

The East Field / South Field Duality

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South Field Formation 2003
Click image to enlarge.

"Let us admit what all idealists admit - the hallucinatory nature of the world. Let us do what no idealist has done - let us search for unrealities that confirm that nature. I believe we shall find them in the antinomies of Kant and in the dialectic of Zeno . . . 'The greatest wizard (Novalis writes memorably) would be the one who bewitched himself to the point of accepting his own phantasmagorias as autonomous apparitions. Wouldn't that be our case.' I surmise it is so. We (that indivisible divinity that operates in us) have dreamed the world. We have dreamed it as enduring, mysterious, visible, omnipresent in space and stable in time; but we have consented to tenuous and eternal intervals of illogicalness in its architecture that we might know it is false." *JORGE LUIS BORGES, Other Inquisitions*

On the 2nd August 2003 a striking crop circle was discovered in the middle of East Field, probably the most well known field in crop circle lore. Six days later on the 8th August, another very similar formation was discovered in the middle of South Field; a field, which has also housed numerous crop formations over the years and in fact overlooks the famous East Field. These two formations, to my mind, appear to encapsulate so much of the phenomenon as we currently understand it that I felt it a worthwhile exercise to see what, if anything, could be learnt from them.

The East Field / South Field events of 2003, were in fact just two in a series of four related formations, the first of which was discovered on the 22nd July 2002, on almost exactly the same spot, in South Field, as the 8th August formation of the following year. In both cases the formation was placed abreast the top of this dome shaped field, affording panoramic views across the Pewsey Vale and the surrounding down land. The next formation in this series appeared at Windmill Hill on the 7th June 2003. This was the first major formation of the 2003 season and seemed to pick straight up on where the 2002 season had left off. What was so arresting about these particular formations was that they combined several themes or elements that had emerged in the body of crop circle design over the previous few years, namely the square, the circle, and the thread, rope, cord or ribbon. In sacred geometry it has long been the tradition to regard the square as symbolic of the earthly or material plane, whilst the circle is symbolic of that, which is spiritual and heavenly. Hermetically the cord, rope or chain was seen as that which binds us to the divine, as well as that which umbilically links us to our ancestral roots.

"In order to make the spiritual and the material worlds continuous daimons are often mythically depicted as comprising a long chain stretching between gods and men. But no matter how many links are added to the chain, making the spiritual ever grosser, the material ever more attenuated, there is always a point of discontinuity at which the spiritual ceases to be spiritual and becomes material and vice versa . . . And not least of the daimons' paradoxes is that they are simultaneously continuous and discontinuous

with this world." *PATRICK HARPUR, Daimonic Reality*

I find the crop circles so endlessly fascinating because they appear to inhabit, two mutually exclusive but homogeneously compacted realities. On the one hand they are nothing more than a modern art movement, or perhaps a fringe sociological phenomenon and in this capacity they accord with our rational, largely mechanistic worldview. Whilst on the other hand they're the product of some liminal intelligence at the thresholds of consciousness and in this capacity their very presence tweaks the fabric of consensus reality.

We thus find ourselves in the unusual position of having to accept that two differing possible realities can simultaneously coexist, each vying for the title of absolute truth. Most, if not all crop circle research is directed at trying to swing dualities of this nature into the clearly defined parameters of a single truth, whatever that may ultimately turn out to be. It's a process that appears to have certain similarities to the collapsing of the wave function in quantum mechanics, in which the potentiality of the quantum field is mysteriously transmuted into the actuality of a Newtonian event. The crop circle phenomenon appears to demonstrate the paradoxical truths of the quantum world within our tangible 3D material reality, by resolutely refusing to be dragged from the liminal zone of ambiguity into a singular linear truth. I find this a very encouraging occurrence, and the fact that the mathematical logicians and then the particle physicists of the last century encountered the same paradoxical truths at the core of their arts, encourages me to assume that the crop circles are of a similar nature. They appear to be, though, far more emotive and compassionate than a mathematical truth; more like an intelligent interface guiding us gently, but firmly through the paradoxical limitations of the mind/body dichotomy, into an expanded state of being.

Does this mean then that we should sidestep the issue of 'genuineness', and accept all crop circles on equal terms? I have the sense that it is more productive, and instructive not to do so, even though, in reality, all attempts to objectify or simplify this phenomenon appears intrinsically futile. So whilst I've

never suggested there exists a definitive litmus test to prove the 'genuineness' of any given crop formation, there does appear to be fairly solid grounds for at least attempting to classify crop circles into two types. I would suggest that there are formations that are man made constructions and to which I will refer to as hoaxes, only because I believe them to exist in parallel with another order of event, which I will provocatively refer to as genuine and which are, by implication, not man made. Because one exists, so must the other, but this 'other' which exists in tandem with the regular easy over man made hoax, I am discovering, is as much a quality of mind as it is the revelatory crystallization of a deeper, geometrically literate intelligence. In manifest, tangible, objective terms, I would argue that there is little, if any, distinction that can be drawn between a man made and a genuine formation, and yet the more I take this realization on board, the more certain I become that both man made and genuine formations exist. This certainty is not born, so much, from any objective evidence, explanation or proof, it arises more from things like the sense of operating from a less fixed perspective, from a deepening of personal relationships, from the healing of the physical body, the dissolution of emotional blockages and from the many inspirational and loving people that I have come to encompass as a direct result of my interaction with the phenomenon. However, I feel that I can go further and provide some interesting and tantalizing observations that go some way to objectifying the sorts of differences I perceive to exist between the genuine and the hoaxed, the revelatory and the delusional. I suggest there is a certain correlation between uninspiring and unoriginal designs with scrappy ground lays and visible damage to the crop on the one hand, and astonishingly original, geometrically rich and symbolically deep designs, with fluid and complex ground lays and very little damage to the crop on the other. I am led to believe that man made hoaxes tend to fall largely into the former category whilst the latter contains the vast majority of those unprecedented, unique, jaw-dropping designs that have come to define this phenomenon and which continue to remain unclaimed and unexplained to this day.

Perhaps this is made clearer with the use of specific examples and to these ends I am going to highlight

several key factors that I believe to be consistent with and indicative of the regular, easy over manmade hoax/or commissioned artwork, and these observations will be pertinent to our investigation into the East Field/ South Field events of August 2003. The physical traces of the manmade event are important but I also want to look at the more subjective nature of the quality of the actual design itself as well as looking for casual traces that one would expect a manually constructed formation to trail in its wake.

