

UFOs

A BRITISH VIEWPOINT



**Jenny Randles and
Peter Warrington**

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by

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and

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To
Mum and Dad (R and W)
for putting up with UFOs
and
Paul and Rosalind
for putting up with us

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Illustrations

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- 2, 3, 4 Photographs from the Wrexham case on January 5th 1977. Comparative photograph taken by a UFOIN investigator at Wrexham
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Introduction

It is late on a dark winter's night. You decide to take the dog for a walk before you go to bed. As you step out of the door you glance into the sky, and there, gliding silently towards a nearby copse, you see a glowing disc of white light. You stare in amazement as it disappears from sight, and now your name has become one more statistic in the lists of UFO witnesses. You have just seen a flying saucer!

What would you do when you went back indoors? You might tell your family and receive looks of disbelief in return. You might telephone the police and hear a rather bored duty officer ask basic details before he files and forgets them. So you then try the local airport. They tell you no aircraft were in the area at the time and suggest that you saw a star! You just cannot believe that nobody wants to hear about the flight through our airspace of this wonderful object.

By now you are no doubt pretty frustrated. In desperation you may well call your local newspaper, in the hope that someone else has seen and reported the same thing. The next evening they carry a short story, "Mr Smith sees a spaceship from Mars", and your sighting is now known to every household in the town. Workmates crack jokes behind your back. People's opinions of you are never quite the same again. You are now someone who sees things!

You will now be wishing quite definitely that you had never seen this wretched flying saucer, and you will be quite adamant that if you ever see one again you will not tell a living soul about it.

Although you might believe that we are exaggerating here you would be wrong. This story is repeated, with but minor changes in detail, thousands of times each year. It happens in every country of the world. Mostly, what people report as a UFO is no more spectacular than in this example, and

often there is a simple explanation. Yet just imagine what would happen if something much stranger took place. Perhaps the UFO lands and a figure gets out and speaks to you. In such circumstances what do you do? Would you risk your job or reputation to tell of this encounter? You will be only too aware of the reactions you will experience from all quarters—and yet you know it really happened and you feel duty bound to tell somebody. But who?

This is where the UFO enigma begins. It is an incredibly complex subject. Why do people believe or disbelieve? What do people see? What are UFOs? Where do they come from? We have searched for answers to questions like these since 1947 when 'flying saucer' became a household phrase. We seem to be little nearer the truth.

In this book we shall look at the UFO phenomenon in all its aspects. We shall firstly consider its deep-rooted effects on society, from those whose lives revolve around it to those who are bitterly opposed to the very existence of UFOs. Then we shall examine step by step the kinds of thing that people report. We shall build up systematically from the innocuous light in the night-time sky to sightings of strange creatures seen beside a landed object which leaves traces on the ground. Witnesses being sent to hospital with mystery illnesses, trees and paintwork scorched by passing objects, car ignitions and lighting made inoperable by a hovering UFO—all these and more are part of the great mystery.

In the last section of the book we shall look at the work being done to tackle these problems. Some questions have been answered, others have not. Yet this work has led to theories about the origins of UFOs. We shall take a critical look at some of the more popular.

To conclude the book we shall present our own ideas about what the phenomenon represents. Our suggestions will be considered strange by some people. Even those within Ufology will find some hard to swallow. Yet we believe that they offer a very plausible solution to the riddles that confront us.

The material we shall be using will all relate to Britain, and much of it to the North and Midlands. We do this partly because we feel it wise to rely on information in which we were directly involved. The investigations reported on in these pages are almost exclusively ones where we have had first hand involvement. This is not because we disbelieve

other investigators, but simply that it is best to restrict the channels through which the data passes. The witnesses come from all walks of life; engineers to engine drivers, policemen to plumbers. Everyone seems to be a potential UFO witness —and the next one could be you!

We also present a book confined to one country because we wish to show that even these small islands mirror a pattern seen throughout the world. Something very strange is going on in every corner of the globe.

Perhaps you already believe in UFOs, but do not know what they might be. In that case we hope to give some reasoned suggestions. Maybe you are firmly convinced that we are being visited by beings from another planet. Maybe we can make you think twice about that. However, maybe you feel it is all nonsense, the product of nothing more than a fertile imagination. All we ask is that you keep an open mind. Whether real, imaginary or a mixture of both there is a mystery here to be solved. The crucial question is what that mystery is all about.

1

UFOs in Perspective

“The easiest way to solve a problem is to pretend it doesn't exist”—Isaac Asimov in *The Gods Themselves*

Unidentified flying objects (or UFOs) are still known much more popularly as ‘flying saucers’. This is a phrase which entered our vocabulary by sheer accident, following one of the earliest well documented sightings. It was not in fact coined by the witness himself, businessman Kenneth Arnold, but by the media who seized upon the dramatic description of the objects he had seen to come up with a catch phrase destined to capture the imagination of millions. However, when viewed as a descriptive term it is most misleading.

By no means a majority of objects which are reported turn out to be saucer shaped, and even the term ‘UFO’ is not significantly better. The reported incident need not involve anything which can be said to fly in any real sense, and in addition we have the problem that ‘unidentified’ is a relative statement. Something which is unidentified by an inexperienced observer may be completely explicable to someone well versed in conventional phenomena.

We ought really to redefine our terms and speak of a UAP (unidentifiable atmospheric phenomenon). Unidentifiable implies that no observer will be able to explain it, and by referring to atmospheric phenomena we can account for all manner of observations of objects in the air or on the ground of apparently external origin. It will no doubt be argued by some that this leans too heavily away from the artificial origin that ‘UFO’ suggests. Surely this is preferable to a heavy bias towards such an unfounded claim. After all an aircraft can be said to be an atmospheric phenomenon, whereas some kind of static meteorological effect cannot by any scientifically rigid definition, be called an unidentified

flying object. Since we are by no means certain what the UFO phenomenon is this is an important point.

Although such a change in terminology must come about if we are to see the subject of Ufology become scientifically acceptable, UAP will not immediately replace UFO because the latter is far too engrained into our consciousness to be so easily removed. We must, therefore, try to base more rigid definitions upon this term.

A report received for investigation will be classed as a UFO report at the outset. "UFO report" should be used *only* for an initial, pre-investigation phenomenon. Subsequent work may well find a solution which is *more probable* than an undefined new phenomenon. Even if a conclusive identification is not made the report should then become an *identifiable* flying object (or IFO). A report which defies identification but does not completely exclude one or more naturally explicable event should remain a UFO, until such time as it becomes an IFO, by addition of new data, or conversely the explicable phenomena become implausible. Any report which has considerably more probability of being a *new* type of phenomenon (i.e. which requires a large amount of improbable alteration to the data to fit one previously known) should be termed a *true* UFO.

All of this is not as pointless as it might seem. *True* UFOs *do* exist, in some abundance, and the combined probability of these shows that a phenomenon of a revolutionary nature is required to explain them. Obviously it is a cornerstone of any claim to the existence of UFOs that this be proven. The burden of proof rests with those who are fighting *for* a new concept, and not those who are fighting against. Because of this rigid definition it can quite readily be accepted that *true* UFOs exist. If this is *not* accepted then one is arguing that every kind of atmospheric phenomenon has been observed and understood. This is clearly a ridiculous proposition.

Only as recently as the nineteenth century the existence of meteorites was finally proven. Scientists had long argued that the peculiar rocks which had fallen to earth as balls of fire could not possibly have come from the sky because there were no rocks in the sky. Even within the second half of the twentieth century we have come to realise that mysterious electrical effects called 'ball lightning' actually exist. They have been reported, and ignored, for centuries. Now they have been photographed and analysed, although we are still

a long way from understanding their nature. There is little doubt that these floating tubes and spheres are the cause of some modern UFO reports. Surely we are not so convinced of our own abilities that we believe that we know everything. Quite clearly *true* UFOs exist, and new phenomena await discovery. Consequently it is meaningless for anyone to argue that the study of 'Ufology' cannot be scientific.

Almost certainly any object seen by primitive man which he could not immediately identify as a bird or something understood would have been a *true* UFO. Examination of these reports led to advancements in scientific knowledge and astronomy and meteorology developed solely because of the study of primitive Ufology. This is a sobering thought, because it not only indicates that we might expect to make progress by looking at current *true* UFO reports, but it also shows that many will eventually prove to represent phenomena which will one day be accepted as naturally as the sun and moon.

It would appear that reports relating to *true* UFOs go back as far as the earliest written records permit. Such records are almost non-existent from earlier than a few thousand years ago but there is ample indication that people were seeing *true* UFOs. Fifteen thousand years ago man painted pictures of animals on the walls of his caves. Amidst these pictures are images which can only be viewed in context with typical UFO reports, including the archetypal flying saucer.¹ We should not place any great stress on these drawings, as we know so little about the conditions under which they were created, but it is equally hard to ignore them as chance similarity in shape or design (see Fig. 1).

Many recent books about UFOs have relied heavily on the Bible, and other sacred texts, to prove that the phenomenon existed long ago. It is true that some passages include references which are of great interest. There would appear to be a possibility that some of these are attempts by writers desperately trying to allude to unknown phenomena using inadequate terms of reference. However, all too often one is tempted to read too much into the linguistic terms in the light of what we now know. Much has been made of Ezekiel's description of a whirlwind coming down from the sky.² Many now see this as relating to exhaust jets from a landing UFO. However, whirlwinds *do* come down from the sky, and so do a lot of other things of quite natural origin.

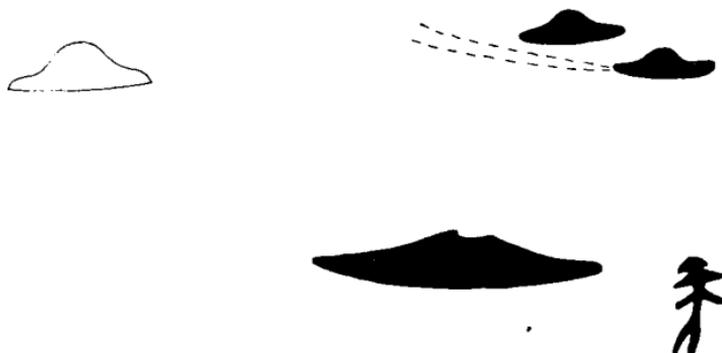


Fig. 1 Typical drawings on the walls of Central European caves painted about 12,000 BC (after Aimé Michel and Gordon Creighton of *Flying Saucer Review*)

Consider the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.³ The Biblical version tells of an external force (God) completely decimating the cities and reducing one of the onlookers to a pile of salt by some supernatural means. As we develop our understanding of the world we can put our own interpretation on these events. Formerly we might suggest the destruction be due to a mighty earthquake, but in 1945 the world became faced with the awesome result of an atomic explosion and it is hard not to equate Hiroshima and Nagasaki with the two Biblical cities. This would even go part way towards explaining the 'pillar of salt' transformation which we might relate to radio-active ash. We are still not absolutely in agreement with the facts as presented in the original story but the likelihood is that some technological development in the future will provide us with an even more appropriate solution. This shows, of course, that it would be quite foolish to put too much credence on our current theories. After all the whole thing could simply be a cleverly contrived tale which illustrates a religious or ethical problem. It may have no basis in fact at all.

Although there is some possibility that Ufology may have references in these ancient texts it is obvious that we must be wary of reading into them things which were not intended by the original writers.

However, there are written texts which go back nearly as far (e.g. to classical Rome) which have descriptions of unusual sky phenomena in them. These we can be reasonably sure do relate to real events. It is most interesting to note that the objects seen are described as 'flying shields',

'fiery daggers' or by other phrases which are relevant to the historical period in question.

Tapestries from medieval Europe depict scenes with townsfolk looking up at tubes and spheres in the sky. There are accompanying written records which make it hard to think of these as scenes of anything other than a *true* UFO report. In his book *The Dragon and the Disc* F. W. Holliday makes reference to the relation between the UFO shape and religion throughout history.

It does not appear in doubt that UFO events have occurred regularly in the past. Just how regularly it may never be possible to determine, because communication systems were so poor until the eighteenth century that many events were simply forgotten and a large number never even recorded. It is, of course, possible that they never occurred, but research of early publications from astronomical and philosophical societies reveals much material. It seems that either the phenomenon began to manifest in abundance exactly at the time when our communication systems allowed news to travel fast enough to be collated and published, or that it has been manifesting much longer, perhaps always, and we have simply missed the significance. This could prove a vital point in our understanding of what the phenomenon is.

By the nineteenth century regular newspapers were printed, fast travel between points some distance apart existed, and it was at this stage that the conditions first combined to create a UFO *wave*. This is an occurrence which happens to this day, when localised it is called a *flap*. Basically it is just a series of reports which group together in space and time. The late nineteenth-century wave was almost certainly not the first to occur, but it was the first to be recognised as such at the time of its occurrence. It is only in recent years that it has been fully documented.⁴

It has become known as the Airship Wave, and was centred upon the farmlands and hill countries of America. In 1897 many people reported what were apparently mechanical devices, with attributes similar to modern day UFOs. It is important to note once again that the phenomenon was interpreted in terms of the technology of the times. Airships were just being built, although none was able to perform the activities described. Neither were there enough of them about for several to appear in various parts

of the USA on the same day. More important than this, the phenomenon actively *encouraged* the interpretation in these terms, by both looking like airships and producing mysterious 'inventors' who claimed responsibility and then vanished off the face of the earth.

Airship Waves occurred elsewhere in early parts of the twentieth century, including a large group of sightings in Britain in 1908. They were followed by reports of unusual aircraft in the 1930s⁵ and the 'foo' fighters during the Second World War. These mystery lights which paced aircraft were attributed by each side to one another, but belonged to neither. In retrospect it appears that all these events may be related to the UFO phenomenon.

One further incident may, or may not, have anything to do with UFOs. It does have interesting parallels. It has become known as the Miracle of Fatima, and is accepted as such by the Catholic Church.

It concerns the visions of two village children over a period of some months during 1917. A being in white, called the Virgin Mary, appeared to them and eventually promised a miracle. On the date in question, October 13th, people gathered from all over Portugal. Early morning rain cleared away as the time approached and many thousands of witnesses claimed to see the subsequent event. Some said that the sun itself came down from the sky, flew around, and then disappeared. Piecing their stories together it seems that a silvery sphere (which was photographed) had performed these motions. To us it does appear to be an example of a UFO sighting, and indeed as we shall see has interesting connections with the modern experiences related by 'contactees', or people who claim to have met and talked to 'space beings'. However, the phenomenon again appeared in a very different form and was accepted into a context socially relevant to those who perceived it.

On June 24th 1947 the phenomenon became a household name when private pilot Kenneth Arnold, flying over Washington State in the USA, saw and reported to the Press a formation of disc-like objects. It was not, in fact, the first UFO sighting to be reported, nor was it the first of the particular wave which manifested at that time.⁶ It heralded a flurry of reporting which has never subsided, largely because it became clear that the subject was one which had public interest and was therefore good media material.

There is no intention of attempting to catalogue even the major events which have occurred since that time because this would fill several books. Many of the more recent British cases will be referred to later in the text. For foreign material there are many excellent sources in the bibliography, and past issues of *FSR* (*Flying Saucer Review*) will be found of great value in this respect. The reason for presenting this very brief historical review was to put the phenomenon into its correct perspective. The modern phase is but one part of a continuing story.

At this point you are simply asked to accept that a phenomenon exists. Even if this phenomenon is completely physical, or has subtle psychological overtones then it exists, and we as human beings react to it in differing ways. In a sense this reaction is as intriguing as the enigma itself. It varies from the wild exuberance of the cultist to the stolid scepticism of many of the world's scientists. In between these extremes lie the much maligned and misunderstood people—the UFO enthusiasts. We will take a look at these varied reactions in the next chapter.

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Society and the UFO

“The greater the education, the higher the proportion that indicated they have heard of flying saucers, who think that they are real rather than the product of imagination and who believe that there are people somewhat like ourselves living on other planets”

—Report by Aldora Lee in statistical sociological study of the Colorado University project sponsored by the US Government and headed by Dr Edward Condon

There have been numerous public opinion surveys conducted with a view to testing the response of a wide cross-section of the populace to the UFO mystery. The results of these have been quite consistent, but sadly such surveys have often been conducted in a biased manner. Questions are framed so that the answers presuppose that UFOs, if existing, must be spaceships from some distant planet. So the results do not gauge people's general awareness of an unknown phenomenon, but more realistically their belief in 'little green men'. It is clear that there is a widespread interest in the phenomenon. This must be due in part to the unjustified assumption that all *true* UFOs must be spacecraft, but it means that the majority of the public *believe* in UFOs.

This situation produces several side-effects. For example, it means that some people are extremely ready to believe that anything which they see in the sky, not immediately explicable to them, is a UFO (in the sense that they understand the word). Many people find it very hard to accept that even ordinary aircraft can look peculiar under certain circumstances. More to the point such people simply do not want to believe it. They prefer to be able to say that

they have 'seen a UFO' because this has a certain manner of drawing attention towards them, and whether we consciously realise it or not we want to be noticed by others. Of course, there is the other side of this situation where witnesses struggle desperately to find a rational explanation, often far beyond what would normally be expected. These people simply have to explain their sighting in some kind of known manner.

Even the most highly trained observers fall prey to quirks of the psychological impulse. There is a famous instance of a policeman at Aldridge in Staffordshire. In August 1971, he became highly excited after seeing a glowing orange light. While maintaining his rationality he was able to photograph it, convinced that he was in fact witness to a UFO event. Sad to say that it was later shown that what he had in fact seen was the planet Mars, which happened to be particularly bright at that time. This does not mean that the policeman concerned was a fool, simply a human being. If you go out on any clear night and stare at the sky for long enough you will quickly find yourself believing that some of the stars are in fact roaming about the sky. Tricks of the eyesight and basic human psychology combine to produce 'flying saucers' from all manner of normally identifiable sources.

This general climate of belief has another result, when human nature is preyed upon by certain individuals for their own ends. Largely this is done by the media who sensationalise what are often very ordinary events, but the cultists have a part to play in reaching the believer inside of us all.

So we appear to have a need for the existence of the UFO phenomenon. It would seem that even the hardened sceptics, who claim that there is nothing to the subject at all, react with a hostility that would appear to outweigh rejection based purely upon logical reasoning. If such things as UFOs, or the Loch Ness Monster, did not exist as a possibility then the world would be a dull place to live in. People simply love to report that they have seen a UFO, and so these sightings flood in. Does it really matter that 90 per cent are *not true* UFOs? The existence of a phenomenon is proven by the degree of reaction encountered.

From out of this background come the multiplicity of 'ufologists', a term applied to all those who study the subject. This takes in the cultist, the serious amateur and the scientist alike. Each of these groups would probably dis-

agree with this statement with some measure of hostility, but it is true nevertheless. Each employs the phenomenon in some way.

The cultist refers to that group of people which believes in the existence of UFOs (undefined) to such a degree that it becomes a kind of religion. Usually this automatically implies a connection between the phenomenon and 'space brothers', coming to rescue our world from moral destruction. They blend quite naturally into the fanatic, who perhaps does not go to the extent of building a religious construct around his belief but certainly has extreme and unshakable viewpoints on the nature and origin of the phenomenon.

It is only natural that there be individuals who express themselves in this manner. Some are no doubt mentally unbalanced, but many are highly coherent and rational in their beliefs. Again this shows the dramatic impact that the problem can have on the human conscience, and a few ufologists have had mental breakdowns which might be at least partly attributable to their involvement in the field.

As an example of how the phenomenon can have deep rooted effects is a type of which we have experience. Such a person is very convincing with his arguments that what we are experiencing as UFOs is but the fulfilment of Biblical prophecies about the Apocalypse. The manner in which he does this typifies the cultist psychology. One can sense the intensity of emotion as he thumps his Bible onto the table during the course of a lecture. Such people are not isolated instances. There are many of this type of cultist in the world of Ufology, as there are in other fields on the threshold of human knowledge. The chief danger is that they are too often taken as being representative of the subject. A psychologist may see within them the basic reason why everyone else is involved in the study of the phenomenon, whereas this is certainly not the case. There are considerable differences in temperament and methods of working between individuals such as these and the serious ufologist.

Cultists frequently gather themselves into groups, organised around a pseudo-religious theme. For example, the Aetherius Society has an enormous support throughout the world, probably because of the basic appeal of its ideals. Its leader has a very charismatic image that instills belief in telepathic communication with space beings. However, the

whole thing is taken way beyond this simple premise, and the Warrington branch of the society became the first in Britain to be recognised as a church and given permission to perform marriages!

At this juncture it would be wise to briefly consider the position of the 'contactee'. This is a word applied to someone who claims to have conversed with UFO entities. It raises an extremely difficult problem, which we shall look at more closely later. However, there is a specific type of contactee who quite clearly must be regarded as a cultist or fanatic. This is the person who receives a message which convinces him that he must convert the world to his new-found beliefs. He does this by giving lectures, writing books and in the process quite often making money. He may or may not have had a genuine experience in the first place, but he is quite obviously using this to his own ends.

Some of these people are nothing more than charlatans, who confuse the already confused public and who are a nuisance to serious investigators. Once their stories were gobbled up by the media who delighted in publishing every tale, no matter how silly, but this has fortunately subsided somewhat and we do not hear of so many contactees nowadays. However, the phenomenon has not disappeared and American researcher John Keel has spoken of the 'silent contactee'. These seem to exist in large numbers, although we may never be able to determine their true size because most are so frightened of ridicule that they do not come forward. 'Silent contactees' do not try to make an issue out of their experience and their stories are examined by serious ufologists.

In addition to all of this there are a few of the cultist groups who like to call themselves UFO investigators (although most do not bother since they have no need to collect evidence—they already know all of the secrets of the UFO!). These 'investigators' descend upon a witness and fill him with stories about spacemen here to save our world and offload huge quantities of literature. It has been our experience that most witnesses find this both frustrating and annoying. They have simply had a strange experience and wanted to report it to someone to seriously investigate it. Consequently, it sometimes happens that when a serious investigator arrives after one of these groups he might find the door slammed quickly in his face!

Another mysterious individual that is a part of the UFO mythology is the Men in Black (or MIB). Most claims of this nature come from America where it is said investigators or witnesses who have got too close to the truth are approached by strangers in dark cars telling them to cease all investigation or interest. Threats are supposed to be issued. Descriptions have been fairly consistent and include black suits and olive-coloured skins. The rumours that circulate within Ufology are that these are either government agents suppressing information or the aliens themselves in another of their disguises.

Obviously, it is no easy matter discovering objective evidence for MIBs. By its very nature, if it exists, witnesses to it will be none too keen to come forward. We have been involved in one case where a witness to a low definition UFO of no significance alleged that two men in a Jaguar car watched his home for several days. When the police were called in they watched the mysterious car and then were ordered to apprehend its occupants. As the two police officers approached it to do so car and occupants vanished into thin air! This is the story, and it has proved impossible to verify other than by getting statements from the policemen.

Of course the reason why the only such case we should discover was related to the sighting of an unimportant light is impossible to tell. This is the infuriating thing about the whole affair. There is such a selectivity in who seems to be approached. So many successful researchers and highly important witnesses never experience anything of this kind that one is tempted to dismiss the whole matter as the product of over-imaginative minds, or of the escapades of extreme cultist ufologists. Yet can we dismiss all of the evidence, tiny as it may be?

Much of this kind of activity could be the product of a gigantic hoax, perpetrated by people who have a mind to do so. In Europe some years ago a vast circulation of technical material, supposedly transcribed by inhabitants of the planet Ummo, was transmitted by normal postal communication means to leading researchers. It seems that this may well have been a large-scale hoax.

In Britain a similar situation has arisen (although it is not yet known if the affair is a hoax or has a real basis). Many ufologists have been contacted by an agency calling itself

APEN (Aerial Phenomenon Enquiry Network) who operate under strict security and refuse to divulge addresses (except to their agents). Occasionally more elaborate dispatches are sent. Message tapes, highly dramatised with German war marches, have been distributed. The basic theme seems to be 'Beware—UFOs can be hostile!' There also exists an APEN report on a landing case in North Wales appealing for the expensive dispatch of equipment and personnel to the location. Apparently the 'aliens' told the witness to contact APEN only and gave their ex-directory phone number to him. There is no proof that any of this is more than the product of some people's minds, enjoying a good laugh at the expense of UFO researchers. On the other hand it may be that APEN is a serious organisation who believe that their methodology is the correct one. Whatever the truth they form another part of the crazy world of UFOs.¹

Amidst all of this frantic emotional involvement, so typical of the cultist, lies almost unnoticed the serious UFO investigators and researchers. They conduct their work quietly, but suffer because of the misleading impressions created by their extremist colleagues.

Even within the ranks of what could be termed 'serious' ufologists there is a great diversity of involvement. To a large extent this diversity is due to the wide-ranging viewpoints about what UFOs are, a particular individual or group may have. This is particularly so when this view is the extraterrestrial hypothesis (usually shortened to ETH) or the opinion that UFOs are spacecraft from another world. Such opinions, if firmly held, do tend to colour the work and a bias inevitably creeps in. Facts are twisted to fit in with this theory, or if they cannot be made to fit ignored altogether.

Of course, it would be unfair to paint such a black picture in general. There are those who realise that the only method of achieving results is to maintain an open-minded approach. One is bound to have forthright views in a subject such as Ufology, but it is vital that these be kept in proportion and that investigations be done objectively without presupposing any explanation.

Serious researchers are unlikely to band together in large groups. Often they work in small teams, sometimes even alone, to collect the data, discuss it and attempt to fit

together the pieces of the great jigsaw puzzle that confronts us. Larger UFO organisations of a serious nature do exist, of course. The pattern that they present is almost as complex and as interesting as the phenomenon they purport to study. They flare bravely into existence, in a flurry of local publicity, and then die away once it is found that support is not forthcoming and that too much has to be done by too few. Alternatively, their founders get bored with Ufology, which can be both mentally and physically taxing, and move on to something else which is easier to cope with, or preferably run by somebody else. The majority of UFO groups exist to fulfil a need within society. Some people need an outlet which can not only be briefly amusing and fascinating, but also serves to promote their ego by bringing them into the public eye in some way. It is certainly easy to gain publicity if one becomes a ufologist.

It is possible, therefore, to recognise a distinction between the hobbyist group and the scientific one. The latter are dedicated towards finding out what the subject is all about, no matter where the answer lies, but they are greatly outnumbered by the former.

It has been said that there is a gestation period for every UFO group. If it survives this it must make the transition from being purely hobbyist to having a scientific approach. This is only true in a general sense. There have been groups who have immediately established themselves as scientific and there have been hobbyist ones who have clung to life for a number of years. What is certainly true is that if a group has no scientific basis it will eventually fade away for the reasons given above or because they fail to achieve anything. They have no purpose upon which to build a future. Sadly, some reach this transition point and fail to choose. They try to take a medium road, maintaining interest for many members whilst at the same time trying to do serious work. This does not succeed because there is too wide a difference between various types of ufologist and their motives. Such groups stagnate, often perpetuating their existence for the sake of it, whilst their more dynamic personnel lose faith and branch out on their own. The outcome is a situation where in some areas there are almost as many UFO groups as ufologists to join them.

How do these distinctive types of UFO group operate? Hobbyists thrive on publicity. They love to attract new

members to have someone to talk to and to become the biggest (often erroneously equated with the best). They hold many public meetings and produce a 'magazine' full of peripherally related material. They see it as part of their duty to 'educate' the populace about the truth behind UFOs (their brand of truth of course). They maintain their own existence quite happily for a time and attract many reports because of their public contacts, but their standards of investigation are often very poor. When investigated their data ends up in a drawer in someone's living-room, gathers dust and eventually is lost. Such groups make little positive contribution to Ufology, except by providing a channel to attract normal public interest away from the serious ufologists. They do also sometimes turn up a significant case. The scientifically orientated groups are very different. They do not openly attract publicity, partly because they recognise its dubious advantages and partly because they are not of so much interest. Serious Ufology is of much less interest to the media than a group which proclaims that it is in contact with Martians. *That* is what sells newspapers. Open meetings and open membership are often avoided. It is usually realised that membership of a serious group needs to be on a selective basis of some kind. Most people who would want to join a UFO group would only be passively involved. To make positive progress only those willing to work for the aims of the group are allowed to join.

Britain has of course representatives of all types of group, with differing ideals, theories and motivations. The actual total is impossible to determine because they come and go so rapidly. Few stand the test of time.

The longest standing national group is BUFORA, the British UFO Research Association. This was formed from an amalgamation of several local groups in 1962 (one constituent, the British Flying Saucer Bureau, dating back to the earliest days of Ufology). There is a definite bias in membership towards southern England, which inevitably leads to communication problems. Meetings are only held regularly in London, thus isolating regional members. Their chief benefit is through the bi-monthly *BUFORA Journal*, which is excellently edited by Norman Oliver and has a good level of content. It maintains a membership which varies between 600 and 1000.

BUFORA do conduct investigations on a regional basis, employing what they call Regional Investigation Co-ordinators. They supervise work in a fairly large area and help overcome some of the problems, but standards still vary enormously. In 1976 there was some effort to remedy this situation with the publication of a basic handbook *UFO Investigation*.² This provides a very useful guide to all those who might be interested in field investigations of UFO sightings, but have had little experience.

BUFORA is not a hobbyist group, but although it can count a number of scientists amongst its membership it is not truly scientific either. It is in the unfortunate midway position. From time to time it holds a conference, with some important research papers. Such events certainly try to make Ufology scientific. However, despite its problems BUFORA fulfils a useful purpose in Britain as a public interest and media relation outlet.

The other major national association is CONTACT (UK), the home branch of a world-wide organisation, originating in Britain. Overall membership is a little larger than that of BUFORA but it operates in a completely different manner. Members perform some basic investigation work, though by no means to the same extent as BUFORA. Their main work centres on a research headquarters in Oxford where reports from all over the world are collected onto a master file called "World Ufo Catalogue". They have some excellent publications, which keep the inactive membership contented, and have produced some valuable contributions in the form of report catalogues, listing world-wide sightings based upon specific attributes of the phenomenon. This enhances the centralisation of activity. CONTACT concentrates on this research, and does not regularly hold meetings or lectures. It is the standards of research for which it is highly respected.

To their credit, both BUFORA and CONTACT have pursued co-ordination programmes aimed at bringing the two organisations closer together. This is particularly true in the case of investigation, and it is obviously a major step forward which will undoubtedly facilitate the progress of Ufology in Britain.

It was because of this lack of regionalisation, and consequent isolation of the north from the scene that the idea emerged for an alliance between the various UFO factions

existent within that region. Hence, the Northern UFO Network (NUFON) came into being in the spring of 1974. NUFON was never intended to rival the national organisations, but to work with them helping to integrate the North more fully into the UFO system in Britain. Chiefly for this reason it maintained an air of informality, which proved a useful feature in its development.

The main function of NUFON is as a liaison medium. It is open to groups and independent researchers, and counts amongst its associates virtually all of those who are active within the region's ufology. The differing commitments between various types of ufologist was recognised and is catered for by there being two levels of involvement. This consists of association, for the more active participants, and affiliation for those only peripherally involved. Meetings are frequent and decisions made because they are seen to be to the common good. They are adhered to by trust. There are no rules or regulations, no membership to the network and the independence of all the contributors is a key factor in the concept.

Investigation standards vary, but it is policy not to dictate technique but to allow the possibility of improvement by working with others more experienced. This does appear to be working, and the NUFON files (available to all participants for reference) have built up into an important repository of data on investigation work within the region, and are housed in a building owned by the Nottingham area group, NUFOIS, associated with the network. NUFON co-ordinates the activity of researchers within the North, and works with the national, and ultimately international organisations so that a sense of integration is maintained. A monthly newsletter, *Northern UFO News*, is published to give up to the minute information on sighting report and investigation activity.

Involved in the amateur UFO structure are a large number of individuals, many through the medium of local UFO groups. However, the number of such groups which can be considered as being of some importance because of the work that they do is relatively small. Once again the hobbyists predominate.

Of course it must be realised that all such work is done by amateurs. Nobody is paid for doing UFO work in Britain. In the USA there are a very small number of individuals who

do look after UFO administration on a full-time basis, and it is easier to support oneself there as a 'professional' ufologist by writing articles for the several mass-market publications. Since this situation does not exist in Britain the scope is much more limited at the present time, although one or two people have found it possible to devote some of their working day to Ufology.

Such a situation is far from ideal. All of the organisations mentioned so far have a wide range of membership. This inevitably conjures up the image that Ufology is but a game to most, and this is indeed true in a majority of instances. This naturally has the effect of preventing the involvement of scientists from all disciplines who might have the knowledge to take our understanding further. Whilst the amateur has a definite role to play, it is a limited one, and he should constantly be striving towards greater respect for the subject. Only in this way will the needed assistance be forthcoming.

The organisations have tried to make the subject more scientifically respected, and in some ways have succeeded, but ultimate success will only come through specialisation and selectivity. With this in mind an idea was formulated to gather together the most experienced investigators and operate a UFO Investigators' Network. This small and informal team attempts to work to professional standards, producing detailed reports on a small number of selected cases. These cases are those of 'high strangeness' which offer hope of providing true additional knowledge. The network is linked with *Flying Saucer Review* which publishes all important cases and gives some financial support on investigation. Entrance into UFOIN is open but there are high standards of endeavour and commitment required. It is early days yet for the concept, but indications are that it will go a long way towards achieving recognition for Ufology. This can only come about by dedicated hard work and maintenance of its standards.

It has been commented by some that since the early days of our modern involvement with the subject we have gained but the barest understanding of what it is about. We believe it true to say that few people within the subject have approached it determined enough to extract knowledge from their investigations. Often they have preconceived ideas which they cannot allow to be altered by the evidence

confronting them. In order to understand this, and the consequent lack of progress, we must take a closer look at the internal workings of UFO groups themselves.

It is a sorry fact that most UFO groups do not employ methods which will yield valuable data. They tend to believe without question everything a witness says. Often they feel that the only thing that is of importance is what the witness says he saw, whereas in many instances it proves more important to know about the witnesses themselves. Groups also meander into less respectable areas of the subject, such as 'skywatching'. This peculiar pastime involves sitting on a hilltop hoping to see something that can be termed a 'UFO'. It can be shown fairly easily that since there is such a small percentage of *true* UFO observations every year then skywatching is at best a waste of time, and at worst a decided thorn in respectable researchers' sides because of the adverse publicity it invariably brings.

To be fair to skywatching it is not entirely useless. It can be beneficial to the inexperienced ufologist, to acquaint him with the natural sky phenomena which do exist. If one has never seen a fireball or a satellite then one is less likely to be able to tell when a witness is reporting one as a UFO. Nevertheless such familiarisation can be done relatively quickly and it is certainly pointless spending night after night on such a vigil, as some UFO groups do. It is of some interest to note that groups engaged on skywatching appear to report seeing UFOs far more often than one should really expect.

Investigation of a sighting is often done ineffectively. In some cases a group will happily file away any report which they receive as a *true* UFO, without the least effort to find out if there is a normal explanation. On the limited occasions that they do contact a witness no conception of the need to plan and structure the interview and subsequent investigation seems to exist.

The great problem is that UFO investigation is the province of anyone who wishes to do it. There are no qualifications in the subject, and experience is the only means of becoming proficient. However, most local groups, and the national associations as well, rely totally on their membership, whoever they may be, to do the investigation. This produces most unsatisfactory end results and very low standards in many instances. Despite some effort by

BUFORA, CONTACT and NUFON success in overcoming this problem has been limited.

The only answer to this was the development of the UFO Investigators' Network (UFOIN). The entrance requirement was the production of a technical report, in depth, on a significant case. However, UFOIN deals with only the very small percentage of those reports which offer more than marginal information. The vast majority are still in the hands of local UFO groups and inexperienced investigators. They are often not too particular about relationships with the mass media, who enjoy branding anyone as a crackpot if they have the slightest justification. It is more often than not better for the few serious investigators to steer away from publicity.

The serious local groups, and the national associations also to some extent, have contacts in the scientific disciplines who specialise in various fields which may be useful in giving guidance or judgement during a UFO investigation. Such people include psychologists, chemists and photographic experts. Often they have an interest in the phenomenon but are afraid to be publicly involved because of the climate which surrounds it. We hope that the day will soon come when they will be free to enter into research without this fear. A proposed new Research Centre in Britain—the BUDC (British UFO Documentation Centre)—is attempting to achieve this by appealing directly to scientists and avoiding too much involvement with UFO groups. As yet they lack the charisma of a leading scientific figure to stimulate interest, but if they find one they may provide a bridgehead.

At this stage it will be a useful illustration to look at a few specific cases and examine the methods of investigation which surround them. It should be stressed that only the serious organisations would even begin to investigate in this way. Many would not even consider it necessary and would have recorded all these events as true UFO phenomena.

In the first case specific details are not important. Suffice it to say that a middle-aged woman at Marple, Cheshire, had seen a green and red light cross the sky silently in an arc. When questioned as to whether she had seen lights behave in this manner before she pointed out that aircraft were seen during the daytime, but not in the same direction as these

lights appeared. It was reasonably clear from the outset that the lights were probably going to prove to be an aircraft. However, this needed confirmation. A brief telephone conversation with Air Traffic Control at Manchester Airport brought details of a flight probably responsible. The time of sighting agreed well with the position of the aircraft and an approximate course was plotted in relation to the witness. The area meteorological office provided details of the prevailing weather conditions, which showed good visibility and a strong wind blowing away from the direction of the witness. All of this information confirmed that this was a simple misidentification of an aircraft. The lack of noise was due to the wind carrying it away. The large apparent size of the lights was caused by the relatively short distance between the witness and the aircraft.

Our second example concerns a man who claimed that his car had been paced by a flashing object as he drove along a road on the outskirts of Manchester. Here all that was necessary was for the investigator to visit the site of the incident. Here was found the most probable cause, which was the car head lights shining on the 'Reflector' (a part of a television aerial on a rooftop). Without a visit to the scene this case would have remained unidentified, so it must be an important feature of any investigation.

Our final case involves a series of reports from the area surrounding Rochdale, Greater Manchester. All that was reported was a ball of fire floating gently through the air, but a number of witnesses reported the same thing at almost the same time for a number of consecutive nights.

At an early stage of the investigation it was discovered from the local fire brigade that a store of old tyres in a quarry nearby had caught fire two or three days before the reports began. Being unable to extinguish it, it had been left by them, under supervision, to burn itself out. Pockets of burning gas had been seen rising from the fire, and these could not be ruled out as an explanation for the sightings. On examination of the meteorological data it became clear that, although this could account for some cases it could not for others (seen moving against the wind). A single explanation for all the reports was still thought likely, and the search continued elsewhere.

The witness had been reasonably sure in some cases that what they had seen *was* on fire. A check with local police

revealed that someone had reported the find of a model hot-air balloon. Within a few days more were found. They were made from a large polythene bag with the neck held open by a piece of wire. Suspended from this was a rag soaked in inflammable liquid. The rag was set alight and the balloon released to drift on the wind. In fact a couple of these balloons came close to starting major fires when they fell to earth. Investigators co-operated with the police in attempts to find the release point, and this proved simple once the prevailing wind direction had been obtained. Thus was solved another puzzling set of UFO reports.

