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"ON UFO WAVES AND THEIR POSSIBLE FUTURE PREDICTION"\*

by  
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It was not until the early 1950's that pioneer ufologists began to systematically collect and chronologically arrange ufo reports on an appreciable scale. Once begun, however, the advantages of processing reports in that way became rapidly apparent, leading as it did to the realization that the ufo record as a whole contained recurrent trends and patterns within its fabric. One of the earliest important realizations concerned the fact that ufo activity occurs periodically in "waves". All subsequent systematic recording of ufo reports has not only confirmed the reality of these waves but has shown that they have continued right down to our own era and, as the historical aspects of the ufo record have been uncovered through research, that they have apparently been occurring for centuries.

The tracing of ufo waves within the overall ufo record has fascinated many researchers, and several interesting attempts have been made down the years to express these in statistical or graph form (1; 2; 3; and 4), often tying-in the patterns to some known celestial factor, such as the Martian or planetary opposition cycles. Vallee, however, has shown that, while interesting, none of these so-called "findings" really stand up to close scrutiny, and that the significance of ufo waves is still very uncertain (5). One of the more valid conclusions of the ill-fated Condon Committee, moreover, concerned the virtual impossibility at present of predicting where and when future ufo waves will occur (6). Indeed, occurrences of ufo waves at specific points in time have almost always only be determined long after the waves themselves have passed, recognition of their actual occurrence usually coming through later systematic accumulations of sighting reports for the relevant periods. An especially good illustration of such "hind-sight recognition" was the enormous wave of 1947, the real extent of which remained largely unknown until 1967 when the researches of Ted Bloecher (7) disclosed its true magnitude. As the physical accumulation of ufo reports for practically any period of time is both geographically uneven and temporally erratic --- being normally dependent upon publication and/or exchange of information by (a) the mass media, or (b) various ufo organizations --- it is easy to appreciate why recognition of the occurrence of ufo waves is often far from immediate. This, of course, is a very unsatisfactory state of affairs.

At this juncture it is important to distinguish between ufo "waves" and ufo "flaps", especially as these terms are often used rather loosely by some workers. Briefly, we may regard ufo "flaps" as flurries of ufo activity (sometimes quite intense) confined to comparatively localized areas. For example, hundreds of ufo sightings made over a few days or weeks but confined to, say, the West of England, would constitute a "flap" if during the same period ufo activity was minimal elsewhere in Britain. If, on the other hand, the whole of the rest of Britain and Europe was similarly effected by ufo visitations simultaneously, then a true ufo "wave" could be said to be taking place. Ufo "waves" also tend to occur on a cyclic basis, as later data will show, whereas "flaps" appear to be decidedly irregular in occurrence and are probably not predictable. This paper is concerned primarily with a consideration of ufo "waves".

A very pertinent adjunct to the ufo "wave" problem is the fact that, even where the occurrence of these waves has been established on an historical basis, the resultant information has hardly ever been used by those ufologists who organize

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\* This is a somewhat expanded version of a talk delivered to the Birmingham UFO Conference staged by BUFORA in November 1976.

and hold skywatches. Although no statistics are known for the number of skywatches actually promoted since 1947 (when the existence of ufos first became generally known) or for the types of skywatch venues selected, it is easy enough to see why all skywatches should be scheduled directly in relation to the known ufo record. This statement applies with equal force to local, national, and international skywatches. Regrettably, the majority of skywatch organizers seem either to be unaware of this requirement or persistently ignore it. Accordingly, skywatch results are frequently mediocre and sometimes downright poor --- even on occasions when favourably viewing conditions prevail. An example was the recently reported skywatch of July 5th-6th., 1975 (8), which, though well equipped and undoubtedly well intentioned, was doomed to failure before it began because it was almost certainly held during the wrong month. The result was that no ufos were sighted at all.

In my estimation, most skywatches have been and are staged on the wrong dates, whereby much time, not to mention effort and finance, is expended to very little good effect. The degree to which many would-be ufo spotters become disillusioned on these occasions must also be very high. The additional fact that representatives of the news media sometime attend such skywatches, and who, like the would-be spotters, fail to see anything that could be classed as a genuine ufo, also exposes the holding of skywatches and their organizers to ridicule insofar as most subsequent published write-ups of the events are hardly favourable. This situation is not only undesirable but is, I submit, avoidable.