top

Team Satan and the Poynings Commission



Poynings images:

centre-circle
crescent-detail
crop-damage-2
general-lay-1
general-lay-2

aerial-2

The first example is from a formation in Poynings, East Sussex (see Poynings images, left), that was made by Team Satan/ the Circlemakers for a pop video, commissioned by the Brighton based band the Levellers. I must point out that this formation was not a hoax, it was certainly manmade but no deception, as such, was intended. After the video had been shot the Circlemakers openly discussed the formation and its construction on their website and in this instance no subjective interpretation of the design's aesthetic is required, as the Circlemakers' task was to transcribe the band's preexistent logo into a large crop formation and, as far as this brief went, they did an admirable job in fulfilling it, although even in this relatively straight forward design it should be noticed that all the rectangular components are of differing widths in the finished formation. The formation certainly looked pretty good from the air and certainly from the top of Devil's Dyke, a local beauty spot atop the South Downs, where Andy Thomas first spotted the formation, it looked like a promising event. When Andy and I first visited the formation we had no idea as to its origins. We called on the nearby farm first, to

ask permission to enter the formation and despite the initially very cagey behavior of the woman we spoke to, it soon transpired that it had been commissioned and this combined with the fact that there was a hydraulic 'cherry picker' crane parked at the side of the field in question, left little doubt as to the nature of its origins. Nevertheless, we were very interested in having a look at the formation and seeing how it compared to the other local formations we'd visited. The wheat was very dry and brittle, and as soon as you walked over the downed crop it crunched and cracked underfoot. As can be seen from the attached images the quality of the lay was particularly scruffy. There were no intermeshing sweeps of crop, any fluidity or precision to the lay and across the entire formation the stems of the downed crops showed signs of severe breakage, kinking and splitting. It must be remembered that a video had been shot in this formation so it is rather unfair to flag this formation as being typical of a manmade hoax, yet the damage to the crop was ubiquitous. At any point in the formation if one looked at the downed crop, signs of breakage and damage were clearly visible. The band themselves apparently helped in the flattening of the crop and that needs to be taken into account when assessing the formation, but the lay was generally so rough that, apart from the air, this formation was never going to be that convincing. It is also important to bear in mind that this formation was constructed in broad daylight with no particular time constraints and no added pressure of it being a covert activity. Given these ideal conditions I find it intriguing that these leading proponents of the 'all man-made hoax hypothesis' failed to produce something even close to the quality of the many formations that appear mysteriously in the dark, often in inclement conditions and yet contain breathtaking lays, precisely ordered and interwoven component parts and more often than not an unprecedented, geometrically sublime design.

In my experience, every manually constructed formation that I have been into shows noticeable signs of damage to the flattened crop. It's not even particularly subtle, the crop is visibly damaged and the general lay of the crop will not be uniformly and cohesively fluid. Unless a formation is constructed with a choreographed precision and an almost superhuman attention to detail, the haphazard

movement of feet backwards and forwards across the formation during the construction process will result in areas of crop being scuffed up, haphazardly laid and most importantly visibly damaged. There may exist ways of manually flattening crop without causing the degree of damage that I've witnessed, but most of the hoaxing methods with which I am aware utilise a stomper board of some type.

Interestingly the damage to the crop comes not so much from the edge of the board pushing against the stems of the crop, but from the crop itself buckling against the wall of crop that stands behind it, as it is being pushed to the ground. This kinking or buckling is visible across whole swathes of crop and just from this evidence alone it possible to get a sense of how big the steps were between pushes and a rough indication of the size of the stomper board used. The degree to which this damage is visible depends on the age and condition of the crop, but young or old, green or dry, I have found evidence of these lateral swathes of kinking in every man-made formation I've been into. Another very simple way of looking for signs of this type of damage is to very, gently lift the downed crop up off the floor. If one bounces the lifted crop gently from the base, it inevitably bends at those points where the kinks and creases lie, even if the damage is not that visible to the eye, yet in many of the most eye-catching formations the stems show no sign of damage at all, and when lifted up out of the floor lay, remain perfectly straight. However, and this is another important factor to bear in mind, every pair of feet that walks around a formation will create further damage of this nature, so unless you are certain that you are one of the first into a formation, you can never be sure that what you are seeing are the tell-tale signs of manual construction or the physical traces of subsequent visitors. This said, crop that is already laid seems to pick up a lot less in the way of damage than crop that is being pushed to the ground in the first instance. So a good crop formation maintains a fairly good condition, despite numbers of visitors, whereas as a manually flattened formation will contain visible damage right from the outset. The following images all highlight the sort of damage I'm talking about.

The Patcham 'Flower' Formation



Patcham images:

Arty-Petal-Shot
General-Neat-Lay-Image
Panoramic-View
Path-Intersection-1
Path-Intersection-2
Petal-Lay-Detail
Straw-Bridge
Straw-Bridge-2
Test-Plant-Damage
Undamaged-Stems-Detail
Undamaged-Stems-Detail-2
silhouette
geometry_details

crescent_tip_highlight

Let's now compare the quality of this formation with another local Sussex formation (see Patcham images. left) that was in a crop of a similar age and condition, although this example is from July of last year. This formation appeared alongside a busy stretch of road and was spotted fully formed and complete at the break of day. Although entirely circumstantial I must point out that this formation appeared in the nearest available field to my house on the very day that Nick Kollerstrom (a well known crop circle geometer) was visiting me in Brighton for the first time. I met him at the local train station and we then went straight into the formation to survey it, along with Andy Thomas. We were certainly amongst the first handful of visitors to enter the formation and even from the side of the road, which afforded a good view of the formation; this was clearly an impressive and beautifully constructed design. Although based on the 'Flower of Life', a fundamental geometric construction, this was an original variation on the theme, and the largest formation, to our knowledge, that has appeared in Sussex.

The quality of the lay and the condition of the crop couldn't have been more different to the Poynings formation. As we walked around the formation we were completely blown away by its precision and accuracy. Furthermore, despite the crop crunching beneath our feet, the laid crop showed virtually no prior signs of any kinking, breakage or lateral damage whatsoever. The lay in the central petals was beautifully ordered and consistent over the entire

formation, with each petal made up two primary directions of lay, with an interwoven fanlike bridge that connected these two flows together like the rungs of a ladder. Rather like an Escher drawing or closing the top of a cardboard box without tape, the lay order of the petals was somewhat baffling. Each petal is made up two contra flowing sweeps, the end of one flow overlaying the beginning of the other. Subtle lay patterns of this nature appear to be present in one form or another in almost all the most stunning formations that I have surveyed.

Lay Order diagrams:

flow-diagram-1

flow-diagram-2

flow-diagram-3

In the Patcham images a couple of typical junctions are highlighted. In both cases the flow of the outer ring, as it feeds into the junction, extends out some way into the path of the oncoming flow. This means that the lay it is feeding into was not present when they met, as some of the crop that would be required by that lay clearly belongs to this inflowing tributary, yet it both overlays and is overlaid by the lay of the oncoming path. The lays of all the feeding tributaries appeared to curve in sympathy with the clockwise flow of the oncoming paths. Although very time consuming, studying the lay pattern of any given formation is a very interesting exercise and the Lay Order diagrams (right) show the complexity of the lay patterns found in these three, relatively obscure Sussex formations. Even constructing them on paper, raises all manner of technical difficulties and it seems inconceivable to me that, given the added levels of difficulty of working in the dark, under pressure and in an unforgiving medium, that hoaxing teams would be incorporating these additional levels of complexity into their construction sequences as a matter of routine. Especially, as in the vast majority of cases, no one is even looking at these sorts of details.

Another indicator of the gentleness and delicate care with which this formation was laid down is shown in the Patcham images. These images show where the flow of the main central ring crosses one of the many tramlines that run through the formation. The tractor's

wheels have left noticeable ruts in the field, and these pictures show how the downed crop crosses this gap like a delicate straw bridge, with absolutely no damage to the wheat stalks at all. How could this be? Surely over the course of a whole night's busy work someone would have stepped into a tramline, accidentally crushing down the stems into the rut, thus leaving signs of damage and breakage? Yet over the entire formation, the delicate straw bridges were intact and unblemished. No one appears to have made a single error for the duration of this increasingly improbable fairy dance. In the image entitled 'Test Plant Damage' I show a test conducted at the edge of the field where I gently pushed some crop over with my foot. The buckling, kinking and lateral damage to the crop is clearly visible, yet over the entire formation I was hard pushed to find evidence of a single crease!