It is interesting to look at some of the subtle points involved in the investigation of a case. Trevor Whitaker has covered much of the ground of investigation procedure³, but of paramount importance is the interview with the witness.

In the main a witness to a UFO event has experienced a puzzling and enigmatic incident, and in some cases may have been frightened by it. The technique of handling an interview is therefore vital. A successful method is to ask the witness to talk themselves through the incident, describing as many of the details as they consider important in as much depth as they wish. In doing so the investigator will be able to grasp the main points of the story, and equally importantly will gain some idea of the ones which the witness considers most significant. Some people have great difficulty in describing what they have witnessed, and will not be satisfied until they have related the story in a way which meets with their approval.

It is only after this introduction should an investigator press points and seek more elaborate descriptions of any uncertain parts of the testimony. The use of a tape recorder from this point onwards can be a great advantage. It is not usually wise to introduce this at the very beginning of an interview, unless one is satisfied with the attitude of the witness. There could otherwise be a marked tendency to 'play to the microphone', though many people are naturally inhibited when the thought of having to speak into one is presented to them.

A useful technique can be employed when the investigator is reasonably familiar with the chronology and basic details of the incident. This is to allow the conversation to drift away from the event altogether, and then without warning bring

the witness straight back onto the topic with a question which requires a specific answer. The manner in which the witness responds is often a good pointer to the validity of the testimony. Another method which often proves successful is for one investigator to introduce minor inconsistencies into the details of the incident. This can be an error of detail which conflicts with the witness's statement. An attentive witness will notice the slightest error. If a second investigator is present he can illuminate the point if the witness does not see the error, by querying the discrepancy. He should then be ready to act upon the response of the witness.

The procedure outlined mirrors that conducted in a court of law in several instances. Here, the natural confusion surrounding the observation of an incident is overcome by careful questioning and it may pay all UFO investigators to visit the public gallery of their crown court should an opportunity arise.

As will be seen from some of these ideas it is preferable in an interview situation to have two investigators present. This is not simply so that one may take the notes whilst the other talks, but to provide room for the subtleties mentioned above and also to keep a watch on the facial reactions of the witness to certain questions. It is possible for two investigators to build a partnership which will prove its value over the course of the years.

Observational skill, unless one has been specially trained, is not pronounced in many people. Many experiments have been conducted which show that if an accident is staged in front of a large number of people without their knowing it will happen then subsequent questioning will provide great inconsistencies in what they claimed to have witnessed. The physical condition of the observer, the environment or surroundings and the degree of concern an individual shows in a certain situation all effect to what extent detail is perceived. Ulric Neisser, of Cornell University, sums this up by pointing out that, "neither perception nor memory is a copying process".

It is often found that details of size and position are frequently exaggerated in cases where identification in terms of natural events later proves possible. Time estimates, contrary to the findings of some studies into eye-witness testimony, appear reasonably accurate. However, this is usually only true when the duration is in the order of several

minutes. Shorter duration sightings can be claimed to last for much longer than they do in reality.

It must never be forgotten, although it often is, that a witness will have a natural tendency to 'clean up' the details of his testimony. With the passage of time he will make his story more logical and order all of the facts so that they do not appear so inconsistent to him. He may well add spurious details which in fact were not perceived. It is very important, therefore, that in all investigation the witness be asked to write down details of the incident as soon as possible after the event, and if an interview is not possible within a matter of hours or at the most days, then failure to do this will make the evidence considerably less valuable than it might otherwise be. It is quite true to say that the most important report is the one that is happening now. One that happened last week is probably as important as one which happened last year.

During an interview this addition of detail or unconscious alteration of major facts can be stimulated if an investigator shows the slightest favourable reaction to a particular part of the testimony. For example if a witness mentions that he felt 'funny' at the time, and the investigator immediately picks up on this and asks if he had a pain over his eye (because the investigator has heard that this occurs in similar such cases) then the witness may well say that he did have such a pain because he unconsciously realises that this is what is expected. Again an investigator should never suggest to a witness that the object was such a shape or another, the witness may feel obliged to agree even if there is significant difference between what he thought the object looked like and what he is being asked to confirm. The investigator is indicating that UFOs are a certain shape. The witness feels he saw a UFO, and therefore he may decide that it was that shape after all.

In cases where tremendous publicity is given to a sighting other witnesses may jump on to the bandwagon and claim to have seen the same thing, whereas they really saw something which at the time they did not think twice about and which was more than likely not related to the publicised event at all. Indeed they may well 'forget' that their sighting occurred the day before or after the other one, reporting it as occurring on the same day because they are sure that they saw 'that UFO'.

Investigators working in the subject are strongly recom-

mended to study any of the numerous books and papers on Visual Perception. One of particular value is produced by Buckhout.⁴

In general all of the emphasis of the groups has been on objective reporting of the UFO event. Investigators appear to place little credence on the subjective aspects of the experience, such as personal circumstances of the witness or his emotive state at the time of the incident. It is this lack of documentation of less tangible factors which has kept us at some distance from finding the answer to the most puzzling sides of the phenomenon. Investigators should not ignore such subjective detail, and examine more closely the background of the witnesses. They are usually the only thing that we have to study. The UFO itself cannot be investigated and witness reports of it depend just as much on themselves as human beings as they do upon the objective stimulus which may or may not have been present in the first place. This is particularly true in the close encounter cases, because here the witness is affected by the presence of the UFO. We need to know why these effects happen and how.

A part of society which finds itself heavily involved in the fact and fantasy of UFO lore is the mass media. The overriding factor so far as they are concerned is that UFOs are *interesting*. It often does not matter whether fact and fantasy become intertwined, so long as the story is appealing to the prospective audience. Ufology is not often considered serious news material, but rather an amusing sideline. Consequently, with the occasional exception, a light-hearted approach is used.

Fortunately, the days when the phenomenon regularly made front-page headlines in the national press are long since gone. In the early days of the late forties and early fifties one could frequently read about the latest sighting, and this did leave an open door for people to perpetuate hoaxes in order to enjoy the subsequent publicity. This element has been considerably reduced now that UFOs have become commonplace.

It is somewhat rare nowadays for a major story to be devoted to a sighting. A sensationalised event from abroad, such as the alleged abduction of Arizona forestry worker Travis Walton in November 1975 did, however, achieve this.⁵ More recently the encounter of Mrs Joyce Bowles and

Mr Ted Pratt near Winchester (where they claim to have met a bearded entity by the side of the landed craft), found its way into a large number of newspapers, both local and national.

There was considerable media publicity surrounding the arrival of the film *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* in Britain during spring 1978. This resulted in quite serious interest by both the *Daily Express* and the *Sun* newspapers, but it is to be expected that this will have proved to be only a temporary phase.

Local newspapers tend to be much more interested in UFO reports, as they are newsworthy events within a small community, and no doubt help to generate interest in the paper. Such reports vary from the insubstantial light in the sky, to an apparently more spectacular event. Of course many more sightings occur than are ever reported in the newspaper pages, but it is still a vital source of raw data for the investigator.

The amount of information contained in a press report varies quite considerably and the investigator has to be careful not to allow this account to interfere with what he discovers at a subsequent interview with the witnesses. The reporters from the paper are not over concerned with the details of what happened, and will not worry unduly about factual correctness. Often they will emphasise a minor point and omit entirely something which they do not find of interest, although it could be of very real significance to the UFO event.

As an example of this, the *Bolton Evening News* carried stories on January 24th and 27th, 1976 about sightings in that town. One of these was given but a brief mention, and the other was treated in some depth. In fact it eventually turned out that the former was quite possibly a *true* UFO event, whereas the more highly publicised one was probably the misinterpretation of a common astronomical phenomenon. The first story also proved to have physiological effects on the witness, which were not even mentioned in the newspaper article.

A newspaper, by definition, must print news, and a vital ingredient of anything which is printed is that it must have human interest. This means that the strict scientific aspects of the phenomenon are not of great importance to the media, whereas the more sensationalised ones are. Sadly

this is often taken to the extreme where there is such a bias towards the cultist and fanatic elements, that any reader who was unacquainted with the subject would believe that everyone involved was of a similar outlook.

Consider a series of articles featured in one of Britain's leading provincial newspapers, the *Manchester Evening News*. This series ran for several weeks during November and December 1975, and purported to be looking at the 'people who believe in UFOs'. It began on November 15th, with a general introduction to the subject, based almost entirely on the theory that UFOs were interplanetary vehicles of some kind. It attempted to show how unlikely this was by describing in very loose terms the distances involved and the inadequacies of our current physical theories. It may have convinced one or two of those who knew next to nothing about astronomy but it was so poorly researched and full of factual errors that all it succeeded in proving was the inability of the writer.

By the side of this piece there was a short column about the 'serious' side of the UFO investigation. This stemmed largely from a three-hour discussion with members of the Manchester UFO Research Association, and a subsequent visit to a meeting held in conjunction with another local UFO group, the Direct Investigation Group on Aerial Phenomenon. This meeting was specifically organised to show how groups can work together within a small region, but it was of course termed a 'meeting of rival groups' in the newspaper article. It was perhaps to the credit of these groups that all of this interview time produced just a few lines. One can only assume that there was not enough sensationalism to warrant inclusion. Even so, by twisting the facts very subtly the best possible effort to manufacture it was made.

The series went on to cover a paranoiac clergyman, with views about UFOs and prophecy, a middle-aged woman claiming telepathic contact with Martians and other extreme individuals. Needless to say these articles did little for the credibility of the subject. Ufologists do not *need* the publicity, and this type is considerably worse than none at all.

Fortunately the phenomenon is not always treated in such a banal manner by journalism. There are many reporters with whom the ufologist can strike up a happy relationship. They are always willing to pass on sighting details reported

to them in the hope that the investigators will return the favour should the case prove of interest. They will also assist by carrying a short story appealing on behalf of the investigators for more witnesses to come forward in the event of an important sighting.

An example of this occurred when the *Swinton and Pendlebury Journal*, a local newspaper in Greater Manchester, featured a sighting in December 1975. When it became clear to investigators that other witnesses should be forthcoming the reporter concerned, who was working with the investigators on the case, produced a factually written account which did indeed bring results. This turned an interesting event into an important case.

Magazines which are devoted to the subject abound amongst amateur groups. More often than not the accent is decidedly upon 'amateur' in publication standards and content. To a large extent this is dictated by financial considerations, but there is a more serious internal failing of many. They do not achieve anything like acceptable standards of scientific appraisal. Because they need to sell or be of interest to their membership the content has to appeal to a wide cross-section of individuals. This means that they are unable to devote adequate space to properly documented material, and space travel news and speculative theories are the order of the day.

A few smaller, and lesser known, journals have abandoned all hope of commercial viability and with great devotion of their editorial personnel have published scrupulously accurate reports. The Nottingham UFO Investigation Society produce *UFO Research Review*, which has established one of the better reputations among local group publications. Other examples exist, and there is an interesting experiment tried by the Irish UFO Research Centre, which concentrates on expensively produced reports on single cases of importance, which are made available on a limited scale to serious researchers.

So far as magazines unconnected with any organisation are concerned there are only two of any real note in Britain. One of these is *MUFOB* (the Metempirical UFO Bulletin). As the title suggests it is concerned largely with close examinations of the phenomenon from the viewpoint of human experience, and some excellent articles on the sociological and psychological aspects are included.

Undoubtedly the most important ufological publication in Britain, and indeed the world, is *Flying Saucer Review*. The name, born in the very earliest days, is usually shortened to *FSR*. It has over its long history since 1955 established itself as a channel of considerable scientific respect, and researchers and investigators refer to it as the ultimate publication outlet. It is professionally produced in a style which could compete with most wide-circulation magazines. Unfortunately it is not sold other than on subscription, but it has several thousand of these and reaches some of the most famous scientific establishments in the world.

Its pages have included papers from scientists in many disciplines, and it has a list of contributors which is impressive indeed, including Dr J. Allen Hynek, Dr Jacques Vallee, Dr David Saunders, and many more. Standards are kept impeccably high and articles have been produced which have proved a significant contribution to the field many times over. The editor of *FSR* is regarded as one of the most prominent ufologists in the world. For a dozen years this position has been held by Charles Bowen. Britain is fortunate indeed to have the world-focus of ufological publication. It provides an excellent outlet for investigational work, via the UFO Investigators Network.

In Great Britain of late there has been a great upsurge of growth in the field of local radio broadcasting. Most large population centres have at least one station operated by the BBC, and many have in addition an independently run company. This has opened up a whole new territory to the ufologist, and more often than not this is to his distinct advantage.

Local radio is just as much based upon human interest as the newspapers but it has much more freedom because of the air time available. In some instances this is twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. In consequence the UFO subject receives a wider treatment, and frequently it is simply a case of the ufologist approaching a station and air time is his, though quite often the station approaches him. This channel for publicity is utilised in two ways. There is the interview situation, and there is the involvement of live feedback from the public.

Interviews are normally arranged on the spur of the moment in order to present a viewpoint on a current local sighting or to answer some specific point which is presently

being discussed. For example in April 1975 the Manchester station approached a local ufologist to answer various comments made by the local police force.

Probably the most useful type of programme, so far as the ufologist is concerned, is the radio 'phone-in'. This involves a panel of local investigators, possibly with a sceptical astronomer added to it. The show goes out live and members of the public are asked to telephone in with general comments or to report sightings. It is of course most useful to the investigators when the emphasis is on actual sighting reports. One particular programme of this nature, again in Manchester, in February 1975 produced a startling report of an alleged UFO landing and contact with occupants of the craft. The poor, frustrated announcer having ploughed through mostly unimportant sightings for the majority of the night had to cope with this one arriving just three minutes from the end of the programme.

Eventually this last mentioned case turned out to be a hoax, and this illustrates one of the other great advantages of radio. Had this been a press story it would have been left in the minds of the reader as true, even if subsequent investigation disproved it. However, the next time the investigators concerned were on radio the opportunity was taken of explaining to listeners that the report had indeed been found to be fabricated, and therefore an important service was performed.

Finally we move on to the world of television. This is an industry which has grown up alongside Ufology, but in Britain has never shown much interest in it. A full-scale examination of UFO investigations was filmed in late 1976. It was anticipated that this would give fair coverage to the subject, with interviews with prominent figures such as Charles Bowen and Gordon Creighton. However it was so wide in its coverage and included so much of the fringe elements that it failed to convey the scale of the problem.

Local news programmes carry occasional sections devoted to the subject, usually interviews with witnesses. Sadly the treatment is rarely very serious, and the trappings of weird music and visual effects are often included. It is perhaps fortunate that the subject is covered so infrequently, as the television medium is an important means of determining public attitudes, and as the following example shows, can even produce UFO sightings.

In February 1975 Granada Television noted in a news programme that they had received several reports from the north-west of strange objects seen in the sky. Following this the switchboard became jammed with calls reporting discs, spinning saucers and all kinds of wondrous things in the evening sky. In actual fact all that was occurring was a somewhat unusual conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Venus. These two bright planets were apparently close together in the sky. They did look spectacular, but the UFO investigators were forewarned and knew what to expect. Naturally these planets did not roam about the sky, and they had no shape at all. They were simply points of light, and certainly not discs or saucers. The ease with which the public began to see these UFOs once they were advised by the television medium to do so is quite remarkable.

In October 1975 the Northern UFO Network were most fortunate in obtaining ten minutes of nationwide television in a programme whose aim is to give minority groups access to the screens. A virtual free hand in the production of the programme was given to the team who worked on it, subject to some financial constraints.

There were obviously great difficulties in presenting such a complex subject as Ufology in so short a time. They were, however, able to put across something of the serious work involved and hint at some of its scientific applications. Techniques of UFO investigation were explained, facts and figures from official sources were quoted and the whole aim was to show that there was a serious aspect to the investigation of the phenomenon and that people did exist who were trying to do something about it. No mention was made of the various theories concerning what *true* UFOs might be.

The programme was repeated at peak viewing time the following Saturday, and there was a considerable response from the public. Not only were letters received congratulating the team on presenting the subject so factually, but sighting reports poured in which took many months of work to investigate. Again the power of the medium was indicated by the number of people who were still telephoning, having noted the telephone number, several years after the programme had been broadcast.

This was a breakthrough in television coverage of the subject in this country, but the situation still falls far short of

Secrets Act, which does have controls over some events within our airspace. Occasionally, however, a story reaches the public. An instance of this is the radar/visual sighting made by several airline crews, including that of a British Airways Trident jet over Portugal on July 31st 1976.⁸ Here, the pilot, believing the story would reach the press through one of the passengers, gave his story to local UFO investigators. As it happened the story did not break until ten months afterwards when the pilot finally released it to the media.

Sighting reports which come into an airport are often ignored. A few years ago one airport entrusted this job to an 18-year-old trainee Air Traffic Controller. His instructions were to stick such reports onto a spike, which gradually accumulated more pieces of paper until eventually it was emptied into a waste bin!

It could be that the public have a false impression about what the government, as represented by the MOD, are in fact doing about UFO reports. Of course we do not really know the truth. It is possible as argued by some, that the MOD know more than they are telling and have a full-scale investigation in secret. There is no proof at all for this. They may well be looking to other countries, such as America, for a lead. Or they may sincerely hold the beliefs that they express—that there is in fact nothing to the subject at all. It does however, seem somewhat contradictory that despite proclaiming that there is nothing to investigate a department apparently exists which continues to investigate this non-existent phenomenon.

The manner in which the MOD operate is certainly of interest. In January 1976 Mr Ron Riddell and his wife spotted a black rectangular object over their home on the Isle of Wight. They reported the event to the local air base, where the meteorologist had also seen the object. They were told that the Ministry might get in touch. They did. Inside of five minutes they spoke to Mr Riddell and filled out a questionnaire. Odd indeed if they think that there was nothing to report.

To reply to any query on the phenomenon the MOD will say that they investigate purely for defence implications. They do *not* look at scientific aspects of a case, and they do not always investigate to the point where specific identification of a possible cause is found. In other words the public

policy is that they do nothing at all to investigate a report properly.

It is very rare that the Ministry will notify a witness of an identification made. This will in some cases be because no simple explanation was found. Perhaps they have grown wary after the events of the past, where a superficial solution to a sighting was quickly produced only for it to be found impossible under close scrutiny. Statistics issued by the department for the period 1959-72 show that just over 10 per cent of cases are probably 'unidentified' (the rest being aircraft, balloons, stars and other common misidentifications). Since they say quite clearly that they do not pursue investigation very far some of the probable identifications are no doubt dubious. However, it has to be of significance to notice that nearly all serious UFO investigation groups throughout the world produce unidentified percentages which bear remarkable similarity to this 10 per cent total.⁹

One might expect that it would be the scientists who would pick up the challenge of the UFO, since it seems to offer prospect of modifying concepts or introducing new ones. Unfortunately, there is great reticence on the parts of most scientists. There are several reasons for this.

There is a fear that over-involvement in a subject considered somewhat fantastic might lead to excommunication from the scientific fraternity. It is always up to a subject such as Ufology, which is trying to become recognised, to prove itself the hard way. One only has to think of many of the fabulous scientific developments of this century, such as the rocket, and see how long it took science to accept them as even credible. All of the groundwork was done by amateurs.

Radical thinkers have abounded in our history. Galileo was nearly burnt at the stake for holding the 'impossible' belief that the Earth revolved around the Sun. Radical thinkers have been wrong as well, of course. The Earth is not flat. However, there is generally a subtle difference between possible and impossible arguments which boils down to *logical* reasoning based upon *observed* facts.

There *are* facts to be observed within the UFO phenomenon, and it is logical to assume that, when all currently existing possibilities have been explored, they are representative of a new possibility. This is all that the ufologists

argue, as they challenge scientific conservatism with a wealth of reasoned data.

It is the belief of science that ufologists are out to prove that UFOs are space-ships, and this makes the problem all the harder for them to come to terms with since one has to accept two speculative ideas – i.e. the existence of extra-terrestrial life *and* the existence of *true* UFOs. Where Ufology is making its current mistake is in not concentrating enough on the case that *true* UFOs (and nothing more than that) exist.

Such an approach leads to heartfelt pleas such as this one, from Zdenek Kopal who is Professor of Astronomy at Manchester University. His reply to a question about UFO believers was, “I know you want to believe in something — but please believe in something more worthwhile.” This is an odd response from such a celebrated scientist, who has produced much thought-provoking research on the question of life in the universe. Indeed he has written an excellent book on the theme, which touches on problems of contact with extraterrestrial life. So even if there is but a remote chance of connection between Ufology and his own work how can he proclaim it is not worthwhile?

There are exceptions to this attitude. Forward-looking scientists such as Professor John Taylor have looked at various kinds of paranormal phenomena. The consultants board of the British magazine *Flying Saucer Review* has many illustrious scientific names on it. There are those who are prepared to brave the ridicule of colleagues and stand firm because they feel that there is some truth there somewhere, and they have no wish to be thought of as one of those who ignored it because it seemed wholly incredible. Indeed the UFO Investigators’ Network (mentioned earlier in this chapter) is viewed as only a first step. Professionalising investigation in this manner is hopefully to lead to a scientific institute for UFO research in the UK, with both scientists and amateurs working together in an informal body.

It is necessary to put Britain in context with the rest of the world, because other countries have made more progress towards scientific involvement.

Some Latin American governments have openly expressed belief that UFOs exist. These statements have compounded the views of some that other governments know more than

they are saying, but to some again they are dismissed as peculiarities of the South American temperament. This cannot be said of France, where a most remarkable statement was made by Monsieur Robert Galley, the Minister of Defence, on nationwide radio in 1974.¹⁰

He quite candidly admitted that the French Government had been interested in UFOs since the early 1950s, that they believed that there was something to them and that they were supporting scientific investigation. The gendarmerie, the French special police, had procedures to deal with reports and to liaise with a team of scientists. This vitally important statement has never received adequate press coverage in Britain, which is odd. It is an attitude which has not altered since 1974, and France is now viewed as one of the most forward-thinking countries in the ufological world, with men such as Dr Claude Poher and Dr Pierre Guerrin producing important research results on a variety of topics. Much of this work has been published in Britain in *Flying Saucer Review*.¹¹

In the USA there has also been a little more progress than Britain. This is largely due to the effect of one man, Professor J. Allen Hynek. Formerly astronomical consultant to the US Air Force (a position he held for twenty years), and head of the department at North Eastern University, he is not only one of the most famous astro-physicists in America but one of the most influential ufological figures in the world.

After an American university team, commissioned by the US Air Force, produced a huge study known as the Condon Report (after its editor Dr Edward Condon) official UFO investigation was ceased—at least publicly—by the air force. The Condon Report had a very narrow guideline. It searched for proof that UFOs were spacecraft—but did not find any. At the same time it failed to identify *one third* of the selected cases it studied, despite considerable efforts on the part of teams of experienced scientists. This challenge of unexplained material was never taken up—but it is now a very common misconception that the Condon Committee disproved the existence of UFOs. In fact they went further than almost anyone to *prove* it.

The challenge was taken up by Hynek. Along with colleagues, such as Dr Jacques Vallee and Dr David Saunders he operates the Center for UFO Studies, which

despite its meagre resources, functions as a scientific research institute and has published some useful subject matter since its initiation in 1972.

This then is a brief summary of the various groups of people who are enmeshed in the UFO phenomenon. Until very recent times the scales have been heavily balanced in favour of the amateur. As with all developing sciences, this balance is changing. The amateur will always be important to do the initial investigation work, but the road is clear for the future. We are going to need more scientific involvement, more specialisation in various aspects of the phenomenon and a more united approach towards the solution of this perplexing mystery.

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Classifying the UFO

“Scientific study presupposes data patterns and a measure of repeatability, and by and large UFO reports lend themselves to classification within their domains of strangeness”—Dr J. Allen Hynek in *The UFO Experience*

In this second section of the book we are going to look at the UFO evidence that confronts us. The phenomenon is so complex and its possible attributes so wide ranging that we need to structure our arguments in some way and present this evidence in a logical sequence.

It is common practice within scientific study to define classes of any phenomenon under study so that this breakdown facilitates both comprehension of the overall pattern and specialisation within individual facets. This methodology has been applied to the UFO phenomenon in the past. Vallee was the first to define a workable system¹ and this was followed by Hynek in his first important publication on the subject.² Both systems have had some measure of support, but it is that of Hynek which has come into universal usage.

Vallee classifies more according to the behaviour of the phenomenon, whereas Hynek relies more upon the physical description as provided by witnesses. Neither are completely satisfactory to our minds but that of Hynek provided us with the best basis upon which to work for our purposes.

In his system Hynek proposed six categories:

NOCTURNAL LIGHTS

The lowest in the order of merit, or as Hynek called them low strangeness. They form the bulk of any collection of UFO reports, being no more than a light in the night sky (very commonly abbreviated to LITS—light in the sky).

DAYLIGHT DISC

Generally referring to all daylight observations that do not fall into any other category. Disc is applied very loosely as all manner of shapes may be reported.

RADAR/VISUAL CASES

Simply cases where a visual observation coincides with a radar tracking of an unknown object. Non-visual radar contacts are generally considered too suspect to take note of.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE FIRST KIND (CE I)

An object observed at close quarters where there are no effects or traces to otherwise indicate the presence of an unknown phenomenon.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE SECOND KIND (CE II)

Close encounters which involve an effect or leave traces of some kind, on the witness, environment or both.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND (CE III)

Encounters where animated entities are associated with the phenomenon.

The basis for this system is an excellent one, but it has clear failings. We recognise the difficulties of attempting to alter what is now a widely used method of classifying data, and quite possibly our innovations will be ignored. This is particularly so now that the system has been introduced to the general public via the publicity surrounding the feature film, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. Indeed the promotion clip for the film showed Hynek explaining to the world how his system works! Despite all of this we felt that it could be modified and improved and this we have attempted to do, with due acknowledgement to Dr Hynek.

The difficulties with the system arise from three main points of view. Firstly, there is a clear overlap where it can often be very hard to determine which category a case fits into. This is particularly so between the Daylight Disc, CE I and CE II classes. Secondly, it is not very acceptable to distinguish between close encounter and non-close encounter on the basis of distance. An arbitrary boundary may well be set (e.g. 100 metres) where anything closer than this becomes labelled a close encounter, but it is well known that witness estimates of distance are, to say the least, inaccurate. Thirdly, there seems to be not enough distinction

between the higher strangeness types of reports—the very reports we ought to be the most interested in.

Our updated system provides a logical build-up of strangeness (just as Hynek intended), and its seven categories will form the framework by which we shall present the various aspects of the UFO phenomenon in Chapters Four to Ten.

The system comprises:

LOW DEFINITION (LOW)

Reports where the definition is poor, and only brightness, colour and motions are discernible with any degree of certainty. This takes account of all the Hynek 'Nocturnal lights' and some poorly defined daylight cases also (regardless of closeness of approach).

MEDIUM DEFINITION (MED)

Any report where the object has a definite physical substance to it, so far as the testimony of the witness is concerned. This normally means the addition of a clearly defined shape. Again proximity of the object is unimportant if there is no interaction, either with witness or environment.

INSTRUMENTALLY DETECTED (INST; /P, Photo, /R, Radar)

The category that supposedly provides 'hard' evidence, in the form of radar trackings, photographic images or any other observation by means of an instrument that can permanently record the phenomenon.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE FIRST KIND (CE I) Encounters with transient effects

To determine a close encounter of any kind there must be an interaction between the phenomenon and the witness, environment or both. The phenomenon must be experienced only by the witnesses directly involved with the phenomenon as it happens. In other words it will always be totally second-hand evidence when investigated. Examples of transient effects which would come under this heading are: physical, or more likely psychological, reactions of the witness during the event, cases where effects on the environment occur during the event (such as animal disturbance or electro-magnetic interference). No permanent or semi-permanent evidence of any of these effects remain after the phenomenon is over.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE SECOND KIND (CE II) Encounters with semi-permanent effects

This category comprises close encounters (under the same definition as above), but with the addition that the effects produced last for at least some time after the phenomenon is over. In so doing they must also be seen and attested to by persons who were not direct witnesses to the UFO phenomenon itself. This may or may not include the investigators. Examples here are cases where there are physical traces left on the ground or vegetation growth is affected at alleged UFO landing sites, and where a witness undergoes long-lasting physical or psychological change following an encounter.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND (CE III)

A. Entity Cases

All encounters where an entity is seen that there exists some associated evidence to link to the UFO phenomenon. A UFO may or may not be seen at the time of encounter. Entities may be on the ground, in the air or in the object itself and may be performing various activities, provided no form of contact between witness and entity takes place.

B. Contact Cases

A similar definition as in the CE IIIA, except that contact between witness and entity is alleged to occur. This may involve no more than gesture or verbal communication, but may extend to claims of actually boarding the UFO provided none of the factors relevant to the CE IV are reported.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE FOURTH KIND (CE IV) Encounters with psychic effects

These encounters may or may not involve the presence of UFO entities, although they most often do. They include all reports of a highly subjective nature where effects of a psychic (here defined as 'apparently non-physical') nature take place. This often means abduction claims, where there are time-lapses and other 'non-real' elements. In many instances the border between CE IIIB and CE IV must be determined by the investigator concerned.

It is perhaps a measure of the manner in which our understanding of the UFO phenomenon has increased over recent

years when one realises that several of the major differences between this system and that of Hynek have been made necessary because of it. Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind would have been regarded as unrelated to the UFO phenomenon not so very long ago, but now they may well offer us very significant insights into the nature of the mystery.

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Low Definition Cases

“Twinkle, twinkle little star, How I wonder what you are”

Unfortunately the largest number of reports received by a UFO investigator fall into this first category of low definition. From the outset it should be made clear that these can be given but a low priority, unless there are exceptional reasons why the case should demand more attention. Indeed it will be found that priority of investigation will in general increase as we consider examples within our classification system over the next few chapters.

Let us first consider a typical example of this type of sighting and develop from this towards some of the more interesting cases of ill-defined phenomena. In some instances these do suggest a *true* UFO. However, the level of factual data available is so low that only tentative conclusions can normally be reached.

Low Definition Cases refer to all those often termed lights in the sky (or LITS for short). However, many daylight observations are so lacking in data that we can only give them equal significance with such nocturnal events. Our general criteria is quite simple. Only colour, brightness and motion of the object must be observed in order for them to fall into this category. Considerable care must be taken over a reported shape. A star seen through binoculars or window glass can readily be distorted into many apparent shapes, although it is in truth but a point source of light. Even under normal vision a very bright planet or star, such as Sirius, may seem to be a rounded object. Consequently shape must be very distinctive indeed for it to lead to a definition in the medium category. Peripheral effects, such

as sound, may be in evidence provided they do not take the case into the class of a close encounter.

The vast majority of Low Definition Cases can be attributed to known causes, if enough care is taken over the investigation. Even when a conclusive explanation is not found one is often strongly suggested by the reported facts. Perhaps only one per cent of these cases eventually prove of some value to our understanding of the UFO phenomenon and even then this contribution will be minimal because of the shortage of available data. Usually, therefore, it is practice simply to record these incidents and not spend a large amount of time attempting to find the appropriate natural cause.

Such an approach does have a disadvantage, as experienced investigator Trevor Whitaker has pointed out.¹ Since we are highly reliant on receiving the reports from witnesses in the first instance then we must not appear to ignore their insubstantial sightings otherwise they might refrain from coming to us with potentially more useful information. The solution is quite simply to accept everything and to give an explanation when one is forthcoming, although it is wise not to do this right away even when the answer seems obvious. It is best to be absolutely certain of the facts before claiming an identification.

The simplest form of UFO report consists of a white, star-like light moving across the night sky. This it does quite silently and slowly and in most instances is likely to be an artificial satellite. There are hundreds of such objects in earth orbit, and the total increases every year. A number are very brilliant indeed and can present a puzzling spectacle to someone caught unawares on a dark night. A normal satellite will take several minutes to cross a reasonable arc of sky, but describing this as fast or slow depends on the observer and is related to whatever he is comparing it with.

Not all satellite observations are so straightforward. Sometimes they tumble in orbit and catch sunlight whilst rotating. This can give an appearance of flashing on and off. They may also vanish quite suddenly, when they fly into the earth's shadow. Normally they are white, but if seen through high clouds or particles of dust or pollutant in the atmosphere they may take on a coloured tint.

Such objects can only be seen when the sky is not cloudy, but of course even when the sky seems completely overcast

there may be a slight gap. A satellite making a brief appearance through this will often seem very strange indeed. No satellites can be seen during daylight.

Many of the prominent orbiters can be quickly identified, but with others an intensive search would be required. This is rarely justified when all but a white light is reported. One often has to dismiss these observations as probable satellites since this is the most likely explanation.

Flashing lights of other colours, usually red and green, can often be attributed to night flying aircraft. The patterns of navigation lights flown are reasonably standard but the manner of their observation varies quite remarkably. Consequently almost any combination of coloured lights, if that is all that is reported, may be taken as probably referring to an aircraft. It is usually a lot easier to check this if care is taken.

Even peculiar motions need not be indicative of anything but an aircraft. Consider this example seen over Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire, on December 15th 1976.² The witness is a sensible young woman, not prone to exaggeration. She claims that she saw a flashing light moving about in the distance. It changed frequently from red to white to green and hovered twice for a few moments before reversing its course and disappearing behind a building. There was little difficulty in identifying this culprit as an aircraft, seen with lights merging into one due to the distance. The apparent hovering is quite common when an aircraft changes direction and flies either directly towards or away from a witness.

Often a witness will argue that what he saw could not possibly be an aircraft because it made no sound. They overlook the fact that it was probably some distance away with a strong wind blowing any sound in the opposite direction, that they were indoors with the sound muffled, or that there was heavy traffic noise in the immediate vicinity of the sighting.

Occasionally when still over a populated area aircraft switch on powerful landing lights, meant for the final stages of the approach to the runway. What then appears is a brilliant ball of light moving across the sky, and such events have often been mistaken for a UFO.

You would think that few people would be likely to misidentify a star. Everyone should be used to them serenely shining night after night. Yet from time to time they may

appear to discard this serenity. Stars do, of course, twinkle quite markedly. This is due solely to the effects of the atmosphere and can cause dramatic alterations in colour on some nights. Again, if one stares for long enough at a bright star it will not only take on strange shapes but will begin to roam about the sky in an erratic fashion. In reality the star moves very slowly relative to the earth, because of the slow rotation of the earth itself. It is usually simple to tell if a stellar object is responsible for a UFO event because despite all of the peculiar motions attributed to it by the witness it will move only a short distance in relation to some fixed point on the ground, such as a building, over a considerable period of time. The example cited in Chapter 2 of the Jupiter and Venus conjunction serves to illustrate this point well.

One of the most spectacular sights adorning our skies is the meteor. Ordinarily this is just a very brief flare of white light, sometimes bright and sometimes not. It usually lasts but a second or two. A larger meteor is known as a fireball or bolide, and whilst it does have a distinctive shape associated with it it is undoubtedly of relevance to low definition cases.

The fireball consists of a large chunk of rock or dust, which burns up with friction in the upper atmosphere. By and large we are talking in terms of a few inches diameter, although larger ones have been noted and these tend to crash to earth leaving a crater on impact. There is a famous example of this in Arizona, USA, and it is quite possible that the large mass which struck the earth in the Siberian desert in 1908 and caused immense destruction all around was a very large fireball. When passing through the atmosphere most fireballs disintegrate completely. They then present a marvellous sight, being a ball of fire with a tail (usually coloured red/orange or blue/green) which can take several seconds to pass overhead.

On June 6th 1976 such a fireball was seen from many parts of Britain. It passed across the skies in five or six seconds. Some reports suggest that it exploded. By collating together the many reports we have been able to build a clear picture of how this rock crossed our airspace many miles high in the atmosphere. If we had had but a couple of reports the situation would have been most confusing.

The fireball was seen at 10.34 p.m. when there were many

people out of doors. In Manchester it proved possible for ufologists to tell right away what it was. A great influx of sightings were received, and this is often indicative of a fireball event. In addition a member of the local UFO organisation saw the phenomenon, and immediately recognised it for what it was. It was, therefore, possible to explain to some witnesses what it was that they had seen, but some local authorities remained in a frenzy. Press reports the next day revealed claim and counter-claim from official sources explaining away the mystery. One police chief told reporters that it was probably just an unusually bright star!

In other parts of Britain the weather conditions were not favourable, and fewer reports of the fireball were received. Here the press had less to go on and quite liberally termed the object a UFO. In the Midlands the local UFO Research Association of Staffordshire did an excellent job in correlating the events. In most instances the data was reasonably consistent, but exaggerations of size and duration (up to several minutes in one case) were found to exist. Although we are certain of the time of passage quite accurately sightings of what was definitely the same object referred to times of between 9.30 p.m. and midnight. One gentleman insisted that he had seen a Russian atomic powered spacecraft, and no investigator had the heart to disillusion him.

All of these witnesses were sincere, and an average cross-section of the population. Yet there were discrepancies which would have been impossible to remove without reference to the extremely large number of reports received overall. However, in most observations of a UFO event we have but one or two witnesses and this clearly indicates one of the major problems we face. There is a tremendous difference between what actually occurs—the UFO *event*—what is perceived—the UFO *sighting*—and what is finally passed onto others (sometimes years afterwards)—the UFO *report*. All along this chain there are perceptual and psychological factors which distort what was actually present, and the final result may bear little relationship to the original stimulus. We must be constantly aware that even the most ordinary event can eventually be turned into a UFO *report* by some witnesses (see Fig. 2, 3).

The gentleman who observed the Russian spacecraft was a victim of what the psychologist calls a 'mental set'. In other words he saw what he expected to see. The police

official who explained the fireball as a star was guilty of the same error. He 'knew' that it could not be a UFO, because such things do not exist for him, but he probably had no real idea what it was—hence it became a funny star.

The question of mental set is especially important to consider when dealing with low definition cases. Because so little data exists the distortion of but one factor can make an identifiable object apparently unidentifiable.

After what has just been said you may be forgiven for believing that all low definition cases are valueless. This is not strictly true.