Ideally, of course, skywatches should be arranged to coincide with ufo waves, or with periods when such waves may be reasonably expected to occur. Obviously, the likelihood of actually sighting ufos then would be very much greater than during most of the present arbitrarily arranged skywatches. The anniversary of Kenneth Arnold's classic sighting of 1947 or of George Adamski's alleged meeting with a Venusian is no criterion on which to base the holding of a skywatch. Something much more positive is required.

The successful dovetailing of skywatches with ufo waves, however, necessitates some reliable method of forecasting when and where future ufo waves will most likely take place. Although our present ability to predict where future ufo waves will occur is still almost nil (Dr David Saunders, however, is grappling with that problem and hopes to announce demonstrably valid solutions in the near future), indications are beginning to emerge that suggest when such waves will probably occur. The development of these indications into a workable forecasting method should not only prove invaluable to skywatch organizers everywhere but ought also to be of interest to ufologists in general. The remainder of this paper is therefore devoted to a consideration of them.

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The emerging indications just alluded to have resulted from recent statistical comparisons of the contents of UFOCAT and WUFOC, the two largest collections of ufo reports currently available. UFOCAT is a computerized catalogue of over 85,000 chronologically listed reports compiled by Dr David Saunders of the Centre for UFO Studies in Chicago, and WUFOC is the World UFO Catalogue of over 43,000 chronologically listed reports assembled by the Data Research division of Contact (UK) in Oxford. Although both these sources are admittedly incomplete, partially overlap, and are constantly being added to, it is nonetheless felt that a record as comprehensive as the one they collectively represent constitutes a true cross-section of ufo activity as a whole and, as such, permits valid conclusions to be reached through in-depth analyses of their contents. The conclusions presented in this paper have been based upon just such studies.

For various reasons, which will become clearer as we proceed, it seems sensible

to treat the overall ufo record in two sections --- the MODERN era commencing January 1st., 1947, and the HISTORICAL era ending December 31st., 1946. Of these, the former is by far the best documented and embraces the largest number of known reports, which, if expressed as a graph, produces the ufo activity profile shown in figure 1. This profile, of course, is based upon global statistics.

It is immediately seen that this profile is typified by a series of peaks and troughs, the peaks corresponding to the aforementioned ufo waves.

Advancing from 1947, we find that peaks occurred not only in 1947 itself but also in 1950, 1952, 1954, 1956, 1957, 1962, 1964, 1965/6, 1967, 1968, 1972, 1973/4 and apparently in 1974/5. Our knowledge of ufo activity during 1974/5 and subsequent periods is still rather deficient as many reports are still being received for that period, and is, indeed, a good modern example of how long it presently takes us to accumulate sufficient evidence before being able to recognize a ufo wave's occurrence, or at least to establish its reality.

At first glance there seems to be little consistent pattern to the distribution of these peaks; but if we probe deeper it is possible to distinguish two apparently separate patterns --- an approximate 10-year cycle comprising (between 1947 and the present time) the peaks of 1947, 1957, and 1967, and an apparent 6-year cycle consisting of four peaks separated one from another by intervals averaging two years. Thus, the peaks of 1950, 1952, 1954, and 1956 form one 6-year cycle; the peaks of 1962, 1964, 1965/6 and 1968 form another. Very probably the peaks of 1972, 1973/4 and 1974/5 form part of another but as yet uncompleted 6-year cycle, that will presumably end about 1978.

Of particular interest is the fact that the 10-year and 6-year cycles are out-of-phase one with another, or at least appear to be so to us.

For the sake of convenience, we will henceforth refer to the ufo activity peaks typifying the 10-year cycle as TYPE A waves, and those exemplifying the 6-year cycle as TYPE B waves.

As the exact periodicity of the TYPE B waves is still uncertain and urgently requires deep study, it seems sensible to concentrate the remainder of this paper upon the more readily identifiable TYPE A waves.

