturday, as an aeroplane flew back and forth several times over the city. Because of the foggy weather, no light could be seen, but the sound of a very powerful engine was heard by everyone on the editorial staff. The aeroplane looked like a giant shadow in the air. One hour earlier, ten persons observed a plane over Haparanda, flying back and forth.

One favourite, though suicidal, stunt of the ghostflier was to cut his engines as he circled low above the witnesses. Among the rash of sightings around Umea, Sweden, on January 11, is this example: "Rortrask, northeast Norsjö, saw the machine . . . People there observed the engine stop three times as it passed directly over them. The machine was flying so low that the whole forest was bathed in its light. It seems that the plane wished to land, but suddenly he increased his speed and followed the Skellefteå river instead."

On January 31, 1934, Lieutenant Colonel Snellman,

chief of the Finnish Air Force, told the press, "There is no longer any reason to doubt the existence of the ghostflier."

Crash in the Norwegian Alps

One of the best-reported incidents of the ghostflier wave was the apparent crash of a plane on top of the "nearly inaccessible" Fager mountain about ten miles from Tromsø, Norway, on Monday, February 5, 1934.

57. February 7, 1934. Oslo, Norway [condensed]. The following message was received by *Dagens-Nyheter* from Tromsø: An unknown aeroplane has crashed or made an emergency landing on Fager Mountain in Malselv, Monday evening. People in the valley watched the machine as it went down on the mountain. The next morning the plane was still there and two men were visible beside it, apparently clearing away the snow. Moments later the machine made two attempts to take off, but without success . . . When the *Dagens-Nyheter* received the message they talked with the head of the county constabulary in Malselv, Valderhaug, and he said he felt the message was reliable. The accident, or the landing, had been seen from both sides of the mountain, he said. Very reliable people had witnessed and reported the occurrence.

When the plane landed on Monday evening no engine sounds were heard but a raging snowstorm at the time may have smothered the sounds. On the other hand, an engine sound was heard from the mountain today. A woman on Mr. Martensson's farm heard the engine this morning as she fed the animals . . . Later other people heard the same sound and that kind of noise is very uncommon up there. That was probably when the plane tried to take off and failed.

Eight men struggled up the mountainside that day and failed to find any trace of the craft. That night, at 10.00 p.m., four persons reported seeing an aeroplane passing over Malselv on a south-west course "straight from the area of the Fager mountain." Three more search parties climbed the mountain the next day and the Norwegian newspaper *Tidens Tegn* reported: "Farmer Martensson of Fugleli said that one of the patrols discovered two parallel traces in the snow 300-400 metres north-west of the point where the aeroplane had been seen. The traces were about 75 metres in length and 80 cms. wide . . . The patrol also found footprints of people around the traces. The search will begin again tomorrow at dawn. Lieutenant Kjaer, a specialist from the Defence Department, will command the operation."

The ghostflier appeared again at midnight on Thursday, February 8, over nearby Sigurfjord, according to the paper *Norlands-Nytt*. "It was approximately 500 metres high and projected a very powerful searchlight

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on both sides of the nearby hilltops. Observers noted a red lantern on the machine before it vanished in a south-westerly direction."

Meanwhile, a lighthouse keeper named Bjornsen was watching a "mysterious vessel" near the Makkauer lighthouse, Vardo, Norway. The ship first appeared on Tuesday afternoon, February 6, pursuing an easterly course. Then it changed directions and moved out of sight toward the west. It reappeared on Wednesday. Bjornsen said it reminded him of the inspection ship *Frithof Nansen* and was approximately the same size. "No foreign ship has requested permission to call at Norwegian harbours," the newspapers noted.

While the stalwart *Eagle* charged up and down the Norwegian seas searching for phantom ships and ghostfliers, the rugged climbers on Fager mountain threw up their hands in disgust. It was impossible, they said, for any plane to land or take off from the high, snowbound plateau. Norway's *Adress-Avisen* had the last word on the incident when it reported on February 10 that "one of the men who took part in the search of Fager mountain said in a telephone interview that the mysterious aeroplane on the plateau was a stone!" Had the long-time residents of the valley mistaken a stone twenty feet long by twelve feet high for an aeroplane?

The ghostflier reports began to trickle out by the middle of February, even though the planes seemed to be getting larger.

71. February 15, 1934. Melbo, Nordland, Norway. Several persons reported watching an aeroplane near Borøy-sund in Melbo at noon Thursday. The machine was flying so close to the water that the witnesses thought it was

going to land. But it did not.

This machine was much bigger than the other planes which had been seen over the community earlier. It was two-winged and followed a course southward . . . The sound of an engine was reported at several places along its route.

Reports became sporadic during the remainder of 1934. But the ghostflier never really went away. The mystery aeroplanes were sighted infrequently throughout the 1930s.

75. April 1, 1934. Oslo, Norway. Five persons have reported seeing a very large aeroplane over Sandnessjoen, according to *Tidens-Tegn*. One witness, a sixteen-year-old boy, said he saw the machine in the brilliant moonlight over Altenfjord. It was a very large aeroplane, he said, and the engines stopped when it suddenly descended towards the water. Eight propellers were observed. Instead of landing, the craft started to move in wide circles so the boy was able to view it from all sides. He noticed that the cabin windows were all lighted.