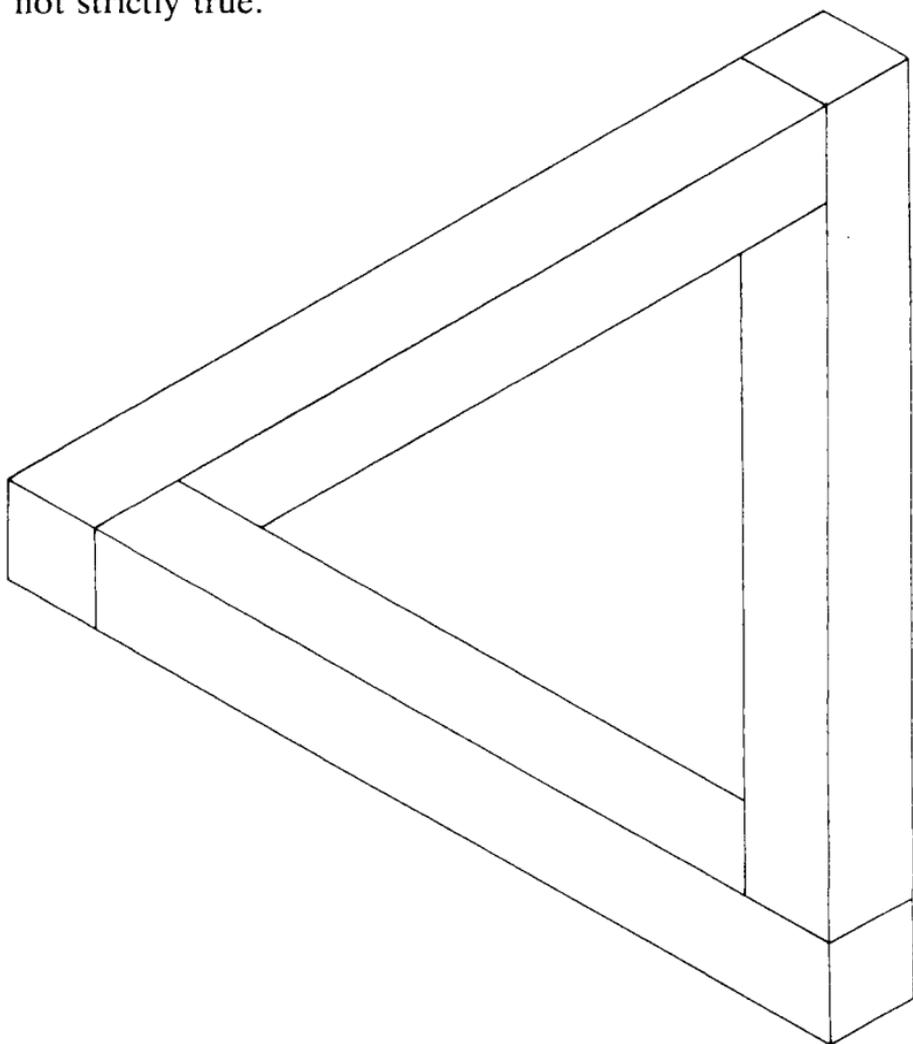


Fig. 2 The impossible triangle: an illusion of logic devised by Penrose and Penrose (University College, London)

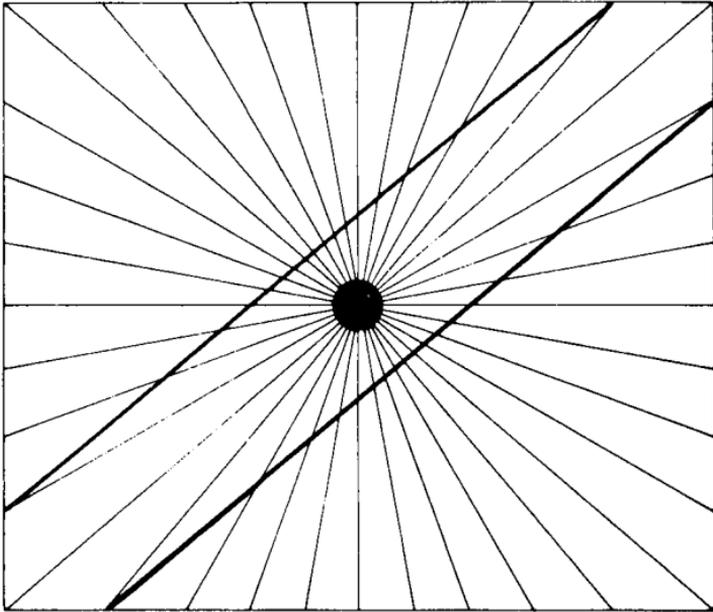


Fig. 3 A typical optical illusion: the lines appear bent but are in reality absolutely straight

There is a part of northern England dominated by moorland and the gentle foothills of the Pennines. This falls roughly into a triangle with Manchester, Halifax and the Rossendale Valley at the apex. Since 1972 this area and its surrounds has been inundated with sightings of an object which is known as the 'mystery helicopter'.

Usually all that has been reported here is a light seen flying low over the hilly terrain. On rare occasions it is reported to land in remote locations. There have been suggestions that it is in fact a helicopter flying illegally, and perhaps bringing in immigrants without permission. To our knowledge, however, nobody has ever been completely certain that it is a helicopter. Daylight observations are quite rare, one of the few of which will be related in Chapter 7.

The reports themselves have been received in periodic bursts, but have always been during the winter months. Not unexpectedly the police have been witness themselves on many occasions, and we have had several interviews with officers concerning their observations. One event concerned a chase across lonely moorland at 4 a.m. one morning. The 'helicopter' landed in some desolate spot but the police were

unable to find it. This was during a big wave of sightings in January 1975 and local police told investigators at the time, "If you can find this thing nobody will be more grateful than ourselves."

On the night of April 3rd 1976 at around 1.55 a.m. Detective Sergeant Norman Collinson of the Greater Manchester police was returning by car to his home in Heywood. The roads were very quiet and the night still. To his left he suddenly perceived a white light. This moved quickly across the road ahead and flew towards a hill in the distance. At first he thought it was no more than a low-flying aircraft with lights on, but then the object reversed at ninety degrees and began to come back towards him. At this point he lost sight of it for a moment as he turned off the M66 motorway.

As he was turning onto the Heywood road the object reappeared coming at an angle towards him. He stopped the car and got out to watch the light hover overhead and perform a series of box-like motions within a small area of sky. It then flew off again heading westwards. Returning to his car he pursued the object, which was looking like a white disc, for a quarter of a mile. He saw it stop once more and perform the same type of box-like motions.

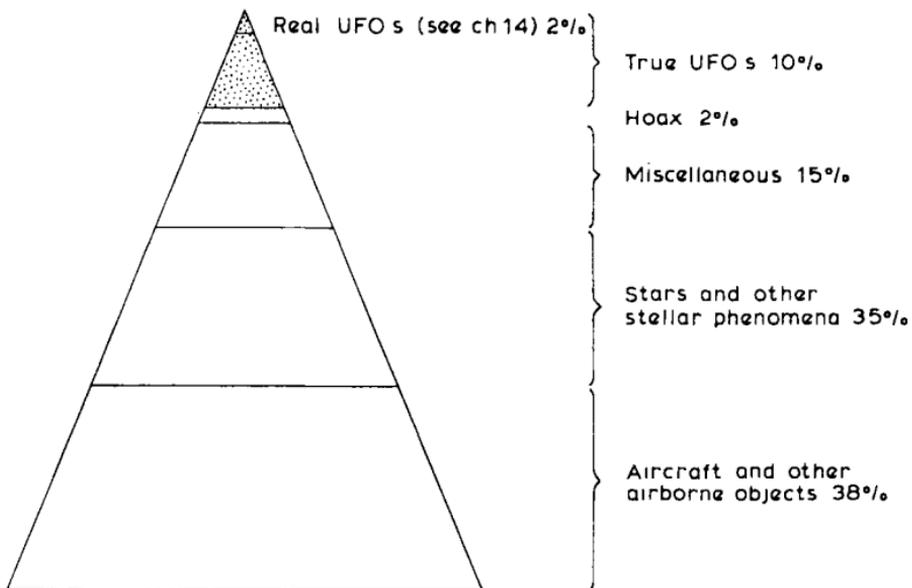


Fig. 4 UFO identification iceberg: Visual representation of the relation between misidentifications and *true* UFO reports

Throughout this part of the sighting Detective Collinson was convinced that he was watching some new kind of aircraft. However, he was shortly to be shocked out of this belief. Whilst in full view the object suddenly accelerated and shot towards the horizon, vanishing in less than two seconds.³

A feature of low definition cases which seems important is the often reported colour changes. Daylight sightings often refer to UFOs as metallic, silver or golden bronze (often signifying reflection of sunlight). Those seen at night, however, seem to have an intrinsic glow, which is most often reported as yellow or orange. Colours do vary and there are a number of reports of objects at the blue end of the spectrum, but these are in the minority. White is of course the most frequent colour, since most misidentifications of stars and satellites fall into this category.

It seems important to try to understand the relationship between the sightings of red/orange objects and those of yellow/white ones. It seems possible that the associated colour changes are in some way connected with the performance of the phenomenon under certain circumstances. For example, it seems true that a change towards the red end of the spectrum occurs when the object reportedly accelerates or decelerates. This is illustrated by this next case. It is typical of a low definition case which has defied explanation and offers about as much data as such a sighting probably can do. Oddly enough this report compares quite remarkably with the one mentioned earlier involving Detective Collinson. It occurred some months before, on August 16th 1975 but was in the same general area, around Bury, Greater Manchester, and also involved policemen.

On this night there was considerable low cloud and intermittent rain. The wind was from the south to south-west at between eight and twelve knots. At 3.30 a.m. there were very few people about, mostly officials doing necessary work for the good of the community. One of these was a policeman with twenty-eight years' experience on the local force. He had parked his car on a lonely hilltop north of Bury, overlooking the Ashworth Moor Reservoir. Suddenly he saw a strange light in the sky. It was dazzling white and moving against the wind southwards. Getting out of his car he surveyed the scene as the object flew overhead. Despite the utter desolation of his surroundings not a sound was to

be heard. He commented to investigators shortly afterwards that he had "never seen anything like it in all my years on the force".

This policeman radioed into his base at 03.27. This is important because this time was logged, and proves that the sighting occurred at about 03.25 or just before.

A mile or two south, in Bury itself, a younger policeman was in his patrol car. He was with a different division and had no knowledge of the report from Ashworth Moor. As he perceived the light it moved eastwards towards Heywood, and he pursued it in his car. It moved so fast that he had difficulty in keeping up, but after a mile or so he stopped at the elevated grounds of the Fairfield Hospital and got out to watch. The object turned southwards in a sweeping arc and hovered over the Darnhill Estate. At this point it blinked and illuminated the clouds above. Then it quite noticeably dimmed to a reddish colour and moved away southwards much more slowly.

A few miles east of here lies Rochdale Infirmary. On an upstairs ward a sister, nurse and auxiliary all saw the object. They watched it as a brilliant whitish glow descending towards the Pennine foothills around Denshawe.

All of these reports were submitted to the police and by good fortune Jeff Porter, a local investigator for MUFORA, was able to interview the witnesses within hours of the event. There seems little doubt that they all saw the same object, though there is some possibility that the younger policeman followed an aircraft. The blinking light, the apparent hovering and the sweeping arc motion are all consistent with this explanation. Apart from the timed message all the other sightings are simply known to have been around 03.30.

In fact it proved possible to interview two more witnesses a few days later, and their testimony was to prove invaluable in understanding this case. They were security guards driving through North Manchester when they spotted a brilliant white light heading east-south-east. It was only seen for seven or eight seconds as it passed between houses. The area here was heavily urban. Driving further northwards they stopped at Heaton Park Railway station, and got out of their vehicle. Approximately seven minutes after their first sighting they saw a white light in the south-west, heading west on a descending path and growing in intensity.

Because there were so many witnesses of high standing more attention than would be normal was accorded this report. Airborne objects drifting with the wind, such as balloons, were ruled out by the weather records. The low cloud cover denied an astronomical source. It was possible to use trigonometrical calculations to determine the height of the object with so many clear reports to go on. This showed that the object was certainly below 1500 feet and quite probably below 1000 feet. Manchester Airport was at the height of the holiday season with inbound and outbound flights being frequent. Only one aircraft passed over the area within reasonable time of the sighting. This was an inbound flight from Glasgow, which would have passed over the area at 03.32. If the security men saw the same object as the first policeman at about 03.25 then their *second* observation was probably this aircraft. What is more to the point is

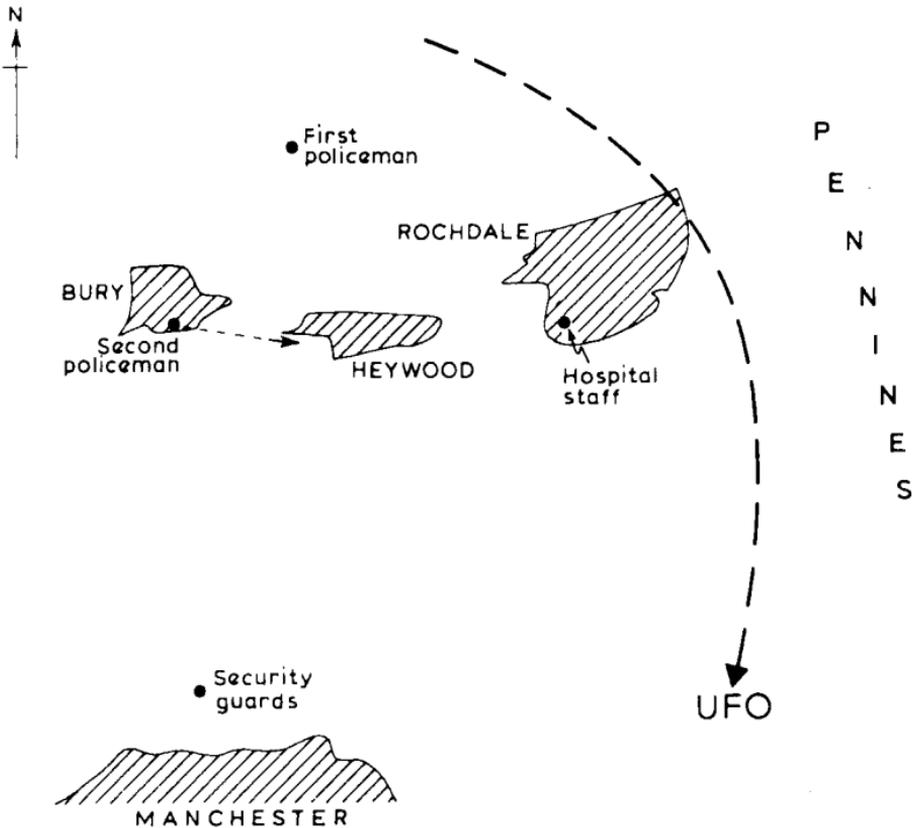


Fig. 5 Witness locations and path of object seen at Bury, Greater Manchester, August 15th 1975

that this second report is the only one which tallies with an aircraft passing overhead, as it was heading westwards towards Manchester Airport (*see* Fig. 5).

There seems little doubt that another object was responsible for the main reports. Quite what it was we do not know, but the description of the reddening effect may well be of importance here. It has been speculated by some that this effect relates to the propulsion of the UFO. If we view propulsion in its strictest sense (i.e. cause of motion) then it does not imply an artificial origin for the phenomenon. Such a speculation is, therefore, valid and a study of such reports may give an insight into the true nature of what is being observed.

One idea is that the colour change is due to ionised particles of air which surround the *true* UFO. This would require an electro-magnetic field around the phenomenon, and as we shall see later this is supported by other aspects of the sighting reports. Differences in the energy levels of these particles would cause changes in the associated colours, and this could quite easily be inter-related with the speed of movement.

We are now left in a somewhat tantalising position. We do seem to have some evidence of an unusual phenomenon, but were this all we had to go on then we would not be justified in coming to any conclusions whatsoever. The amount of data lacking in low definition cases leaves us wanting much more. Reports where we do have some additional information are classed as Medium Definition Cases.

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Medium Definition Cases

"I know it was not a figment of my imagination. If it was imagined then I could logically say the same about the 405 bus that passed by a few minutes later . . ."—
UFO witness

Medium Definition Cases encompass a wide range of reports, including Hynek's Daylight Disc category.¹ This is a very misleading term as it implies parameters which are not universally true. It is far better to base a definition simply on the existence or otherwise of a detectable shape, and it is the presence of this characteristic which provides the distinction between our low and medium definition cases.

It will become apparent that the discoidal shape is more prevalent with close encounters, but in a general sense is not predominant. Shapes in the category we are now considering vary from a sphere through an oval and cigar (or tubular) to a basic triangular configuration. These are the four basic types, although time has brought many curious additions to this list. An example here is the cross shape, much in evidence in the autumn of 1967 when Britain experienced a wave of sightings.

A great deal of effort has been put by some researchers into classifying these various shapes. The organisation CONTACT produced a chart which illustrates many of these.² Whether or not such information tells us anything or not is, of course, another matter.

Let us consider in very simple terms what the UFO phenomenon might be. If we consider two broad suggestions, that it might be a natural atmospheric phenomenon or that it could be a man-made device ('man' is here used to imply any race of intelligent beings) then we can compare these suggestions by using two known examples. If we look

at cloud formations as representative of the atmospheric phenomenon and at air vehicles as our man-made device then we see that in both instances the shape varies. Certainly there are more differences in cloud patterns than in types of air vehicle but we cannot equate in other than a very broad sense a helicopter, a first world war bi-plane and a jumbo jet! In other words it need not be of great significance for any explanatory hypothesis that the reported shapes vary considerably. We would expect there to be basic classes of shape, and this is indeed the case.

An interesting illustration of this idea might be to consider visitors to a safari park on a busy summer's day. The visitors here all have a common purpose, to drive past and see the animals. Yet if we look at the situation from the viewpoint of a lion watching the procession of people go by then we see a position akin to that which we experience with the UFO phenomenon. The lion views cars, vans, coaches, double-decker buses of all sizes, shapes and colours. There is almost no standardisation unless a massive statistical study is undertaken.

Let us assume that the lion is capable of identifying everything that passes by but a double-decker bus. To him these are *true* UFOs. An uninitiated lion might report almost anything as a bus under some circumstances (a particularly large van for example). The reports of these *true* UFOs will therefore contain wide variations in all categories. Even the genuine buses will possess some of these variations, but they will also possess factors which could be isolated (for example that all buses have two sets of windows on top of one another). This is fine provided the lion realises which factors do isolate his *true* UFO from the rest, but what if he chooses the wrong factor to isolate? Assume that he decides to use colour as his criteria. He would merrily go on separating everything that was blue, red or black but would get absolutely nowhere. Even if he had no spurious non *true* UFO reports he would still learn very little except that some of the phenomena were blue, some red and some black.

We may well be struggling in just this position, trying to isolate factors which have no relevance to our understanding of the UFO phenomenon. However, even if the implications of the variety of shapes are not clear in our present state of knowledge it is still necessary that we continue to record them.

Unfortunately this is not the only problem we have to consider. We also need to take the angle of view into account. Take any household object of a clearly defined shape and hold it some distance in front of you against a *uniform* background. Now twist it about and see how the apparent shape differs dependent upon how you look at it. In this way a cigar or tube can seem oval if held at an angle or a sphere if seen end on. This point must always be borne in mind when thinking about the reported shape.

This effect of perspective can make an object appear to alter shape as it moves. However, there seems to be an even further consideration which ufologists call transmogrification (or simply an object which changes its shape).

This effect has been reported in circumstances which seem to preclude those attributable to perspective. If understood it may well tell us something about the nature of the UFO phenomenon, but it does not necessarily favour any particular theory of origin. Going back to our earlier examples, clouds quite noticeably alter shape through intrinsic factors, but we might also recall that the Concorde aircraft may alter its shape (i.e. droop its nose) to improve the pilot's visibility. Again one should remember that such changes of shape may be related to the witness since we know that in a dream we can alter the shape of anything quite easily.

We can illustrate some of these shapes and this phenomenon of transmogrification by referring to specific cases. It should be realised that although this second class of report offers us much more data and is generally productive of a higher proportion of *true* UFOs than low definition cases there are still a number of possible explanations which can give rise to a misidentification and perhaps only 5 per cent of these reports turn out to be labelled *true* UFOs in the end.

A sphere in its simplest sense is quite often reported. Of course our definition of 'sphere' may or may not include any round object seen in the sky, without necessarily giving indication of possessing three dimensions. We shall not here be too strict provided that a shape is quite certainly in evidence and is not purely an optical effect relating to a point of light with no determinate dimensions.

Two phenomena which we know something about must be considered here. One of these we came across in the previous chapter when we looked at fireballs. These are an

important contributor to any list of spherical UFOs but can readily be isolated because of their fast progress across the sky (never exceeding several seconds). Ordinary meteors are much less spectacular and do not have any kind of shape associated with them (being just a streak of light). Of course, they may be falsely perceived as having a shape. The other phenomenon due for consideration is ball lightning.

Everyone is familiar with ordinary lightning, zigzag patterns of light which flash across the sky during a thunderstorm. Each bolt of lightning contains a great amount of energy which can be released when it strikes something on the ground such as a tree or even a man. Fortunately most lightning goes from cloud to cloud, rather than from earth to cloud and is therefore relatively harmless, except of course to something in the air.

Lightning is simply a discharge of electricity moving at a speed of 186,000 miles per second. The track seen across the sky is its course through the air molecules and without delving into high-power physics it would be impossible to describe what the particular form of lightning known as 'ball' lightning is. Even scientists still argue as to its exact nature. However, they now no longer doubt that it exists and there are some photographs of it.³

Ball lightning consists of energy, most often seen rolled up into an oval or ball shape. Usually it is no more than a few inches in diameter. It is something like a lightning bolt screwed up into a ball and held together by magnetic forces. It often forms during thunderstorm activity, but this does not seem a necessary condition. When in existence it can move about slowly, touch things and then streak away. These motions can occur close to ground level and can last up to a minute or two. It is highly dangerous and can electrocute or burn anything in its path and often disintegrates in a violent explosion. These balls of light can be red, white or blue in colour and have naturally enough caused considerable fright when seen by a witness. Many UFO sightings undoubtedly are of this type and an example will now be given of a case which has a high probability of such origin.

On June 15th 1975 two young women, aged 20 and 21, were outside the home of one of them in Stretford, Greater Manchester. Miss Garner noticed the object first as a point of white light moving through trees. She told her friend,

Miss Doyle, and they watched it move south-westwards decelerating all of the time.

By now both girls were puzzled by what they were seeing and so they moved down the road to obtain a better view. After being out of sight behind houses the object re-appeared. It now looked like a ping pong ball with spikes around it and a conical shape on top. It was dazzling white in colour. Undoubtedly the spikes were an optical effect caused by the terrific brilliance, to which both girls attested. It was in fact so bright that it lit up all of the surrounding area.

The object had now come down to about 200 feet and was hovering over some fields. It did this for about two minutes and the girls brought it to the attention of a woman who passed by. Suddenly there was a flash and the object was gone although the girls thought that they saw it streak upwards into the clouds.

Of much importance to the understanding of this case is the fact that there was local thunderstorm activity that night. The sighting occurred at 10.40 p.m. and the storm passed over the area about an hour later. The conditions were certainly conducive to the formation of ball lightning and the motions of this object leave little doubt as to its origin. Interestingly both women developed headaches shortly after the sighting and this is not uncommon with some people when a severe electrical disturbance is felt at close quarters.

Even more intriguing is this story. Once more this refers to a ball-shaped object, but there seems no indication as to how we should identify it. It may be representative of a very unusual type of electrical discharge, but whatever its cause we must call it a *true* UFO as it appears to warrant a new kind of explanation.

Mr Brook, his wife, their daughter and a male friend of the family were walking close to their home in Barnsley, South Yorkshire at 5.10 p.m. on November 18th 1975. Mr Brook suddenly heard a high-pitched humming noise which seemed to penetrate inside his head but none of the other witnesses heard this. However, he pointed upwards and they all did see a vivid blue ball of fluorescent light moving across the sky from the south-west. It moved in a zigzag fashion and kept disappearing for several seconds at a time, reappearing in unexpected locations but still keeping to its

overall course. At this point it rotated about its axis and became ellipsoid in shape. Suddenly there was a flash and the object became two balls of light separating at a 90 degree angle. These then disappeared, reappeared and collided again with another flash. The rejoined object moved on its original path and after having been in view a total of three minutes it was lost to view. All of this latter phase of the sighting occurred in complete silence.⁴

All these witnesses told consistent stories and there is no reason to doubt what was reported. This illustrates quite clearly the complexity of the UFO phenomenon. We have already come across a *true* UFO report which seems to demand an explanation in terms of a new physical phenomenon. It would be very hard to equate this with traditional theories for UFO origin, such as an extraterrestrial spaceship. It will become apparent as we go along that this sighting is of a type which require one explanation, whereas others probably require different ones. The final total of explanations required may well be several.

On January 14th 1975 the Oldham area was in the midst of an important flap of sightings. One report has already been featured in Chapter 4 and a further one from this same flap will be referred to later in this chapter. At 8.25 p.m. on this date two teenage girls were returning home from a farm where they had just stabled their horses for the night. The area was in Moorside and their immediate surroundings were darkened country lanes with low hillsides and stone cottages.

Above the rooftops they saw an object which looked oval—something like a face. It had a curved top and bottom and two central eyes consisting of a steady green light on the left and a flashing red light on the right. It was very low and seemed to rotate. It also displayed a curious, but familiar, motion—rocking from side to side as it hovered. This feature is most interesting because one often finds this description in connection with UFO reports, where it is known as the ‘falling leaf’ motion because it is reminiscent of a leaf as it moves from side to side on a descending path through the sky. This is due to the virtual lack of weight of the leaf and it has been speculated that UFOs perform such a motion when hovering because they have a gravity control mechanism which makes them almost weightless. It is an interesting idea but the most important aspect is that this

feature of UFO stories is so little known that it is most unlikely that two teenage girls could add it to their report unless they really saw it happen.

The two girls were very upset and called the police as soon as they arrived home. They drew the object independently for the officer who interviewed them and came up with very similar pictures. The police were convinced of their sincerity, as were investigators of MUFORA who spoke to the girls the next day. Even then the psychological impact of the sighting was still apparent.⁵

The disc is of course the classic UFO shape, and this is frequently reported (although by no means as exclusively as some people might imagine). Even within the basic classification 'disc' there are many variations. We shall look at just two but there are many more. In fact very rarely do two sightings of 'discs' appear to be even largely the same.

On October 14th 1974 an elderly couple, Mr and Mrs Haughton, had retired late to bed. Their home is in Mossley Common, Greater Manchester and overlooks to the south considerable open ground sloping down to the Bridgewater Canal.

Mr Haughton was awoken at 1 a.m. by brilliant white light flooding into the bedroom. Thinking there was an accident outside Mrs Haughton got out of bed, followed by her husband. They both saw a huge object, not eighty yards away, hovering low down through the trees. It had a domed top and a rectangular underside with a row of seven framed windows along this bottom portion. The white light was pouring out from these.

The object rose to just above the tree level and paused there for five minutes or more making no sound. The Haughtons stared on incredulously. This lengthy observation period enabled the dimensions of the object to be compared with a barn on the nearby farm. The length turned out to be something like forty feet. The object then began to move away slowly, still keeping at tree top height, and then dimmed perceptibly as it accelerated away rapidly into the sky.

Here we have an object which was very probably quite close to landing. Unfortunately this case was not discovered until some time after its occurrence and any traces which may have been left were lost. This is a perennial problem in UFO investigation. The brightness changes in relation to

acceleration should also be noticed with reference to the remarks made at the close of the previous chapter.

The disc shape is illustrated even more dramatically by another case from the town of Oldham, very close indeed to the scene of the famous Cairo Mill incident (to be reviewed in Chapter 7). It occurred on March 1st 1976 and the witnesses were a group of boys aged between 8 and 14. They describe an object with an oval bottom and a small dome on top. The overall colour was white but there was a red light along the middle of the bottom section. A vertical strut was also seen down the dome, which itself appeared to be made out of a glass like material. The dome was rotating, as was shown by the motion of the strut. The object was seen moving in and out of clouds for a total of about one minute.

Already we are building up a complex series of shapes which seem to bear no relationship to one another. One finds it most difficult to put them together into a meaningful overall pattern as they seem so different. This difficulty will be seen to be further enhanced as we proceed.

One of the problems with the cigar shape is the similarity to an aircraft fuselage. When seen in strong sunlight it is often possible for the wings to appear to vanish and this can leave a cylindrical shape. If seen glinting in the sunlight this will appear silvery, or if reflecting the setting sun or seen against a contrasting dark background it may become golden or bronze coloured. There are many possible combinations and a high proportion of all identifications do in fact turn out to be aircraft. With new types, such as vertical take-off, developing all of the time this situation is likely to be intensified.

Despite the truth of this statement we do have some interesting unknowns in the cigar category. Witnesses frequently use this descriptive term and it proves quite appropriate for a usually smooth-sided tubular object. There is speculation that these objects are what is termed 'mother ships', or carriers for smaller craft. This presupposes an artificial origin for the phenomenon and no objective evidence exists for this statement. It is true, however, that cigar-shaped objects are often much larger than other shapes, although this is not invariably so.

To illustrate this type we shall examine a 'mother ship' sighting. As will become relevant later in the book, it is of

interest to note that the witness claims to be psychic. There were no other witnesses to what proved to be a spectacular event, and this is important in our consideration as to whether or not the event occurred as it is alleged. It seems improbable that a huge spacecraft did discharge several smaller craft over Werneth Low, as the witness describes, and yet she insists that she saw it. We cannot simply ignore this, and nor can we dismiss the inconsistency between what she says occurred and what we feel cannot have occurred in a physical sense. This is a constant factor in dealing with the UFO phenomenon. Time after time we are confronted with the intrinsic subjectivity that it presents.

One morning just before Christmas in 1974 the witness was taking the early morning air at about 7.30 a.m. She actually lives in Denton, Greater Manchester, but was looking out northwards towards Werneth Low, a small hill several miles away between Oldham and Stockport. Suddenly she noticed two oval shapes rise slowly above the hill. One descended out of sight behind it whilst the other remained. This then elongated into a cigar shape and then flattened at one end (note the principle of transmogrification is also illustrated here). From out of this flattened end came several smaller spherical objects. These were discharged as soap bubbles are blown out of a child's hoop, clinging to the end and then accelerating away to the south. Eventually the other object returned, the cigar reverted back to its oval shape and both disappeared from view behind the hill. They had been observed for a total of some twenty minutes.

We can now move on to the final group of shapes, which we can broadly term as conical or triangular. This is a category in which we find a large number of misidentified weather balloons.

These balloons are released from centres throughout Britain at various times every day. Their purpose is to conduct meteorological observations high in the atmosphere, such as the checking of wind speeds. They are often made of a large bag of silvered material which can inflate or deflate according to changes in pressure. They can be triangular in shape and travel at such great heights that they are readily mistaken for something quite strange. This is especially true when they are seen against a darkening twilight sky. Here they can glow brilliantly silver because the sun is still reflecting on them at their height, even if to a

ground observer it has sunk below the horizon. This forms a very stark contrast indeed.

An intriguing case of this type which has defied an explanation, concerns a married couple who were out for the day in the beautiful countryside of Cumbria. England was in the midst of a heatwave and August 14th 1976 had been another brilliantly sunny day.⁶

The time was 6.30 p.m. and the couple had been watching a hot air balloon sail across the valley before them through 12 times magnification binoculars. Their attention became centred on a white 'star' in the sky, and on training the binoculars onto it it resolved into a disc with a brilliant white reflection on top. The object slowly moved out of view into the distance, as if moving further away. Although the behaviour exhibited by this object is consistent with a weather balloon none was found to be in the area at the time. However, it cannot be given high value.

More unusual is the object seen over Swinton, Greater Manchester on December 13th 1975. This provides us with a classic *true* UFO of the domed type. It concerns the whole Dutton family. They were witness to the flyover of an unusual object at 4.45 p.m. on this Saturday.⁷

Their fifteen-year-old son was the first to spot it and he called to his parents and two younger sisters, who all saw the mysterious white light in the west. It moved very slowly towards them and as it approached they saw that it consisted of a silvery dome, apparently reflecting the setting sun, with white, red and blue lights underneath. Mrs Dutton went back inside somewhat worried and was able to verify from the clock that the total duration of observation was about four minutes.

The object seemed very low, only a few hundred feet, and as it passed almost directly overhead moving north eastwards no sound at all was heard. As it passed over it took on a bluish tinge.

The witnesses now passed through the house and Mrs Dutton followed them to the front door where they saw the object hovering over the road. Passers-by watched as it stayed in this position for about half a minute. Then without warning it accelerated away south eastwards at a speed everyone described as "simply incredible". As it shot out of sight it took on a reddish hue (again the colour changes referred to in the previous chapter).

Earlier in this chapter we discussed the problems of transmogrification, or change of shape. The Werneth Low case illustrated the change from oval to cigar shape, but it was by no means clear if this was not due to the object simply rotating. At such a distance this is a very real possibility. Of course, it is also quite possible that the object was 'created' by the witness and that the shape changing was thereby induced.

A fascinating multiple witness case which seems to defy any other than a distinct transmogrification aspect occurred at 4.50 p.m. on November 24th 1974, as the sun set on a cloudy day which later became very windy and wet.⁸ There were several sets of independent witnesses from all over the Rossendale Valley, which is a hilly country region twenty miles north of Manchester. All saw something slightly different, although we can piece together their stories to give a consistent account. It seems that there was a procession of one, two or three cigar like objects glowing brilliantly orange and moving in formation north, north westwards. They moved slowly and below stormy clouds, which were at 3000 feet.

The most interesting feature of this particular case is that one of the witnesses, who was farthest south on the projected trajectory of the object, described two cigars initially and said that they merged into one with a fuzzy band joining them. Here we have either a genuine docking manoeuvre of two physical objects, or a subjective manipulation of the matter that was present. It is an important question.

There is another aspect of this category of report, which is intrinsically more interesting than low definition cases. This is the aspect of sound.

It may well have been noticed from the sightings already featured that a UFO report nearly always describes a total lack of sound. This in many senses implies a contradiction because the objects are often reported at speeds well in excess of that one would normally define as the limit for the production of a sonic boom. It is a fact that this boom has rarely been reported. There have been no more than a handful of cases where the object has been said to make a loud noise, such as a roar. One such case from Scotland in the early 1950s involves an object shaped like an aircraft which streaked over an airfield leaving a roaring noise

behind it. One is tempted to think that in such cases an unusual aircraft or a misidentification of one is involved. Interesting theories have been put forward to explain how a physical object can travel so fast without producing a sonic boom.

This boom is due to air displacement and complex methodologies have been devised to show how such a displacement need not occur under certain circumstances. However, one is led much more easily towards the feeling that anything moving so fast without creating a boom does so because it is not a solid object. We now have a clash of definitions. Are we to say that the objects were not physical, or that they were not really there? We are not making such a statement just yet. However, the evidence is beginning to point us in this peculiar direction.

UFO phenomena are not always reported as silent. When a sound is noted it is usually of one type. Time after time we hear descriptions such as 'hum' or 'like bees buzzing'. Another common one is 'like an electricity generator'. This consistency in many close encounters leads one to feel that there probably is an associated sound to *true* UFO events.

An example which illustrates this sound well occurred during the flap of sightings in January 1975, at the town of Uppermill just outside of Oldham.⁹ There were many witnesses, mostly groups of children playing in some fields, as the oval-shaped object with a dark middle and a scintillating rim swooped low down over an aqueduct and then shot upwards into the sky at a great speed. When at its nearest a sound was heard which was described by one of the children to his father. He happened to be involved in electronics and was able to determine that the sound produced was similar to the hum of a generator working at about 100 cycles per second.

This sound is nearly always faint and there is evidence to indicate that it is only heard under favourable conditions. We could speculate that such favourable conditions could include close proximity, a wind blowing sound in the direction of the witness and good hearing, but against this we have to balance those cases where only one of a whole group of witnesses claims to have heard the sound (see the Barnsley sighting on p. 74).

Certainly if we postulate a physical object of some reality, be it artificial or natural, there are many reasons as to why a

noise should be associated. The example of ball lightning, alluded to already, serves here since a 'crackling' is often connected with it. Therefore, some new type of electrical phenomenon could well provide the 'hum' which our *true* UFO appears to produce.

Taking the other side of the picture we can imagine an artificial craft which utilises a power system creating the sound. Perhaps, indeed, two sounds, for the roars infrequently reported seem to be connected with objects close to the ground and may therefore be associated with take-off or landing processes.

Consider this most interesting report. On a sunny day in 1964 several couples were driving along the beach road in Aberdeen, Scotland. They saw a peculiar object hovering over the sea. It was described as looking like a miniature gyroscope and rocking from side to side as it moved slowly across the beach very low down. It created a faint humming noise of the type prevalent in UFO encounters. Eventually it was lost to view behind some buildings.

Are we to postulate that this was an artificial craft which was gyroscopically controlled? This could indeed account for many of the features found with UFO reports, such as the fluttering or 'falling leaf' motion and the spinning of the domed section of the object. This would also certainly explain the slight humming, as the noise created by the air as the object rotates.

Perhaps this sound is at a very high frequency. The human ear has varying sensitivity and possibly only a few individuals can actually hear the sound during its normal operative mode. It is of great interest to notice two points here:

- 1) Children often tend to report the noise more frequently than adults. This ties in very well with the fact that sensitivity of the ear in the higher frequency range (i.e. 13 KHz to 20 KHz) falls away with age (*see* Fig. 6).
- 2) Animals are often sensitive to UFO events more acutely than humans and it is known that some animals can 'hear' at frequencies beyond the capabilities of the human ear (up to 30 KHz or even 40 KHz). The high frequency dog whistle is used because the dog hears it, but to a human it is silent.

This leads us to the tentative conclusion that the phenomenon has a sound connected with it which is in the very high

frequency range. Tests on witnesses who claim to hear a sound when others with them do not could be used to discover their personal sensitivities. It may be possible to discover the frequency range in a particular encounter, although this frequency may vary from encounter to encounter.

We have already seen how certain elements of the UFO mystery do point towards a subjective interpretation of the facts, such as witnesses seeing things in locations where there ought to be back up observers but there are not, or the variety and apparent manipulation of UFO shapes. The presence of the 'hum' may be a similar indicator, because it also seems to be related to various types of psychic phenomena.

Witnesses who claim to have seen apparitions have apparently 'felt' this peculiar noise at the time. We say 'felt' because it is often at the threshold of hearing and one cannot be certain whether the sensation is purely in the mind or out of it. Jenny Randles has had personal experience, not of seeing apparitions, but of awaking in the middle of the night with the feeling that there is someone in the room. Always this strange hum seems to be present, tantalising the senses. It is a most unnerving experience. From discussing this with others it seems to be quite a common feeling, and of course it could well be entirely

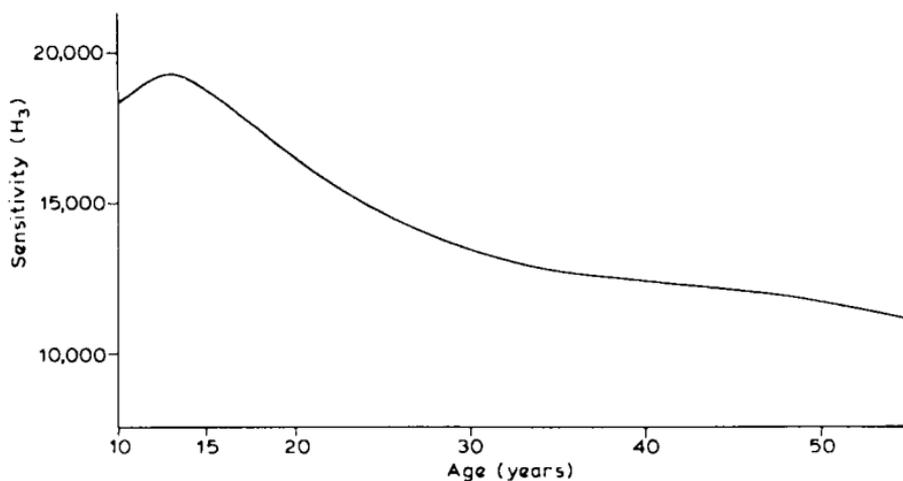


Fig. 6 Graph illustrating how the sensitivity of the human ear varies with age

psychological. She is by no means a psychic person and has had none of the encounters seemingly appropriate to mediums, such as seeing a ghost or, possibly more appropriately, *true* UFOs!