The lack of damage to the downed crop, the illogical lay orders, the interwoven meshing of lays as they flow into each other are all baffling and intriguing physical details, many of which will be blurred or erased over the course of the formation being visited. However, as well as all these physical traces there are often causal traces that emerge over the course of a formation's existence, and as a rule of thumb I have noticed, that those formations that appear suspicious in terms of the physical traces already discussed, tend to drag a series of causal traces behind them in their wake. For the majority of all crop circle enthusiasts, who don't live in or near an area of crop circle activity, it is unlikely that these causal traces will ever emerge, however, if a formation has been manually constructed it is subject to all the same laws and limitations that we experience making anything on planet Earth, and it is therefore not that surprising how often these causative ripples bubble to the surface. The formation will need to have been designed, planned and executed over a period of time. In the majority of cases more than one person will have been involved, and with every additional participant it becomes increasingly difficult to ensure the level of secrecy required to, at least ostensibly, give the impression that it is a 'genuine' crop circle.

top

The Cliffe Hill Formation



Cliffe Hill images:

lay-damage-1

lay-damage-2

stem-damage-2

silhouette

Again let me illustrate this with an example. In May of last year (2003) Andy Thomas and I were contacted about a formation that had appeared below Cliffe Hill, on the outskirts of Lewes (See Cliffe Hill images, left). The Southern Circular team, under the indefatigable leadership of Andy Thomas has built up a very reliable system of being alerted to new crop formations within hours of their appearance. For the most part this is achieved through word of mouth, grass roots observations, as well as farmers contacting us directly. On this particular occasion, however, not one but two local papers, the Sussex Express and the Evening Argus, contacted us. This was rather unusual in itself, as for the most part it ends up being us contacting the local media as opposed to them contacting us; nevertheless, both Andy and I, accompanied by a photographer and reporter from the Evening Argus, set out to survey the formation. The formation was in a very young field of bearded wheat, and due to the relative immaturity of the crop and the very wet and sunny weather we were experiencing at the time, the crop had grown up from its prone position very quickly. Initially this gave the impression that the dramatic bends on the nodes of the downed crop had occurred whilst in the process of being laid flat. However, on closer inspection, it soon became apparent that it was due to phototropism and indeed all the formations, both in Sussex and Wiltshire that I visited at around this time showed similarly dramatic instances of phototropic node bending.

We weren't in the formation long before we became concerned by the quality of the lay. Whilst superficially neat in the formation's circular elements, in other parts it was very scruffy and disorganized, with readily visible under paths linking up what would otherwise have been isolated circles, inaccessible from the tramlines. The crop was very broken and creased and again this was ubiquitous across the entirety of the formation. Despite the crop having grown back up very quickly, the centres of all the circles were very flat, again consistent with someone having stood there whilst another walked around them flattening down the crop. Another telling sign was that the diameters of several circles were identical, indicating a single 3ft wide stomping board had been used to construct the whole formation, with little forethought as to how the relative dimensions of these features related to the overall proportions of the formation. The silhouette diagram, to my mind at least, reveals a very poorly thought out design. I'm not for a minute suggesting that we are incapable of designing convincing crop circles, far from it, but I do find it interesting that poor ground lays are almost always intimately associated with uninspiring designs and there was certainly very little in the way of inspirational geometry to be extracted from this formation.

A Mr. Longman had contacted both the Evening Argus and the Sussex Express, alerting them to the new formation. Another individual who had the same e-mail address as Mr. Longman, but a different name had also contacted the Evening Argus. Given the long, well documented association with chalk hill figures and crop circles, it did seem a little odd that the man doing the alerting shared the same name as our Long Man of Wilmington. What was more puzzling was that he had accurately described the formation to the Sussex Express, stating he had seen the formation from the golf course atop the downs and it afforded good enough views to clearly make out specific details of the formation's design. Mr. Longman specifically indicated the formation had a star shaped pattern at one end but despite walking up and down the golf course, the photographer from the Sussex Express, even armed with a powerful telephoto lens, could not find a suitable vantage point from which to clearly make out this detail. Either Mr. Longman had been into the formation and failed to

inform the papers of this, or as I strongly suspect, Mr. Longman and his pals were the perpetrators of this hoax. Unable to resist the temptation of following the ensuing events from afar, they contacted the papers to get things under way. Unfortunately for Mr. Longman & Co. the formation received lukewarm responses from every quarter and I imagine the predicted excitement and joy of deception ended up feeling rather distasteful. But the story doesn't end here, for in a rather extraordinary coincidence the crop circle researcher David Kingston was in Sussex visiting some relatives and tells the following tale.

"Earlier this year I visited my home county of Sussex to see my relatives. During one excursion to a pub in Rottingdean I overheard a group, I assume they were students from Falmer University the way they were talking, discussing how easy it would be to make a circle without anyone knowing. At this I pricked up my ears. They went on to discuss methods that someone from London used. The chat went on for about an hour during which time the name Sussex Devils came up as a group from Lewes were using that name. The tall one in the group had asked had anyone been to see their formation at (Cliffe Hill) Ringmer they (The Sussex Devils) had created a couple of days before despite it being a little rough. The group (in the Rottingdean pub) seemed to think that they could do a far better job from their conversation. At this point I made a point of going over to the group and join the conversation saying nothing about my background. It was made quite clear to me in no uncertain terms that it was a private conversation and that I should "piss off" plus a few stronger threats. My relatives suggested that I should leave them to it at that point and rejoin them which I did."

I find this all terribly interesting. Even though this formation was constructed at night, with probably no more than a handful of people privy to the event, a whole host of causal traces have bubbled effortlessly to the surface. Furthermore the fact that this group of jokers called themselves the 'Sussex Devils', ostensibly referencing the well known hoaxers 'Team Satan', indicates to me a distinct lack of original thinking. This is reflected in both the design of the formation itself, and the uninspiring way in which it had actually been constructed.

The Stanton St Bernard Formation



aerial

Stanton St Bernard
images:

scruffy-lay-1
scruffy-lay-2
stem-damage-1
stem-damage-2
stem-damage-3



aerial-1

Stonehenge
e
Ribbons
images:

photo-2
silhouette



aerial-1

Beckhampton
images:

photo-2
silhouette
geometry

Another interesting facet to the phenomenon is looking at how formations are actually positioned in relationship to the landscape. I was in Wiltshire in June 2003, having spent the night at Michael Glickman's, and had popped out to get a pint of milk for breakfast, when I came across a modest looking formation on the road between Stanton St Bernard and Alton Barnes (See Stanton St Bernard images, left). I had heard nothing about this formation prior to happening upon it, so I entered it with no preconceptions whatsoever or even an overview as to what it looked like from the air. As with the Cliffe Hill formation the crop had grown back upright from its prone position very quickly, and although I imagine a number of people had been into the formation, I found signs of breakage and stem damage across the entirety of the formation. The lay was again very scruffy in parts and just did not, in my opinion, hang together cohesively. When I did see an aerial photograph I was not surprised to find a very

plain design that looked very awkwardly placed in relation to a bare track that traversed the field. You only need to look at how exquisitely the Stonehenge Ribbons formation 4th July of 2001 (See Stonehenge Ribbons images, right) was placed in relation to its field boundary and the nearby burial mounds, or indeed the Beckhampton Pentagram of 13th July 2003 (See Beckhampton images, right), which almost perfectly tangents an identical path running down the centre of that field. In both instances a stunning design, awesome ground lays and little in the way of damage to the flattened crop matched their perfect landscape placements. In the case of the Beckhampton Pentagram, not only was it perfectly placed in the field, but it was orientated due north, thus acknowledging the little known fact that historically almost all crop formations depicting pentagrams have been precisely orientated to either due north or south. It is also interesting to note that the scruffy Stanton St. Bernard formation appeared on the same night as the awesome Ogbourne St. George formation, which exhibited a beautiful spiraled lay pattern, a masterful geometry (see [Martin Keitel's](#) analysis of this formation) and again very little visible damage to the downed crop, providing a beautiful counterbalance to this rather tawdry event.