Before leaving TYPE B waves aside, however, it is perhaps pertinent that the largest concentrations of recorded ufo landings and ufo occupant cases have so far tended to occur during TYPE B waves, not during TYPE A waves. Informed ufo-ologists will recall that 1952, 1954, 1964, 1968, 1973 and 1974/5, when TYPE B waves occurred, were all years of heavy concentrations of ufo landings and ufo occupant sightings.

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The reality of an approximate 10-year cycle for TYPE A waves is apparently confirmed if the known ufo activity predating 1947 is also expressed as a graph profile. Figure 2 shows the ufo record plotted in this way back to AD.1700. As ufo records spanning the 1700 to 1946 period generally fall below preferred standards and are far from satisfactory, little seems to be gained by attempting extensions of the activity profile back to still earlier times, particularly as the reliability of reports from such periods becomes progressively worse. Nonetheless, despite their overall paucity, the pre-1947 ufo records probably represent a reasonable same of the activity that actually occurred then, and do seem to indicate (despite their meagre numbers) a series of recurrent peaks separated by intervals generally fluctuating between ten and eleven years. The almost clockwork like periodicity of the post-1947 TYPE A waves probably derives from our immensely more detailed knowledge of them. Thus, were the pre-1947 ufo records

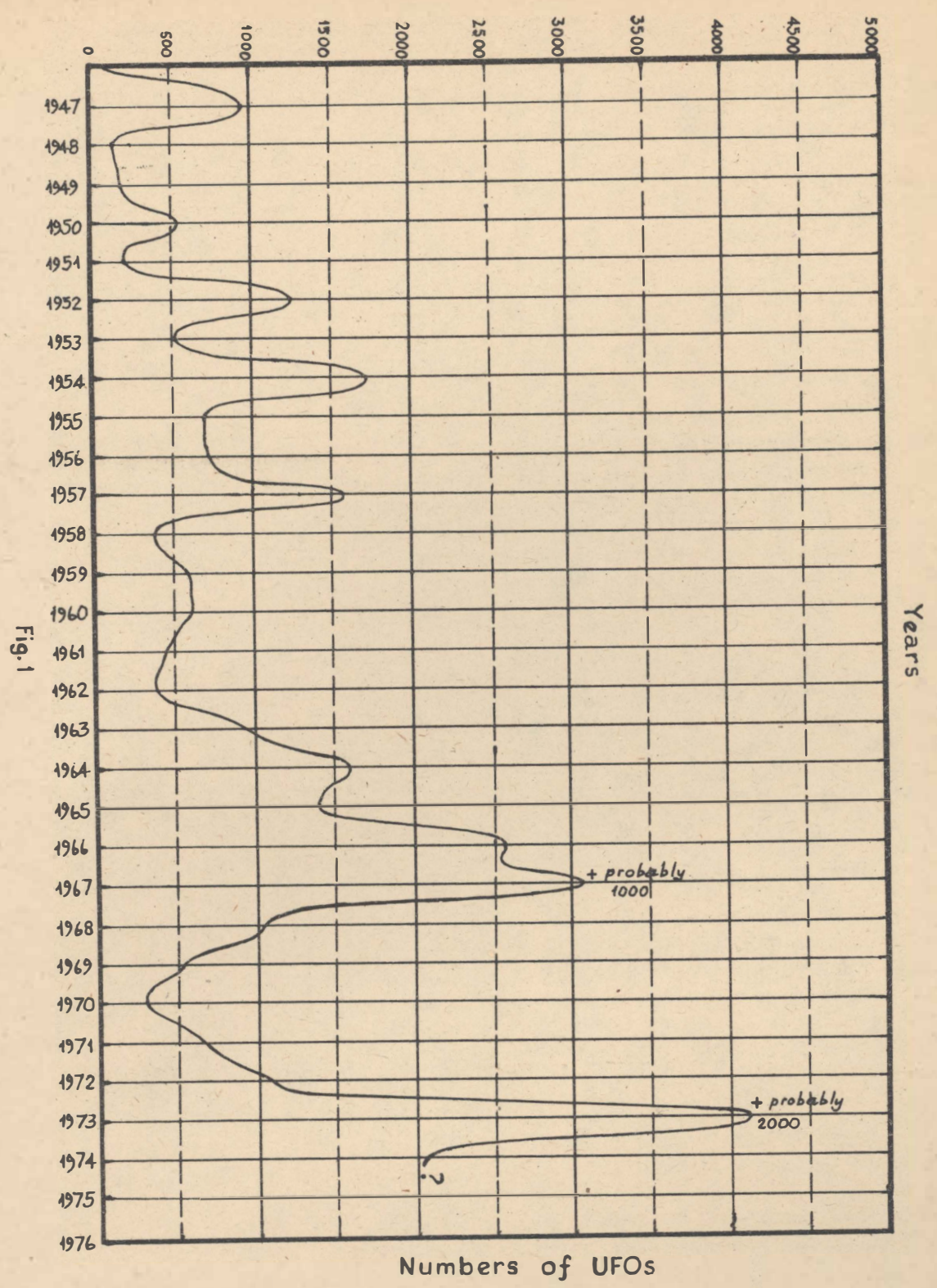


Fig. 1

Numbers of UFOs

Years

as dealt then, perhaps, the intervals would be nearer to 10 than 11 years, right back to AD.1700. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the TYPE A wave for 1947 peaked in early June, that the 1957 TYPE A wave peaked in November, and that the wave of 1967 had twin peaks, in America during March and April and in Europe during late October. We are thus not talking about very exact periodicity for TYPE A waves. From what is presently known it would be correct to state that the length of the intervals separating TYPE A waves fluctuates somewhat.

In my submission, however, an approximate 10-year cycle for TYPE A waves does indeed seem traceable in the known ufo record at least as far back as AD.1700, just as Figure 2 indicates. On such a basis it is possible to forecast the occurrence of future TYPE A waves in 1977 (or 1978), in 1987 (or 1988), and in 1997 (or 1998 or 1999) depending upon whether or not 10 or 11 year intervals separate them.