We are not—and we make this very clear—claiming any validity for any kind of psychic experience. Certainly we are not denying their existence either. All that we are attempting to show is that to regard UFO phenomena in solid, objective terms may be misleading. We need to look at them from all aspects, because if we are honest we simply do not know where the answers lie. ‘Reject nothing’ must be the watchword, because the one tiny piece of ‘irrelevant’ information which we simply ignore may indeed turn out to be the key to the whole problem.

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Instrumentally Detected Cases

“The camera doesn’t lie . . . but cameramen do!”—
Anon.

In this chapter we shall be primarily concerned with the question of photographic evidence for the existence of *true* UFOs. We shall also take a look at those instances where objects of an unknown nature have apparently been tracked on radar. These two types of case offer the vast majority of current evidence for instrumentally detected observations of the UFO phenomenon, although it is recognised that in future we may well see the introduction of different kinds of detection techniques.

In the past photographic evidence, either still or ciné, has been regarded by many as the ultimate in proof. Surely if it can be photographed it must be real, the argument seems to go. Yet we believe that there has been a considerable overstatement of the importance of this type of evidence. There are just too many problems involved in the acceptance of such data as proof.

From time to time the media carries a photograph taken by seemingly genuine and sincere witnesses. Proudly they claim that their pictures show spacecraft. They then go on to say that they now firmly believe in the existence of flying saucers. After all the proof is there right in front of their eyes. Yet this is certainly not the case. Just as any ordinary object can be visually misidentified so too can it be photographically. If unusual lighting conditions make an aircraft seem strange to the eye, then a similar effect will appear on any photograph of it. Indeed the problem is further enhanced because a photograph encapsulates a brief moment of time and lacks the dynamic element which may serve to explain a temporary mystery. If a photograph is

taken at the wrong (or right, depending which way you look at it) moment almost anything can become a UFO.

We have found it very odd that so many people who are supposedly serious investigators of the phenomenon will quite often challenge the testimony of a witness but not of a photograph. This is despite the fact that there are likely to be far more photographic hoaxes around than ordinary sightings. The urge to dramatise and create impact, coupled with the ease of faking a good UFO picture, make many people want to try just that once to fool their friends, the press or on occasion the world.

Whoever said, "The camera doesn't lie . . ." must not have been a very good photographer. Where would Hollywood be today without the camera and its lies? King Kong, disaster movies, science fiction and fantasy . . . all would be little more than cartoons without the expertise of the cameramen of the special effects departments. On the screen anything can be made to happen, and often is. We, the public, pay handsomely for the privilege of viewing their make believe. After an evening at the cinema how many of us wonder how each scene was made? Often we simply accept what we saw as reality, even when we know that reality is impossible.

Consider the film *Chitty, Chitty, Bang, Bang*. The star was a vintage car capable of flying, which it is seen to do in a number of scenes. To the child, captured by the wonder of it all, there is no doubt—the car flies. To the adult it flies too, but by trickery. The crux of the matter here is that the car might just as well be a flying saucer. It would have been just as easy to make one of these fly on the screen. The technique is well known outside of the world of cinema. It is called Back projection and involves an image being superimposed onto a previously filmed background. Even to the experts it is undetectable. There was no way of telling whether Chitty, Chitty really flew or not. Perhaps it is a good job some UFO investigators did not have the film. No doubt they would now be proclaiming the existence of flying motor cars.

Looking at UFO photographs in very basic terms we can subdivide them into three categories. Firstly we have photographs that show an object in all its glory, with visible protuberances, doors, windows and the rest. Then there are those which just show something in silhouette. Finally we

have diffuse blobs of light or just light trails across a blackened sky.

Obviously, the ones that show a fully fledged UFO are the most fantastic. Yet these are not at all common. Indeed they tend to accompany the contactee stories and are often presented along with a story of beings from outer space powering super spaceships. The photographs, such as those taken by George Adamski, seem to reinforce this belief rather too readily. We do not seem to have many actual photographs of an object when a close encounter did not occur which shows the amount of detail we are here referring to.

The most abundant group of photographs are the second. Indeed these represent the typical UFO picture. We are here speaking of a shadowy, often blurred, object of usually circular or disc shape. Most often this is a dark object against the lighter tones of the sky, even when colour photographs are available. This is quite to be expected when one considers the difficulties of photographing an unexpected often fast moving and distant object against the vast expanse of the sky. Indeed it is perhaps more surprising that we do have the clear photographs mentioned earlier.

The third type of photograph is nearly always next to useless, as nothing but an undefined light or blob is present. This could be either caused by a time exposure having been taken of the moving object, or the camera being shaken or jolted during exposure. This latter error is hardly unexpected under the circumstances.

As a basis upon which to build our discussion we shall look at a few cases which may be said to be typical of the more interesting received by UFO investigators. We shall not refer to instances which involve only a streak of light or an amorphous blob since little purpose is served by considering these in any seriousness.

On January 5th 1977 at Wrexham in North Wales two teenage boys saw a UFO. In actual fact they claim to have seen four dark objects passing by in formation. They were playing snooker at the time and preparing to go into the town before the shops closed for half day. The time was early morning, and they were still on holiday from school after their Christmas vacation. One of the boys spotted the objects moving slowly and apparently at some distance. He dashed upstairs to find a loaded camera, which was of only a

very simple 'Instamatic' type. It took some minutes to locate, and when he did he joined his friend out in the garden observing the strange procession.

The objects moved from left to right across their viewpoint, making no noise. As they did so two colour photographs were taken, before the objects disappeared from sight behind a dark rain cloud.

Our attention was first drawn to this incident by an article on February 1st in the local newspaper, the *Evening Leader*. The reporter, Mark Curie, admits that his story was originally written in tongue-in-cheek fashion, but that he subsequently altered this when he checked with various centres and discovered that the boys had not seen aircraft. He also had the press photographer examine the pictures and this expert's view was that they were genuine. Mr Curie's attitude became further altered when he read a story in a national newspaper describing the sighting of an object very similar to the ones photographed seen on the same day in southern England. Consequently the story received quite an amount of local publicity, and some months later (whilst we were still investigating it, and unbeknown to ourselves) the national television programme "Good Afternoon" featured the story and photographs.

Ken Green was the investigator for UFOIN. He interviewed the boys and took photographs at the site. The negatives of the photographs were obtained and sent to the Kodak Company for analysis. We shall look at the results of this later in the chapter.

In many ways the investigation of photographic cases proves very rewarding. This is because it is often possible to come to fairly definite conclusions after a logical examination of the facts. Those shown by the photograph must agree with the testimony of the witness. All too often he reports a sighting as occurring at early morning when lighting proves the photographs to be taken in the evening, or a similar glaring inconsistency occurs.

When an investigator views a series of photographs for the first time it is all too easy to rush towards a premature conclusion. More often than not the photograph itself will contain the necessary clues to enable the experienced eye to tell whether or not it provides evidence of an unidentified phenomenon in the sky.

Another case which involves colour photographs occurred

at about 5.30 p.m. on June 25th 1977, and once more there were two young men as witnesses. In this instance, however, they were both in their twenties.¹

The two were driving along the B651 road in Hertfordshire, close to the village of Wheathampstead. Whilst travelling through an area of open country one of them saw what at first was thought to be a small cloud. However, when the 'cloud' began to move they stopped the car and had a closer look. One of them reached for a Polaroid SX 70 camera, which was in the car, and took a sequence of four pictures of the object as it moved across the sky below the clouds (Plates 5 and 6). Shortly after the fourth photograph was taken the object shot away and was lost from view. It is interesting to note that whilst the object was in sight the men reported feeling a slight tingling sensation in the upper portions of their bodies.

The four pictures each show an object of a domed disc-like configuration. The outline is quite fuzzy and indistinct. During the passage of the object another car drove along that section of the road, but the driver did not apparently stop to look at the object (or may not in fact have seen it). This car is visible on the third of the sequence of photographs, with the object apparently above it. It is difficult to understand why the driver did not stop if he saw the two men out of their car on a lonely stretch of road, pointing a camera towards the sky in an obvious state of excitement.

At first sight there may appear to be no grounds on which to question the testimony of the two witnesses. In fact the investigator of the case, Mr Barry King, states in his report¹: "I have come to the conclusion that the four photographs taken by Martin Tominey appear to show what is commonly called a UFO." However we believe that valid grounds exist to question that conclusion. These relate to the fact that all four frames show the object to be blurred and out of focus.

The motion of the object is described as being "fairly fast", we know the duration of the observation to have been estimated as being between 45 seconds and one minute. The sequence of photographs show that the object, relative to the camera position, moved through at least 90 degrees. The shutter speed of the camera is not known (it is controlled automatically by the exposure meter within the camera depending on the lighting conditions), though it may reason-

ably be expected to have been about 1/125th of a second. In our opinion the blur is due to neither camera shake or the movement of the object. The former explanation of the blur is rejected because the remaining detail of the picture is reasonably clear. Although a fast moving object will produce a blurred image if either its movement is too fast to be frozen by the shutter speed in use or if the camera is not panned with the movement. The camera was not panned for the same reason that the possibility of camera shake was rejected. It is doubtful that the speed of the object was sufficient. Given a high enough speed the image should display a suggestion of clarity on the leading edge and the blurring most marked on the trailing edge of the object. None of the four frames display this property. In fact all the four images appear equally blurred even though the angular velocity of the object varies through the sequence. However, the principal argument against the possibility of object speed having caused the blurring is that its movement was through 90 degrees, and such angular movement in even considerably less than 45 seconds cannot be regarded as sufficiently fast to produce the degree of blur seen in the photographs.

Our concern when dealing with photographs is in establishing the validity of the evidence and not in detecting how the photographs may have been obtained. However the earlier comments regarding back projection may well be applicable to these photographs also.

Cases involving photographs have a habit of becoming 'classic'. A mythology almost tends to surround them, and what was initially a very inconsequential sighting turns into something much more spectacular after the intervention of some avid ufologists and a few years of fading memories.

One such case occurred in 1966, and has since become famous as the Conisborough photograph or the Stephen Pratt case.²

Stephen Pratt was a teenager at the time that the event occurred in late March 1966. He is now a keen UFO enthusiast. He and four other members of the family claim to have seen an orange light in the sky. Quickly going inside to get a camera he was able to secure one photograph of the light before it moved away out of sight. On processing the film one frame was not printed, as at first glance it did not possess an obvious picture. However, on closer inspection

the negative was seen to feature three dark objects against the overcast sky. Not at all what the witnesses thought they had seen.

The testimony of the witness does have inconsistencies that we need not concern ourselves with, suffice it to say that serious doubts in our minds suggest that the account of the events may not be entirely accurate. However the principal reason for mentioning this case is the factor of the photographs varying from what the witnesses say was observed. Many witnesses have been confronted with this situation and have suggested the explanation lies in the possibility that the object was emitting light at a frequency at which the human eye is not sensitive whilst the film is. Whereas it is true that films do record parts of the infra-red and ultra-violet sections of the spectrum it is not tenable to propose that the light emissions of the objects photographed fall completely within the bands visible to the film but not the eye. Fig. 7 shows comparison graphs for typical black and white film and the human eye regarding their sensitivity to light at different wavelengths, the graph for a typical colour film is also shown. It does not account for the reports that photographs may show objects which were not visible to the eye. If an object is seen by the witness, then it should occur on the emulsion of the film in some manner, though modified possibly due to the effects of contrast and density.

One of the simplest things an investigator can do when first confronted with a photographic case, is to try to look at the picture in its true perspective. This means that he should examine the photograph in such a way that it retains the original perspective that it presented to the witness as he clicked the camera shutter. The increase in realism that this provides can be quite remarkable, and enables the investigator to make a much more accurate judgement about the information provided. The interested reader is recommended to study Kodak pamphlet M-15 'Viewing a Print in True Perspective', from which the following notes are adapted.

Because of the geometrical relationship between the camera and subject when a picture is taken, someone subsequently viewing the print can regain the correct perspective if he reproduces this same relationship. The correct distance from which to view a print of any size can be found by applying the formula:

$$D = F \times N$$

D is the correct viewing distance in inches.

F is the focal length of the camera lens in inches.

N is the number of times the negative has been enlarged to obtain the print.

The same formula can be used to calculate the degree of enlargement needed to obtain true perspective when the print is viewed at 15 inches ($D = 15$).

This is:

$$N = \frac{15}{F}$$

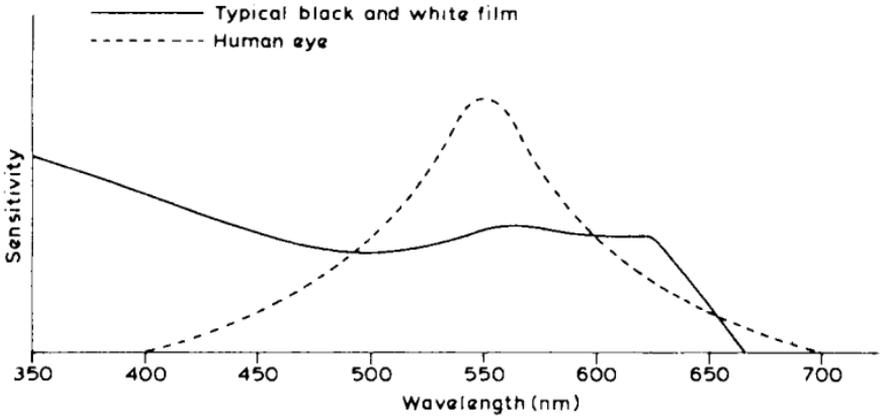


Fig. 7a Comparison of the spectral sensitivity of a typical black and white film, and the human eye (Courtesy Kodak Ltd, Hemel Hempstead)

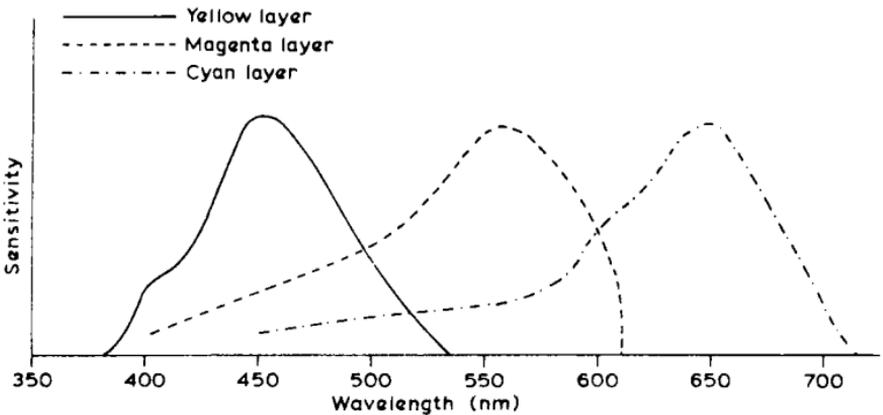


Fig. 7b Graph showing spectral sensitivity of typical colour film (Courtesy Kodak Ltd, Hemel Hempstead)

By utilising this method it was found that the photographs taken by the two boys at Wrexham could not be accepted as valid evidence to support the testimony of their sighting. The perspective shown in the photographs is impossible to achieve if the witnesses stood in the place that they claim. Photographs taken by the investigator at the site show that the boys would either have to be considerably taller than they were or to have stood on top of something, which their story does not claim.

The technique of back projection and its application to the film *Chitty, Chitty, Bang, Bang* has already been referred to. There is no doubt that this methodology has been used to fabricate a good many UFO photographs. It is easy to put an image, such as a cut-out shape, onto a sheet of glass or perspex and photograph a scene through it so that it appears that the image is really part of the scene and at some distance from the camera. It may be possible to show that the image is in fact small and close to the camera if mistakes are made by the perpetrator of the hoax. Should reference points at varying distance from the lens be included in the background scene lighting and perspective may give lie to the illusion. However, when a fuzzy shape is placed against a featureless background or skyscape it is nearly impossible to tell whether or not the photograph does indeed show an object in the sky or a back projected image apparently put there.

A 'classic' of this type was taken by schoolboy Alex Birch some years ago. For ten years he hoaxed UFO experts throughout the world before admitting what he had done. There are other photographs still claimed to be genuine which look so remarkably similar that we would be failing in objectivity if we did not dismiss these from consideration, be they genuine or not. The photograph reproduced here (Plate 7) was taken by George Manson within days of the technique being explained to a group in Manchester. It was never claimed to show an unknown phenomenon, but does prove how simple it can be to come up with a convincing fake.

It must be appreciated that we are not saying either that all the photographs ever claimed to show genuine UFO phenomena, or indeed all of the cases referred to in this chapter, have been faked. What we are saying is that because identification of a fake photograph is so difficult

considerable care should be taken in the investigation of photographic cases. It is usually best to make no judgement on the evidence provided by the picture if doubt remains, as it almost always will do, and a photograph without the support of excellent supportive witness testimony should never be claimed by UFO investigators to represent proof of the existence of *true* UFOs.

Evidence in the form of motion pictures is certainly less common, as one might expect. However, there are a few such pieces of film on record which do require comment. Of course, all the previous remarks about still photography have some bearing on the question of motion picture evidence also.

The ciné film aspect of photographic evidence is represented here by three cases, two 8 mm and one 16 mm films. These are the 'Peter Day' film of 1973, the 'John Flattley' film taken in 1977 and the now well known 'ATV' film which was taken by a professional film crew in Oxfordshire in 1971.

The Day and Flattley films comprise the core of our ciné film evidence. In many ways these films run parallel courses, not least of these being the phenomena filmed appear almost identical. The Flattley film is perhaps the more interesting of the two, not only is it longer, it shows the same phenomenon on two different types of film stock. This however should not overshadow the Day film which is not without merit.

Peter Day is a building surveyor and planning consultant by profession and an amateur film maker by desire. He was between Thame and Aylesbury close to Cuddington on the Oxfordshire border, and on his way to an appointment in Cuddington. The time was about 9 a.m. on Thursday January 11th 1973. He had seen the strange thing in the sky about two minutes before he was able to stop the car he was driving in a place where it would be practical and safe. As he prepared to film the event he was not to know that he would be able to record only the last few seconds of the incident.

Using the cine camera that he carried on a seat of the car he filmed the mystery round orange object (plate 10). In less than 15 seconds the object had gone and Peter Day was a very puzzled man. Those few seconds of film are valuable in many senses. They confirm what happened of course, but they also add weight to the many other reports of similar

observations which are not supported by such pictorial evidence.

The basic details of the observation by Peter Day are quite simple, he was driving along a road he knew well when for a couple of brief minutes he saw a totally unfamiliar event. The round orange object he estimates was at least three-quarters of a mile away and travelling in a level plane and horizontal to the tree lined horizon. He also estimates that the object was about 2,000 feet above ground level, and travelling left to right. He describes the disappearance of the object as "one minute it was there and the next minute it was gone". In fact the film shows the object to be clearly visible in the penultimate frame and not in the final frame. This and other similarities with the Flattley film will be enlarged upon later.

After he had kept the appointment to which he had been driving Peter Day approached the offices of the local newspaper to enquire if anyone else had seen the object. He learned that about fifty children at a school in Long Crendon plus a teacher who was driving to school at the time had all seen the object. The report which was published in the *Thame Gazette* on January 16th 1973 quotes one child as saying the object was like "a huge blob of orange fire". Mr Day recounts that the children told him that the object had passed within a few hundred yards of the school and that they had a clear view and that it had illuminated the ground with an orange glow. The school teacher described to Mr Day how the object had been ahead of her and stationary. To her it looked round like a ball on the top though the bottom half of the shape was flat, the whole thing was spinning. Both the teacher and children confirm that the disappearance of the mystery object was sudden.

The film shows the orange object at some range from the camera and low on the horizon, in fact shortly after the sequence begins the object is seen to pass behind some of the trees on the skyline. It is also clear from the film that even when run at normal speed (18 frames per second) the object is clearly flickering or pulsating in an irregular manner. This is more noticeable of course when the film is viewed at lower speed and the movement slowed, the pulsation is then quite considerable in some scenes. It is widely known in circles of people working in the subject that the final frame of this film is the subject of some

speculation. We will take this opportunity to mention that the cause of this speculation is in our view due entirely to the fact that the final frame shows camera shake. This gives the impression that the scene "is being drawn upwards by unseen powers"; upon examination it is clear that the effect is due to rapid movement of the camera downwards as it stops filming.

The second case, the John Flattley film, is a recent addition to our files and is still under investigation. Filmed in October 1977, it is perhaps the most significant case involving ciné film of an (as yet) unidentified aerial phenomenon known to us. The details of this particular case are not too important to the discussion that follows, though they are to be published in *Flying Saucer Review*.

The witnesses are two families from the Crewe area of Cheshire who were taking a short holiday in Wiltshire. With the intention of making a short film about Stonehenge they had camped within a stone's throw of the henge. During the evening of Tuesday October 18th, John Flattley, a keen cinéphotography enthusiast, his wife and daughter and Terry Hayes with his wife and daughter, were to witness a spectacular display that was to last over three hours and involve about eighteen of the mystery lights.

The events of that memorable evening began when a portable television flickered and the picture died. The screen left blank and the attempts at returning the picture unsuccessful, it was forgotten. Shortly afterwards the first of many strange lights was observed for a brief moment. It looked like an orange in the sky, it meandered about gently and then disappeared. Soon it was followed by more, and it is these that are recorded for all the world to see. As the evening progressed more film was taken, short sequences, always leaving some film in reserve should something really spectacular occur. Then the inevitable happened, there was no more film left to expose. So with about three minutes of film shot, the witnesses must have been left to watch the continuing events without hope of recording them.

It is these few brief minutes that hold the answer, if there is an answer, to at least part of the UFO enigma.

So what does the film show? What can we tell from the film? The film shows what the witnesses described as orange balls of light that did not appear to radiate (Plates 8 and 9). As mentioned the film consists of two film stocks, a daylight

film and a more sensitive film intended to be used under low light conditions. The low light film, Kodak Ektachrome 160, shows the scene as dusk fell. The foreground clearly visible, and the strange orange light in the sky moving through the field of view, slowing and stopping. The daylight type film, believed to be Kodachrome 40, shows simply the orange objects as silhouettes against the dark sky. This being a film intended for use in daylight the dusk was insufficiently light to produce a fully illuminated picture, so only the brightest areas are recorded, in this case the lights. This section shows lights appearing 'from nowhere', and melting back again in to nothing. Sometimes two, but three or four are seen in the same sequence. At one stage two lights appear to gyrate around each other, in all these scenes the lights resemble the ones seen on the low light film.

The salient point being that an aerial phenomenon was observed and filmed repeatedly.

Both the Peter Day and John Flattley films were examined by experienced staff at the Kodak Company. Their findings were that the images on the films are genuine and not formed by trickery. In essence the result of the examination of the films is that they do show actual objects of some sort in the sky.

So then what are these mystery objects? As is well known the area of Stonehenge is close to Salisbury Plain where there are a great many military exercise areas and firing ranges. The suggestion that the lights filmed were flares used to illuminate a battle area was quick to arise. The witnesses are adamant that this is not the explanation. They argue that the lights moved into their vicinity from some distance horizontally, and displayed rapid deceleration. Not, they contend, the expected behaviour of flares. They tell how on other occasions the lights appeared "out of thin air" and simply "melted away"—such characteristics are seen on sequences of the film. On these occasions the time taken for the appearance or dissolving ranges from a fraction of a second to several seconds. The disappearance of the object on the Peter Day film is also rapid, in the order of 1/40th of a second.

Another reasonable suggestion of what the film shows is the phenomenon of ball lightning. However the sheer fact that witnesses saw the lights repeatedly and from the same location is surely argument enough that it was not ball

lightning that was observed. The reader requiring a deeper understanding of ball lightning is recommended to the earlier mentioned *Taming of the Thunderbolts*, and a comprehensive work by Stanley Singer *The Nature of Ball Lightning*.

The indications are that there will be a great deal of discussion yet to come about the nature and origin of the objects on these two films. Even now in these early days of our investigations the explanations contradict each other, the authors are keen that no premature conclusions are drawn here and the reader is referred to the articles in *Flying Saucer Review* for a fuller and considered opinion on these two intriguing films.

On October 6th 1971, by sheer good fortune, an experienced film crew witnessed a UFO event whilst preparing a sequence of film for a television programme.⁵ They were able to take a good length of colour film of the phenomenon, which was also seen by a large number of independent witnesses in the Oxfordshire countryside.

Unfortunately, although this case provides the perfect basis for the highest quality of filmed evidence, the event filmed was of limited value. What is recorded generally resembles a high flying aircraft accompanied by a vapour trail, and looks most unlike a typical UFO event. The film has proved extremely difficult to analyse, although considerable efforts have been made. There are a few minor points that argue against the image being an aircraft, but in general researchers who have worked on the film have left the impression that the film represents something remarkable. Had the film not been taken there is little doubt in our minds that the case would now be forgotten as fairly uninteresting and quite possibly representative of an aircraft seen under unusual conditions. Because of this we feel that the film does not constitute any real evidence of an unusual event.

The other form of instrumental evidence that has been attached a great deal of significance is that provided by radar.

The modern radar system is often thought by the layman to be the ultimate in surveillance. A sense of wonder surrounds this modern miracle of electronics. In many ways it is a modern miracle. It has provided a safe means of travelling through the densely congested air space above us. It enables navigation at sea to be undertaken in the poorest

of visibility. Its other uses range from being a tool of the police in enforcing speed restrictions on our roads, to mapping the surface of the planet Mars. However as one specialist in radar systems told us "the problems and shortcomings of the early radar systems are still with us today".

A basic understanding of the principles involved is necessary if we are to discuss the application of radar as a tool of surveillance. RADAR is derived as an acronym from *RAD*io *DE*tectio*N* *AN*d *RAN*ging. That is exactly what it does. For our purposes it will suffice if we explain the operation of a typical system. Although most radars are used to survey a volume of air space as previously mentioned this is not their sole use, but we shall consider the aerial to be rotating continuously. As it sweeps its circle it transmits a fan-shaped verticle beam. Horizontally this beam is as narrow as possible, for a reason that will be explained shortly. In practice the profile of this beam is irregular in so much as it does not cover the arc from ground level to directly overhead (as would be ideal). The beam of radio energy transmitted by the aerial consists of a series of short bursts, hundreds per second. During the gaps when the transmitter is off, the system listens for any echo that might come from a target. When a target is received the echo is displayed on a screen in relation to the range at which it lies. The range is calculated from the time taken for the beam to travel to and then be reflected from the target back to the aerial. The screen on which the echoes appear to the operator is called a plan position indicator, and just as the range is displayed so is the direction of the target in relation to the aerial. Thus the operator is provided with a display of the situation under scrutiny.

The factors which determine if two closely spaced targets can be resolved and displayed on the plan position indicator as two, is related to the horizontal beam width transmitted by the aerial, and to the pulse length of that beam. The aerial beam width determines if two closely spaced targets can be resolved in azimuth or direction. For example, if the aerial beam width of the system is 3 degrees, the diameter of that beam at a range of 25 miles would be approximately $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles. Consequently, two targets at a range of 25 miles and closer than $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles would merge and be displayed on the plan position indicator as one target. In a similar way the

pulse length dictates the spacing at which two targets might be resolved.

This basis will enable us to discuss a few of the problems encountered in the operation of a radar system. As one might expect, there are a number of technical complications to both the operation and problems that we are to discuss. For a fuller discussion the reader is recommended to consult the book *Radar Ornithology* by Eric Eastwood.⁴

A number of problems arise in the operation of a radar system that may give rise to a great deal of misunderstanding on the part of the layman. Not least of these being that the interpretation of a plan position indicator is a skill which can only be gained after a good deal of experience. The plan position indicator is cluttered with 'blips' or echoes of varying strength, these blips might represent an aircraft, a flock of birds or a piece of high ground. The interpretation is of vital importance. It appears that almost anything can produce an echo that may be displayed as a 'blip'. A discussion on the interpretation of a plan position indicator would be largely pointless without a screen in front of each reader, the problems that we shall concern ourselves with however, are the objects and conditions that are known to produce blips.

The source of a blip may be as diverse as a small number of insects, to a range of mountains. In general terms what causes an echo of the transmitted beam is a change in the refractive index of the atmosphere through which it is passing, or simply being reflected off a subject that may or may not be the desired target. The cause of an echo from a source that is not known to the operator may be extremely difficult to identify. Although an experienced operator might after some time know that an unidentified blip might well be due to a flock of roosting birds for example, a less experienced operator might interpret the blip as a target that has other more 'genuine' origins, unless of course he is an ornithologist using radar as a tool to monitor bird movement.

It is well known in the quarters that deal in radar that a great many objects can cause radar echoes. As mentioned these are relatively easy to identify, and in many cases they can be removed from the plan position indicator if desired. The majority of these unwanted echoes are stationary, since they are due to returns from the terrain around the locality

of the aerial, from high ground some distance from the aerial or because they originate from targets that are moving slowly. All these sources of 'clutter' may be removed from the display by means of a filter called a moving target indicator. This operates on a simple process of comparing the time the beam takes to travel to and from the targets under observation, if there is more than a predetermined degree of change the system accepts that the target is moving and is subsequently displayed. If a target does not meet the applied degree of change it is regarded as stationary and is not displayed. In this way only actual targets that are moving get displayed. It should be noted that if a target is moving in a circle with the aerial at its centre then the system will regard it as stationary, because the time taken for the beam to be received as an echo has not changed, it will therefore not be displayed. It should also be noted that no radar can display a blip from any target if that target is not 'illuminated' by the beam or else fails to return a sufficiently strong echo.

The filtering of the information in the moving target indicator is all very well and desirable if the blips that are unwanted are stationary or are slow moving. It should be remembered that the blip is not necessarily due to a reflection off a target. A change in the refractive index of the atmosphere can also cause a return. In his book Eric Eastwood talks of pockets of "non standard air" as causing returns. By this term he means a pocket of air that has either a different temperature from the air which surrounds it, or a different humidity, or pressure, or we suspect simply a different direction of movement. The changes necessary to cause a return from such air pockets need not be very great, a change of for example, a few millibars; if moving at sufficient speed these could be enough to pass through the moving target indicator and be displayed. Perhaps it is these that on occasion have produced what a radar operator would call an 'angel'. On other occasions it is obvious that the 'angel' has a more curious cause. The reason blips of these unknown sources were called 'angels' is simple; they appear to be capable of flight and perform some quite amazing manoeuvres, of course they are not actually echoes from anything exotic, they are returns from sources that interest the atmospheric physicist and the meteorologist, not the ufologist. A great deal of research is being done into

these 'angels' or 'clear air echoes', the indications are that they are caused by atmospheric conditions, and have little or nothing to do with the subject of this book.

Although we have talked mainly in terms of radar as a tool to observe airspace, another principal use is in meteorology, notably in airborne weather radar systems. At one time such systems were only carried by large airliners, though in recent years their use has become far more widespread and now they are in use in general aviation.

There are a few differences in the operation of weather radar compared with air surveillance systems, though in general the same principles apply. It must be remembered however that the personnel using airborne weather radar are pilots first and radar operators second. Although they are instructed how to use radar, they have nothing like the experience of the professional operator. The interpretation of the airborne weather radar display is a far more subjective business.

If one considers the cases that accumulated over the years there are very few indeed which have any radar observations forming part of the evidence. If one then further examines these cases it is clear that only an extremely small number of these have occurred in recent years. The vast majority of these happened in the early 1950s. The authors are aware of only two or three cases that have been recorded, and that are available, since 1958. A number of the cases that are on record prior to 1958 are without visual confirmation of an unusual phenomena, in fact very few cases indeed exist where the source of the unidentified blip is observed visually whatever period is considered. One American researcher has argued that a radar observation is of most value when supported by visual back-up or, a second radar observation. From our researches it would appear that if one radar sees an unidentified blip so will another system that is operating at a similar wavelength. So if one system sees an 'angel' so will a second system.

As we said earlier, the problems of early systems are still with us today. The birth of radar as a method of observing the atmosphere was in the 1930s. By the 1950s radar was out of its infancy and many teething troubles had been overcome, but we suggest that radar had a troublesome adolescence. Our argument against radar observations is quite simple. Is it too unreasonable to propose that the

majority of the alleged observations of UFOs were actually misidentified 'angels', or genuine returns from aircraft, birds or other rational objects, not to mention the multitude of atmospheric and meteorological conditions that exist?

We might further argue that there are no known recent radar observations of UFOs, though the enthusiast would probably counter with the old government cover-up routine. In researching material for the present book we talked at length to specialists both in the design and operational use of radar, and from those many people we only learned of one incident where something strange was observed. An aircraft had been asked by the air traffic controller if they were able to see the cause of an 'angel' which had appeared on the display. The crew replied no, and flying in near perfect conditions, promptly flew through the 'angel'. One must come to the conclusion that the cause of the 'angel' was a clear air echo. Such spurious targets can provide spectacular images on modern high power radars, images that move against the wind, change direction rapidly and display qualities that are normally associated with solid targets.

In our examination of cases involving radar observations we have found enough indication that almost all can be explained in terms of possible imperfections or misinterpretations of displays, and see little substance in the alleged evidence provided by such cases.

We may relate an incident that occurred on July 31st 1976. It involved the observation of an unidentified target on the weather radar system aboard a British Airways Trident aircraft flying on the regular service to Faro in Portugal. The incident received widespread publicity some time after the event because the aircraft's captain was unable to accept the initial explanation of the events he and his crew had witnessed.

The aircraft was flying from Heathrow; on the flight into Faro. The crew saw a "very bright light (which appeared) well above the horizon, bearing 030 degrees" from their position. Whilst watching this light, "at a much lower level, a large rectangular object suddenly materialised. It had the appearance of a thick, foreshortened condensation trail. The periphery was of a vapourish appearance and coloured probably by the setting sun. The centre was very dark, solid looking somewhat cigar like and appeared stationary. Approximately 50 seconds later another of these objects

suddenly appeared behind the first.” This account comes from the aircraft’s first officer whose statements were recorded by Omar Fowler and published in *Flying Saucer Review*.⁵ The return flight to Heathrow was to hold a mystery also, a mystery that persisted after Philip Taylor had published his findings that the object the crew of the Trident, ground radar controllers, and at least two other aircraft crews had seen was a research balloon. Taylor’s findings, which are quite conclusive, were published in the British UFO Research Association *Journal* Vol. 6, No. 5. In our experience his findings have been largely ignored by fellow workers.

During the return flight as the aircraft approached the vicinity of the sighting, the captain had turned on the weather radar and to his surprise the display showed a big blip and then two smaller ones close to it. He describes the size of the blips as being three times larger than the size of an echo from a supertanker ship. The first officer described the blips as “enormous” and at a range of twenty miles and stationary. The crew turned the light on the flight deck down to dim and began to search the sky ahead of the aircraft for any signs of the echoes that were displayed. The aircraft passed to within seven miles of the position of the echoes and nothing was seen even though the night was clear and visibility was good. The crew seem convinced that they had a good radar contact with something very strange indeed.

It is possible that the returns displayed by the radar were actually echoes from the balloon, though this seems unlikely considering the behaviour of the balloon. We feel that the cause of the blips could be something much more down to earth.

The British Airways fleet of Trident Two aircraft are equipped with the M.E.L. E290 Series radar. The equipment is capable, as most weather radars, of either being used in a weather detection mode or else in a ground mapping mode. The former permits the aircrew to observe the weather ahead of the aircraft and if necessary to avoid its denser centres. The latter mode is intended as a means to map out the terrain ahead and below the path the aircraft is flying. The display does not produce what the layman could recognise as a map; rather it shows a display of how well the terrain reflects the beam transmitted. There are a number of

factors that need to be remembered when considering if the crew actually made an observation of something strange. We should emphasise that we have every faith in the standard of operational technique of the British Airways aircrew. The point to be remembered is that the crew were expecting (albeit subconsciously) to see something on the radar display that would confirm that they had seen something earlier. The radar display on which they viewed the blips is far smaller than those used on air traffic control situation for example. The air traffic control displays are about 20 inches in diameter, the display of the E290 weather radar is $4\frac{1}{2}$ by $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches. From the size of the blips described by the crew they were covering a considerable portion of the display area. It is the sheer size of these blips that cause us to pose the question, could the crew have seen echoes from the terrain of the rising ground below the aircraft?

The course the aircraft was flying on the return flight was to have taken it from Faro to Valladolid, and across the northern coast of Spain close to Santander. There appears to be some confusion about its exact position when the radar blips were seen. One should also remember that the radar has a terrain mapping mode, and it is not clear if the equipment was set in that function or in the weather detection mode when the blips were observed.

After consulting the "Aircrew Operating Instructions" for the E290 radar which were kindly supplied by the manufacturers for us, we do not think it unreasonable to suggest that the crew actually saw some ground returns. It does appear from discussion with people involved with radar and in particular the equipment manufacturers that the blips were too large to have originated from an airborne source other than perhaps an 'angel'. Such an explanation would appear reasonable in accounting for the fact that the crew did not sight anything when they searched the sky in the direction of the blips, perhaps had they looked down they might have seen the cause.

Perhaps our fellow workers in the subject view our negative approach to radar and photographic cases as a little unreasonable. We would reply that there is nothing wrong in adopting an objective standpoint when considering evidence of such possible magnitude. But taking their point of view for a moment, if these radar observations are of

bona fide UFOs within our atmosphere, where is the supporting hard evidence of these events in the reports of equally spectacular nature that are alleged to have occurred at ground level?

What many people inside, and outside the subject, fail to realise is that over Britain, and many other countries, watch networks of cameras record the passage of meteors and fire balls, in all covering millions of square miles of sky. Why is it these networks are not turning up UFO events in the quantities that many people would have us believe they happen?

In passing, it is worth mentioning if only briefly the work being undertaken in America by a team of people working as Project Starlight International.⁶ The working objective of this project is to gather a broad range of UFO hard data and make that data available to any section of the interested scientific community. The centre uses a selection of electronic and optical tracking equipment to record UFO events. To date the authors are not aware of any major successes.

As a final comment on the subject, consider this remark by a colleague when discussing UFO photographs: "The trouble with UFO photographs is that some look like nothing at all, and others look too much like we imagine they ought to look."