An eight-propeller-engined aircraft would be a remarkable sight even today.

[*There was the DoX, a twelve-engined (six pull, six push) Dornier flying boat, which was quite a sight in the 1930s—EDITOR.*]

The fourth, and final part of Mr. Keel's article will be published in the next issue of *Flying Saucer Review*.

* Most of the reports in this article are from *Dagens-Nyheter*, Stockholm, except where cited. Other newspapers providing material for this study are named in Part One, FSR, May/June 1970, and Part Two, FSR, July/August 1970.

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MANUSCRIPTS INVITED

MYSTERY AEROPLANES OF THE 1930s Part IV

John A. Keel

IN the first three parts of this article we followed, in some detail, the 1933-34 "Ghostflier" news items that were unearthed with the help of Swedish researcher Åke Franzén and others. Let us close with a discussion around those facts, and a few additional items that have come to light.

Geographical Distribution

One of Dr. Jacques Vallée's many important contributions to ufology is his discovery that the phenomenon tends to concentrate itself in thinly populated areas.¹ Although there were a number of mass sightings in southern Sweden, the most heavily populated section of the country, the greatest percentage of reports came from the sparsely populated lake country and the mountainous regions of the north where the average population density is three persons per square mile.² Jämtland, Västerbotten and Norrbotten were most often named in the reports. The Norwegian reports were mainly concentrated in Troms and Nordland, while the Finnish accounts (and we have only unearthed a few) were centred in the states of Oulu and Lappi.

AREA OR STATE PROVIDING THE MOST REPORTS	AREA IN SQ. KM.	POPULATION (1958 figures)	POP. PER SQ. KM.
SWEDEN:			
Jämtland	51,549	142,022	3
Västerbotten	59,140	240,403	4
Norrbotten	105,877	259,694	3
NORWAY:			
Oppland	25,325	165,451	6.6
Nordland	38,324	235,844	6.1
Troms	26,090	125,192	4
FINLAND:			
Oulu	56,686	402,800	7.1
Lapland (Lappi)	93,870	197,600	2.1

We can assume that communications were fragile in some of these areas in 1934, and that a great many sightings went unreported. But we do have enough detailed reports to trace the routes pursued by the planes, and have been able to lay out some flights from point to point on specific days. However, on some of the flap dates ghostfliers appeared simultaneously over many points in the south as well as the north, indicating that either many planes were in the air at that time or that the whole of Scandinavia was witnessing some rare form of atmospheric phenomenon.

Many of the reports *do* describe nothing but lights-in-the-sky (LITS). During that period every LITS was

obviously regarded as the ghostflier. This does not explain, of course, the many low altitude, grey, unmarked aeroplanes accompanied by engine sounds. As we have already stated, the deployment of these planes and their deliberate manoeuvres seems to suggest that they were designed to provide a frame of reference—or explanation—for the more mysterious wavering searchlights and multi-coloured high altitude lights.

If we disregard the LITS altogether and concentrate on the movements of the definite aircraft, we find that their flights seemed to originate above the Arctic Circle somewhere north of Norway, perhaps in the vicinity of Spitzbergen. Reports would be understandably scanty from the northernmost state of Finnmark (population density 1.4 persons per square kilometre). As they moved down the coast of Norway towards the more densely populated areas the reports would increase . . . and they did. There were some reports as far south as Trondheim. But in most flaps the craft turned inland around Tromsø, Norway, crossed into Sweden and moved to Gällivare . . . which is in the centre of Norrbotten. Gällivare appears to have served as a key landmark to the ghostfliers. From here some flights proceeded south-east to Luleå, Haparanda (and Kemi, Finland). Then they moved on down the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia to Skellefteå, Umeå, Sundsvall, and Uppsala, just north of Stockholm. Other flights pursued inland courses from Gällivare to Sorsele and Östersund.

If these were conventional planes operated by smugglers or by some foreign power, this was an enterprise of unprecedented boldness . . . and risk. The terrain was mountainous and dangerous. The ghostfliers chose to fly in the worst kind of weather so they had to be extraordinarily good navigators. They could rarely see the stars so they had to rely on instruments . . . and the known navigational instruments of the period were unreliable and primitive . . . at least for this kind of flying. Small wonder that the Scandinavian press commented with wonder on their navigational skills.

Assuming that they represented a foreign power, it is possible that they could have been launched from a ship in the Arctic Ocean, and could have flown the 300-400 miles to another ship in the Gulf of Bothnia. But why would they find it necessary to make such a hazardous trip daily for months on end? And why would they risk exposing their whole clandestine operation by clowning above the villages and towns along the way? What was the real purpose behind their seemingly insane missions?

The Finnish reports indicate that some flights returned to their mysterious home base by flying northwards over Lapland on a course that might have taken them to Novaya Zemlya, the islands where a mysterious