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The determination of an apparent and general 10-year ufo cycle from highly emotive raw data (i.e., ufo reports), is scarcely strong enough to stand on its own without corroboration from one or more other sources. An attempt has been made to find such confirmation elsewhere.

As the ufo phenomenon seemingly takes place against a natural astrophysical/geophysical background, a general appraisal of the many elements constituting that environment has been undertaken in the hope that the desired corroboration would be forthcoming. Although most enquiries produced little or no helpful data, one line of enquiry proved to be unexpectedly promising. This was the Sunspot Cycle, which, although averaging 11.1 years, actually fluctuates between 9.7 years (interval ending in 1935) and 14 years (interval ending about 1802), if the official sunspot statistics cited in the astronomical literature (9; 10; and 11) are consulted.

That the sunspot cycle appears to be a reliable long term element seems to be confirmed by the fact that annual growth rings in trees --- which in many cases appear to reflect this periodic surge of sunspots quite accurately --- dating from the Pleistocene period have been discovered in Canada showing that an approximate 11-year sunspot cycle occurred then (12). The Pleistocene period, said to have begun at least 2,000,000 years ago, is variously stated to have ended some 12,000 or 15,000 years ago. The sunspot cycle, therefore, appears to be an excellent index of great antiquity and high degree of persistence for measuring other kinds of recurrent phenomena.

If expressed as a graph back to AD.1700 (to coincide with our ufo-record sample), sunspot cycles provide the following activity profile (Figure 3). If, by adding the pre-1947 ufo activity profile to the sunspot profile, a comparable series of peaks and troughs emerges, then, because the periodicity of both kinds of phenomena is closely similar, the natural sunspot cycle can be used as a recurrent indicator of when artificially induced ufo waves (especially TYPE A waves) can be expected to occur. In point of fact the periodicity of sunspot maxima coincides to an astonishing degree with that of TYPE A ufo waves. This coincidence is shown in Figure 3.

Faced with this degree of similarity it is difficult to dismiss it as pure coincidence. As both phenomena apparently coincide quite well temporally, I suggest that sunspot cycles henceforth be used to help predict when future TYPE A ufo waves will likely occur.