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Close Encounters: 1, With Transient Effects (CE I)

“When these objects are around I get very bad headaches and something tells me to look up into the sky”—UFO Witness

So far we have only considered UFO experiences which occur at some distance from the observer, or at least do not affect him in any way. Regardless of how they seem to indicate the presence of a new phenomenon they cannot compare to the situation where the experience directly impinges on the witness, in other words he experiences a close encounter.

It has been practice to distinguish between normal observations and close encounters on the basis of distance. The argument, no doubt, is that something viewed close up is much less likely to be misidentified. However, it seems to be more plausible to form a distinction on the grounds of whether the witness or environment itself incurs any effects, or whether they simply remain passive throughout the experience. From this it proves simple to define close encounters with transient, or passing, effects and those with remnants of a more permanent nature. It will become apparent that by bringing the phenomenon close to the observer its whole complexion alters, and the physical considerations of low and medium definition or instrumental cases become superseded by factors relating to the percipients themselves.

What kind of things of a transient nature are experienced during close encounters? Basically we can distinguish between effects on the individual and those on his surroundings. The former are primarily psychological in nature

(including induced paralysis), and the latter can concern animal disturbance or interference with the electrical systems of equipment—such as the ignition of motor vehicles.

As an example consider two close contacts with the phenomenon which produced only minor effects, but left a very deep impression on the single witness in each case. This is interesting because the individuals concerned are very different in social status.

The first incident involves a seventeen-year-old girl, called Shelley Barnes. She works as a receptionist and was returning to her home close to the side of Rumworth Lodge Reservoir in Bolton on the night of January 23rd 1976. The time was about 6.10 p.m.¹

Shelley became aware of a light over the reservoir looking something like the back lights on a car. It was red in colour. After watching it for a few seconds it suddenly streaked towards her and hovered close by just above roof-top level.

At this point the frightened witness was able to see a clearly defined octagonal object with two large lights on the front. One was a steady amber and the other a flashing red.

The object now began to rotate on its axis, but remained quite silent, and Shelley felt her teeth begin to vibrate as if some ultrasonic sound was emanating from the object. Terrified she fled from the area. Although she regained her composure readily afterwards she was constantly afraid of ridicule and refused a request to appear on television because of the way she felt she might be treated.

Even more intriguing than this instance is the encounter experienced by security guard John Byrne on October 8th 1972 whilst patrolling his ground at the Cairo Mill in Oldham.²

Byrne became aware of a humming sound—our familiar noise like a swarm of bees or a generator (both very common descriptions of the UFO sound). He looked all round, puzzled, and was surprised to find that the source of the noise was not on the factory grounds but above them. Hovering by the side of the mill was this strange looking craft—no higher than 200 feet, perhaps less.

The following is taken from the transcription of the interview with John Byrne, made by investigator Ron Drabble for BUFORA.

JB "I looked over my right shoulder when I came out of the bicycle shed and there was this 'thing' hovering—just hovering doing nothing else. I didn't hear it come . . . I estimated it myself to be about 100 feet in diameter because it almost seemed to completely fill the sky. The edge nearest to me was almost over the top of the bicycle shed. I couldn't see the sky for this 'thing' that was hovering there. It also had what appeared to be a window, rather a large window, in the front of it. This was quite brightly lit with a bluey-white light."

RD "Could you see into the window?"

JB "No, I couldn't see into it at all. I didn't get any impression of anybody being inside the 'thing'. Just that this 'aircraft' or . . . machine . . . was brightly lit with this fluorescent type of lighting because it was not casting any shadows and no beams of light came from it at all. I got this impression of it when I stood watching it for five minutes until it turned itself upon its edge. Then you could see a definite saucer-shaped type with a large dome—an extremely large dome on the top of it and this was also lit. This dome gave me the impression as though there were bars on it—you know these could have been definite windows or storeys if you like . . ."

The object hovered for some few minutes without making any change in the pitch of the hum. It then flipped on its edge and shot straight up into the air. Note the witness comments about the sound here.

JB "Now there was no variation in the pitch of the hum at all. Not even when it left—and it left at a rate of knots which was absolutely fantastic. I've never seen anything like it and I don't want to see anything like it again."

Here we have some factors which we have to try to reconcile with the viewpoint that what was here encountered was a domed disc spacecraft hovering in our airspace. This proves most difficult to do.

1. The craft cast no shadow although it glowed very bright—with an eerie bluey tint.

2. The note from the object did *not* alter when it streaked away at a fantastic speed. Yet everyone is familiar with the doppler effect in which the noise from a passing car, or the whistle of an old steam train changes pitch very noticeably according to whether it is approaching or receding. This should be true for any physical object.

3. The object was *not* seen by anyone else in what is a densely populated area. Some rumours did spread of people having seen something but nothing at all that was confirmed, and it must also be noted that a colleague of Mr Byrne was

only yards away at the time. The witness was paralysed with fear and did not call out—but despite the tremendous size, the closeness of approach and the audibility of the object his colleague knew nothing of its presence.

What was seen at Cairo Mill? We shall leave discussion until the end of the book, but notice that it is a very common feature of close encounter reports that they are *not* perceived by anything like the number of people one might expect (see Fig. 8).

In this last case there is one additional fact which should be mentioned. The factory cat was apparently alerted to the presence of the object. It ran away in terror and hid out of sight for some hours afterwards. Clearly it was even more affected by its presence than John Byrne—although the witness himself was terrified afterwards. Yet his colleague nearby was totally unaffected.

Close encounter reports which involve interference with animals are by no means uncommon. Indeed it seems that in situations where an animal is within the sphere of influence of the event, then it is more likely than not to experience some reaction.³

Such a reaction is typified in the following experience. Alan Fallows was driving home alone one August evening in 1975. He was returning from Yorkshire across the flat and featureless moorland of the Pennine Hills towards his home at Mossley, Greater Manchester.

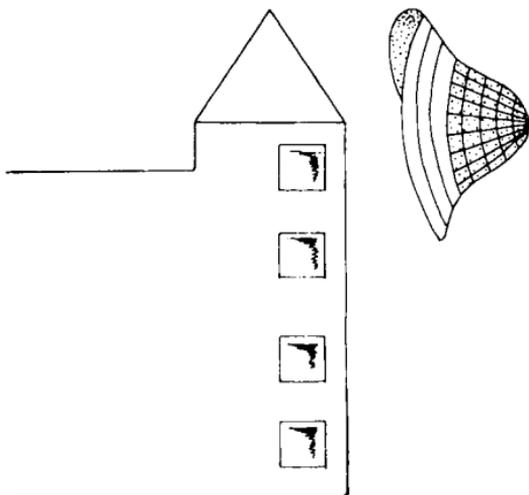


Fig. 8 The object drawn by security guard John Byrne at the Cairo Mill, Oldham, Greater Manchester, October 8th 1972

The light was fading at about 8.30 p.m., and thick hill mist surrounded him. He drove steadily on along the narrow road with just small wooden marker posts separating him from the adjoining peat bogs.

Suddenly he became aware of a white light in front of him and apparently in the fields by the roadside. It shone clearly through the mist—although visibility was reduced to no more than a few yards. In fact he commented that it seemed to create a tunnel through the mist. He drove on a few seconds and then stopped, afraid that the light came from some great lorry on the road in front. Given its width, passing this would not be easy. You will note that he is not thinking of UFOs but of common and down-to-earth practicalities of his current situation. However, he now realised that the light was on the ground or just above it, in the fields alongside and a few hundred yards ahead. He wound down his window but despite the eerie fog-ridden silence he heard nothing. The light began to move—at first imperceptibly and then very slowly and steadily on a diagonal course towards him. Throughout the experience the object travelled at walking pace, that is no more than a few miles per hour.

It is not difficult to imagine the fear and tension mounting as this huge object sailed through the mist towards him. It crossed the road ahead within fifty feet and he was able to experience a very clear picture of what was passing by.

In shape it was like a huge egg—or as the witness described it a "barrage balloon without fins". The colour was white but the glow came from within the object—which had a strange translucent-like sheen to it. The whole object glowed. Because it was so close and with investigators subsequently measuring the road width it was possible to secure very accurate figures for its size. In length it was about 25 feet and in height about 15 feet. Its width was approximately 25 feet. The only marking was a black circle on the rear underside of the object.

Now it has been suggested that what was seen was a weather balloon rolling down the hillside in a partially deflated condition. However, the facts argue most strongly against this—apart from which the witness had seen such a weather balloon before and is certain that this was not one.

As it travelled along the object was almost at ground level—negotiating the undulating terrain with no hindrance. As it reached the marker posts by the roadside, however, it

rose upwards, crossed the road, and then descended to its former level again, all the time remaining on an even keel. This is despite the fact that it could easily have crossed the road between the marker posts as their spacing was much wider than the width of the object. It also quite definitely did not rise like a caterpillar (i.e., front end first), as an object being raised by the thermal currents caused by the warmer air above the road surface would do.

The object now proceeded to turn down the valley and rose steadily away out of view behind an outcrop of rock.

Alan Fallows sat in his van paralysed with fear, but he had another shock to come. Out of the mist ahead of the car came two white shapes walking across the road, oblivious to his presence. They were sheep, mechanically walking behind the object and staring up at it. One was bleating—in stark contrast to the silence that pervaded. Both sheep disappeared into the mist in pursuit of the intruder.

As the object passed by, Alan Fallows swallowed as one does with relief—and his ears quite noticeably ‘popped’. Was this difference in air pressure related to the tunnel or vortex apparently being created in the mist?

The encounter lasted three minutes at least and when it had ended Alan Fallows found himself claspng a screw-driver in his hand. He does not recall picking this up—though it was on the front dashboard before. Quite probably it was an automatic defence mechanism. The whole experience has ingrained itself into his mind quite indelibly.

The reactions of the witness in all of these cases typify a usual feature in a close encounter. Fear of an extreme degree is to be expected when something strange and unknown seems to be taking a personal interest in one—for that is the way most witnesses view a close encounter. The often reported paralysis is probably attributed to this fear. The muscles of the body go taut and legs and arms seem immobilised. Fear may also be a part cause of the headaches which many witnesses experience subsequently.

Another interesting aspect is the number of occasions a witness will say, “I don’t know why I looked up—something just made me look and there it was.” They seem to indicate that they would not normally have been likely to look up and view the phenomenon, but on this occasion something ‘made’ them do so. Was this something an intuitive or even psychic realisation that something odd was present, or was it

a sub-effect of the phenomenon itself? Something, perhaps, which lay on the threshold of perception.

The manner in which animals seem able to hear sounds of UFOs when humans cannot has already been mentioned. Animals have a wider sense perception than humans. They might, therefore, be much more acutely aware of the phenomenon than human witnesses, and this is why for them a close encounter occurs much more frequently.

Consider this report for example.⁴ On December 31st 1976 Mrs Nellie Richardson of Bignall End in Staffordshire was awakened at 2.45 a.m. by light flooding into her bedroom. For the next hour and a half she observed a huge yellow sphere hovering over the Cheshire plains which surround her home. There were other witnesses to this strange phenomenon. Mrs Richardson also claimed to have seen two shadowy figures in front of the object (although these were quite possibly optical effects, due to the window through which they were observed, and Mrs Richardson's advanced age). However, the main point here is the reaction of the family cat.

Normally this cat slept through anything. On this occasion however, he was found downstairs on the window sill staring out at the object. Since it had made no noise or created any perceptible effects on Mrs Richardson, one is left to puzzle what it was that made the animal aware of its presence.

It may be of significance to note that extreme close encounters cases are quite often experienced by women. The bias towards female witnesses is not excessive, but it is noticeable because in general many more UFO reports are made by men. This is probably accounted for by the male psychology: a man is more likely to wish to relate a mysterious observation, and also men tend to be more involved in space travel, astronomy and such hobbies.

What is the significance, therefore, of this predominance of women experiencing close encounters? It could well be that women are more sensitive to the phenomena associated with the event, but it could also indicate a link with emotive and intuitional factors. Notice how many women mediums there are. The relationship appears to be of some importance—and the psychology of close encounter witnesses should be studied to see if it can be connected with that of other 'sensitive' people.

Of course it is quite probable that mediums and psychics

see 'UFOs' often. They would tend, however, not to view such visions as being significant to them due to their commonplace occurrence, whereas a solitary event experienced by a non-sensitive person takes on great significance and is readily reported. In addition UFO investigators in the past have been wary of listening to the claims of such people. An immediate reaction in several instances has been, "This case is not for us it is one for a psychic research society." What this *may* mean is that the most important cases are being ignored because they seem too fantastic. It could be that because of this conservatism we are touching but the tip of a vast and hidden iceberg.

An example of such an instance illustrates the complexity of close encounter cases. It is quoted from the report prepared for UFOIN by investigator Andrew Collins and took place at 00.45 on May 1st 1977 in the densely populated Walthamstow region of North-east London.

"The sighting occurred after Mrs Shirley Lewis, a middle-aged lady, had got out of bed to make a cup of tea due to her being unable to sleep. She walked out into the kitchen and put on the small strip-light on top of the cooker. Glancing towards the window she was puzzled to see a white glow emanating from outside. Curious she walked across to the window, pulled up the net curtains, and was astounded to see two objects, one above the other, identical in shape and descending vertically towards the ground. Each was shaped like a pear-drop or light bulb with the pointed end towards the ground. The top one was white in colour and the bottom one a fluorescent vivid, dark green.

"They descended gracefully for approximately one minute before the bottom one started to be obscured or go into what is thought were houses or buildings some three-hundred yards away. It continued to move behind or go into the building until totally obscured. The second object also disappeared in the same manner, it was as if both objects had disappeared down a hole."

After the objects had gone Mrs Lewis went to get a pair of binoculars and on training them on the area she saw an eerie green glow, squarish in shape, seemingly on a roof top. It was not self luminous.

One has to ask the obvious questions here. How can two large and striking objects be on view in a densely populated part of one of the world's leading cities, and yet be seen by

just one witness? Again, how can they apparently disappear 'into' a building (area checks reveal it as unlikely that they just went out of view behind a building).

The answers to these questions may well have something to do with the fact that Mrs Lewis is psychic. She claims to have had several premonitions in her life, once forewarning her of an accident to her daughter the next day. Such a background is by no means uncommon for a witness to these strange types of encounter, and must be considered relevant to the investigation.

Is it simply that witnesses with a psychic history are more liable to see UFOs, or is there a deeper relation? The fact that this might be so is indicated by the following experience.

Terry Shotton is an experienced UFO investigator, well known to the authors, and with considerable background in the subject. He is a perfectly down-to-earth man, whose work brings him into contact with all kinds of people under stress situations, and involves an understanding of psychology.

On November 13th 1976, Terry saw a strange golden light from outside his home. It was never identified but was only of a low definition type. However, within hours Mrs Joyce Bowles and Mr Ted Pratt had their encounter with a landed UFO and occupants (*see* Chapter 10) and he began to feel there was a connection.

Over subsequent months strange things began to happen, and on one occasion, February 28th 1977, he was again witness to a low definition object—this time with two colleagues. This event occurred on a skywatch (though his group do not make a habit of such ventures). It involved a golden trail of light which coincided with an uproar amongst farm animals near the scene. It also coincided with frightening phenomena on the garage roof, atop which the three skywatchers sat.

What happened was that the roof began to vibrate—undulating up and down. All those present felt it and also had a growing sense of apprehension which ultimately caused them to stop the watch. This experience is, of course, very reminiscent of poltergeist activity. Was Terry the catalyst for this?

On July 18th 1977, Terry was driving through Staffordshire near Hilderstone Level with colleague Chris Bourne. They had just left a meeting with their third colleague,

Derek James. Before rounding a corner Terry announced, out of a growing sense of unease, that they would see a UFO. They did.

What was observed consisted of a golden/yellow ball of light heading towards them and growing in brightness. It disappeared momentarily, and they stopped the car and got out. The ball continued to head silently towards them, and lit up all the surrounding area, and the ground below. It was totally silent though it seemed, said Terry, "as if it ought to be crackling away loudly". After about two minutes the ball floated to the ground, was possibly obscured by trees and left a glowing image at its point of departure for some seconds.

Terry was well aware of how this claim would be treated. He said, "If someone told me they had seen three UFOs in eight months or had seen one on the way home from a UFO meeting, I would have thought—this man's an idiot." Neither Terry nor his friends are idiots—they are professional men of great integrity and what they experienced has to be fitted into the framework of the UFO phenomenon and not just ignored.

A major aspect of transient effects associated with the UFO phenomenon concerns alleged electro-magnetic interference. This most often involves the stoppage of a car or other motor vehicle by the presence of a UFO—with either lights, engine or both being inhibited. However, it has also been claimed that UFOs have been responsible for major power failures throughout the world, and there is certainly some interesting evidence to suggest that the phenomenon has undue interest in sources of electrical power.

In December 1976 the Midlands of England was subjected to quite a substantial flap of close encounter cases. On the nights of December 13th and 14th particularly, disc shapes with a row of tiered lights were seen by several independent witnesses. All of the reports on these nights occurred over or near to electric power cables or electricity generating sub-stations. This seems beyond coincidence.⁵

We shall close this chapter with reference to a case which encapsulates this element of electro-magnetic interference and is also a close encounter in the truest of senses. It has not been identified.⁶

It occurred on the night of March 8/9th 1977—when UFO

phenomena were seen in many parts of Britain, and especially in the North Lancashire area.

At 3.10 a.m. Mr Brian Grimshawe and his friend and co-worker, whom we shall simply call Jeff, had just taken some workmates home and were about to return to their night shift at a nearby factory. They were driving through the dark and deserted streets of the town of Nelson. Surrounding this town are many hills, steeped in traditions of folklore, and witchcraft. One of these is Pendle Hill—home of the infamous Pendle Witches. The echoes of magic and mystery can be felt wherever one goes in the area. It was directly over Pendle Hill that the UFO phenomenon in this example first materialised.

The UFO seemed to drop down out of a cloud and head towards the Vauxhall car driven by Mr Grimshawe. As it came closer the two men were able to detect its shape. This was a large, dark oval with seemingly a row of windows along the middle. Orange light poured out of the ends (see Fig. 9).

The object was huge and it approached the car and hovered perhaps fifty or a hundred feet above it. As it did so the car headlights dimmed and then went out and the engine

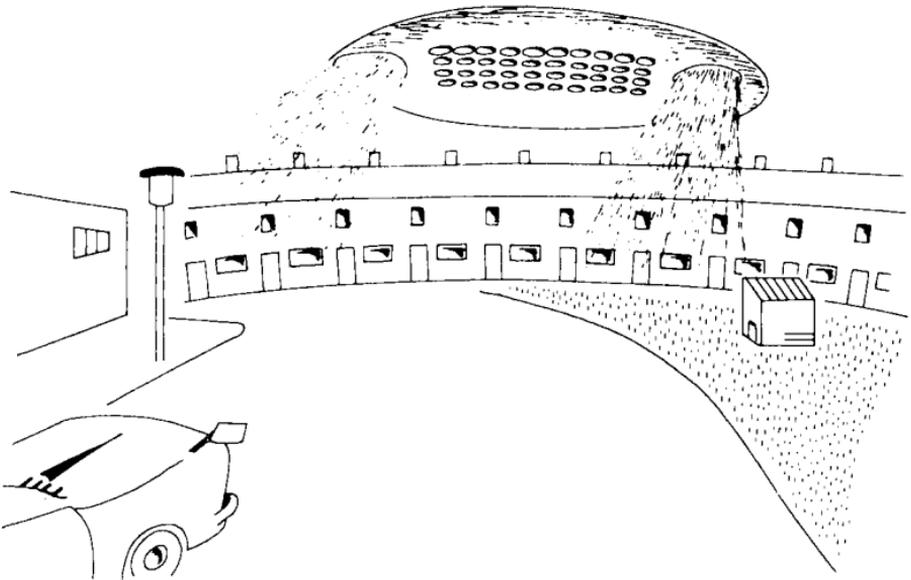


Fig. 9 The scene of the car stop incident at Nelson, Lancashire, March 9th 1977 (after drawing by Pauline Bowen for *FSR*)

died. No matter how Brian Grimshawe tried it would not turn over.

The men were now very frightened and got out of the car. Overhead the UFO was making a soft humming noise which seemed to permeate the area. It remained stationary for several minutes.

Outside the car the men felt a strange effect. There seemed to be a pressure coming from above. An invisible force pushing down on their shoulders. The sensation was described as a tingle—and it seemed related to the electrostatic crackle one gets when taking off nylon clothing if the body happens to be a good conductor.

Jeff at this point became panic-stricken and began to plead, "Let's get out of here." His friend tried desperately to help. Having more composure he returned to the car and tried to re-start the engine, but to no avail. However, the object began to slowly move away and the tension slackened. When it had moved several hundred yards away the lights of the car suddenly came back on again. At this point Brian Grimshawe was able to re-start the car, and Jeff climbed back in. At great speed the men drove away from the scene.

Subsequently both men developed headaches and Brian Grimshawe noticed that his eyes started to water. This persisted for some weeks after the event but was not noticed by anyone else.

Were these effects all inter-related? We can of course postulate some kind of electro-magnetic field—but it is of interest to note that examinations of vehicles involved in cases such as these do not usually reveal the tell-tale signs of being subject to a field strength which would be capable of causing the ignition to fail.⁷ Are we, therefore, to believe that this whole thing is again subjective? Could it be that the car is stopped by relatively normal means. In other words the UFO experience creates a particular atmosphere around the witnesses which causes them to stop the car—although they quite possibly are not aware of doing so nor of making futile attempts to re-start it.

This possibility is not quite so simple. One has to consider cases where very straightforward interference occurs. Perhaps the event itself does not involve a close approach, but just a light in the distance which blocks out a car radio with static.

The one thing that seems certain is that there is a common

denominator. Whatever causes the UFO event in some way causes the electromagnetic effects. However, there are numerous close encounters between UFO and motor vehicle where no effects at all occur. One obviously asks why. It seems that we must look for something inherent in these vehicle interference cases which is not present in other instances. That something may well be the emotional state of one of the percipients.

Our evidence seems to point towards this conclusion. All transient effects appear to be witness orientated (here we must count animals as witnesses, since only animals with the potential to 'experience' an event appear to be affected by the presence of a UFO). Some of the witnesses experience one type of event. Others experience several. Some witnesses involved in a situation which many people would regard as a close encounter feel no effects at all. We, of course, would not term this a close encounter.

This is the only conclusion which explains why UFO events are perceived differently by various individuals, or not at all by people obviously in a position to perceive them. Although it may be objective in some senses, in the majority of instances it is subjective and relative to the personality of those involved in its perception.

Curiouser and curiouser. These possibilities only make the subject appear more complex instead of simpler. Instead of illuminating the true nature of what we are seeking, we seem to be turning up new problems all of the time. It seems that we are going to have to broaden our minds and think in terms far wider than some simple mechanical device invading our airspace. Indeed it seems that we may not even be dealing with a device at all. This is something our progressive search must attempt to reveal.

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Close Encounters: 2, With Semi-permanent Effects (CE II)

“The universe begins to look more like a great thought than a great machine” — Sir James Jeans

It is all very well considering reports of close encounters where a witness claims to have come into the sphere of influence of a *true* UFO and been affected by it. However, such reports are at best second-hand, and there are people who will simply refuse to accept the existence of anything unless they experience it directly themselves. Scientists are often like this. They insist on being able to replicate or permanently record a phenomenon before accepting it into their schema. This is not always possible, and there are occasions where faith must be put in eye-witness testimony. One would assume, for example, that although you might never have seen a crocodile you would be prepared to believe stories that it can decide to make a tasty meal out of you! Some trust in second-hand evidence is necessary in our search for knowledge.

Is it possible, though, to go one stage further and to obtain evidence for the UFO phenomenon not entirely reliant on the witness themselves?

Many people might argue with our definition between Close Encounter I and Close Encounter II cases. We make the distinction on the basis that for a Close Encounter II the effects must be visible to someone who was not present at the actual UFO event itself. In other words a vehicle interference case, which many would view as being of Close Encounter II status, only takes on the significance of the former category. This division seems justified in the interests of objectivity.

The kind of effects which can be detected afterwards can be split into three groups: psychological, physiological, and physical traces.

Psychological effects are the most common. Many people are profoundly affected by any UFO experience, and may begin to take a new interest in strange phenomena. Unless the effect is very deep and associated with a close encounter in the first place it could not be considered in this category.

For example Jenny Randles and Paul Whetnall recently interviewed a solicitor who was involved in a sighting of an object looking like two Welsh hats stuck together (seen in Wales incidentally). This event had occurred in 1967 and had caused the solicitor's interest in UFOs to deepen to the extent that in 1977 he was quite an authority on the subject. Since this witness had some interest in the paranormal before the UFO sighting, his interest is not particularly remarkable. However, there are cases on record where the effect is so deep that the witness seems subsequently to be a different person. This seems to be related to the basic psychology of the person involved rather than to a facet of the phenomenon. A close approach sighting—particularly if effects of a transient nature occur, can greatly upset some individuals.

Close Encounter III and IV cases often produce even more severe effects. One case presently under investigation concerns a family allegedly abducted into a UFO. Their whole life altered drastically afterwards. They would not eat meat, nor drink alcohol, and experienced traumatic dreams.

As an example consider the instance of a teenage boy who lives in Laindon, Essex. On May 22nd 1977 he observed at close quarters a yellowish object which flew towards him, and changed shape. He was very frightened by it. On return home the fear was quite noticeable, and indeed a doctor had to be called to prescribe tranquillising tablets. The boy was of a nervous disposition and therefore this reaction is not totally unexpected, but it clearly shows that the UFO event (whatever its stimulus) had a very deep effect on the witness indeed.

A similar effect to this was noted in a case which occurred at Bridlington on the east coast of England.¹ The case illustrates how transient effects overlap into semi-permanent ones, and shows how although some transient effect cases can be highly important to our conception of the UFO, the

addition of a third party helps to take away some of the subjective elements involved.

On January 27th 1977 three women cleaners were about to begin work at a large factory. The time was 4.45 p.m., with darkness falling. They sighted two objects in a cloud above the factory one of which was to become the subject of a close encounter. The women do not know what happened to the remaining object. The object was oval with a strange protrusion at the back, something like a jack or pump.

The UFO flew down low towards them, being no more than the height of the roof of houses nearby, hovered awhile and then moved away slowly over a wood-yard. Here it hovered once more and possibly began to collect samples into the pump or tube.

The women were by this time quite hysterical and ran to the factory where they were met by co-workers. Their distress was quite obvious to see. They proclaimed most excitedly that they had seen a UFO right in front of them. Now there are additional factors that make this case quite definitely a close encounter of the second kind. The women subsequently began to develop physiological effects—including sore eyes and throats. The effects were quite mild and lasted only a few days, but seem to have been attributable to the sighting.

Additionally it was claimed by the women that one of the supervisors at the factory told them that a piece of machinery had suddenly stopped working at precisely the time the object had hovered overhead. Unfortunately investigators were not able to confirm this, as the supervisor could not be traced. It is unusual for electro-magnetic effects to be confirmed by someone who did not see the UFO—but not entirely unknown.

One instance of this latter experience concerns a sighting by two RAC patrolmen who in February 1977 spotted a glowing orange object at the same time as their radio communication was interfered with by heavy static.² The interesting point here is that at precisely the same time police nearby in Stafford experienced severe static on their broadcasts—although no reports of the UFO were made by their officers.

A report has come to our notice which may be very significant. It elevates a 'car stop' incident into an encounter with semi-permanent effects. Such visible remnants may be

of great importance to our understanding of the nature of the field of energy associated with *true* UFOs.

The event occurred at 03.30 a.m. on August 3rd 1977, near the small village of Thaxted in Essex, and involves a 24-year-old musician, Mike Stevens, who has a degree in Russian. He was returning from a recording session in Cambridge towards Chelmsford in a Vauxhall Chevette car which was only three months old, and on hire.

He spotted a diffuse peach-coloured glow through bushes. The car was stopped in a lay-by and two oval objects were seen hovering over the fields by the side of the road. One object momentarily brightened and the other deepened in colour and rose slightly. The first object then started to slide towards him and in panic he fled the scene.

The car had been left out of gear and running normally. He followed normal gear change routine to leave the area and no effects on smoothness of running, engine or lights were noticed. However, he found that though his foot was flat on the accelerator, the car was not accelerating. It would not move above 35 mph. It seemed to be held back by some force. When about 400 yards away from the stopping point the car suddenly surged forward at over 50 mph—nearly causing the witness to lose control.

Two days after the incident the car was examined and test driven. It showed no malfunction and the hire firm reported it was in excellent condition. It was possible to examine it in conjunction with its sister car (the very next registration mark) also owned by the hire company. Magnetic readings of the two cars are shown.

| CAR IN INCIDENT | | CONTROL CAR |
|-----------------|------------|-------------|
| 290° | left wing | 108° |
| 130° | right wing | 240° |
| 350° | bonnet | 257° |
| 130° | roof left | 016° |
| 118° | roof right | 345° |
| 020° | rear door | 182° |
| 118° | front seat | 130° |
| 350° | back seat | 050° |

This seems to show that the magnetisation of the car involved in the incident was almost completely reversed—especially around the front of the car. Stringent checks were made to assure that conditions were the same for both tests.

So we may here have evidence for electro-magnetic aspects of the UFO force field.

Physiological effects, such as those experienced by the three women in Bridlington, are not uncommonly reported after a close encounter. Fortunately it is rare that they are other than mild or that they persist for more than a day or two. This does, however, mean that they are often *not* noticed by a third party.

Such an example of this is the Nelson car stop experience related in the previous chapter. The subsequent physiological effects, whilst persisting for some weeks after the event, were mild enough not to be noticeable to outsiders. Unfortunately it is very uncommon indeed that a doctor is called upon to treat these effects, and therefore, important evidence about their nature is often lacking. However, we do have medical statements on record where witnesses have been treated for a skin rash similar to dermatitis following close encounters.

Seldom are anything like major physical effects experienced by witnesses. Indeed our investigations have not yet encompassed one such case. There are reports on record, although few seem to be of unquestionable veracity—though one or two from abroad are certainly interesting if nothing else.³

If we are lacking in evidence for a physical cause of these effects what is the solution? It is certainly possible that some of the minor effects are the results of the stress of the experience. They may well be the same as the psychological effects noted by some individuals, in the form of psychosomatic physical attributes. Other contributory factors could be the brightness of the light source of the phenomenon itself. There seems little evidence to support the idea that the effects are the result of radiation from the object, although in view of previous comments about sounds associated with the phenomenon it is not inconceivable that ultrasonic sound may be in some way responsible. There has also been some useful research cum speculation about microwave radiation (similar to that used in microwave ovens). This *could* be responsible for some of the burns reported by witnesses.

Some interesting research is presently being done into noise below the threshold of audibility. It seems that it can cause various types of illness, including headaches and

nausea. Indeed it is thought possible that it could be a major contributory factor in the development of travel sickness in some people. In other words it is not necessarily the motion of the vehicle that is important, but the minute sound patterns existing all round in a confined space.

It may also be worth considering the phenomenon of stigmata. These are mystery marks which may appear suddenly on the body—such as signs of nail marks in the hand or wrist (supposedly representative of those found after a person has been crucified). It seems that our mind and body are interlinked to an extraordinary degree. Some people are able to learn to control the physiological functions of the body—such as the slowing or speeding of the heartbeat. These stigmata may well be simply an extension of this. UFO witnesses who have burn markings on their body after a UFO encounter *may* do so because they have been so convinced that they were experiencing tremendous heat from an object that they have caused the burn to appear.

One might think this is going the wrong way about things. Clearly if a burn mark exists it is more likely to have been caused by excessive heat—not a thought. However, one has to consider the cases where witnesses claim to feel such heat and yet do *not* experience a burn mark, or the many noted subjective elements of the reports themselves. In other words it is useless arguing about whether the cause is physical or psychosomatic if we could show that the phenomenon was not objective in the first place. In some cases—perhaps not all—we do seem able to show this.

One might also begin to consider the phenomenon of psychic healing at this point. The body has a marvellous defence mechanism. In some respects it regenerates itself when damaged, and its antibodies combat most ailments. Modern theories about how spiritual healers are able to 'cure' people, miraculously, centre around the possibility that these healers are utilising the natural energy channels of the body to help it heal itself. In other words they somehow act as a catalyst which speeds up the natural rate of healing.⁴ Nobody is quite sure how this catalytic effect occurs, but it may well help to explain how on very rare occasions UFO witnesses claim to have been cured of some ailment. Again no case of this type is known from Britain but there is an instance in America where the wound caused

by a pet alligator mysteriously disappeared after that hand had been exposed directly to the glow emanating from a close UFO.⁵

Some type of energy seems to be involved here but the energy does not appear to be physical, rather it seems to act on the mind, causing it to inspire the body to generate its own miracle cure.

One can speculate about the possibility of an electromagnetic force from the body as has Professor John Taylor in his study of Uri Geller and others who claim the ability to bend metal objects without touching them.⁶ He extended his ideas to look at poltergeists, telekinesis and other parapsychological effects but was *not* able to prove or disprove the existence of an EM field. He was left in the awkward situation of having no evidence for any other physical field and being unable to see how a non-physical field causes the effects. He therefore had to conclude that an EM field was most likely present.

Is it possible that a non-physical field is in evidence and as with car stop incidents the witnesses perform the physical effects themselves without knowing it because of the influence of the non-physical force on their mind? Perhaps Uri Geller does 'cheat', as many accusers argue, but he is not aware of doing so.

Yet clearly an electromagnetic field probably could explain a good deal about the alleged effects of UFO close encounters.

So far as we know there are only four fields of force which are dominant in the environment—electro-magnetic, gravitational, nuclear, and radio-active. However, what if there is a fifth force (some have labelled it the psi force)—responsible for all parapsychological effects and only briefly detectable on the physical scale, being mostly psychic in origin. This could not only be the causation for the UFO effects but, as we shall see, quite possibly for the UFOs themselves. This is not such a wild speculation as it might seem. We know research into this possibility is being done, and we are aware of some startling results by one of Britain's leading research scientists which, as yet, he is wary to discuss openly. There quite definitely is a chance that the UFO energy can and will be understood within the near future, and with this will come insights into many more puzzling phenomena.

Our final category of semi-permanent effects concerns detectable remnants on the environment immediately local to a sighting. Most usually this means impressions on the ground at the site of an alleged landing or burnt or damaged trees or bushes in the vicinity of a close encounter.

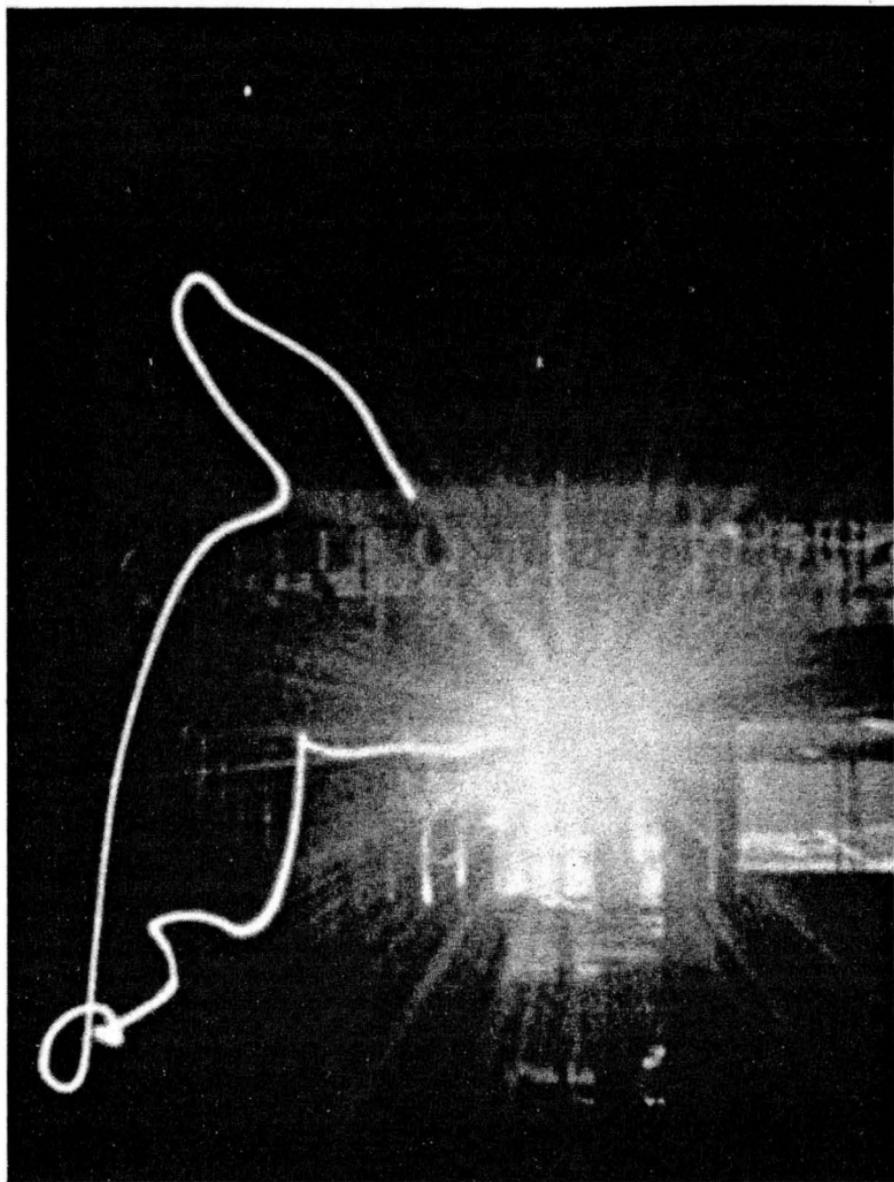
There have been a number of cases of markings which it is claimed are due to 'landing pads' of machines. A catalogue of such cases has been prepared by Ted Philips.⁷ Often these concern triangular sets of markings which seem to imply some heavy object has been on the ground. One would expect them to be in evidence on most occasions that a UFO lands or hovers in an area with suitable terrain. Unfortunately this is by no means the case. They are in fact comparatively rare.

It is quite easy to find areas of ground which look as if they may have hosted a UFO landing. Every country dweller knows many ways in which animal habits can affect the landscape in a manner which could be puzzling to the uninitiated. Many of the 'saucer nests', or circular areas of flattened grass, which turn up are no doubt caused by perfectly natural means.