top

The Stanton Bridge Formation

Stanton Bridge images:



sequence-1



sequence-2



aerial-1

Hackpen Hill
images:

landscape
silhouette

Let me highlight another example of this nature. This was a formation from Stanton Bridge in July 2002 and is a good example of how a manually constructed formation can be easily collapsed into an objective framework (See Stanton Bridge images, left). At first glance this formation was fairly large and superficially quite impressive, although the distance between the inner and outer paths were noticeably different across the span of the two spiral arms. Furthermore this was not an original design and borrowed heavily from the Hackpen Hill formation of 4th July 1999 (See Hackpen Hill images, right). The original Hackpen Hill formation was a true classic; it was absolutely beautiful inside and geometrically unprecedented. It took Bert Janssen several months to understand how it worked geometrically, and to fully appreciate how accurately it was constructed you just need to compare it to the Stanton Bridge formation of 2002. Needless to say, no one has ever confessed to making the original Hackpen Hill formation of July 1999, nor has any circumstantial evidence emerged linking it to any known hoaxing group. It remains an unprecedented design, beautifully realized and immacutely constructed. The Stanton Bridge formation of 2002, however, contains a series of telling details that highlight the very real difficulties encountered by fallible earthlings operating within the material world, the sort of unexpected problems that we encounter every time we try to hang a picture, or put up shelves. The problematic nature of working under pressure, in the dark exacerbates these difficulties and this is something that it is very easy to lose track of when investigating crop circles.

Milk Hill



aerial

In the Stanton Bridge images, I show digitally altered images of the final formation, with one of its spiral arms completed and the second at an early stage of construction. I stress that these diagrams are

schematic and don't necessarily reflect the actual order of construction, but the problems I'm highlighting would still be encountered regardless of the actual construction order. (In fact I think the outer arcs of each arm were actually constructed before the inner arcs but I've shown them unfolding the other way round.) In fig (a) I show the 'anchor man' highlighted as a red circle, standing at the relevant centre of rotation, needed to create the inner arc of the incomplete arm. A red arrow indicates the path the 'stomper' will be required to walk, in order to lay down the actual manifest path. In fig (b) the stomper is also highlighted as a red circle and between him and the anchorman a taut guide rope is shown. In addition to this a tall telegraph pole is also highlighted in red. Whoever conceived of this formation had failed to notice this feature when they were deciding where to place their formation. In fig (c) I have shown the anchorman in position (again this is just an approximation) and the initial path walked by the stomper. All appears to be going well until they hit an insurmountable snag. The stomper is prevented from progressing any further, because the telegraph pole is annoyingly situated right between him and the anchorman. Whatever the stomper does, short of levitating, he cannot get around this obstacle, and as a result he has to wade through the standing crop, walk around the telegraph pole and then retrace his path back to the half constructed arc, at which point he is at liberty to complete his path unhindered. There is, however, one further technical difficulty that needs to be surmounted, and that's to know when to stop this arc. Whether the outer or inner arcs are constructed first, the problem remains, and if you look at fig (h) you will see that at the tips of both arms, there is a portion of overrun and this is a feature that we see time and time again in poorly conceived of, messily constructed formations. (The formation below Milk Hill from 17th June 2003 is another example of this, and in this case small circular caps have been constructed at the six laid petal tips, thus superficially disguising these areas of arc overrun. See Milk Hill image, right) Fig (f) highlights how exactly the same problem with the telegraph pole is encountered whilst constructing the outer arc. If we then look at the actual formation, as it was when it was originally discovered Figs (h), we see, etched into the crop around the rogue telegraph

pole, the very paths that we hypothetically calculated would have to be present. Linked with arc overruns, the variable distances between the inner and outer arcs on the two arms and the fact that this was an unoriginal design leads me to safely assume that this formation is the product of manual construction. Interestingly the hoaxers, clearly unhappy with their creation, returned a couple of days later and flattened the areas contained within the inner and outer arcs. Although partly disguising the tell tale track marks around the telegraph pole, the mechanical way the crop has been laid, especially visible towards the outer tips of the spiral arms, to my mind makes the formation even less elegant than it was originally.

top

The South Field Formation 2002

South Field
images (2002):



aerial

3-4-5
initial-drawing
internal-1
internal-2
internal-3
internal-4
internal-5
internal-6
primary-squared-circle
primary-template
silhouette.gif
squared-circle
squaring-the-circle

So let's return to the Southfield formation of 22nd July 2002 (See South Field 2002 images, left). I did not visit this formation until several days after it was first reported, so I am unable to comment on the condition of the lay as it was met by the first visitors, however, when I first went in to it, along with Andy Thomas and our sons, we all thought it looked wonderful. It took me several weeks to understand how it worked geometrically and the most intriguing aspect of its design was the way that the width of the pathways running between the individual twists of rope in the outer braid were consistent with an underlying 13 fold grid that underpinned the design. (The pathways were the only indication of this subliminal guiding structure; no such grid was

actually marked out in the field.) I'd never come across a design that utilized a 13-fold sub grid before, although interestingly the number thirteen had been emphatically incorporated into the giant Milk Hill formation of 2001 as well as several formations from the 2002 season.

Windmill Hill



aerial-1

The Windmill Hill formation of 7th June 2003 (See Windmill Hill images, right) was clearly based on very similar geometrical principles to the South Field Knot of 2002, although this time it was based around a much more traditional 8-fold-grid pattern. Despite its size and apparent complexity, this was, geometrically at least, quite a straightforward design that borrowed heavily from the previous South Field formation. The fact that the pathways between the braids were quite significantly skewed off true, as well as the level of damage to the downed crop witnessed by its first visitors, led many to suspect that this was, in all probability, a man-made hoax. Nevertheless, were it not for the distasteful fact that it was a hoax perpetrated on an unsuspecting, trusting public, this was a very well thought out design, and given the conditions, a fairly well constructed formation.