This paper does not suggest that ufos and sunspots share a common origin, but does recommend that much more detailed work be attempted with regard to the apparent coincidence between the two cycles. The consistent and persistent recur-

### UFOs 1700-1947

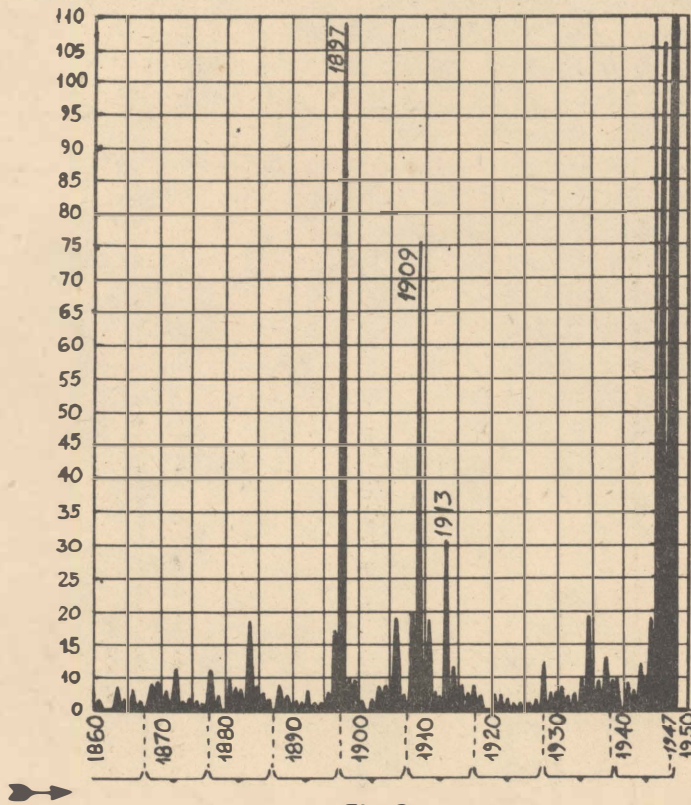
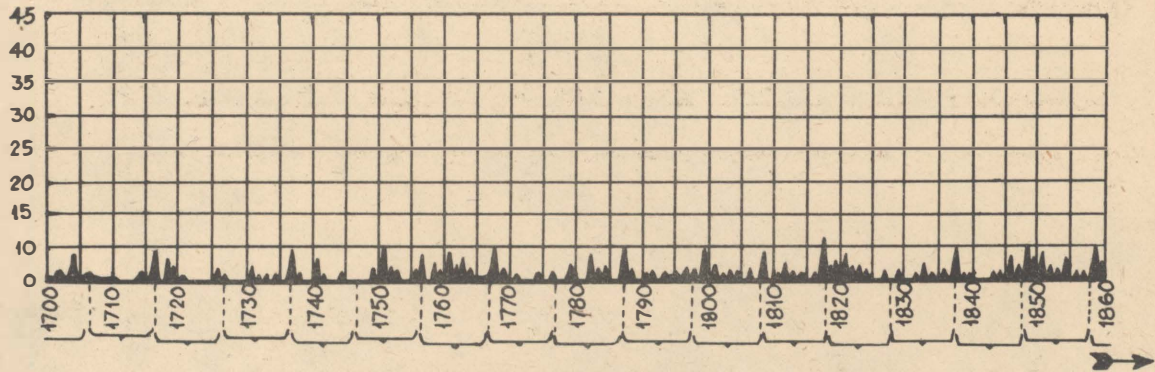