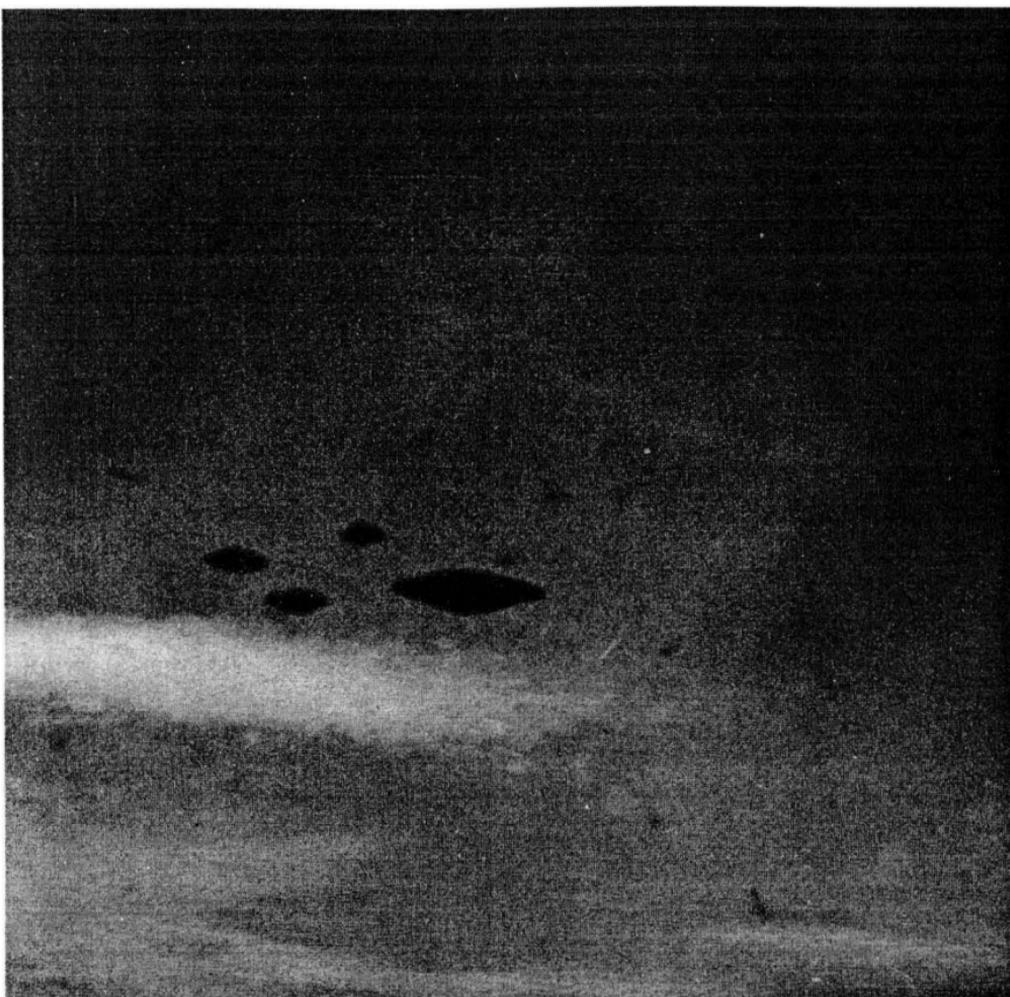
There also seems to be a tendency to 'improve' the standing of a low or medium definition case by discovery of possible traces afterwards. An innocuous light in the sky seen at a considerable distance could find itself labelled a close encounter if investigators or witnesses find unusual marks on the ground anywhere remotely near to the site. Indeed the location of the UFO may unconsciously alter afterwards in the minds of witnesses if such traces are found.

We shall look at the encounter of Mrs Joyce Bowles and Mr Ted Pratt at Winchester later. Following their first sighting UFO investigators were hastily on the scene. Geiger counters supposedly registered abnormally at the spot in question—but it was later found that owing to faulty directions they were examining an area several hundred yards from where the craft supposedly was. The true location proved to show no out-of-the-ordinary effects at all. There was no trace of the object having been there.

The story of Mrs Kent's encounter with a landed object and entity will be referred to in the next chapter. Investigators here found a semi-circular patch of grass which was discoloured. Had further checks not been made these would undoubtedly have been associated with the event—



This photograph was submitted anonymously and without details. It may show ball lightning; certainly it illustrates clearly how the phenomenon is typically a small round object which moves about fast and erratically and then explodes. The photograph appears to have been exposed for several seconds.

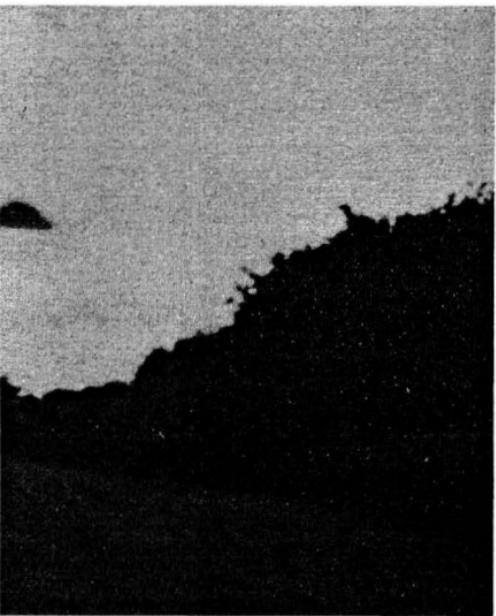


The two photographs from the case at Wrexham on January 5th 1977 are reproduced here, with (*below right*) a photograph taken by a UFOIN investigator, using a similar camera and lens, from the position where the witnesses say they took their second photograph.





These four photographs from the Wheathampstead case of June 25th 1977 show clearly the object's passage through 90 degrees during the observation which lasted an estimated 45 seconds.

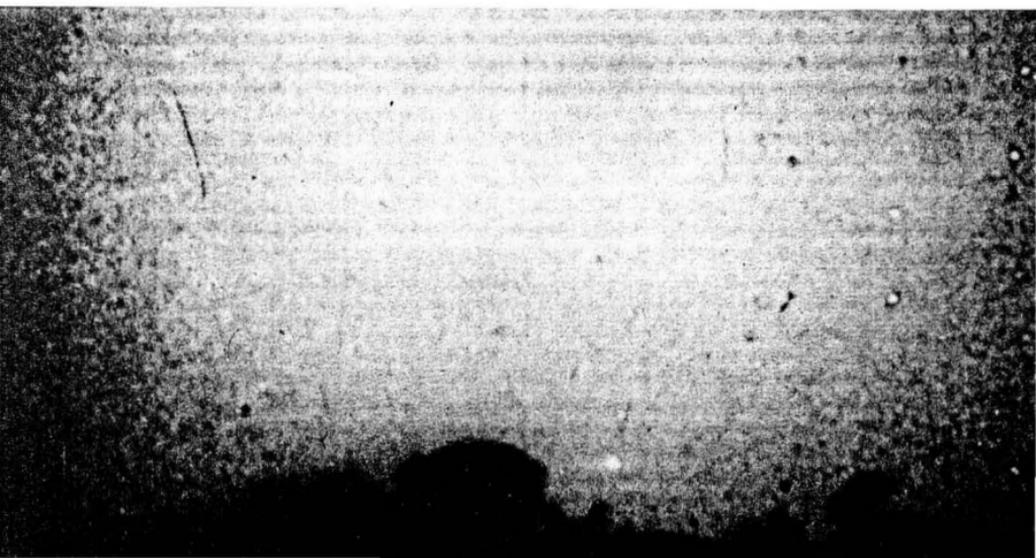


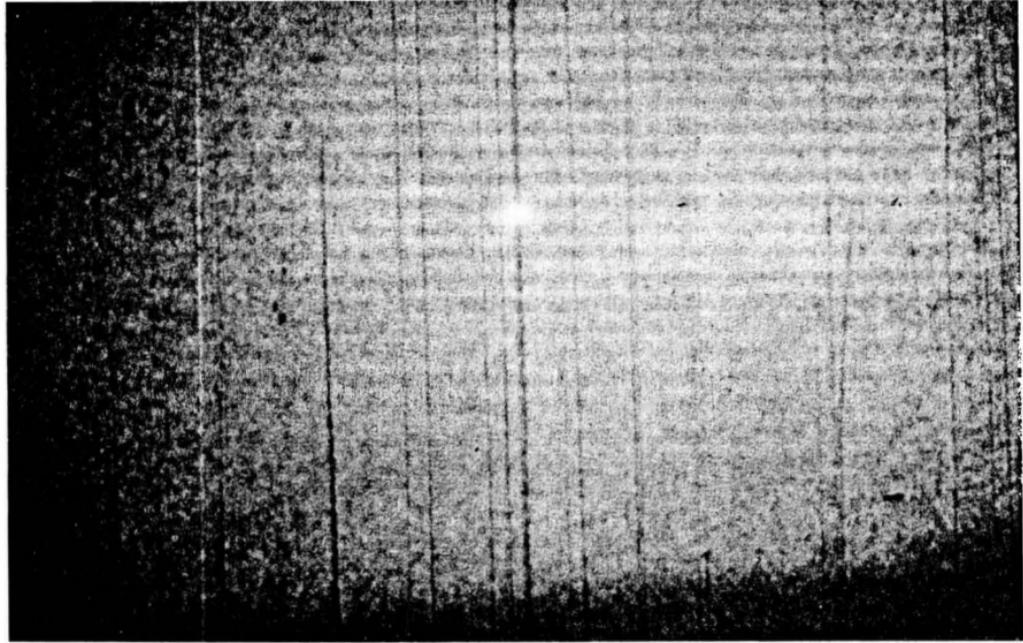


This photograph was manufactured by George Manson who fabricated the UFOs by sticking cut-out shapes on to glass and then photographing a sky scene through it – simple back projection. Note the striking similarity between this and other photographs of UFOs.

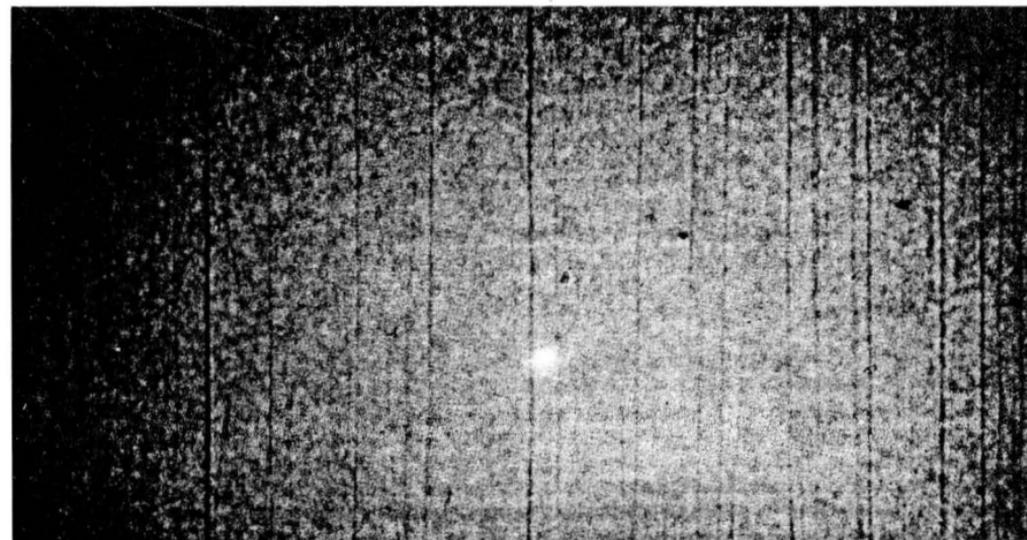


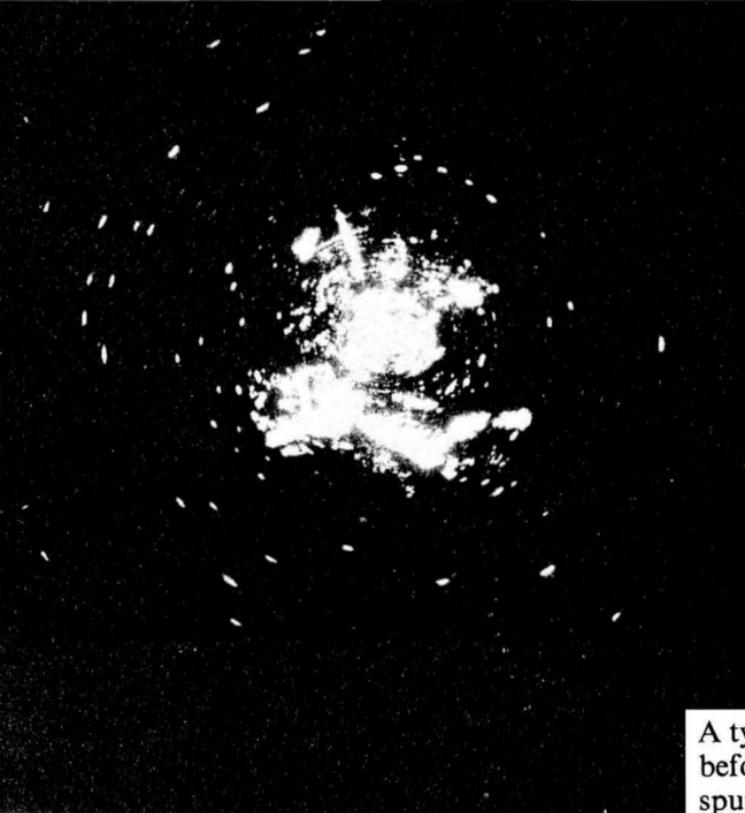
These two successive frames of the Peter Day film give a good indication of the appearance of the phenomenon that he filmed on that memorable morning in January 1973.





These two photographs are taken from the 8mm ciné film made at Stonehenge in October 1977. They are taken from the low-light type film. Note the apparent similarity of the object to that in the two facing pictures.





A typical radar display before and after spurious echoes have been removed. The display gives an indication of the degree of subjectivity involved in the interpretation of a radar system.

Photographs courtesy
Marconi Radar
Systems Ltd,
Chelmsford.



turning it into a physical traces report. As it was, it was found that the markings were almost certainly due to a lawn-mower of the local council, and certainly not a spaceship from the beyond!

This paucity of ground markings of some reliability leads us to ponder why supposedly physical 'machines' do not leave traces behind more often. Could it be because these supposedly physical 'machines' do not exist?

However, we do have some cases, and a fairly typical example occurred on May 3rd 1977 in the midst of a large wave of close encounter reports in Britain.⁸

The scene of the event is the town of Hainault in Essex. At 3.55 a.m. the local police received a 999 call from a distressed man claiming a UFO had landed near him in a local park. Immediately a police car was sent to the scene, where two police officers were to meet the witness.

On arrival however, the two constables forgot all about this rendezvous since there was a conical object, glowing red and pulsating, in the middle of some bushes by the lake. Opening the park gates with a pass key they went towards the object whereupon it suddenly vanished. One of the men said he saw it streak overhead. The other did not.

Owing to the close liaison UFOIN has with the police, investigators Andy Collins and Barry King were called upon immediately and were at the scene within hours. They found a small bush had been crushed in a circular pattern, seemingly from above, and there were some indications of scorching of the branches on the upper portion.

The policemen did eventually remember the original witness but it was some time after the call was made and he was not to be found. He has never been traced, although it is hardly surprising that after some considerable period and under the circumstances described he did not wait around for the police to turn up.

This case is quite representative of many such landings, and again apart from the damage to the bush itself no evidence for the arrival or departure of any object was discovered. Soil samples and portions of the bush were taken but there was nothing unusual in the analysis. This factor is consistent and there is no authenticated case of severe radiation or any other kind of force field having affected the area of a UFO landing.

Of course something caused the traces to occur in this

instance. It is conceivable, though not likely, that it is not connected with the UFO event, as the actual location of the object is only known in a general sense. However, on assuming that the cause is connected with the phenomenon visually observed we are not forced to conclude that it was a material object by any means.

One might envisage the situation where a bolt of lightning is observed to strike a tree. The tree will subsequently show some considerable effects, but it is not necessary to speculate that an intelligence caused them. Consequently, it is not possible to decide whether a machine or simply a strange type of natural phenomenon caused the markings at Hainault.

We now have additional evidence concerning the field of telekinesis, where objects are moved without any known physical force,⁹ or reports of poltergeist phenomena, where unexplained forces move heavy objects around a room or cause other inexplicable effects.

All that it is presently possible to conclude is that the ground markings associated with *true* UFOs seem in some way to be connected with a force. This may perhaps be the undiscovered fifth force (the 'psi' force) the same one which causes electro-magnetic disturbances and physiological effects; one which may be mostly psychic in origin and only briefly physical in substance, therefore providing numerous instances where traces are not produced when other factors seem to suggest that they should be.

The next case we shall consider is in many respects quite similar to Hainault. However, in this instance we do not have to explain away crushed leaves or scorched trees, but mysterious footprints, which some ufologists have argued belong to the occupants of the object that landed at Rainhill, Merseyside, on May 18th 1975.¹⁰

There were three witnesses to this event, which occurred at 10 p.m. They were Mr and Mrs Scothern and Mrs Scothern's father. They all describe an object like three tennis balls in a triangular formation, which silently flew across the sky and crossed some fields adjacent to their home. Going outside they watched the object descend low over a barn and seemingly land in a small copse which became illuminated with a strong white glow. A humming noise was heard very briefly to come from there. One of the witnesses returned to the house and obtained a flashlight.

He went out to the copse but was unable to see anything. The glow of light had vanished whilst he was indoors, and the other witnesses had not noticed it disappear. However, it should be noted that no object was seen to take off.

The following morning the area was thoroughly searched and it was found that the copse contained a small duck-pond surrounded by some areas of wet mud. In this mud were four strange prints which looked as if they had been made by a heavy boot.

These prints were square in shape and 14 inches long by 6 inches wide. The stride length between them was 45 inches. Surrounding the scene there was also a patch of mud which had samples of soil dug out of it.

This all tends, of course, to point toward the suggestion that some object landed on or hovered over the pond and lowered an entity down which walked a little distance took samples, and then was taken vertically upwards back into the craft. This seems the only way to explain why there were only four prints. There were none leading up to or leading away from this group, although the mud in the area around it was just as soft and would certainly have provided evidence of anyone who had walked there.

Fortunately, these prints were photographed for posterity, although a lot of work which should have been done by local investigators (such as taking plaster-casts of the prints) was not.

So are we to believe that this is high-quality evidence for the existence of an objective phenomenon? Unfortunately this is not possible. There is in fact nothing significantly unusual about the prints to suggest that they could *not* have been made by a human (perhaps the farmer) though their connection with the UFO sighting is certainly interesting. It is however, somewhat difficult to postulate a physical force which leaves impressions like footprints. What it is not difficult to do though is to suggest a similar mechanism as was proposed to account for car stop incidents. Perhaps the witnesses created the prints themselves under the influence of a psychic force, the intention being of course to reinforce the belief that the Rainhill event was representative of a visit from some outer space entities. Or, more reasonably, they were 'led astray' into accepting the unconnected footprints as products of space entities.

You may feel that this is being very awkward. Why not

accept that the most likely solution is that someone or something did walk there. This would be true if cases such as these were commonplace—but they are exceptionally rare. Most landings offer no evidence of any human or non-human presence.

The solution which this seems to argue most in favour of is that the 'entities' are most often not present on a physical plane and, as with the fifth force referred to earlier, only make transitory appearances into our material world. Indeed we may be forced to accept that they are in some ways just a further extension of the fifth force, and we might also like to ponder if it is they who are responsible for the 'leading astray' and if so why?

We must finally take a brief look at the subject of artifacts left behind by landed UFOs. One of the most famous of these stories comes from the USA where a UFO occupant allegedly handed the witness, Joe Simonton, a pancake—freshly baked from the saucers kitchen!¹¹ This was a gift which it appears the entities expected the witness to appreciate—yet hardly consistent with the belief that they were visitors from space who just happened to have picked up earthly cooking habits after watching TV! In many respects this familiarity argues against the extraterrestrial origin of the phenomenon.

Pieces of metal have been reportedly found at the site of UFO events quite often. Stories circulate afterwards that these pieces are of a degree of purity unheard of on the earth, but objective analyses seem to indicate otherwise.¹²

In Spain in 1966 there was a classic UFO event, where independent sets of photographs recorded, and many witnesses saw a disc with a strange marking like a letter 'H' underneath.¹³ Some plastic said to be discovered in this episode was allegedly of a type not available on the open market, and only used in NASA space operations. It is now feared, however, that this story is a gigantic hoax. So, one wonders what this does to the 'evidence' of the samples.

The Rainhill landing case, described earlier, produced a piece of metal found at the site. Analysis showed it to be aluminium alloy—by no means unusual in this modern world. It would be stretching imagination a little far to connect this with the supposed landing, and one has a feeling that it is all too easy to scour the scene of a UFO landing and produce pieces of metal with no trouble.

Anyone could go now into their garden and pick up a bottle top or a beer can, invent a UFO close encounter and proclaim that the inhabitants of Venus drink lager! No doubt the story would soon be told that the can was of unusual composition—not found on earth—and a classic UFO case would be born.

The intention here is not to belittle the many serious or genuine encounters which do exist, nor the investigators who work on them. It is simply to show how easy it is to interlink things with a UFO event which have no connection whatsoever.

On August 1st 1977 a policeman in Redbourne, Hertfordshire, heard a rushing noise outside and glanced up into the sky. Falling through the dusk was a white ball of light. With a thud it struck a field at the back of his home and on inspection he found a flattened area of grass and a piece of whitish 'ice' in the middle.

This is a typical example of a 'fafrotsky' (short for 'fall from the sky'). Over the centuries many strange things, especially ice, blood and small animals have fallen down from the sky with no apparent reason. However, the causation seems more likely to be some kind of physical force akin to a whirlwind than to alien, experimental rejects—as some people speculate.

The Hertfordshire 'ice' turned out to be nothing more than plain ordinary frozen water which quickly melted and there are several possible mechanisms to explain how it could fall down from the sky. There is no reason to invent the presence of a UFO—although it is no doubt very simple to relate this fall to sightings of UFOs in the south-east of England on that night.

In summer of 1973 a strange black cloud travelled across Cheshire and Staffordshire on a sunny calm afternoon. Underneath it everything it passed was affected by a strong vortex and sucked upwards. Bales of hay went straight up into this cloud and were deposited earthwards miles away.

This meteorological phenomenon is quite common in some countries where the UFO explanation would never even be considered. In Britain it is not common and so it is perhaps understandable that it is taken out of context and given a stranger frame of reference. We can see, therefore, how dangerous it is to be too liberal about relating mysterious events to UFO phenomena.

Quite often on radio programmes about UFOs questions about the "Bermuda Triangle" are raised. This area of sea in the Atlantic where ships and aircraft vanish mysteriously without trace is a fascinating enigma, but to link it with UFOs without firm evidence (which appears to be lacking) is a great mistake.

Another puzzling effect of UFO encounters is 'Angel Hair'. This is a fibrous, light deposit found floating in the air or hanging from trees or telegraph poles after some UFO events. It is not at all common, and has apparently become much rarer in recent years. Arguments have been put forward that it is simply the deposit left by certain spiders, but others argue it is a waste product of the UFO machine. There is a better possibility that it could be particles of dust collected together by electrostatic attraction. This attraction would, of course, be due to the field which surrounds UFO events and leads to the other noticed effects.¹⁴

An interesting case from the Northumbria area seems to be of relevance here. It occurred on July 3rd 1977, and involves the sighting of a black oval seen rising from behind some bushes into a black whirlwind. Spinning below the dark cloud was a mass of tiny, black specks—like insects. The cloud hovered briefly, then travelled slowly by, quite low down, producing a fierce wind. Oddly the specks did not seem to fall to earth. It was as if they disintegrated in mid-air. No causation for this phenomenon has been determined.

The purpose of these last two chapters, dealing with close encounter cases, has not been to explain away all the effects created, but to show that explanations may be much more complicated than possible side effects of some mysterious mechanical device. We must recognise the fact that it is impossible to explain all UFO cases with a straightforward 'spaceships' theory. There are too many cases which contradict this idea—which lead towards a belief that the phenomenon is not objective.

In other words we have either to accept a phenomenon which is both physical and non-physical, or we have to postulate at least two phenomena in force. The similarities existent within the reports which possess physical and non-physical aspects make this latter possibility difficult to accept. Hence we find that the first becomes more attractive.

Many of the effects which *true* UFOs appear to produce could be explained by the existence of a psychic force—which may or may not be electro-magnetic in nature. This force is responsible for the manipulation of physical matter, but is chiefly existent in the psychic parts of our world.

Is this force a natural one? Or is it linked with our own brains? Or is it induced by some external agency which utilises it? This seems to be the question we now face.

The answer to this question may well be in the entity or contact cases which we are about to discuss.

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Close Encounters of the Third Kind: 1, Entity Reports

"I felt queer, as if I was looking at a ghost."—UFO witness

Until very recently, stories of witnesses encountering strange beings in connection with a UFO sighting were treated with great reserve, and cases where contact between witness and entity allegedly occurred often ignored by the serious researcher. Clearly these were the work of cranks or lunatics, was the frank assumption of this time. In some instances this was due to extreme caution, but in others it was purely an example of prejudiced thinking. Science might be persuaded eventually to take an interest in some kind of aerial phenomenon but in little green men—certainly not! Therefore, ufologists tended to sweep these reports under the carpet. However, they remain to be explained and are still the most controversial aspect of the subject.

Nobody can be quite certain where the phrase 'little green man' comes from. There are very few UFO encounters where the entities seen fit this description,¹ although the 'little' part of the phrase is quite often supported by witness testimony. UFO entities have in fact been reported with all manner of shape, size and colour.

Surprisingly, there are very few instances of huge monsters, of the type so beloved by science fiction writers. An early case from Flatwoods in the USA does fit this description,² but such examples are exceedingly hard to come across.

The most common description, indeed almost universal, is that of a human-like figure. Charles Bowen, editor of *Flying Saucer Review*, has put together a book which deals exclusively with Close Encounter III and IV cases and

contains contributions from many eminent ufologists. Here the term 'Humanoid' is coined and this seems apt as the generic reference.

There is a tendency to refer to beings seen associated with UFOs as occupants, but American specialists Ted Bloecher and David Webb (compilers of an important research project into such cases) suggest that we keep the word 'entity' for use because it does not follow absolutely that the being seen may be an actual occupant of the object.³ Indeed a UFO may not even be seen when an entity is reported.

Bloecher and Webb describe a classification of entity reports which provides a useful subdivision of this important group of experiences. With acknowledgement to this we shall here divide the reports as follows:

- a) entities seen with no UFO visible;
- b) entities seen with UFO in vicinity, but no evidence to link the two;
- c) entities seen beside UFO and subsequently to enter it;
- d) entities seen entirely inside UFO;
- e) entities seen with no UFO visible; contact occurs with witness;
- f) entities seen with UFO in vicinity, but no evidence to directly link the two; contact occurs with witness;
- g) entities seen beside UFO and subsequently to enter it; contact occurs with witness;
- h) entities seen entirely inside UFO; contact occurs with witness.

Categories (a) through to (d) will be dealt with in this chapter, and categories (e) through to (h) in Chapter Ten. At the conclusion of that chapter we shall also look at our close encounter four cases. This grouping has been recently defined to account for those experiences which seem to be of a non-objective kind. In other words they are so steeped in subjectivity that it has to be considered that the event took place on a 'psychic' rather than physical plane. Often these have been referred to in the past as 'psychic contactees'.

Category (a) provides us with problems right away, since encounters with entities when no UFO is present prove most difficult to trace. It is quite possible that we all see a UFO entity every day. We might pass them in the streets and never know. Certainly there have been stories that this is indeed the case, and how does one disprove them?

Although we are likely to discover entity cases when a UFO is present, simply because it will be so unusual to the witness as automatically to make the event noteworthy; when a UFO is not present this is untrue. There would have to be something striking about the entity itself for the case to be brought to anyone's attention.

Occasionally this does happen, and it can prove difficult to tell the difference between a UFO entity and a ghost. Possibly they are one and the same thing and there is no doubt that the investigator should pay close attention to local 'hauntings' or stories of mysterious strangers. They could prove to have a significance for his work that he had not imagined. All of this can be said without implying anything about the reality of ghosts, except in the same sense as we are talking about the reality of *true* UFOs.

Consider this story from the autumn of 1968. It took place in Hull, North Humberside, late one dark night, in a populated but deserted street.

Mr John Scarrah was returning home with thoughts on nothing but a warm house and bed. Suddenly he became aware of a strange figure ahead of him on the pavement. The figure was dressed in a boiler suit, which seemed to be tight fitting at the ankles and neck. He had short hair and was apparently of normal appearance. The entity stared at Mr Scarrah in considerable alarm, as if shocked to confront anyone. He then turned round and simply vanished instantly. In amazement and fear the witness went to the spot at once and tried to find a means by which the figure could have appeared to vanish. He found that there was no possible manner in which this could have been done without his noticing it. The being had simply vanished into thin air.

This ghostly apparition is quite common. No doubt many people have had such an experience and never bothered to mention it to anyone. However several aspects of such cases, such as the clothing, are reminiscent of entity cases where UFOs are visible.

A further example concerns a Mr and Mrs Taylor, who were returning from a holiday in North Wales one sunny day in July 1975. It was early afternoon as they drove through countryside at Ewloe, in Clwyd, close to the English border. The roads had been quiet as they rounded a corner with tall hedgerows topping a steep embankment on either side of the kerb. Suddenly they spotted a figure which

had apparently just clambered down the embankment. It was facing away from the road, but swivelled slightly to look at them with a startled face as they drove past. At the same time it seemed to pick something up from the roadside. This entity was considered unusual because of its great height. It was at least 6 feet 6 inches tall, probably more than 7 feet, and it wore a one piece silvery suit and a balaclava-type helmet. The face looked human enough, but the stare was mechanical.

All of these cases are interesting, but we can say very little more about them. Yet what is one to make of the remarkable photographs taken by Jim Templeton in May 1964?⁴

He was on a lonely stretch of the Solway Firth in Scotland taking a series of photographs of his five-year-old daughter, Elizabeth. When processed one of these came back with a very tall figure standing behind his daughter. It looked like a person in a space suit with a transparent helmet. Of course nobody had been present when the picture was taken. Indeed the area is simply barren grassland. Analysis of the photograph by experts failed to reveal any tricks, such as super-imposition of images which could account for the effect.

Does this photograph hold a clue for the UFO enigma? Perhaps the figure materialized on the physical plane so briefly that the human eye did not see it, but the camera did. Or perhaps the figure did not materialize at all. The camera may have been sensitive to something the eye did not see, or the image could have been placed on the film by paranormal means. An American, Ted Serios, claimed to be able to transfer images onto film by mental processes and demonstrated his abilities under test conditions.⁵ Such feats have never been reproduced and are certainly not understood. All of this is frankly sceptical, but we do have this inexplicable photograph to understand.

These stories are interesting, but we find ourselves in even stranger territory when we consider cases in category (b).

Mrs Kent is a middle-aged woman who lives on a housing estate at Higher Fold, near Leigh in Greater Manchester.⁶ The area is riddled with mines and industry, and although residential contains a man-made hill of small size sculptured out of a former slag heap.

Mrs Kent starts work early, and at 6.15 a.m. on May 11th

1976 she was delivering a pair of tights to her daughter who lives close by. She had to pass by the hill and gazed up in astonishment as she did so. There on the summit was a figure beside a silvery spherical object.

The object had no visible features and was partly obscured by the side of the hill. There is no way of estimating size because, although it was smaller than the entity itself (which in turn seemed small), it could simply have been much further away. The top surface of the hill is broad and flat. The only noticeable thing was a beam of light which poured down the hillside and appeared to come from the centre of the object.

The figure was dressed all in silver. He wore a cloak with pointed lapels at the top, a pointed hat and boot tops. His face was not seen owing to the distance and the strong reflections of the rising sun from the polished silvery surface of his clothing. His arms hung down loosely by his side and he stood there looking something like a dummy. She watched this scene for a moment or two and then hurried on to her daughter's.

About five minutes later Mrs Kent returned the same way. The figure had not moved. It still stood beside this object surveying the scene below. Being by now quite frightened Mrs Kent decided to walk home a different way. She was worried that the entity might try to follow her. At 6.40 a.m. she passed the area again on her way to the bus stop. Both entity and object had completely disappeared. Unfortunately no corroborative reports were received for the story, and one is again left to ponder how an apparently real sphere and entity could arrive and depart without being detected in any way in the middle of a reasonably well-populated area—and how it failed to leave any indication of its former presence on top of the hill.

The silvery suit is a common feature of entity reports. Although prevalent in recent years in Britain it is not the only wearing apparel described by witnesses. We have had descriptions of coveralls and uniforms of a variety of colours. Indeed the cloak referred to by Mrs Kent is somewhat unusual, as we are most often speaking about a one-piece type of garment surmounted by a belt around the waist.

It is a pity no definite impression of height was obtained by the witness but this is to be expected when there are no

real reference points. It is interesting that the entity appeared small because the description lends a great deal to ancient stories concerning fairies and leprechauns.

Jacques Vallee in his excellent book, *Passport to Magonia*, has clearly illustrated how many modern UFO reports involving entities parallel tales from folklore and mythology. It seems that a consistency runs through the legends of many nations referring to 'little people', or beings of very small stature (about three to three-and-a-half feet tall). They live in seclusion and yet love to tease local inhabitants with their fiendish tricks. We shall return to this idea later but for the moment consider the following report and imagine how it might have been interpreted had the witnesses lived in medieval times rather than in 1967.⁷

It was a summer evening and Mr A, who wishes his name not to be published, was out with his fiancée. It was dark and Mr A had parked his car on a bridal path which leads into Epping Forest in Essex. The couple sat talking and smoking when they suddenly noticed a red 'firework' ahead. At first they thought the moving light was a window reflection of their cigarettes, but this was quickly proved not to be the case. The light was by the side of a tree some yards ahead of them by the side of the path. After these lights had danced about for a minute or two, leaving behind a shower of sparks, the couple became aware of a figure. It was the size of a small child and wore a completely white cloak which hid arms and legs. It was moving about around the tree.

Puzzlement soon turned into fear as a white light began to head towards the car from out of the darkness ahead. It swung across the road in a zigzag motion several feet above the ground. At first the witnesses assumed this to be a lantern held aloft by someone walking towards them. Mr A had tried to illuminate the area of the tree with his headlamps but because of their angle of tilt they would not reach. However, as soon as the light came close enough to the car he switched them on and shone them directly at the source, expecting to illuminate the lantern bearer. The beam shone underneath the light but there was nothing there! Yet still the light came towards them.

In panic now Mr A tried to start the car engine. It would not turn over. It took several attempts to get it to do so, although it is not known whether there was any genuine interference. Remember that the headlight beam was not

affected. The witnesses fled the scene as soon as they were able to and not surprisingly reported the matter to the police. Neither of them connected the events with flying saucers, and there is, of course, little reason to do so. Except that the story is so similar to many where UFOs have been reported. In any event what was the moving light if it was not a UFO? It was unknown and seemed to fly.

We shall next look at category (c), and here we find no controversy. The connection between entity and UFO activity is undeniable.

Take this example, which happened one night in September 1973. The witness, Peter Leather, was at the time a stable lad at the Epsom Downs racecourse in Surrey (he is now a jockey). He was just leaving the stables and walking across the darkened course when he became aware of a strange humming noise. It came from a small, flat disc with a dome on top which glowed with an eerie blue light. Slowly it settled down on to the Downs just a few hundred yards outside the perimeter of the track and Peter stared at it in amazement.

Slowly a shape appeared out of the darkness surrounding the object. It was the figure of a man walking towards him. In his hand he carried something like a flashlight but there was no beam of light coming from it. After just a few seconds Peter had become so terrified that he turned away and fled.

He had not been able to see the figure too clearly because of the dark. However, Peter was in no doubt that he had stepped out of the landed craft and that he now returned to it. The next thing he knew the object had taken off and had once more begun to make the humming noise. It then flew away out of sight.

One can see from this story many classic elements of the UFO encounter—the blue glow, the humming sound, the instant acceleration off the ground. The only added feature is the presence of the entity. Therefore, there does not seem to be any reason why we should ignore such reports. They are obviously just as valid as those where only an object is seen, and provide a further part of the UFO phenomenon.

This next case is even stranger. It contains features which are more appropriate to psychic happenings, but in all other respects is similar to those cases already discussed. It may well be that other entity reports only possess these attributes

if they become very close contacts. This event may indeed represent a transitional phase between the straightforward entity case and a contact experience, if there is such a transitional phase and the contact experience does not represent something different altogether.

It involves two women, one of whom at the time was 63 and the other 18. On September 3rd 1976 at 9 p.m. they were walking through the small mining village of Fencehouses in County Durham when they came upon a strange object on top of a mound of earth on a piece of waste land levelled for building purposes.⁸ The object was only five feet long and between three and three-and-a-half feet tall. It consisted of an oval with one round and one flat end. On top was an orange dome and the whole thing sat on sledge-like runners made out of steel or chrome. The middle portion formed the bulk of the object and seemed to be made out of some kind of glass or perspex. The two women felt hypnotically attracted towards the object. They stumbled across the patch of ground slowly being drawn closer and closer. As they did so all of the noise around them stopped. The wind, the traffic on the road nearby—all went still and very silent. Such trance-like conditions often prevail before the manifestation of psychic phenomena apparently.

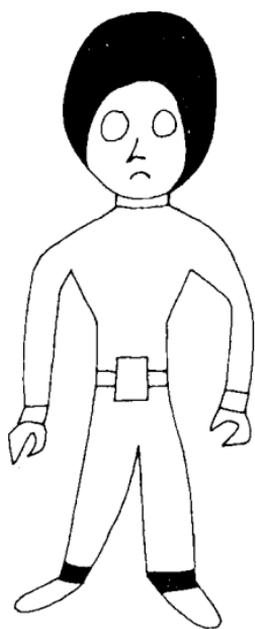
In this case the women viewed the experience as if time itself stood still. They felt suspended in time by some field surrounding the object. One of them was wearing a watch and after the incident it was running ten minutes slow on 'real time', as if it had stopped during the events. This could of course be a most important piece of information about the phenomenon. It seems to indicate that it operates on a different time scale from our own.

At this point the women were suddenly startled by the appearance of two weird looking creatures. They were only the size of large dolls with long, white hair parted down the middle and extra large eyes. This feature is interesting since it is a consistent factor in entity descriptions (just as the small stature often is). The Lorenzens have some comments to make which may prove valid in this respect.⁹ They say that it could indicate that the entities are used to less light than our planet possesses, and this also helps to explain why they come out mainly at night, or more precisely around dawn and dusk (*see* Chapter Eleven) when it is still quite dark but some people are likely to be around.

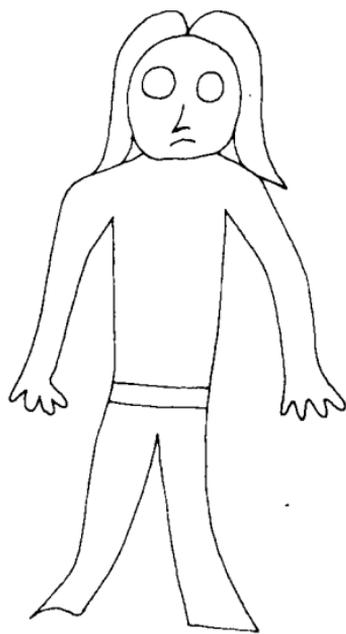
On seeing the women the figures became frightened and put their hands up to their faces, covering them up. From this point on the women became confused as to what happened next, although it seems that the entities returned to the craft and the witnesses backed away from the scene. As they did so the surroundings returned to normal and the object shot up into the air making a humming noise.