Once again, I must stress that this is conjectural, and I certainly hope dissenting opinions will be expressed, but at this point in time I feel the South Field formation was more original, better conceived and more gracefully put together than the Windmill Hill formation. Certainly the Windmill Hill formation didn't add anything further to either the geometry or the symbolism introduced by the original Southfield formation.

top

The East Field Formation 2003



aerial-1

East Field images:

aerial-2
construction-
sequence
silhouette

On the 2nd of August 2003 I heard rumours of another 'rope square' type formation that had been discovered in East Field (See East Field images, left). It appeared to be the next chapter in this very interesting sequence of events. When I first saw an aerial photograph of this formation I was immediately disappointed as it looked unfinished, boded and terribly untidy. With hindsight I wish I'd made the effort to visit it on the day of its discovery, to have a closer look at the state of the lay, but almost all of the reports I have heard speak of untidy lays and areas of significantly damaged crop. Again there is no reason to infer that damaged crop is evidence of hoaxing, I just suggest that it is almost always synonymous with hoaxing. Despite my coolness towards the end result I was quite astounded that a formation of this complexity had been attempted right in the middle of East Field, at a time when the hills are alive with people milling about, checking out likely fields, looking for lights and other anomalous activity. Yet if I was to accept this as being a man-made formation then it must have been pulled off right under the noses of all the folk out crop watching that night, and there were quite a few specifically looking out over East Field itself. This would again shift a long accepted given in crop circle lore that no one could move in a field that was being observed, without being seen.

I was intrigued by how this formation was constructed, so I spent a bit of time playing around with it geometrically. What's so smart about this method of rendering a braid is that geometrically it's very simple, and is almost perfectly tailored for manual construction in a wheat field. One of the great difficulties in hoaxing crop circles, as we have already seen, is knowing when to stop an arc, especially when there are no convenient guides already inscribed into the crop to help you. (Unlike

working in the unforgiving medium of a cereal crop, when drawing on paper you have the advantage of being able to rub out guide lines once dispensed with.) The East Field formation was very well conceived because the way it is physically constructed actually allows for a degree of overshooting, as the subsequent circles are placed neatly over this portion of the arcs, thus disguising the overshoots beneath them. Certainly in the East Field formations the circles all overlaid the paths that fed into them. This is the logical way to draw the formation and certainly in constructing it, this would have been the easiest and most sensible method to use. The circle then naturally hosts two diametrically placed anchor points from which the next two arcs are constructed. It is a sort of self-replicating sequence that enables one to move out across the field, laying your tracks before you as you go. The corners would have been slightly more problematic to navigate but essentially this was a very simple method, which had it been pulled off successfully would have resulted in a stunning formation. However, I was really perplexed as to what the finished design was supposed to have looked like, had it not gone awry half way round the second coil. It certainly looked as though they had intended to continue the spiral right on into the centre of the formation, but had taken a wrong turn at a crucial point, or that they had simply underestimated how long it would take them to implement the full design and they had, therefore, attempted to improvise a finish before they were caught out by the break of day.

As I hadn't actually visited this formation I felt I could really only evaluate it in terms of its actual manifest design and perhaps extrapolate what had been begun into what was probably intended. I created an idealized drawing of what this design would look like, had the spiral been completed. Now clearly we're into subjective territory here, but to my mind, even had the formation been completed in its entirety, the resulting spiral design would have been rather uncomfortable. It would have been very impressive in terms of complexity and scale, but the design itself would have been too busy and cluttered to convey the sense of serenity and poise that we witnessed in the other 'Square Knot' formations, including the Windmill Hill formation. But again, clearly not

everyone will agree with this assessment, and I include my idealized rendering of the projected design, as I'm interested to hear other people's opinions on this. The other thing to bear in mind is that if we look carefully at what was actually constructed in the field, the formation was very wobbly and contained numerous errors and mistakes. The spacing between the first and second coils deviates significantly from true as you follow the spiral around and had they managed to get as far as the third and fourth coils, these discrepancies would have been compounded, and the design would have become increasingly 'ropey', please forgive the pun. This is entirely consistent with what you would expect of a team of people working at night, without lights or pre-marked guides in the field. I am not questioning the obvious skills that the hoaxing fraternity have developed over the years, but I remain unconvinced that they, or indeed anyone, is capable of the levels of accuracy and precision that we continue to witness in a significant percentage of all crop formations.

If, as I suspected, this formation was indeed man-made, then I wondered if a little investigative journalism would uncover any of the casual traces that an event of this scale would have inevitably left behind. As a rule I tend to concentrate on studying the geometry of any given formation, and simply work on those patterns that I find inspiring and putting aside those I don't. However, in this instance I was interested to see what could be unearthed, and to this end I simply followed up a few leads that had revealed themselves to me. To my surprise it took very little scratching to uncover a whole host of information relating to this formation. Again I find it very interesting to note that an unfinished, scrappy formation containing areas of significantly damaged crop trails behind it a whole host tantalizing clues as to its origins. The following report is from a Belgian researcher Rob Geukens who has very kindly allowed me to relay this story.

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Rob Geuken's Story

"Around the last week of July 2003, my cousin and I were staying at the Barge Inn. (We're from Belgium) We met some other Belgian people as well,

whom we had befriended the previous year. Near our tent, and next to the Barge's marquee, two guys were staying whose faces seemed vaguely familiar from years past, but they always seemed to shy away from other people, so we had never actually had a conversation. In the light of this year's events, we can guess why they were reluctant to communicate with others. At a certain point during the week, however, they started talking to one of our Belgian friends. They said they were planning something, and they wanted to recruit us for the job. Our friend Jan came to us with the proposition. The hoaxers said they wanted to make something in the area, and they showed us a diagram of the intended design: a sort of rope spiral, that coiled all the way in to the middle, in the form of a square. It was to be 300-400 ft across, 'not too big, not too small' (but it seemed pretty big to me!). Jan, my cousin Kim and myself debated on the subject, and decided that none of us should take part, in part because the hoaxers had not asked the farmer's permission, but also because we had no desire to actively deceive anyone. After all, you would be flattening a huge area of crop in an area that is bound to receive many visitors. We told the two hoaxers that we were not going to aid in the stomping. They did not tell us when or where exactly they were going to make the design. At around 22.30, on the night of the 1st August, they left the camp site in their green army van.

We left for Adam's Grave to do a meditation and a skywatch, and one of our Belgian friends rode his bike up to Knapp Hill car park. Around 23.30 we descended from Adam's Grave, and Kim and myself decided to head for East Field Tyres (A large wall of tyres situated at the southern end of East field), because we had a feeling (or hope) something might hit the East Field that night. Arriving at the tyres around midnight, we met Bert Janssen and a man from Switzerland who were doing a crop watch. We stayed until about 01.30 am, discussing how hard it would be to make a formation in the East Field unnoticed because sound goes quite a distance at night (we could hear people laughing at a garden party in Alton Priors). Bert scanned the field several times with his night vision camera. Nothing appeared to be happening.

We all left around 01.30 am, Kim and myself on foot, the others by car. On the way back, another Belgian guy crossed our path and went on towards the East Field alone (he was having trouble sleeping). Kim and I hiked back to the camp site to get some sleep. The next morning we heard a rumour about a new formation in the East Field, a square design. We met up with the Belgian guy we had seen the day before and he told us he was walking alongside the field, when he heard people talking, and sometimes even shouting. He took his flashlight and ran out into the field. He could make out people running away from him, but did not pursue them. He then doubled back on himself and went to bed. Some minutes later we talked to the man (Peter) who had cycled up to Knapp Hill car park around 10.45 pm. He had witnessed a good deal of the events from the previous night.