Fig.2

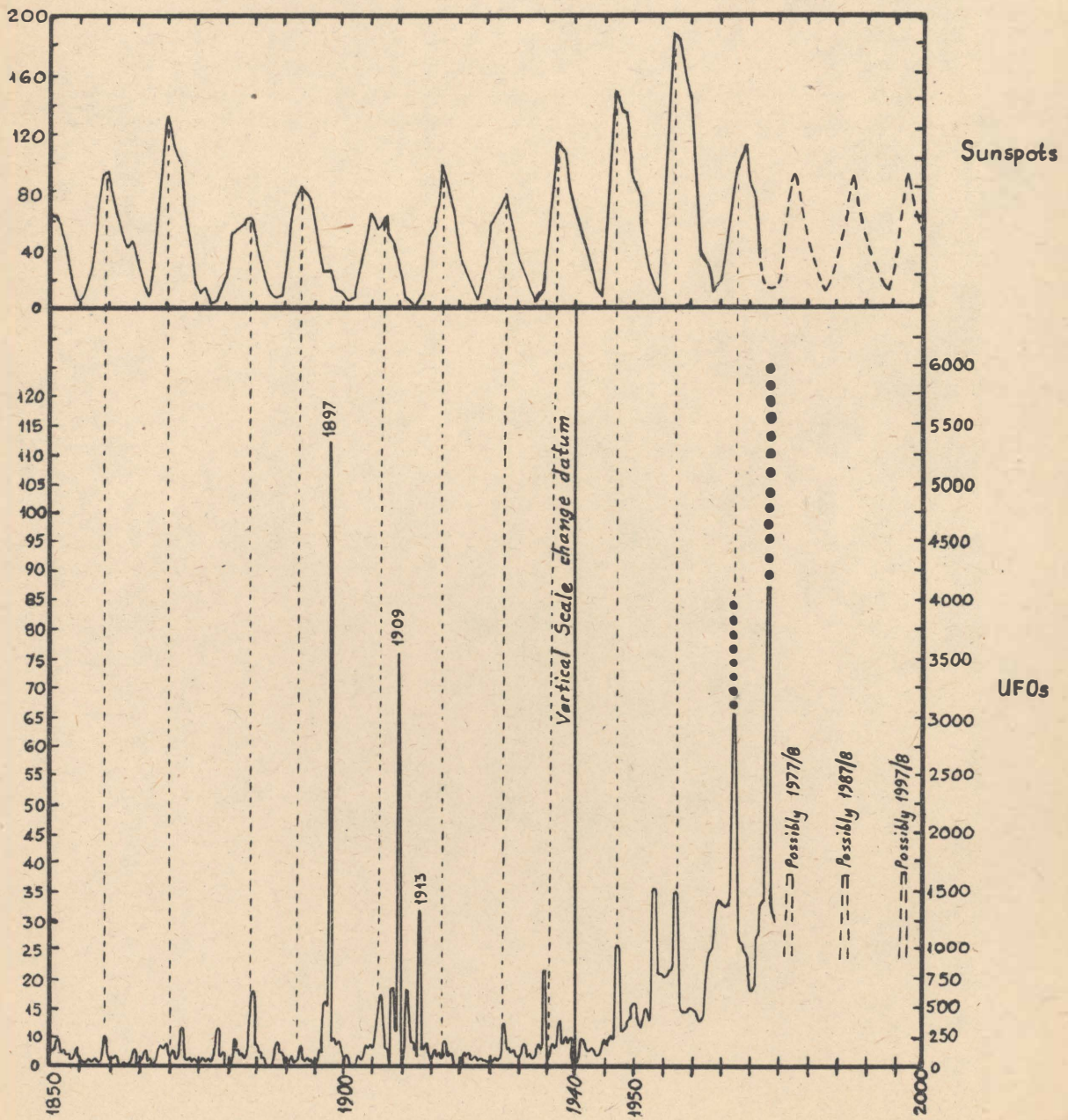
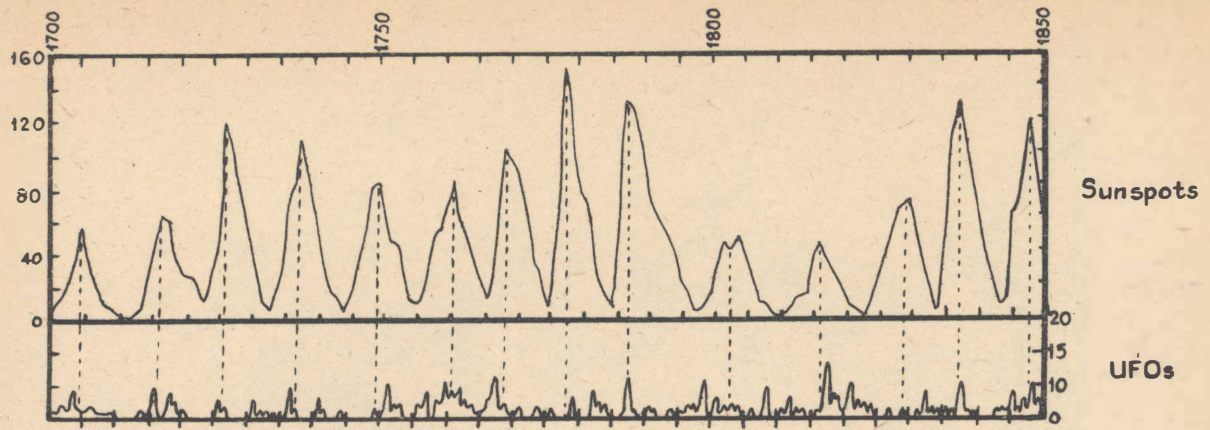