It is very interesting in this respect to compare these entities with the creatures seen at Villa Santina in Italy.¹ If the cap is removed and long hair substituted one may well find that the same thing is being described. It can be reasonably certain that the Fencehouses women knew nothing of the Italian case (*see* Fig. 10).

There is a postscript to this amazing tale. The elderly lady had in fact run her hand up against the side of the object when she had approached it. She satisfied herself that it was real and had a smooth, warm surface. The next day, however, whilst trying to put a plug into an electric socket



Villa Santina
Italy



Fencehouses
Co. Durham

Fig. 10 Comparison between the entities seen at Fencehouses, County Durham, and Villa Santina, Italy

with this hand she found a force repelling it away. It is not known whether this was a purely psychological effect or whether it has something to do with the electro-magnetic field discussed in earlier chapters. Perhaps the surface of the object produced a long lasting electrostatic field. This might not only account for the after-effects in this instance, but for the many references witnesses make to a tingling sensation and to the prickly force which Brian Grimshawe felt pressing down on him during the Nelson car stop incident (see Chapter Seven).

The final sub-type we shall deal with in this chapter concerns those entities which are indeed occupants. That is those which are seen to be actually inside the object. One of the most famous instances of this type concerns a missionary, Father Gill, and many local villagers in New Guinea.¹⁰ They observed a low level object for some considerable period of time, and several figures on board it which waved and made gestures at them.

In the United Kingdom probably one most representative dates back to 1954 and took place in the tiny village of Ranton in Staffordshire.¹¹ At 4.45 p.m. on October 21st, in the midst of one of the largest waves of sightings that the world has ever known, Mrs Jessie Roestenberg and her two children saw an aluminium-coloured disc hovering low down over the roof of their home. Inside of this, through two transparent panels, they were able to see some figures. They were of human appearance and wearing blue suits, like ski clothing, with transparent helmets. Their faces were long and white and their hair was shoulder length. The forehead was domed and they looked down on the Roestenberg family with a sombre and concerned gaze.

To this day Mrs Roestenberg is adamant about what she saw. She comes across as a most impressive witness, and was a vital contributor during the BBC TV documentary on entity cases, screened during May 1977. Recent investigations have uncovered two similar incidents from the Midlands of England during the same year.

There are certainly some consistencies in these stories, but as a whole there are more differences than similarities. It is true that the entities described by the Roestenbergs seem to bear remarkable resemblance to those which Adamski and others have reported (see next chapter). One might wonder at the actions displayed by the various

entities: looking on with concern, expressing interest and firing rockets, digging up the ground, showing alarm and fleeing, and many others. Again there seems to be no set pattern of reaction. Nothing seems to indicate a planned campaign of surveillance.

Let us take a closer look at the cases considered in this chapter and add some detail from other famous United Kingdom entity cases (referred to in *The Humanoids* and *FSR*). The list is not intended to be anything like exhaustive, but forms a basis for future research on the topic.

In this list the category of case is given in brackets after the location:

| <i>Case</i> | <i>Height</i> | <i>Clothes</i> | <i>Features</i> | <i>Actions</i> |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Hull (a) | 5' 10" | One-piece suit | Short hair | Vanished |
| Bucks (a) | less than 5' | Black one-piece plus mask | High cheek Thin face | Taking samples, disturbed at being seen |
| Ewloe (a) | 6' 6" + | One-piece suit plus mask | Thin face | Taking samples, disturbed at being seen |
| Higher Fold (b) | Small? | Silver cloak | ? | Surveillance |
| Epping (b) | 3' | White cloak | ? | Impish behaviour |
| Braemar (b) | 7' | ? | ? | ? |
| Saltwood (b) | 5' 10" | None | No head, wings | ? |
| Epsom (c) | 5' 10" | ? | ? | Interest in witness |
| Fencehouses (c) | 1' 6" | Suit | Long white hair, large eyes | Shock at being seen |
| Elgin (c) | 6' + | Silver one-piece suit | ? | Interest in witness |
| Ranton (d) | ? | Blue suit and helmet | Long hair, high forehead | Surveillance |

This appears to offer little basis for comparison. We could, of course, add the cases to be discussed in the next chapter, but this has not been done for reasons that will become clear when we see the differences.

The similarity between the Fencehouses and Ranton entities is emphasised by the case from Buckinghamshire where the figure, although considered small by the witness, seems to be of a similar type. Size descriptions are of course very relative to what a witness regards as small, normal or large.

From consideration of reports from other countries it seems that there is a type of entity frequently reported which is reasonably close to normal human dimensions. These seem to take part in surveillance or collect samples.

They act as if they are conservationists who are studying our natural features or conducting a scientific appraisal of the planet. The Ranton and Buckinghamshire cases seem to be good examples of this.

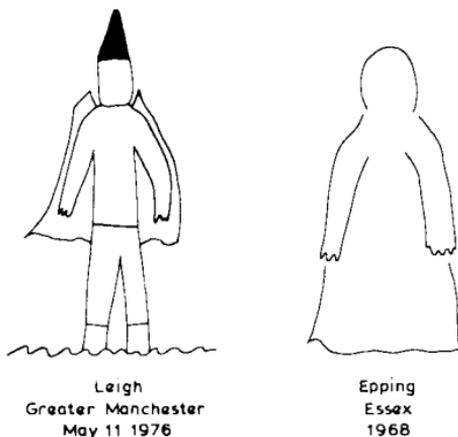
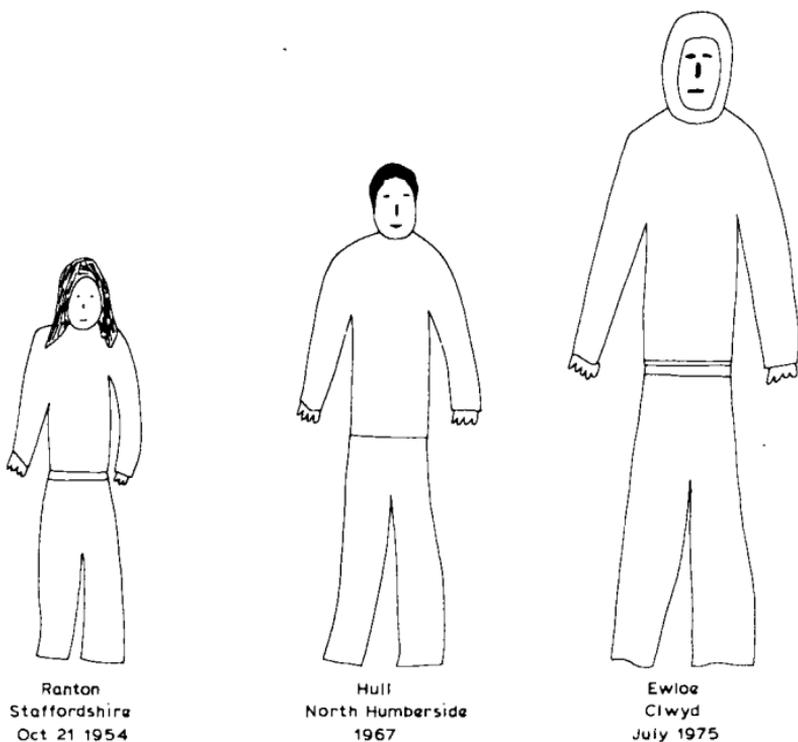


Fig. 11 UFO entities described by witnesses referred to in this chapter (drawn to scale)

In addition we have evidence for a tiny entity, of around three feet in height (perhaps the Fencehouses entities are underestimated in this respect). They seem to wear loose fitting clothing more often than 'spacesuits' (preferred by the other type) and usually behave in a more impish fashion. They do not seem to be so related to category (c) or (d) reports, implying that they may not be actual occupants of the *true* UFO. Perhaps these are the imps or fairies of mythology, so common in past histories of many cultures. They do not seem very concerned about ourselves and rather appear to have a laugh at our expense. At times they may even act hostilely.

An example of this type of entity is the Hopkinsville, USA, 'demon', entities three-and-a-half feet tall with large ugly heads and clawed hands.¹² They roamed about a farm making a nuisance of themselves. There was a similar instance at Leam Lane in the north-east of England when little green impish figures were observed near farmland.

We also have some indications that a taller than average entity may be around. These seem to wear silvery suits and be much more the conventional spaceman that we have come to expect. The Ewloe and Elgin cases seem to be representative of these.

One thing which seems to stand out when we examine these reports is that a rational thread runs through them. The witnesses give every indication that they are telling us the truth. There seems no difference in accepting these tales and those of ordinary UFO sightings. Since there are great discrepancies in these latter reports one would surely expect the same from entity cases. We seem here to have just one more extension of the basic UFO phenomenon.

We could say that we have shown the possible existence of a small, medium and large sized entity with different features in each case. However, all that we have really shown is that there are consistent stories of such figures.

The medium-sized entities seem to have large eyes, long hair, high forehead and cheekbones. This entity seems to be carrying out a scientific appraisal of the planet.

Obviously we can account for the differences in reports as being due to witness inability to report brief duration experiences accurately. Additionally we need only think of the great difference between human types. If one confronted an African pygmy and then a tall, blond Scan-

dinavian one might be tempted to think that these were two totally different creatures. Of course the bulk of people on this planet fall somewhere in between, but even they have differences in size, hair colour, skin colour, etc.

What about the impish figures? Could it be that they only imitate UFO entities. Perhaps they are aware of the existence of such and are trying to entice us into believing that this is what *they* are.

There is some speculation that the larger entities are in fact robots or specially trained animals. This is a possibility, but the evidence is not enough to allow us to decide. Some people believe that Bigfoot, the Yeti and other large, 'unknown' animals have in fact been implanted on the earth from some external source.

We are not yet making statements about what the UFO entities are, but there does seem justification for a belief that such occupants of the objects we refer to as UFOs have indeed been witnessed by honest people. It is perhaps significant that just as UFO landings seem to be once in a lifetime experiences for the witnesses concerned so do encounters with UFO entities. However, where contact experiences are claimed this is definitely not the case. This may inevitably lead us to the conclusion that the two phenomena are totally different in origin.

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Close Encounters of the Third Kind: 2, Contact Cases

“They told me that they had not come to invade us, and I was not afraid. I replied ‘That’s what Hitler said’”—Mrs Bowles, UFO contactee

In the previous chapter it was suggested that the encounter with tiny entities at Fencehouses, County Durham, might provide the midway stage between UFO entity cases and UFO contact stories. This was because it was totally different from all the other entity reports we looked at. In these other cases the encounter is perfectly simple. There are no strongly subjective features and nothing to detract from the apparent reality of the event. Cases such as those at Ranton or Epsom seem to be ordinary experiences, as much a part of everyday life as reading this book. However, Fencehouses possesses elements of the dream or hallucination within it. This factor will be emphasised as we consider further instances where contact between witness and entity allegedly occurred.

Of course stories of such contact go back a long way. There are those who view some Biblical passages where the prophets spoke to angels as being examples of what we now see as UFO contacts.¹ We have also referred to the Fatima experience in Chapter One. If this is read again after this chapter it will be quite apparent that had it occurred in 1967 or 1977 instead of 1917 there would have been no doubts as to how we would now be interpreting it.

In the 1950s, during the early days of the modern UFO era there was the occasional story where people claimed that they not only saw entities but conversed with them, and

indeed in some cases were actually taken on board a craft and flown into space.

At the time these stories were ignored by everybody, including UFO researchers. However, one wonders why, if we accept the validity of ordinary encounters, we argue that on the odd occasion this contact may not go much further.

There is little doubt that some of these early experiences were pure fabrication. As we have already shown it is very easy to produce a convincing fake UFO photograph. Since it is human nature to fabricate something to achieve attention then we would go for something spectacular. It is to be expected that just as there are more UFO photos faked than ordinary sighting reports, then there should be proportionably more hoax contact claims.

Some contactees (the term usually applied to people who make such claims) have undoubtedly made money by selling their stories to gullible papers or have won the attention they craved by being able to travel the world giving lectures about their experiences. A feature of these stories is that they often tend to overlap quite clearly with evangelical missions. The contactees have a religious message to convey and seem to use their UFO experiences to sell this particular line.

Quite possibly some of the many books written by such people during this early period are utter nonsense. However, since it is now becoming fairly apparent that *some* contact experiences may not be 'consciously' fabricated it is only right that we re-examine these early stories with an open-minded attitude.

Probably the most famous contact experience of the 1950s was made by an American, George Adamski. Adamski told his story in several books.² He claims to have met people from Venus who wore light blue suits, had long blond hair, and human features. They were of normal height. Subsequently he went on trips with them to many planets in our solar system (all of which are inhabited of course).

Adamski talks a good deal of nonsense about trees and rivers on the moon and earth-like environments on other planets such as Uranus and Neptune—all disprovable very easily by modern scientific techniques. He also took many photographs of UFOs which are so poor in quality and look so little like UFOs and so much like any kind of ordinary object (such as lamp-shades) that they are almost laughable.

It is practically impossible to accept this 'evidence' as valid—and yet a great many people did and a huge cult grew up around Adamski.

He lectured all over the world, and it is claimed he had audiences with many prominent earth officials—including the Pope. He died in 1964 but his memory has lived on as the archetype of contactee experiences.

What are we to make of Adamski? It is very easy to dismiss the whole tale as fanciful nonsense. He did have deep religious views before his experience and there is no doubt he utilized it to put over ideas he had been unable to do with conviction beforehand. However, one cannot so easily dismiss his description of the 'Venusians'. As we have seen such entities have been reported since, in circumstances which appear to offer little likelihood of being faked. There are also small, but amazing points in Adamski's story—told, remember, many years before the 1960s brought the startling discoveries of our space programme. He tells of the Van Allen radiation belts surrounding earth years before their discovery, and he refers to the sight of 'fireflies' dancing around in space (a graphic description which was quickly confirmed by the first astronauts)—minor points when faced with the many 'misses' Adamski had in his stories of the conditions found in our solar system—but things which to be fair need explaining.

We seem to have to face the possibility that George Adamski did indeed meet with entities beside a *true* UFO but that contact, if it occurred at all, never went to the extremes described by him. Much of the detailed descriptions may have been added by Adamski (perhaps without his really knowing he had done so) so as to make the story more saleable and to form the ideal basis upon which to expound his own personal theories. This would have course quickly have got out of hand and demands for 'proof' would lead to his providing even more elaborate stories and the many photographs he allegedly took.

How does one distinguish, therefore, between such a situation and one where contact seemingly occurs on a genuine level? By genuine, of course, we are not implying that someone actually is taken to Venus in a spaceship, only that their reported story has not been manufactured by themselves for personal reasons, but is the product of a new type of phenomenon—whether that phenomenon be of

objective or subjective origin. This is of course the crucial question.

One might take the example of a poor, but seemingly educated, farmer in Brazil called Antonio Villas Boas.³ In October 1957 he was confronted, he says, by a landed object, taken on board and underwent sexual intercourse with a pretty but very strange looking female humanoid. Subsequently he experienced illness effects which may be attributable to some kind of radiation sickness.

This highly important case is often quoted as one of the most significant on record—though it is sometimes over dramatized to the point where Villas Boas is made out to be totally illiterate and therefore incapable of faking the story. This is definitely not the case—though it is unlikely that he would be acquainted with stories of the phenomenon well enough to produce such a consistent account.

More importantly we have to consider that Villas Boas was ashamed by his experiences, made no effort at all to discuss them publicly and seemingly has no reasons to create a falsified tale of this nature. There are also back up medical reports which seem to support his story. All in all it provides a much more convincing piece of evidence than that given by Adamski, and one may view the differences in quality of data as being the means of separating the fact from the fiction. Of course the Villas Boas story, even if true in an objective sense, does not prove that he was captured by space beings for the purpose of procreative experiments (possibly to breed a new strain of earthmen)—as some UFO researchers would have us believe. All it does prove is the existence of a strange experience to be explained. The nature of the 'reality' it seems to illustrate will be discussed later in the book.

Following the plan outlined in Chapter Nine we now consider some British contact experiences, following the subtypes (e) to (h).

A most significant event of the first category occurred during late 1957 and early 1958 in Aston, West Midlands, and involves a woman, then in her twenties, called Cynthia Appleton.⁴ It all began on November 18th just after 3 p.m. when Mrs. Appleton had just checked to see that her young child was all right. She felt an oppressiveness in the air, such as one often gets before a thunderstorm. Then an entity materialized in front of her in the middle of the room.

The being appeared much as a television picture does, fading in and then solidifying. One cannot help being reminded of the science fiction films that portray teleportation—such as the TV series *Star Trek* whose figures are 'beamed on board' their spaceship. This account was made long before these programmes were screened, of course.

The entity was tall and fair with long hair (this should by now be familiar to you), but wore a garment like a plastic raincoat with a high Elizabethan style collar. It communicated directly into the mind of Mrs Appleton talking of a search for the metal 'titiium' (probably titanium). It then disappeared suddenly but left scorch marks on some sheets of newspaper where it had stood.

On January 7th 1958 the figure returned and this time had a colleague. This other entity had shorter hair and the conversation appears to have been verbal. She was told that her mind was 'receptive' to their visits and that she was witnessing a 'projection'. She could not touch them.

After these initial experiences it seems that many others occurred—one of which involved the entity walking in through the front door.

Now if one studies this story and compares it to the accounts in category (a) from the previous chapter, one is immediately struck by the similarities and the differences. This event at Aston has many more hallmarks of a parapsychical experience and can easily be viewed as entirely subjective (except for the alleged physical traces, although it should be noted these have never been confirmed and nobody seems to have analysed them at the time).

A very important feature of contact experiences is the 'repeater' element. Here initial contacts are followed by progressively more complex meetings. Often it is made known to the witness that his or her mind is receptive. There seems little reason to doubt that had others been present at the time of Mrs Appleton's encounter they would not have seen the entity. This is a factor we find in practically all cases under review.

In this instance we have no direct indication of UFO involvement. Once more one can read the account as a ghost story. In the next example, however, *true* UFOs appear to be involved and the similarity with the Appleton report is quite remarkable.

It involves a series of reports from a middle-aged woman

called Mrs Lainchbury, who lives in the town of Little Lever amidst the urban conurbation of Greater Manchester.⁵ Immediately we notice two consistently different features which seem to single out contact experiences from ordinary manifestations of the UFO phenomenon. There are a very high number of female witnesses involved (there are five women out of seven witnesses considered in this chapter, as opposed to five out of ten for simple entity reports in the previous chapter). Also the events tend very much to occur in urban areas, in direct contrast to other types of UFO phenomena (including entity sightings). Indeed contacts happen frequently *inside* a witness' home. These provide very good grounds right away for considering such events as quite distinct.

Mrs Lainchbury's story began in the spring of 1964 when she was awoken during the night and saw her bedroom illuminated by an orange glow. A sphere of fire passed across the sky, apparently quite close to her wall, and exploded into thousands of pieces in absolute silence. She then says she heard a strange chattering noise but whether this is anything to do with the case is a matter of judgement. The next day it was found that paint was burnt off the window frames and door at that point on the wall. After repainting the paint fell off in massive lumps. It would no longer stick to the surface. This created a blotchy effect on the wall at this one spot only, and this was still noticeable in 1976 when the case came to the attention of investigators. Although nobody else could confirm the rest of Mrs Lainchbury's story the other members of her family could vouch for the strange effects and their subsequent appearance overnight following her encounter. (Note of course the scorching caused by the entity in the Appleton case.)

The next phase of the experience occurred a couple of months later when an entity appeared in Mrs Lainchbury's bedroom one night. It was five feet tall and completely covered in grey circular rings of small dimensions, which may or may not have been some form of suit. It told the witness that it was from the 'ship' that she had seen and was stranded on earth. It thanked her for not being frightened on the first occasion, and explained that this was why she could now receive further visits.

After this a further contact occurred in similar fashion, the entities materializing and dematerializing on the spot in

the bedroom. On the second occasion, however, there were two other figures with the first (again note the parallels with the Appleton case). They mentally told Mrs Lainchbury that they came from Pluto by forming letters in mid-air in front of her. She says that she did not know what this word was until she checked a dictionary afterwards. Here she read the definition that it was another name for Hades or Hell and she took this to be their origin. She did not realise Pluto was a planet of the solar system.

There is a sequel to this tale. Some three years later, while the witness was in bed, she found herself compelled to go to the window. Here she saw an orange sphere float past. She felt certain that this was the entities returning home after having been rescued and that this was their way of saying goodbye to her.

So here we have two very similar stories with no possibility of collusion between the witnesses. In any event there are enough differences in detail to discount this, but enough similarities in the mechanism of their occurrence to warrant the consideration of a puzzling new phenomenon of some kind.

Moving on now to a category (g) report we will look at the first encounter in a series of incidents involving a middle-aged housewife called Joyce Bowles. Her further experiences are a useful example of type (h) phenomena.⁶

Mrs Bowles is an amiable and very extrovert personality who lives near Winchester in Hampshire. She claims to have no knowledge of UFO events, but it must be noted that she had worked for some time with John Cleary-Baker, a well known British ufologist, and it is hard to imagine she did not pick up some knowledge through him. She also has had quite a history of psychic experiences, including seeing spacemen about the home as well as ghosts and poltergeist phenomena. Is it possible that the Appleton experiences are only an initial phase of a much more complex set of events which people undergo? We might only discover this in a very few instances. John Keel, a prominent American ufologist talks of 'silent contactees', witnesses whom he claims exist in their thousands. Such people have had close contact experiences but keep silent about them for fear of the damage it may do to their reputations. It is obvious that we ought to keep a very close watch on witnesses who have any type of close encounter experience. It is possible

that they may have progressively stranger things to tell us—but if we trust to their desire to inform us about them we may never find out the full truth. All researchers are urged to keep a constant low level monitor on such people.

Of course, there is a tendency to feel that if a witness starts to report UFO experiences frequently they are not really involved with the phenomenon but with something else. This is the wrong approach, because quite clearly these people are a part of a puzzling problem which we need to understand. It is true that they may not be witnesses to extraterrestrial spacemen—but then so might not those who only have one encounter. It is the lack of willingness to accept this possibility that is causing many researchers to go into Ufology heavily shackled by their beliefs. Their investigations lack the necessary objectivity to encompass the true width of the UFO phenomenon.

The first time Joyce Bowles claims to have actually met a spaceman was on November 14th 1976 at about 9 p.m. She was with a friend of the family, Ted Pratt, driving near the village of Chilcomb to pick up her son. They had turned off the Winchester by-pass and onto a darkened lane.

Ted had spotted a strange orange light in the sky and as they turned onto the lane the car seemed to suddenly go out of control. It skidded onto a grass verge, and indeed Mrs Bowles says it was “lifted through the air”. Upon landing on the grass the engine cut out and the car stopped directly in front of a cigar shaped object glowing orange and with windows in the middle. It sat on the ground before them.

Mrs Bowles was of course very frightened and clung tight to her friend. An entity then ‘appeared’ (presumably from out of the object Mrs Bowles believes). He was tall with a beard and had pink eyes. He wore a boiler suit with a belt round the middle (Fig. 13).

This first encounter involved no actual contact. The entity simply put his hand on the roof of the car, bent down to look in, and as he gazed at the dash-board the engine suddenly came back on and the headlights which had also been extinguished, suddenly lit up extremely bright.

At this point neither witness saw the entity leave. One minute it was there and the next it was gone. Likewise the object just vanished without trace. However, the car would not move forward for some seconds afterwards. It seemed to be held back by some force.

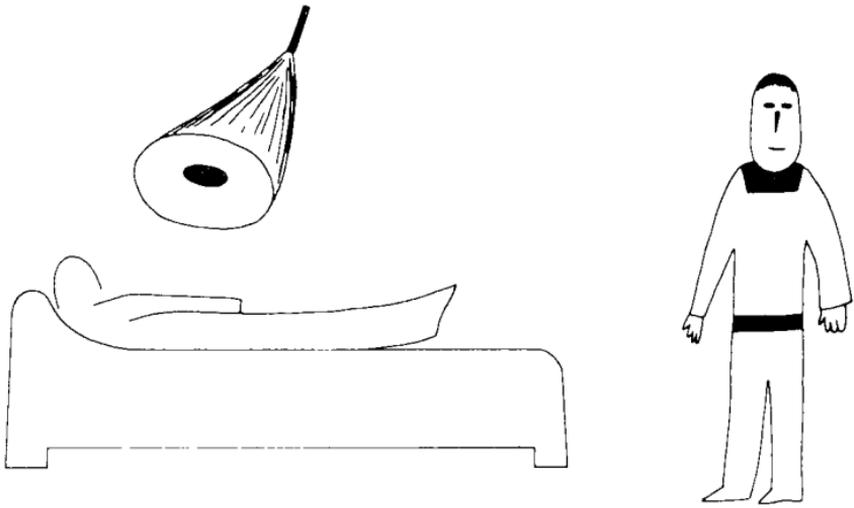


Fig. 12 The UFO abduction scene and medical examination (as drawn by witness, Mr L)

Details of the second encounter Mrs Bowles and her friend allegedly had will be given in a moment, but the third episode, in what became a series, is relevant here. This took place in March 1977 when an entity from a landed object confronted Mrs Bowles, with a female companion this time, and gave her a message, the contents of which Mrs Bowles apparently is not able to reveal.

There is no support for the objectivity of either experience. No physical traces were left at the scene, and no collaborative witnesses exist. The car itself was examined in some detail⁷ and aside from a faulty ignition switch (which may have had some part to play in the car stalling) nothing unusual was to be found.

Our final category can be illustrated by the other experience Mrs Bowles claims to have had, again with the presence of Ted Pratt. It took place on December 30th 1976 at 6.30 p.m. in the same general area.⁸

This time the two witnesses were out to collect some petrol for the car when the strange light was spotted once more. However, much stranger experiences were to follow its observation this time. Suddenly a high pitched whistling sound filled the car and it began to rock violently from side to side. The next thing the couple can remember is being on board what they call a 'spaceship'. Here they were con-

fronted with the original bearded entity that they had met, and two clean-shaven colleagues. The trio talked in a strange language and one of them addressed the two passengers in broken English. It is not very clear exactly what happened, but Mr Pratt was apparently asked to walk about the room and make comment on what he noticed. It seems that it was either hotter or colder at one end of the object. The entity which did the talking uttered the word "mi-lee-ga", and talked of "our fields" when showing a series of diagrams or lines. He also told Mrs Bowles that they were friends and had not come to invade. It is typical of Joyce Bowles and her whole attitude to the confrontation that she should reply as she did: "That's what Hitler said."

Having rather foolishly encouraged the wrath of these unknown visitors she was perhaps lucky only to receive the response—"You have a very strong tongue."

Indeed one might find this an extremely unexpected way to behave for a woman who on the first encounter under much less strenuous circumstances had clung tight to her companion in fear.

It seems that the car was on board the object with the witnesses, although how this transportation could occur is of course not known. To conclude the affair a light flashed from one end of the car to the other end, Mrs Bowles and Mr Pratt found themselves in the car on an unknown stretch of road near Winchester (they do not to this day know where it is).

This case is very typical of many such abduction cases. There are undoubtedly more which never come to light for various reasons. One of these is that the event may be repressed into the subconscious (indeed it is possible that the event only takes place at this level anyhow). There are many cases on record where events of the nature just described are only discovered after hypnosis is conducted on the witnesses. This may be seen to be necessary by the existence of a time lapse. In other words a period of time (usually some hours) remains unaccounted for by the events which are consciously recalled.

The reason for the existence of this lapse depends upon the mechanism that causes the close encounter event. It is by no means necessary to postulate that there was an artificial stimulus. The lapse can just as easily be explained by traumatic events being repressed from the mind by

deliberate blacking out of the memory by the entities involved, or by the fact that the whole experience is a brief hallucination amidst a period of dreamless sleep or a state akin to this. Additionally, the practice of hypnosis as a means of providing 'reliable' evidence of what really happened is somewhat dubious.

One of the classic encounters of this type in the annals of UFO history is the experience of Betty and Barney Hill in the USA.⁹ There were many consistent features here such as the time lapse, the strange noises which began the encounter and the abduction of a man and woman from a car on a lonely stretch of road. In fact it may well be significant that lonely roads, car driving or near sleep conditions are prevalent factors since all seem aspects of sensory deprivation.

Cases of this nature in Britain are very rare. Indeed we know of only one at this time. It occurred in a village called Aveley in Essex and concerns a green mist which appeared suddenly out of a clear night to envelop a car containing a young man, his wife and their two children. One of the children slept through the whole experience (which as mentioned in a previous chapter had a profound effect on the lives of the family). The other took an active part in the affair.

It seems that consciously all they experienced was passing through the mist, but coming out the other side they noticed considerable time had passed by. Under hypnosis it was later found that the witnesses independently believed they had been taken on board a UFO—car and all. Their stories were very consistent.

Investigation into this very important case is proceeding and Andy Collins for UFOIN has unearthed a wealth of data. Apart from vivid descriptions of craft and two types of entity (one small, one tall and slim) they claim to have been medically examined and to have been given detailed information about such things as UFO power sources.¹⁰

Clearly the cases considered so far in this chapter constitute evidence for some puzzling phenomenon. Yet are we able to accept that the encounters described are valid as they stand? Did Mrs Bowles and Mr Pratt get transported to a flying object and become the subject of some experimentation?

We have already put forward some reasons as to why this

possibility does not seem to be likely, but of course there is always the thought to bear in mind that the subjective elements could be induced. However, we notice the decided lack of consistency throughout the stories of contact. Types of entity vary. Points of origin seem to be so numerous as to be almost ridiculous. Methods of arrival and departure vary, and actual reasons for the contact do not seem to be consistent.

If one is to believe the various messages being given to the contactees then we are being visited by hundreds of different races from all over the galaxy—some being friendly and some hostile. All are very concerned with what we are doing to our planet. Some come for minerals, others to probe and study us in great detail. The earth seems to be the biggest tourist attraction in the universe—if the contactees are telling the truth as it really is.

We shall now move on to look at a series of stories which are in actual fact close encounter threes, but seem to have different attributes about them which has warranted the label 'psychic contactee'. We shall term them close encounter four (after a suggestion by Irish researchers John Hind and Miles Johnston). They overlap quite noticeably with the cases we have considered already, and quite possibly offer us the key to the mystery of those contacts, perhaps even the whole UFO problem.

Mrs Hamilton is a middle-aged housewife in trouble-strewn Belfast. She has an invalid husband and is struggling to bring up a family under the circumstances of everyday violence that surrounds her life.¹¹

For her, contact with UFOs began in about 1968 when she saw a bright light dancing on one of her children's toy pandas. Since then she has met 'space people' around the house many times, and been taken for trips in their craft.

The entities are normal humans who wear bright clothing. They materialise about the house but are never seen by anyone else. Their craft is white and clean and like a big house.

The whole method of contact is reminiscent of a dream. She travels to the craft by being "transformed" into a "new body" which Mrs Hamilton terms a "spiritual body". When flying over Ireland on her trips the scene passing by the window is not as it would be in an aircraft, but more like that

in a car. She is never able to get direct answers to questions, nor to furnish any manner of proof for the existence of these entities although she claims to meet them frequently.

There are many aspects of the case which are of interest from a psychological point of view. She seems to use the "space people" as her own guardian angels, claiming that they protect her from all the troubles. She tells some very sad stories about a Mongol child born to a relative—a fact which she attributes to the "spacemen".

This story can be compared to another one involving a man from a town in West Yorkshire.¹¹ He is a well respected official for the local authority and is very puzzled by the series of incidents which befell him. We shall call him Mr L.

These began in similar fashion to both Mrs Appleton and Mrs Lainchbury, involving the visitation of a 6 feet 6 inch tall entity with a long grey face, cat-like eyes, and four digit hands. This appeared in his bedroom one night with no contact ensuing.

The culmination of this story was in February 1976 when the entity appeared with a colleague and mentally showed the witness a picture of a piece of U-shaped tubing. Judging that something had gone wrong with their craft he asked to see it, believing he could help fix it.

He was told to lie flat on his bed with his arms folded across his chest and his toes pointing upwards. He felt a numbness come over his body and then found himself floating upwards out of his body. This is of course a state which is familiar to people who engage in psychic experimentation and is known as astral travel or 'out of body experiences' (OOBE). A good deal of scientific study is now being done into this phenomenon, which it is claimed is related to the separation of the non-physical aspects of the body from the physical aspects.

Mr L now found himself entering a craft described as a golden bath-tub turned upside down. A psychologist, Ann Morris, who studied the case commented that there are so many associative aspects of a piece of U-tube and a bath-tub that a Freudian psychologist would have a field day.

Again there is a time lapse but the witness finds himself on a long, flat table with groups of entities all around him. They are dressed in grey suits with a belt round the middle and a high neck collar. Above him is a huge purple-red eye

like machine which is surveying the whole of his body (see Fig. 12).

Mr L tried to ask questions of the entities but received terse replies. He was told, "A being as insignificant as a worm should not ask questions."

Upon return to his bedroom—he knows not how—Mr L was left paralysed on his bed in the mummy-like posture for some minutes as the entities disappeared on the spot and never returned.

The comments of psychologists studying both these cases led to the belief that they were hallucinatory and many pointers to this were to be found within the stories. It is said that they bear attributes of hypnagogic hallucinations—which are experiences which occur in a state between sleep and wakefulness. The power of such hallucinations is quite remarkable. One of the authors (Jenny Randles) has had personal experience of strong hallucinations under the influence of drugs (administered after major surgery) and can attest to the ease with which they can be confused with normal waking events.

The answer does not seem to be so simple, however. In

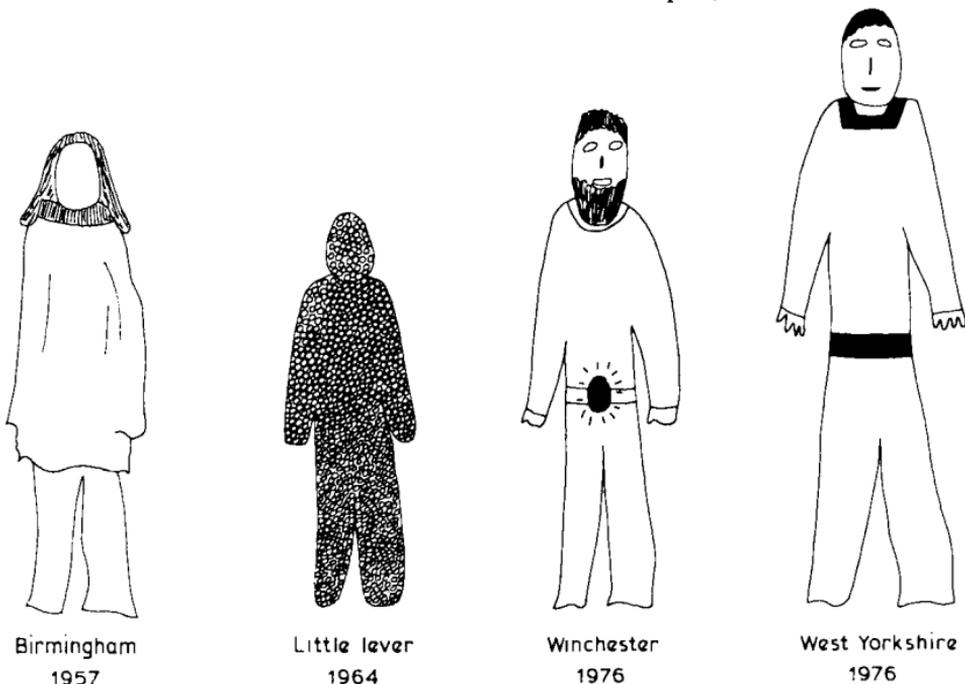


Fig. 13 Entity types described by witnesses referred to in this chapter (drawn to scale)

the case of Mr L particularly the description of the entities is remarkably similar to that given by other UFO witnesses and it is hard to envisage how people throughout the world would hallucinate in exactly the same manner without some external stimulus.

Again Mrs Hamilton gives many details which are clearly improbable and yet mirror comments made by other contactees. Examples of these are, trees and plants on the moon (Adamski) and the fact that aliens live amongst us and hold positions of authority within society.¹²

To summarise it would seem that we have indications that contact stories are different in some fundamental respects from other aspects of the UFO phenomenon. These seem to be chiefly their repeatability, their extreme subjective overtones, and their concentration on a very specific 'type' of witness. In other words whilst anyone can be witness to a UFO experience—including the sighting of entities—it seems only specific people have contact experiences.

This means that it is far more important to study the witness to such experiences if we wish to understand them. For it is they who are the link in the chain. The phenomenon operates through them in some manner, as if they were mediums.

At the same time there are definite connections between contact experiences and other aspects of the phenomenon. There are many common features and it seems that we cannot entirely divorce the two. Perhaps there is one causation but only a few people have the potential to experience the phenomenon to its full depth. This may be the same thing as saying that everyone can listen to a piece of music and appreciate it but only a small proportion of these can go further and actually perform this piece on some musical instrument.

There are three possible solutions to the contactee problem.

Either the stories told are all genuine as they stand. This is obviously impossible to accept because of all the inconsistencies and the false data involved.

Or all the stories are completely false or hallucinatory—in which case we have not explained the consistent thread which does run between *some* of the stories.

It seems we have to accept the third possibility that, although some stories may be totally hallucinatory or false,

others are caused by an objective stimulus which creates these subjective effects in the minds of witnesses. Because a particular kind of susceptible person is involved some of the resultant experiences are more the product of the witnesses' own mind than others'. On this basis the degree of pure UFO phenomenon would be inversely related to the degree of susceptibility of the witness.

The question now, of course, is what is this objective stimulus? Is it really a race from outer space which is manifesting itself in different ways or which we are interpreting in different ways? Or is this a false trail? Is the answer something more complicated than this? Before we search for this answer we will try to tie together some of the loose ends which research into the phenomenon has created. We shall try to see what kind of pattern is presented by the phenomenon as a whole.

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Researching the Phenomenon

“You have to ask silly questions to get good answers.”
—Professor Eric Laithwaite

Since the 1940s we have collected thousands, if not tens of thousands, of *true* UFO reports similar to those considered in earlier chapters. Just what have we learnt about the phenomenon from all of these?

Theories about the origin of *true* UFOs are profuse, and in the next chapter we will be looking at some of these and discussing those more likely. However, we cannot base theories on eye-witness testimony alone. One must go beyond this and try to assimilate what we have in order to set up a hypothesis and then test it. This is the common methodology of science, which has in a few instances been applied to *Ufology*.

It may have been wondered why we have not placed instrumentally-detected cases last in our classification system. This is because they do not represent the ultimate in evidence. They do, however, provide certain pieces of information regarding the supposed objectivity of the phenomenon under consideration and although not infallible (for reasons already explained) are more reliable in certain circumstances than the account of even the best eye-witness. For this reason many attempts have been made to develop a means of instrumentally detecting the presence of a UFO. Discussion of these research programmes will form a part of this chapter.