He too confirmed that the two hoaxers had left the camp site quite early that night (10.30 pm). Arriving at the car park, Peter did not see anything (night watchers usually start arriving after the pubs close). Going further down the car park, at the far end overlooking East Field, he saw the hoaxers' green army van. The van was invisible from the place most people park their vehicles for their nightwatches because it had been parked further down the track. But this place actually makes out an excellent vantage point for the surrounding area, and more importantly, over East Field itself. Peter hid himself and waited. Pretty soon, two or three cars arrived, and every car was packed with people. These people would make up the rest of the team. A conservative estimate would make two cars with three guys each, plus the two hoaxers = eight people, a lot more than the 'two or three friends' most hoaxing teams declare themselves to be. If there were three cars with four or five passengers? you do the maths. This band of people went into the field along with one of the hoaxers. The other one climbed on top of his van to coordinate the work. Peter claims he saw them sporting night vision goggles. I assume some of them might have, but probably not all. They communicated through some electronic system (maybe cell phones or a walkie-talkie?). Again, they probably did not all need phones, just the two coordinating men and maybe one or two others. My guess is the two hoaxers are fully equipped and have a small band of

friends (two or three) with whom they work most of the time. The rest of the group would not be equipped in this scenario, and consist largely of one-time adventurers picked up by the team (after all, it could have been US working alongside them). After some time, Peter left for the camp site.

I'll round up some concluding remarks regarding this hoax:

1. 'People swarm the surrounding hills, it is impossible to hoax a formation unnoticed':

Right and wrong. They were caught red-handed by one person and spied on by another. But these people did not tell on them, nor publicly expose the formation to be a hoax. You tend to keep these things hush-hush because you do not want to ruin other peoples illusions, nor do you want to make enemies out of the hoaxers. After all, they didn't kill anyone? On the other hand: Knapp Hill car park was loaded with skywatchers that night, blissfully unaware. We were at the bottom of the East Field with night vision camera, also blissfully unaware. Sound may carry far at night, but the wind has to be your friend. The formation was made in a dip in the field, effectively blocking it from our view and deflecting the sound of the stomping. To my knowledge, it gets pretty dark around 10.15 pm in July, and even sooner in August. The sun starts to rise around 4.30 am. This leaves at least five and a half hours of darkness in which to work. No one starts a night watch before 11.00 pm, and nobody gets up at 4.00am to go find new formations. The East Field team started the job around 11.00pm and finished around 5.00am.

2. 'Hoaxing teams are small groups of 2 or three young men, armed with 3ft boards and a ball of string':

Incorrect. This may have been the case many years ago, and teams may wish to cultivate this image, but it is not true. Hoaxers evolve as well as researchers do. It is very likely that every new criterion for 'genuineness' proposed by resarchers is being incorporated into formations. Very few of these elements are inimitable. They do use special equipment for communication, pegging out the design and seeing in the dark. A hobbyist fisherman will pay over £500 for a good rod, a hobbyist hoaxer probably does not mind spending the same amount on night scopes and the like. He also doesn't mind inviting friends over to join the party, especially when the design is big or complex. Even the stomping boards are not just 3ft planks by default: tennis rackets, garden rollers, round boards,? if it has a nice effect, they'll use it thus fooling researchers into thinking they've discovered some new aspect of the real phenomenon. (This information comes from the hoaxers).

3. 'People make mistakes, and mistakes in a crop field stick out like a sore thumb'

Eventually maybe. Yes, the team made several mistakes, judgemental and otherwise. They intended the design to be '300 or 400 ft, not too

big, not too small', but they did not complete the job in time. They did not even finish a second tour of the spiral. Pressure of time urged them to fill up the central blank space with the diagonal arm, the messiest bit of the formation. (They admitted this to us the next day). The result was crooked, and the floor pattern was extremely variable, showing nicely flattened out swirls on one side of the formation, and many smashed and broken stems on the other side, with the centre being worst off, truly abominable. And yet, still people were speechless and awed, many defending the formation against anyone expressing doubts. Researchers made comments in front of cameras on the 'major importance of this event' (there was a conference in Devizes that day, and rumour spread like wildfire), without, apparently, having even visited the formation or thoroughly investigated the floor pattern. Several people explained how people had been on Knapp Hill all night and had seen nothing, and thus it would have been almost be impossible to hoax this in one night. I can only express my respect for Bert Janssen, who tried to keep an open mind and refused to make statements before analysing his footage of the floor pattern. Eventually, more people started to see the irregularities of the design, but it remained very popular for the better part of its lifespan."

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The Realities of Construction



lucys_photo

HTV images:

andreass-photo

It must be borne in mind that these particular hoaxers have been around the scene for several years and are linked to a number of other formations in the area, and they must therefore rank as one of the most active and accomplished hoaxing teams currently at large. Michael Glickman commented to me that their creation must therefore rank highly in terms of "the best that they can do". If this is an example of them at the best, then we are once again left with this gaping chasm between what is being claimed by the hoaxing fraternity, and that which is actually being produced by them, when given the platform to openly demonstrate their skills. On 28th July 2001 (See HTV images, right), HTV

commissioned Team Satan to construct a formation for a documentary they were putting together about the crop circle phenomenon. Again permission was granted by the farmer, on whose land the formation was constructed, and although the field was floodlight for filming purposes, the actual design would have been perfectly possible to construct in more realistic nighttime conditions. Despite working in these idealised conditions, Team Satan came up with a design, whose waywardly constructed central elements reflect the very real difficulties involved in inscribing perfect arcs in an unforgiving medium on an undulating terrain. But the very fact that they came up with a design that generates a problematic centre of this nature in the first place, indicates to me that even as the most famous hoaxing team in the game, they don't have a comprehensive grasp of what realistically can or cannot be manually constructed in a field, in the hours of darkness available. Surely they would have chosen a different design had they known the central spokes would be so out, nevertheless, season-by-season, we continue to see far more ambitious designs, with far more intricate components, seemingly effortlessly embossed into our fields, within a few short, dark night time hours.

Rob Geukens' report was only one of several from that night that highlighted suspicious activity. Andreas Muller and Werner Anderhab, who were also out and about, saw the outline of the formation through night vision goggles at about 2.00 in the morning. At this stage the central spine was not present and although they went down to the edge of East Field to have a closer look, because the formation was constructed in a natural dip in the field, from the ground they weren't able to make out any further details. They did however bump into both Linda Moulton-Howe, Bert Janssen, as well as the Belgian guy who was to later walk into the field, causing the hoaxers to run and scatter. Furthermore, they spoke to a Swedish guy who witnessed several people leaving the formation at about 4.30 - 5.00am that morning. He entered the formation at about 5.30am and captured his first impressions video. What he saw, over the entirety of the formation, were clumps of caked mud on the flattened crop, much of it molded into the sort of patterns one finds on the soles of trainers and boots. Andreas and Werner also found postholes of unknown origin in the corners of

the square frame, as well as shoeprints at the centres of all the circles, which had been subsequently covered up by an overlay of crop or a twisted knot-like centre.

