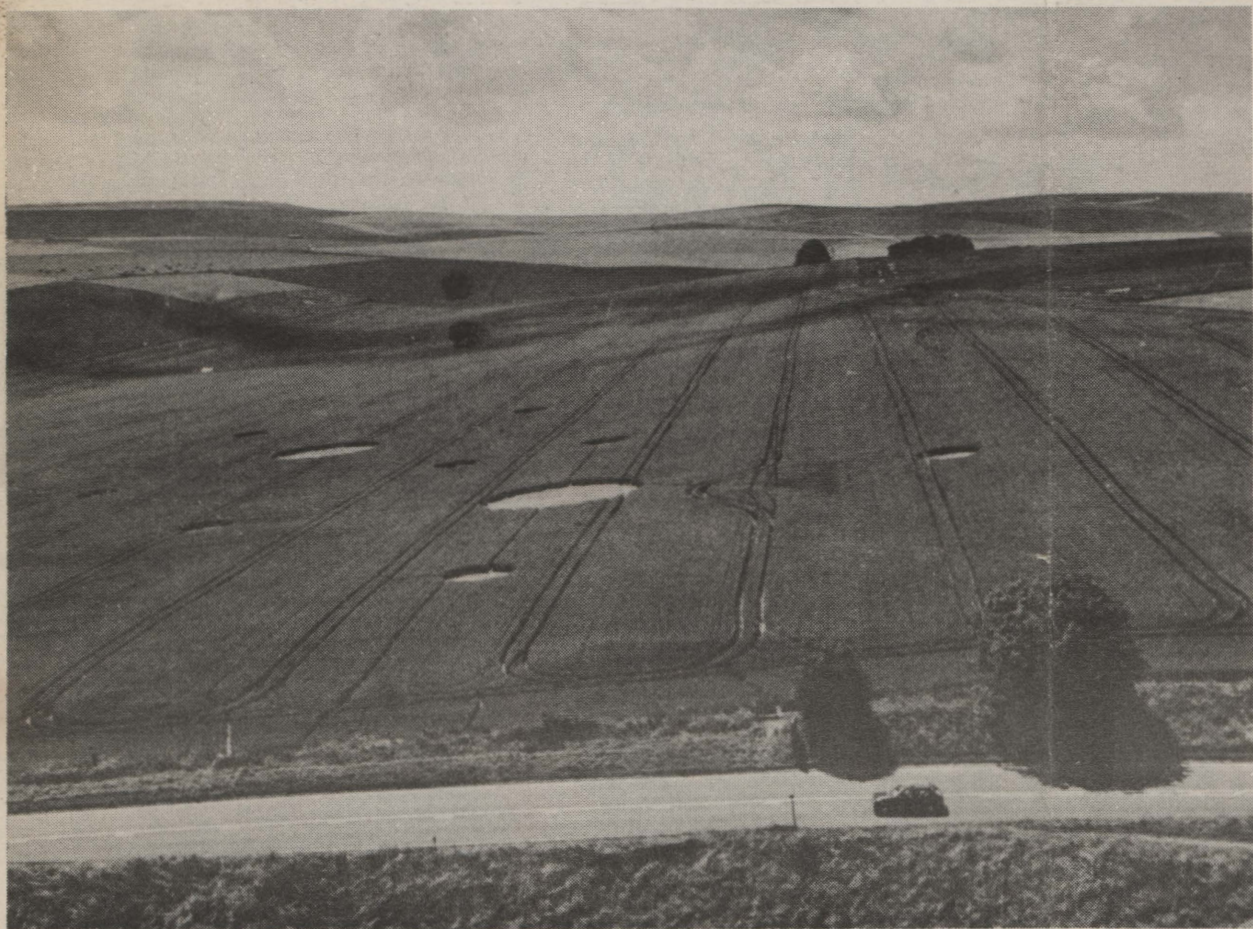




FARM



Circle seekers damage crops

FARMERS are complaining that crops are being trampled by people who are curious about the mysterious circles which have appeared in crops throughout Wiltshire over the past six months.

Seventy-four circles have appeared in England since the spring, with over 50 of those in Wiltshire, prehistoric Avebury having a particularly large number.

Thirteen circles in regular patterns were found in one field alone next to neolithic Silbury Hill, and the owner has complained of hordes of people invading his property in an effort to get a closer look at the puzzling rings, causing inconvenience and expensive damage.

NO EXPLANATION

Theories suggested about the origin of the circles range from extra-terrestrial activity to the result of freak storms. However, nobody has yet come forward with a plausible explanation.

Each set of circles consists of a central circle, the largest seen in the county having

been 16 metres in diameter, with four outer rings.

The two groups near Silbury Hill appeared within a week of each other in a field owned by Roger and Sue Hues.

Mrs Hues said: 'When we first saw the circles we knew they

were going to cause trouble.'

Since then, people have been climbing over gates and fences and walking through crops to view the circles, despite clear signs that the land is private.

She added she did not blame the public for being curious, but wished they would have more respect for

private property and the countryside code. The Hues estimate the damage to have cost them over £100.

by
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