Fig. 3



rence of both in such remarkable unison over the past 250 years ( a period surely productive of a reasonable cross-section of ufo activity ) presumably indicates the possibility of some kind of connection existing between the two. The persistent similarities between these two sets of records themselves confirm the reality of recurrent TYPE A ufo waves.

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In conclusion, therefore, it is contended that ufo waves are not only well known but have been occurring at regular intervals for centuries, and that two separate cycles apparently exist --- a 10-year cycle, the peaks of which we have called TYPE A waves, and a 6-year cycle consisting of several peaks separated by roughly 2-year intervals, which we have called TYPE B waves. It has, furthermore, been suggested that the next TYPE A wave will occur in 1977 or 1978, and that later TYPE A waves will probably occur in 1987 or 1988 and in 1997 or 1998 (or 1999), depending upon whether 10 or 11 year intervals separate the earlier peaks.

At the risk of introducing an esoteric element at this juncture, it may nonetheless be pertinent here to refer to the remarkable prophecy, ascribed to Nostradamus, that in the year 1999 a great and powerful lord will come from the skies to rule over Mankind (13). Although not too much importance ought, perhaps, to be attached to this prediction, it is a curious fact that a high percentage of Nostradamus's prophecies have proved true. Thus, might it not be that this prophecy for 1999 ties in directly with the TYPE A ufo wave likely to occur in that year? Even if the TYPE A expected to occur around that general time actually falls in 1997 or 1998, the arrival in 1999 of some aerial power may well tie in with one of the aforementioned TYPE B waves which, we have noted, tend to contain the heaviest concentrations of ufo occupant reports. There is much food for thought here.

It has also been noted that the majority of skywatches are staged on occasions when no ufo waves occur, consequently with poor results. The use of ufo wave periodicity information should henceforth be attempted by all skywatch planners. A suggested method of forecasting future ufo waves (especially TYPE A waves) has been presented for their general guidance.

As 1977 is practically upon us, it is also strongly recommended that concerted efforts be made internationally to stage co-ordinated skywatches from the early summer months of 1977 onwards, since available "evidence" indicates that TYPE A waves generally fall between the months of June and November. Obviously, the largest possible number of co-ordinated field observers active during those months should collectively enjoy excellent opportunities for making worthwhile observations. It must, however, be stressed that, even if every ufologist in Britain, or, indeed, in any specific region, takes to the field from June 1977 onwards, there is no guarantee that they will sight numerous ufos, for it could very well be that the next TYPE A wave will centre on some country still outside the uneven geographical field coverage presently stageable by the ufological community. The problem of where future ufo waves will occur is still unresolved, and every effort should be made now to solve it, perhaps through more detailed analysis of the spatial distribution of the individual cases comprising the known waves. Hopefully the researches presently being conducted into this matter by Dr. David Saunders will provide some positive answers to this vexed problem. Its importance cannot be over-emphasized, especially if the aforementioned Nostradamus prediction for 1999 proves to be genuinely related to the ufo enigma, for we are already running short of time in which to prepare for such a momentous event.

It seems essential, therefore, that we activate as many co-ordinated field observer teams as possible in 1977, and thereafter speedily correlate their reports. The possibilities are strong and the results could be exciting.

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"SOME UNIDENTIFIED AERIAL ACTIVITY OVER BELGIUM  
DURING THE FIRST HALF OF 1976"

by

Rudy de Groot

Belgium hosted numerous sightings of unknown aerial objects and phenomena during the first half of 1976, most of them being in the vicinity of Antwerp. A major newspaper --- "Gazet van Antwerpen" --- gave extensive coverage to many of these reports, many of which are still under investigation. The following list, which is essentially preliminary, briefly describes several of the more interesting cases.