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The South Field Formation 2003



South Field
images (2003):

jonah-1
jonah-2
jonah-3
photo-2
silhouette
geometry_details

photo-1

Although to the wider research community, the details surrounding the East Field event may be largely unknown, I find it terribly interesting that so much circumstantial evidence as to its origins has emerged. The ease with which this evidence has been uncovered, linked together with the reported levels of damage inflicted to the downed crop, as well as the errors and mistakes clearly visible in the finished formation, all dovetail together very cohesively. Each of the available research strands, the physical, the aesthetic and the causal, all come together to paint a highly likely scenario for this formation's origins. Against all expectations, six days later, another very similar formation appeared in the adjoining field, South Field. This was clearly inspired by the East Field formation, and I must say that when I first saw an aerial image of it I immediately assumed that the hoaxing team that had constructed East Field had returned to try again. Clearly this was a far more eloquent construction, on every level, but because it was based so closely on the principles laid down in the original East Field formation I assumed it must be by the same hand. However, I was very perplexed by the inclusion of the extraordinary central disc component, which was not present in any manner or form in the original East Field formation. This disc was an entirely original development and so eloquent, both in terms of its conception and construction that I found it rather disconcerting that in the space of six days, the hoaxing team responsible had not only conceived it, but had actually perfected

its method of construction to such a degree that it was pretty much flawless in its implementation. Sure the disc was slightly misplaced in relation to the outer braid, but the whole design hangs together far more eloquently than the square spiral in the original East Field formation, even had it been completed. A few days later I was passing through Wiltshire, so I took the opportunity of going to visit the formation. As soon as I stepped into it I immediately warmed to it. Despite numerous visitors the condition of the crop was in remarkably good condition, despite it being terribly dry and brittle. In fact Tim Carson had been actively discouraging visitors to this formation, because he was so worried about the risk of a fire. However, I saw very little signs of the sort of lateral damage to the crop as highlighted by the manually constructed formations discussed earlier.

Encouraged, by what I felt to be a very well constructed formation, I decided to spend some time working on its geometry. The series of diagrams shown in the South Field 2003 images demonstrates the sublime way in which this formation hangs together. I worked in tandem with the Danish researcher Jonah Ohayv and I would refer you to [his website](#) in order to get a fuller understanding of the technical details that would have been involved in constructing this formation. As is the case with the vast majority of crop formations that I have analysed, there is nothing to suggest that technically, or at least hypothetically, this pattern could not have been manually constructed in the time available, it is more a question of determining whether, based on the type of evidence raised so far, that the team responsible for the East Field mess, could realistically be responsible for this masterful interpretation of that earlier theme. Now the East Field hoaxers do claim to have made the South Field formation and again I have included several eyewitness reports relating to the night in question. The first is again from the Belgian researcher Rob Geukens.

"By the time the South Field formation appeared, we had been out camping for almost two weeks. The first week we saw nothing but torrential rain, and the second week would prove to be the hottest of the year, so our spirits started to dampen considerably. After the East Field event, the hoaxers admitted they had been off the mark, and that they intended to do

better next time. They left Alton Barnes on the 4th August for a few days and came back later with their children. During their absence, we didn't think about them too much. By then, the subject was getting old for us. Two days or so after their return, we noticed the two leaving the campsite again around 22.30, so we figured they had plans for making another circle that night. My cousin Kim went up to Adam,s Grave to spend the night there, but I did not join him. Later that night, my girlfriend and I (she had arrived a couple of days previously) walked up to Woodborough Hill. We arrived at around 00.30 am and stayed for about an hour, walking the perimeter and shining our torches on the field between Tawsmead Copse and the Hill. We never actually went to the other side of the hill, visibility being very low that night due to fog. We did not see or hear anything. The next morning, Kim spotted the new formation from his position on Adams Grave, and was one of the first people to enter. He did not get much time to look around, and was asked to leave by a farmhand who arrived shortly afterwards. He may have been able to take some pictures, I'll ask him about it. Upon hearing about the refusal by the farmhand to allow entry, we decided it would not be worth the walk that day to thoroughly check the formation out. I now regret this decision off course. But back then we were convinced it was the work of the two hoaxers: they had left early with their equipment that night, the design was very similar and situated on top of the brow of South Field, so it was very possible that I would have missed them working that night. (Linda Moulton Howe had been on top of Woodborough Hill that night, but left around midnight. She never heard or saw a thing.) Last, but not least, the two guys admitted they had made the formation. There seemed to be no reason for them to lie about it, at least not to us, but I may be wrong off course. They did seem very proud (and a little surprised) when they saw the first aerial photographs of the formation. They told us they had been working much harder, and with fewer people. We considered this info to be sufficient. As I said, we were quite weary by then, and we were starting to loose our edge.

Walkers Hill images:



aerial-1

geometry-1.gif
geometry-2.gif
geometry-3.gif
geometry-4.gif
geometry-5.gif
geometry-6.gif
geometry-7.gif
silhouette.gif

It might be of interest to you to know that the same hoaxers claimed to have made the Swallows formation at Walkers Hill on the 4th August 2003 (see Walkers Hill images, right)). Kim, Jan and myself find this claim to be a bit strange for a number of reasons. First of all, Jan spent the night on Adam's Grave the night the formation appeared. He did not see or hear a thing (this is of course no longer a totally valid argument, but still...), and neither did an Italian guy who was also around at the time. We went into the formation before anyone else (after Jan and the Italian) around nine o'clock in the morning. It was in the middle of a heat wave, so one wouldn't expect to find mud prints on the downed crop, however, because it was so dry I would have expected to see evidence of snapped or crushed plant stalks. But the floor pattern seemed undisturbed and the stalks were all standing at the same angle (about 30 degrees) from the ground. I would think applying weight mechanically would result in different levels of crop, since the exerted force would not be constant all of the time. But here the crop level was constant. Does this make sense to you? Just a thought... Anyway, we could find no evident bruising or cracks on the dry stalks, the bend was made near ground level without actually breaking the stems. As I was saying, the crop stood in an angle, and merely walking on it would flatten down the stems. One could easily make out where he had stepped. Maybe the correct choice of flattening device can minimize this? I don't know. The style of the floor pattern was quite different from what we had seen in East Field. (East Field in itself was more like a showcase of many different styles). When Jan told the hoaxers about the new formation, they were very curious and came in pretty soon after we left it. This seemed to be a bit strange, unless they left the place in the middle of the night and had no idea about how it would look in sunlight. Finally,

we did not see the hoaxers leaving the campsite at around the time they would have needed to do so in order to have enough time to carry out a night's work."

The second report is from the Italian researcher Andrea De Marinis who was also around the Alton Barnes area at the time of both the East Field and the South Field events.

"We decided to spend the night of the 7th/8th August on Knapp Hill. We were hanging out in a van talking till about 3.30am when we decided to go to sleep. The sky was fairly clear at this time with just a little cloud covering. The night passed without incident but when we awoke at around 9.30am we could see something new atop South Field. We immediately set off to have a look and in a few minutes we were inside the formation. In spite of my enthusiasm the way the plants were flattened left me feeling a little disappointed, because they weren't horizontal to the ground, but at an angle of about 30°. Inside the formation there was a special, perceptible energy; the air was dense and full of silence."

The final report is from Linda Moulton -Howe who was also out and about on the evening that the South Field formation appeared.

"I was with Andy Buckley and his friend, Kate from Australia, atop Woodborough Hill from late afternoon sunlight until around midnight. In fact, we went down to look at downed wheat along the trees that grow between Woodborough Hill and the South Field while it was still light and from the path that we walked, we could clearly have seen the formation. I know that because Andy and I discovered the South Field pattern ourselves the next morning when we returned to do some plant sampling and saw the formation as we walked down the same path that we had the night before. Andy did walk down to the trees between Woodborough and the South Field around 11 p.m. that night and "asked" for a formation in the South Field. But he is the one who should describe his firsthand experience."

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Conclusions

There are a series of interesting observations that we need mull over. Firstly, and most importantly in my view, are the gaping differences between the East Field and the South Field formations. In the East Field formation, it is clear that the hoaxers were intending for the design to spiral into the centre, there being no indication either in the manifest design, or in the master diagram shown to several people prior to the formation being constructed, of the central disc that would later appear in the South Field formation. Had the South Field formation consisted purely of a braided square, I would have been far happier to accept that the same team, with the benefit of hindsight, had returned to try again, this time making the design a lot simpler. The South Field formation was almost identically orientated, in relation to the tramlines, as the East Field formation and spanned exactly the same number of tramlines, although the scale of the internal circular components were altered, and this in itself was an important factor in creating a far more balanced and comfortable aesthetic. However, that is where the similarities between the two formations end. On a technical level the South Field formation was almost flawless in its execution. The braid meets itself with such accuracy that I am unable to distinguish where this formation would have been begun, there being no visual discrepancies at any of the four corners. Furthermore there seems to have been a very conscious decision to alter the width of the pathways, the inner fluted pathway being somewhat thinner than the outer fluted path. The choice of path thickness appears to be based on very clear and precise geometrical principles, which unite the two component parts of the formation, the inner disc and the outer braid. The way in which the relative thickness of the inner and outer fluted paths are harmonically related both to each other and to the circular elements, as well locking precisely onto the outer circumference of the inner disc, and indeed its octagonally derived inner circumference, is an astonishing collection of astute geometrical observations. The fact that the formation thus tangentially contains two implicit, perfect square components, the inner of which can be used to generate a further circle and contained square, allowing a 'squared circle by area' to emerge, to an accuracy of over 99.9% is quite astonishing. It must be remembered that the original South Field Knot

formation of 2002, which to all intensive purposes lay directly beneath the formation of 2003, also contained an implicit 'squared circle', which in this case was based on perimeter length as opposed to area. It must also be noted, on the technical side that whilst in East Field the arcs under laid the circular components, the most logical way to manually construct this formation, in South Field the paths overlaid these circular components. This is again an anomalous detail, and one must question why in this formation the hoaxers have unnecessarily raised the complexity of construction, when East Field, which was constructed along much simpler lines, was such a mess. This whole sequence of events just doesn't appear consistent to me. Why make your task even more difficult than it already is, especially when the easier methodology resulted in such a messy formation? In addition to these lay order anomalies, in the South Field 2003 folder I include several images where the downed crop parts and flows around a couple of rogue clumps of cow parsley, which remained untouched and unblemished throughout the flattening process. This is again a feature that has been noticed on several previous occasions, where the flattening process seems to be plant specific, leaving plants of another genus untouched. Of course, these tufts of cow parsley, were taller than the surrounding crop, so they may well have been visible, even at night, but as Andreas Muller's image of this feature demonstrates, the wheat has parted itself so perfectly, that even a single stalk of the cow parsley on the edge of the clump was spared the flattening process, with the crop flowing around this rogue element like a stream flowing around a pebble. Whilst in itself, not proof of anything, this feature must be taken into account, along with all the other anomalous details, that have been generated by this event.

The East Field formation was constructed on the night of the 1st/ 2nd August and by the 8th August the South Field formation was manifest. In this short space of time, if we are to believe their claims, they not only came up with the revised South Field design, including this impressive, unprecedented central disc, but also constructed the Swallows formation of 4th August, which appeared just two days after the East Field formation and four days before the South Field event. The Swallows formation was again a very

impressive piece of geometry and beautifully realized and I find it difficult to reconcile the East Field formation with either of these two formations. It is also interesting to note that two different researchers, both in the first handful of visitors to visit these formations, state that the crop in both the Swallows and the South Field formations to be laid evenly across the entirety of the formation at an angle of 30° to the horizontal. No one reported anything like this from within the East Field formation, all the reports that came back talk about variable lay quality and significant areas of damage, with the crop unevenly laid over the entirety of the formation.

So what are we to make of all this? Perhaps, as they claim, the hoaxers did return to construct the South Field formation and on this occasion managed to pull off a stunning success. I hold that as a possibility. The fact that a German researcher purports to have been shown a drawing of South Field the day before it appeared is a very tantalizing piece of evidence in favour of this possibility, but I have been unable to track him down to personally verify this and I suspect that what he may have actually seen was a drawing of the East Field, not the South Field formation. Rob Geukens states that his friend Kim saw a single, good drawing of the South Field formation in the Barge at about 9am on the morning of its discovery, shown to him by the two East field hoaxers. As I did not see the drawing, I am unable to personally gauge how accurate a drawing it was, and it did not appear to be a working diagram. Again this is a very suggestive piece of evidence but as Andreas Muller pointed out, he is able to accurately draw up new formations, pretty quickly, without the aid of overhead photos; even though many other people may not even have an inkling of the shape formation they're in, so again the issue remains unresolved. It is interesting though that in broad terms, that East Field, being the much more obviously manmade formation, threw up almost immediate objective, tangible proof as to its origins. South Field, however, being far more evocative, has to date, only thrown up subjective indications and subtle allusions. Nothing substantive has thus far emerged, despite a number of people having been around the South Field area on the night in question, and this is a reflection of what we almost always find; that uncomfortable looking formations often collapse into an objective

framework whilst the more beautiful, inspirational ones remain unerringly aloof. Clearly, all regular, easy over, manmade formations possess the potential to hover in or around this liminal zone of ambiguity, yet crucially, rarely is a truly great formation successfully collapsed into a purely objective framework. Surely, if teams of people had the ability and inclination to manufacture all crop circles, someone, somewhere along the line, would have been caught in the act of laying out a jaw dropping design? Yet to date, in over a quarter of a century of activity no one has been caught making anything other than fairly mundane formations. Clearly I remain prejudiced, but even allowing for generous margins in favour of the hoaxers skills and abilities, how do we explain this anomaly away?

The possibility, thus exists, that an indefinable intelligence has responded directly to a man-made event, extracting and reinterpreting its core design elements and manifesting them in a far more accomplished and geometrically sublime manner. However, I must stress again, that these conclusions are conjectural, and have, at the end of the day been fashioned against my own particular penchant as to how the universe may operate. Hopefully this article will generate further debate and who knows what additional evidence may emerge? The hoaxers involved in the East Field formation may choose to come forward and give their version of events, and if indeed something did respond to their initial East Field formation, then that, surely, would be a tale worth telling. Let's sit tight and see if this formation can be collapsed into a singular truth. If, as I suspect that it can't, then this formation, like so many before it, remains enigmatic, paradoxical and apparently inexplicable.

In this capacity the crop circles are like a chalk line snapped against the daimonic membrane that lies between worlds; a subtle dust that renders the implicit momentarily visible; like the delicate tracings of an event horizon, a threshold or a crossing point. It is as though we are being shown that wonder and beauty, synchronicity and fluidity are qualities that can pass unhindered through the porous fabric of reality, like gravitons of consciousness. Whatever else they may portend to, the crop circles patiently teach me the same lesson each year; they gently,

consistently remind me to soften my heart and for that I am grateful. We should not be dependent on the crop circles for proof of our own intuitive understanding of the world, we should ourselves be the living proof that the universe accords with those beliefs, and has the potential to become a better place as a result of them.

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