UFO events are comparatively rare. Although we have quoted tens of thousands and acknowledging that there are at least as many reports still in the minds of the witnesses rather than out in the open, we have to remember two things. This total has been accumulated over thirty years or

more, which suggests only a thousand events per year occurring. Secondly, this total refers to locations throughout the world. Consequently, even if this represents a gross under-estimate then the number of people experiencing close encounters with *true* UFOs in Britain must be rather small—one might estimate rather less than one hundred each year.

A large part of research into the subject concerns the examination of the material we have in abundance, the UFO Reports. One need not channel efforts into methods for instrumental detection to probe the nature of the phenomenon. However, an immediate problem arises because, as we have already seen, the vast majority of UFO reports do not relate to *true* UFO events. It is pointless researching the data if the many cases that have conventional explanations are included in the working material. Unfortunately many statistical studies are conducted without regard for this fact and a sociological factor inevitably appears in the results. This may only be because we are dealing with a hodge-podge of information rather than simply *true* UFO data.

One reason for this is that the majority of publications are not very cautious about what they print. Almost any sighting of an aerial phenomenon will find a publisher who will print the report without reference to a logical explanation. There is obviously a need for some kind of estimation of the reliability of a published report. This needs to be agreed by world UFO organizations. Every report published should be codified in some way to indicate the amount of investigation which has gone into it. In the current absence of such a system we propose that the following 'Investigation Level' be adopted and featured in all UFO publications:

- LEVEL A A report which has received on-site investigation by experienced investigators.
- LEVEL B An interview with the witness or witnesses was conducted by investigators but there was no follow-through investigation into the case.
- LEVEL C The witness has simply completed a standard UFO report form of some type. No interviews have been conducted.
- LEVEL D The report consists solely of some form of written communication from the witness.

LEVEL E The report is based on information received second hand (such as a newspaper account). There has been no follow up investigation at all.

Such a system would be simple enough to apply universally and would do much to enhance the value of published reports. It is our opinion that only reports which have received either a Level A or B investigation could be candidates for a *true* UFO event. Reports in other levels should be considered of insufficient data and efforts should be made to follow these through if experienced investigators in the locality believe they are of sufficient interest.

A great asset in this respect is the existence of a publication which serves to record regularly all UFO activity in a given region, collated from all sources. If such a publication were to list level of investigation alongside each case report then it would rapidly become an invaluable source of reference in future years. In the 1960s Britain was served with an excellent publication known as *UFOLOG*, run by the Isle of Wight UFO Society. Nowadays, the only magazine which is doing a similar thing is *Northern UFO News*, the monthly publication of NUFON. This records data from the North and Midlands of Britain.

Assuming that we have some reasonably reliable data relating to the phenomenon what can researchers do with it? One of the earliest attempts came from a Frenchman, Aimé Michel.¹ He examined a number of sightings on one day during the remarkable wave centred on France in October 1954. He found that these could be aligned in space and that this line passed through the towns of Bayonne and Vichy.

From the initial letters he called this line BAVIC and the study of such alignments 'orthoteny'. Many other orthotenic lines were discovered and controversy raged. US scientist, Dr Donald Menzel, entered the battle and attempted to show how easy it was to draw random lines through arbitrary points on a map.² However, another American scientist, Dr David Saunders, has shown quite conclusively that BAVIC is indeed statistically significant.³ What is of more importance, Saunders has shown that it is not necessary to take events on only one date since an orthotenic configuration is spatial rather than temporal. He showed that a statistically high number of reports occurred on the line throughout the 1954 wave, and there seems every likelihood that the results

would hold true for reports taken over a longer period of time.

Recent research has been concerned with examining the orthotenic lines to determine their properties. They do not appear to follow any man-made or natural landscape features. However, Michel⁴ has recently related the line to apparently significant events in world history, including the palaeolithic cave paintings mentioned in Chapter One. BAVIC also seems to be connected with the birth places of important historical figures.

What does all of this mean? BAVIC is not really a straight line, but a great circle which follows the surface of the earth. Attempts have been made to extend it over the rest of the globe, as they have been with a number of other lines. As yet no major study has been undertaken to relate major world UFO sightings to these lines. This could well be because the subject is looked upon with some disfavour by many workers. Even Michel has had his doubts about its value. There do, however, seem to be possibilities that a new close scrutiny of the field would prove productive.

What is evident is that there are a number of regions, possibly orthotenically related, which produce more than their fair share of UFO reports. In Britain we can especially refer to the Warminster area of Wiltshire, the Oldham area in the North-west, the county of Essex, and South-west Wales. A line which it is obvious on even a superficial glance may have some validity links Oldham with Warminster and may therefore prove to be an OLWAR line. This line passes through the regions of high incidence of UFO reports, namely North Staffordshire and the West Midlands. It is also of interest to note that the major landing cases of recent years seem to be orthotenically related. Winchester and Milford Haven, scenes of two of these, form one line with Warminster, the UFO centre (or 'Ufocal').

Whether we are producing spurious data here can only be shown by a detailed study of high strangeness cases, conducted using computer techniques. There are some good reasons to suspect that such a study would yield productive evidence.

It has been suggested that these lines relate to some channels of energy, possibly 'psychic' energy. There appear to be indications that psychic phenomena tend to occur more frequently around the areas of the lines and this

supports the suggestion that the two phenomena have a common cause. Furthermore investigation is now taking place into the possible existence of 'leylines'. These ancient trackways are thought by some to relate to lines of energy across the surface of the earth, and it may be that there is a direct link between leys and orthoteny. The organisation PULSE exists in the UK to study the possible link between UFOs and leys.⁵

If UFO reports cluster geographically there is the obvious question as to whether there are other consistent factors. For example, can we isolate any temporal bias in the reports?

Jacques Vallee, a French computer specialist now resident in the USA, was the first to make any real attempt at this. He defined a law of time and an inverse law of population density.⁶ The latter indicates the remarkable correlation between high incidence of UFO reports and low population density. This may in part be due to the larger area of open sky visible in rural areas coupled with the greater likelihood of witnesses being in an observationally good location. This has been used by some to suggest that the phenomenon is avoiding detection by showing a preference for areas where there are fewer people about.

The pattern shown in the temporal distribution is even more interesting. In his books Vallee has only dealt with the smaller sections of our time units, such as the hour of the day, but other researchers have contributed findings on the subject.

We have already seen that the UFO phenomenon tends to occur in 'flaps' or waves. There are several reasons why this should be so. Once an important case has been featured by the media for a while they are likely to be sympathetic to others and further articles may well appear. This begins a 'snowball' effect, which no doubt is a prime cause for many flaps. However, it is of interest to ponder if it is the publicity which simply creates a better climate for reporting rather than observing. Of course people will be more likely to look out for UFO events at this time, but if they see one it may simply mean that at the time there are more there to be seen.

What we must do is look at the results through a screening process. One possibility is to discount all reports featured in the press. This would serve to remove the bias of a favourable

editorial climate. However, it has been found that the number of reports still increases. Of course, we would expect this. Witnesses would utilise other methods of recording their observations, for example by word of mouth. What is significant is that reports occur to form flaps in areas where there is little or no regional publicity. This has been highlighted in recent years by the greater communication flow produced by the Northern UFO Network.

In June 1975 there was quite a flap in the North Midlands. This received considerable local publicity, and there is no doubt that towards the end many misidentifications were made that confused the picture. However, the publicity was purely local. There was no mention of the events in the national media and no way the populace outside the region could have known about it. A flap manifested itself in the North-west at exactly the same time. NUFON was able to monitor both of these, which were known not to have been produced by a media stimulus. This is just one of several instances where workers in the field have seen flaps coincide in separate regions.

Another way to approach the problem is to eliminate all the misidentifications that are bound to occur if people are stimulated into looking more closely at the sky. However, even when only *true* UFO reports are considered, flaps are still found to occur. Indeed all of the flap periods of the past thirty years seem to have been coincident with a rise in unidentified observations. High strangeness cases become more frequent at the same time as the number of misidentifications of stars and satellites rises.

We still have to answer the question as to whether this rise is caused by the more favourable reporting climate (giving witnesses the courage to report even more bizarre events), or whether it is due to an intrinsic periodicity in the occurrence of the phenomenon. Undoubtedly there *is* an element of incentive in such a climate, but it does seem that a true periodicity can be shown to exist. This is indicated by the fact that the *percentage* of *true* UFO events increases during the flap times. A normal average of about 9 is to be expected. During the 1976–7 Midlands flap this figure rose to 20. It seems most probable that this is due to a genuine increase in the incidence of *true* UFO events. Otherwise, of course, one would expect reports of misidentifications to rise proportionately.

The next obvious correlation to make is with the month of the incident. This has not been done as often as one might expect, but Arnold Davidson⁷ has shown a definite non-random distribution pattern which displays an October maximum and February minimum. However, he rightly points out that a major flap will concentrate its reports into a period often no longer than a month, and he explains his October high as being due to the tremendously high number of reports in October 1954. When these are removed from the analysis the October maximum becomes much less pronounced, and may even be considered to have disappeared. However, the broad trend of the results does indeed follow a non-random pattern.

Recent work has been conducted to attempt to confirm these results.⁸ Based on a study of reports from northern England confirmation was obtained. Of 415 sightings between 1970 and 1976 only 19 occurred in February, whereas August had 49 and December 48. October did have 40 but both June and November ranked higher. The average total would be 34.6 and consequently this does indicate a definite non-random distribution (*see* Fig. 14).

If one selects April to September as signifying summer and October to March as winter, there are 207 and 208 reports respectively. In other words there is no seasonal variation, and the cause of deviation does not therefore

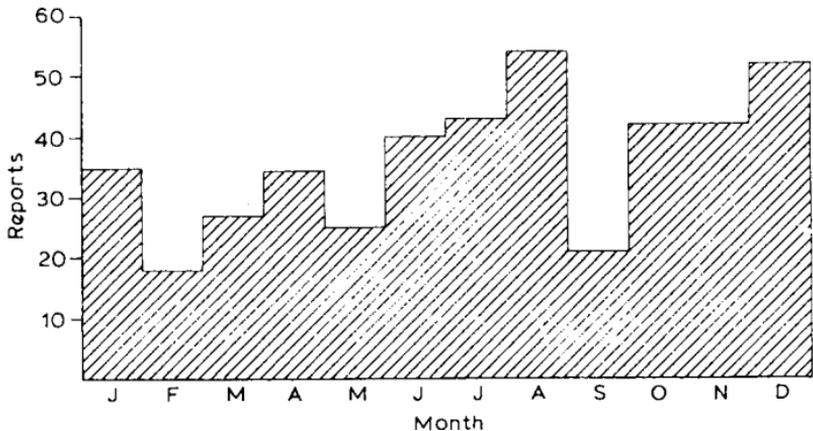


Fig. 14 UFO reports described by month of the year taken from Northern British Data, 1970-76

appear to relate to climatic conditions or resultant social behaviour. However, if we consider the total in the first six months of the year, 178, there is a marked difference with the total for the months July to December, 237.

Interestingly, if we only consider those reports viewed as 'unknowns' by the investigators this effect of a second half rise throughout the year becomes even more pronounced. Reports seem to rise from a minimum in February to a maximum in December/January. This rise appears to be uniform (see Fig. 15).

Exactly what these results indicate is, of course, uncertain without much more work along the same lines. Nevertheless, they do seem to provide a factor which requires an explanation in any hypothesis about the phenomenon.

Few attempts have been made to examine the actual date of the month. This is understandable, because although we might be able to provide logical reasons as to why UFO events might vary according to the month of the year it seems hard to define a mechanism that would relate to our arbitrary division of the month into days. However, comments have been made in the past that certain dates are more prevalent amongst UFO sightings. One such date, often alluded to, is the 24th of the month. Certainly, a number of 'classic' cases have occurred on that date, and several prominent ufologists seem to have met their death

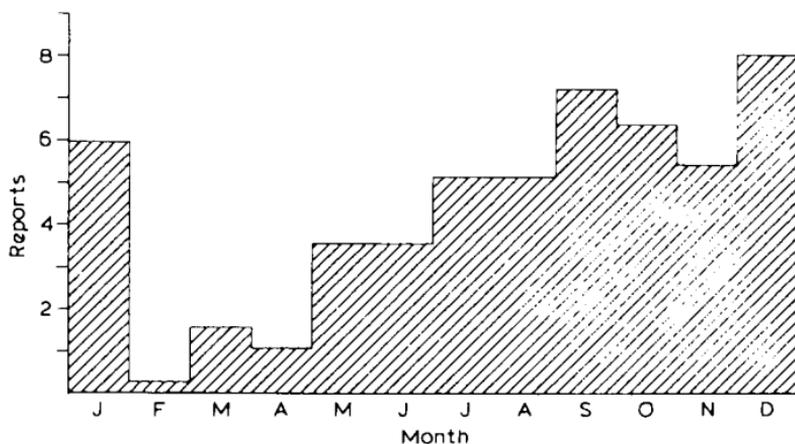


Fig. 15 Unexplained UFO reports described by month of the year taken from Northern British Data, 1970-76

on that date too. No results have been produced to show that this idea is anything other than coincidence.

Having obtained a sample of data with which to work⁸ it was suggested that we split the month into sections, i.e. 1st to 10th, 11th to 20th and 21st to 30th (all sightings of the 31st being ignored as there is not a consistent number of such dates in a year). On this basis we obtain totals of 73, 80 and 93 respectively. This seems to indicate a trend towards a late month increase, but no firm conclusion is possible from such a preliminary examination.

Surprisingly, a great deal more work has been done looking at the phenomenon in relation to the day of the week. Again one has to wonder why an apparently arbitrary calendar division should have any effect on UFO reports. If the phenomenon were purely natural in origin it seems improbable that its frequency would depend upon the day of the week. So far as we know it does not rain more often on a Tuesday than it does on a Wednesday or any other day. Certainly not in significantly high proportions. Yet we cannot dismiss a problem just because it seems unlikely. In Ufology one has to seek to explain the facts that we see, not seek facts to confirm our own beliefs.

Perhaps the most famous research into this topic was done by controversial American worker, John Keel. He has put forward some remarkable, thought provoking ideas in his articles and books and it was in his work *Operation Trojan horse* that he illustrated what he called the 'Wednesday phenomenon'. He attempted to show that more observations were made on a Wednesday than any other day. This non-random pattern was not expected, although one might have imagined that more sightings would be made over the weekend (Saturday and Sunday) when there are more people out of doors, enjoying leisure pursuits and such like. Keel believed that a reversal of this trend had been shown, with a minimum at weekend.

Other research has failed to confirm completely these results, although Saunders⁹ did show a Wednesday peak. Stephen Smith¹⁰ argues for the lack of any significant result by comparing several studies. Jacques Vallee¹¹ has pointed out that we may have been looking at the matter in the wrong way. He suggests that we examine results by 'night of week' rather than by day, because most observations take place at night. For the purposes of such studies he proposes

the day should be 18.00 on one date until 17.59 on the next.

Both Saunders and Vallee feel that there is no significance in the results, and blame the weekend minimum on 'editorial filter', where newspapers are less likely to publish a story on the Monday of an event which took place two days earlier. Few newspapers, of course, publish on a Sunday to carry fresh stories. Certainly all results so far have been confusing and it is possible, as Vallee suggests, that Keel's results were remarkable because they were based on a particular type of event.

Finally, we shall return to the work which was stated earlier as beginning this line of research, Vallee's law of time. This is a factor which seems to be accepted without controversy as valid. It has been shown to apply to sets of data again and again and now few people bother to even check it. Vallee plotted the times of sighting on a graph and showed that very few of them indeed occurred during daylight (which broadly was assumed as being 09.00 to 16.00 hours). The number of observations rose from sunset onwards and reached a peak at about 21.00 hours. What is even more interesting is that the graph shows a second, though smaller, peak at about 03.00 hours.

Vallee has also found some significant differences for the various types of event. For example, he demonstrated that landings occur more frequently around sunset and sunrise. This particular point is borne out quite markedly by a look at the NUFON reports utilised for the research earlier in this chapter. They show no landing reports having occurred after 21.30 hours and definite peaks at 06.00 and 17.00 hours (see Fig. 16).

We can attempt to explain this distribution with reference to the viewing habits of the population. During the day most people are indoors and not in a position to see a UFO event. We have noticed that the phenomenon is more prevalent in rural areas, where people are more likely to be out of doors during the day. A significant factor is that misidentification of normal objects becomes much easier during the hours of darkness. However, there does not seem to be any great difference between the time curves for a cross-section of all UFO reports and a sample comprised only of *true* UFO events.

In order to understand fully the importance of all of this, further research is needed into areas which have been over-

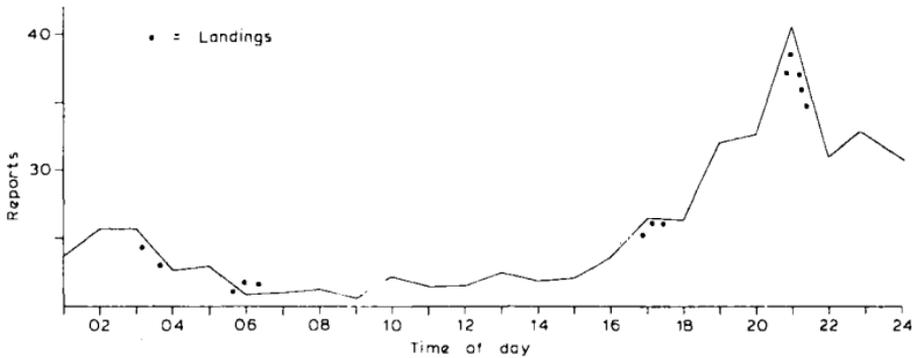


Fig. 16 UFO reports described by time of day (24-hour clock system) taken from Northern British Data, 1975-76

looked. Firstly, we need to know something quite definite about viewing habits in both rural and urban areas. This could be accomplished by means of a sociological study, and hypothetical graphs drawn to illustrate the likely correlation between the number of people capable of observing unusual sky phenomena at various times. Comparison of these graphs with those produced by the time law would allow us to decide whether or not the pattern was caused by an intrinsic factor with the phenomenon or not. We could also go deeper into the meaning of the results and look if there is any seasonal variation in the distribution of sightings. It is interesting to note that if the NUFON data for 1975 and 1976 is divided into summer (119 reports) and winter (122 reports) there are clear indications that there is less of a peak at 21.00 during the winter sample. A peak does indeed exist, but this occurs at 19.00 hours. Also the early morning peak seems to disappear during the winter. Here it would be simple to dismiss this all as due to seasonal variance affecting witness habits, and of course to correct both to G.M.T. involves taking one hour away from all summer data—reducing the apparent difference (see Fig. 17).

Can we piece together all of this information and predict where and when a UFO event will occur? There is a growing prospect that this may be possible. Once more it is David Saunders who has tackled the problem, publishing his findings through the British UFO Documentation Centre.¹² Saunders has attempted to relate the major waves of the last quarter century. A cyclic variation seems to be in evidence, occurring approximately each 10.1 years. A secondary cycle

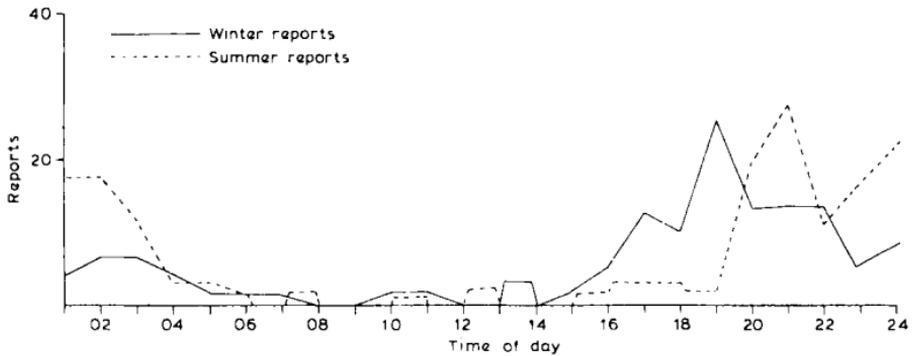


Fig. 17 UFO reports described by time of day (24-hour clock system) taken from Northern British Data, 1975-76 showing differences between summer and winter distribution (not corrected for British Summer Time)

of about 6 years has also been isolated by Bernard Delair.¹³

Saunders, too, has found what appears to be a geographical trend in the focii of the waves (although the UFO phenomenon appears to be universally more active at the times of maximum prominence). From these findings he believes that it may be possible to predict where and when to best mobilise our resources to obtain direct evidence about the phenomenon.

It is clear that there are aspects of the phenomenon which can be isolated and shown to be non-random in nature. This enables us to produce a model of the phenomenon showing its temporal, spatial and descriptive facets. We can then compare this with similar models for known phenomena which may be thought by some to explain the UFO enigma. This has been done by Vallee and Claude Poher,¹⁴ and their results provide perhaps the most important evidence yet produced to demonstrate that the UFO can be representative of a new phenomenon. They drew graphs to illustrate various aspects of the UFO model and have shown quite conclusively that these did not relate to any of the events commonly used to explain UFO events as misidentifications. One of the most striking examples was in the duration of the observation. The curve for this factor is quite symmetrical with a peak at about 100 seconds. This compares with a graph showing the duration of observation of meteors, fireballs and other astronomical phenomena plus meteorological and atmospheric effects. This is totally different and shows peaks at 1 to 2 seconds and 15 minutes. The shorter durations apply typically to meteors, the latter to stellar and

planetary observations. In other words, where the *true* UFO events show a peak there is a minimum for natural phenomena (see Fig. 18).

Now that we have shown that we are dealing with a new phenomenon we must try to describe how its features vary and see if we can relate these to phenomena that we understand in order to give us an insight into what we are investigating.

We have already seen one parallel with this situation in looking at ball lightning. Since we believe it to be some type of electrical discharge it is of importance to study how it is related to normal thunderstorm activity or the electro-conductivity of the air. Such a study will help us to understand how and why it occurs and enable us to predict conditions under which it may occur in the future. It would also give an insight into its properties. One of Britain's young scientists, Mark Stenhoff, is working on a project relating ball lightning with UFOs. He has found some strong similarities, but some differences also, which shows that not all unexplained UFO events can be defined as ball lightning. Indeed it shows that the percentage of UFO events that are attributable to ball lightning may not be as high as had been thought.¹⁵

It has been a relatively recent suggestion that it may be possible to detect the presence of a *true* UFO instrumentally. In the mid 1960s instruments known as 'UFO detectors'

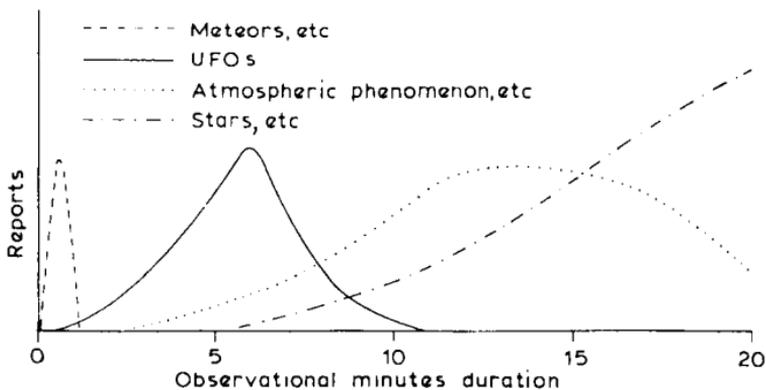


Fig. 18 Graphs to contrast duration of observation of UFO phenomena (as taken from Northern British Data) and typical observations of natural phenomena (after Dr Claude Poher and Dr Jacques Vallee)

became available and are still advertised from time to time. They were eagerly bought by UFO fanatics who would take them out on a skywatch in the hope that they might relieve them from a little of the pressure of continually scanning the skies. Actually 'UFO detector' is a misnomer. These very simple instruments, which can be made at home quite cheaply, detect fluctuations in magnetic fields. They work on the assumption that the phenomenon is at least in part interacting with electro-magnetic effects. Some evidence for this does exist.¹⁶ However, it appears that the sensitivity of these instruments is either such that they react to the slightest fluctuation caused by, for example, a car passing nearby, or else they are so insensitive as to be useless. It has been claimed by some that using a detector of varying sensitivity, which can be adjusted to compensate for local conditions, they have found a reaction coincidental with visual sightings. However, such examples are not usually well documented and little faith should be placed in the detectors currently available.

Very few researchers have the technical expertise or the financial resources necessary to build more complex detection equipment, but one or two individuals have tried. In the United States moves are presently being made by an organisation known as Project Starlight International (P.S.I.), using laser beams and visual recording equipment.¹⁷ Some success in recording anomalous phenomena is claimed. In Britain, David Viewing and his colleagues of the Extra Terrestrial Society have built complex equipment to make a search for spacecraft within the earth's atmosphere.¹⁸ Their searches have all failed, and it needs to be said that this approach is somewhat restrictive. Even if completely negative results are obtained it by no means disproves the existence of *true* UFOs.

Other work has centred on photographic evidence. Ground Saucer Watch in the United States have developed computer enhancement techniques for use on UFO photographs. Considerably more data can be extracted since the computer is able to differentiate between minute tonal variations and to reproduce an artificially enhanced image. Similar methods have been used to improve the quality of photographs we have all seen coming back from the Moon, Mars and other planets via our space missions.¹⁹ Some 'classic' cases have already been proven fake in this way.

In Britain some exciting work is being conducted by Peter Guy and his colleagues of the UFO Studies Information Services (UFOSIS) in Birmingham. They are examining the possibilities of combining spectral analysis with UFO photography. They have even developed a special spectroscopic attachment for a camera.²⁰ A spectroscope splits light from a source into a series of lines according to wavelength. This wavelength itself is dependent upon several factors, such as the elements that comprise the light source and the speed at which the source is moving relative to the instrument. This means that if a bright unknown object could be photographed through this attachment considerable information would be yielded. This may enable the source to be identified or it may give important data on the inherent make-up of the phenomenon itself.

The development of instrumental techniques such as these will open up new possibilities for skywatching making it respectable, provided it is conducted in an organized and scientifically objective manner.

By no means a majority of researchers are skilled engineers or experts in electronics. We have already seen how the work of astrophysicists, mathematicians and computer specialists has contributed to the field, but there is still considerable scope for the less erudite individual to add to our knowledge. A number of people have grown from pure investigators into research workers, often by working on projects associated with the cataloguing of data.

Basically there are three methods of cataloguing the phenomenon. All reports on a world-wide scale can be collected and filed in chronological order, which is what organizations such as CONTACT, and the UFOCAT computer in the USA, do (which currently has some 90,000 individual entries). The other methods involve either cataloguing the data according to regions, or according to specific attributes within the reports.

Regional catalogues have so far been limited to fairly small collections, such as all landing reports from one particular country. This was done for the United States by Josephine Clarke and Jacques Vallee,²¹ and for Spain and Portugal by Vallee again, in collaboration with Juan Ballester Olmos.²² At the present moment a team of workers is compiling a series of regional catalogues for UFO events in Britain. The first of these for Northern England

was planned for publication in 1979, and others will follow. These catalogues are more than a simple reference source for UFO reports. They go on to provide direct help to researchers with tabulated information relating to locality, specific effects, and details of regional sources for the raw data. Such compilations are important ways in which people with no scientific training can contribute. Owing to the multiplicity of sources the task proves far from simple.

Taking one aspect of the phenomenon usually implies collecting all reports relevant to it from any country. For example, BUFORA has been working for some years on a catalogue which lists all vehicle interference cases. Initial results have shown that diesel-driven vehicles do not appear to be affected by the presence of the phenomenon, whereas other forms of combustion engine vehicle do suffer stoppages from time to time.

One of the earliest catalogues of this type was produced by retired diplomat Gordon Creighton. This looked at disturbances to animals caused by the presence of the phenomenon and was published as a series in *Flying Saucer Review*.²³

Other catalogues of this nature include one on physical traces allegedly left by *true* UFOs, pieced together by Ted Philips of the Center for UFO Studies.²⁴ Two other workers for this organisation are putting together a catalogue on cases involving entities, and already this ongoing project, co-ordinated by Ted Bloecher and Dave Webb, has provided some interesting ideas.

The normal format for such catalogues is a lengthy series of abstracts of the case histories, with probably a statistical appraisal of the contents. They do give some insights into the problems they approach, and Creighton's, for example, posed the interesting thought that if animals react so adversely to the presence of the phenomenon then this seems to indicate it is hostile to our environment. He concludes that if this were not so the animals would have adjusted to its presence, but this is not necessarily so. If the phenomenon were of infrequent occurrence we would surely not expect animals to become accustomed to it. After all hurricanes are fairly infrequent and not deliberately hostile, yet we cannot be said to have adjusted to one arriving unexpectedly on our doorsteps.

Having conducted this necessarily brief survey of the

work that has been and is being done, it will be seen that there is a heavy reliance on one piece of raw data—the sighting report. Yet is this the basis from which we ought to be working? There is some reason to feel that we should be studying the UFO percipient just as much. It may be that we are almost overlooking the obvious and most important element of any UFO incident—that is the witness to it.

We have seen earlier that a close encounter causes a perceptible influence on the witness, and in chapter two we saw what a remarkable effect the phenomenon as a whole has on society. Whether or not this phenomenon is related to ourselves, as human beings, or whether we simply react to a stimulus, the study of the person at the focus, that is, the witness, must be central to all our work.

A little work along these lines has been done by Mike Dean and Ken Green of the Wirral UFO Society. They analysed reports from a sociological point of view and published their results through NUFON. These findings, produced in 1975, support those of Ballester Olmos and Vallee, who studied the sociological implications of their Iberian landing data.²² Generally this was that UFO witnesses were an average cross section of the populace, but it is obvious that a good deal more could be done using these studies as a basis.

More recently a British scholar, Ann Morris, has taken a deeper look at the individuals who report the phenomenon and statistically compared her findings to population figures provided by the national census. She has found several definite differences between the two samples, and found that younger people tended to report sightings more frequently than older ones and, interestingly, that men were more likely to report than women. This latter point only applies to average strangeness reports. As already noted, high strangeness cases tend to have the reverse likelihood. It seems that the older and more respected an individual is the less likely he is to risk his reputation by reporting an unknown phenomenon.²⁵

It is important to remember that Ann Morris does not claim that this study tells us anything about the nature of the UFO phenomenon. It would be odd indeed if we did *not* find a bias in the type of people prepared to face ridicule and report their sightings. We would expect them to be of a sociological type. However, her work does indicate methods

by which we can approach the question, "Is there anything special about UFO witnesses?" We already have several clues to the fact that there might be. Think of the number of witnesses to close encounters who have had some kind of psychic experience, or the existence of repeater witnesses who see UFOs frequently when we have shown the chances of seeing even one are remote.

If some people are able to move dice across a table without touching them, whilst others cannot, or bend spoons by concentration when others find this impossible, then we should naturally believe it is something special in these people (although possibly latent in us all) which allows this to happen. Only very recently have investigators begun to ponder whether there is common ground between UFOs and psychic phenomena. The answers seem clear, that at the very least there are fruitful grounds for an unbiased search for more pieces of the jigsaw puzzle.

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The Controversy of Origin

“When you have eliminated the impossible whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth”. — Arthur Conan-Doyle in “Sherlock Holmes: The Sign of Four”

Now he understood perfectly, and smiling broadly he pointed to the sun, made one orbit, made a second, and then touching himself with his left hand he gestured several times with his right index finger towards the second orbit. I took this to mean that the second planet was his home, so I asked, “Do you mean you come from Venus?”

This was the third time that I had spoken the word Venus in relation to the second planet and he nodded his head in the affirmative, then he too spoke the word “Venus”.

So wrote George Adamski in his book, *Flying Saucers Have Landed*.¹ The passage tells how Adamski learned the origin of a man who had just stepped out of a flying saucer.

The question, “Where do they come from?” is quite probably the most frequently asked in the whole of Ufology. It is the one which has sparked off the most turmoil in this controversy-ridden subject. People seem to want to know where *true* UFOs come from even before they know what they are. This impatience has given rise to the lamentable situation of today where there are almost as many theories of origin for the phenomenon as there are photographs of ‘flying saucers’, and the vast majority of these theories are just as suspect as this photographic evidence.

Many of the ideas now in vogue to account for the presence of *true* UFOs are based on sheer ignorance of the relevant basic details surrounding the initial idea. A classic

example of this is the theory that supposes that the earth is hollow, and the *true* UFOs a means of transport for those people who live inside the globe. This can be clearly shown to be ludicrous with only a modest application of present scientific knowledge.

By far the most popular explanation for the origin of the phenomenon is that which proposes that the objects are interplanetary spacecraft carrying intelligent beings from the cosmos to bring greetings to their earthly brothers. The majority of the chapter will be spent in discussing this question of the extraterrestrial hypothesis (or ETH as it is known to ufologists). We make no apology for lingering on this one theory, as it is certainly the one universally associated with the subject. However, we shall first comment on some other suggestions.

Most theories postulate that *true* UFOs are the product of an intelligent civilization. There are very few which have even attempted to look at them in any other way. This is a pity because there does seem scope for such a possibility to be discussed. Biologist Ivan Sanderson did propose in his book *Invisible Residents* that what we are experiencing could in fact be intelligent lifeforms themselves, in other words atmospheric living creatures. This prospect has been also alluded to by Trevor Constable in *The Cosmic Pulse of Life*. However, neither of these ideas have really caught the imagination of the general public, or indeed of the ufologist. However, some research is being done, on a small scale, photographing the sky at UFOCAL sites with infra-red film—supposedly facilitating the capture of the image of these animals.

As to where this super civilisation comes from suggestions have ranged far and wide. One interesting idea is that we are in fact witnessing our own futures in that the *true* UFOs are timeships which will one day be perfected. Now, it is certainly a fact that if time travel *ever* becomes possible in the future and expeditions are sent into the past then we ought to have some historical evidence for this. Could this be the UFOs that have cropped up every now and again throughout history? It is a good way of overcoming the questions as to why the visitors look like ourselves and also take a seemingly undue interest in our activities. However, it has the serious drawback that on our modern conception of the mechanisms of time (admittedly by no means com-

plete) such voyages into time seem to be totally impossible.

Not so long ago the concept of a hollow earth was described as, "Offering the most reasonable theory for the origin of the flying saucers, and by far more logical than the belief in their interplanetary origin".² This has been endorsed by a number of writers in recent years, notably Brinsley Le Poer Trench (the Earl of Clancarty) in *Secret of the Ages*.³

Basically, the idea is that the earth is hollow and that within there dwells a secret civilization. The original home of these people varies according to whichever work you read. They may be refugees from the lost continent of Atlantis or interplanetary visitors who use the centre of the earth as a convenient base from which to conduct their surveillance of the humans on the surface. It is interesting that hollow-earth supporters allow themselves the comfort of using a 'rival' theory to complete their own model, or prevent it crumbling into dust before it has even got off the ground. Quite why hollow earth believers can accept its population with former extraterrestrial beings, at the same time as dismissing the general concept that interplanetary travel is probable, seems hard to understand.

The original hollow-earth fantasy is buried deep in the difficulties of polar navigation, and more recently in the total misinterpretation of photographs obtained from orbiting satellites. These fallacious arguments have led to the belief that there are holes at the two polar regions which permit access to the interior world.

The problems of navigation have for many years caused difficulties for inexperienced voyagers into polar latitudes. This led to the impression that they had in fact discovered new lands which lay inside the polar openings. In actual fact it is considerably more probable that what in fact occurred was simple navigational error leading to misidentification of already discovered coastlines. This is very simple to do in areas of ice-bound landscape.

The misinterpretation of the satellite photographs of the same region is a classic case of ignorance, faulty research and gullibility. The ignorance stems from a failure to understand the basis upon which satellite photographs which survey the earth are often taken. The faulty research comes from investigators too eager to prove a point, and failing to discover the truth when it was easy enough for them to have done so; and the gullibility is the fault of many who have

accepted as positively true this erroneous material that has been churned out by recent works on the subject.

The satellite photographs use a mosaic to form the completed picture. This technique is widely used by space probes now mapping Mars, Venus and other planets. For various reasons, such as orbital factors of the satellites themselves and the illumination of these regions (parts of the Arctic Circle have many months without sunlight), not every part of each region is photographed on all pictures. Therefore, in some instances there are vacant spaces where no image occurs. These vacant spaces were immediately seized upon as being evidence of a hollow entrance to the earth, whereas in truth it could have been fairly simply discovered that if these areas were in fact holes then quite a number of people (who live on the land masses inside the Arctic Circle at the spots where these holes are supposed to be)—do not in fact exist. These people will surely be pleased to discover that some UFO researchers, without bothering to check their data, have engineered their disappearance down a hole into the centre of the earth!

Of course diehard supporters of the theory held firm. The fact that these areas were not shown on the photographs was either taken to imply that the authorities were covering up the existence of the polar openings or that the dark areas were in fact the holes themselves. In such extreme cases of speculation it does not seem that we need to comment further. The earth is not hollow.

Another idea is that *true* UFOs originate from the home of a lost civilization from the past which has lived on and surpassed us in development. This is often linked with Atlantis or other myths from the past. Although there may be a factual basis behind some of these ancient civilizations, their continued flourishing in the manner postulated is little more than romantic fiction.

As implied earlier the extraterrestrial hypothesis is deserving of a more serious appraisal, if only for the reason that it is far the most widely subscribed to of all the theories. The belief that the world is being visited by beings from a neighbouring planet is one that has prompted much critical comment from science. The extraterrestrial hypothesis (ETH) is almost certainly a major reason why the whole enigma has been largely ignored by established scientists. When the subject was at a peak of activity in the late 1940s

and early 1950s the basis was laid for the founding of the ETH combining the many contactee cases with our then poor knowledge of the solar system. This led to the misconception that the other planets within our solar system were habitable. The astronomy of those days was barely sufficient to counter the rapidly growing belief that Venus and Mars were sister planets to the Earth not only in physical size and basic composition but in bearing intelligent life. The supposition that the planets were inhabited grew at an alarming rate and soon was the most commonly held belief to account for the existence of the UFO phenomenon. Even today many people on the periphery of the subject hold the opinion that the origin of the whole problem is interplanetary in nature.

In actual fact the subject of planetary astronomy is now advancing at an amazing rate. Whilst it must be said that there are gaps in our knowledge the principal facets of the subject are well understood. The missing pieces of our knowledge are fast becoming smaller year by year as we further explore the solar system. The probes out to our neighbouring planets provide a wealth of information at their mere passage close to a planet.

To discuss the whole question of whether or not we are being visited by beings from other worlds we should first understand how life comes to be upon a planet and then consider the possibility that such life could evolve to such a stage where it could travel to and communicate with fellow beings.

There are many books and papers discussing the topic of intelligent life in outer space. They range from the highly technical to those at a popular level, and the reader would be well advised to study some of the material that is available.⁴ The means by which planets on which life might evolve are formed is a process that relies on a straightforward progress along a well defined course. Firstly the principles governing the evolution of stars need to be understood, for it is upon stars that the following factors rely entirely. The currently accepted view of stellar evolution is that the birthplace of stars is in clouds of gaseous material, heated by means of contraction. When the interior temperature is high enough nuclear reactions begin that change hydrogen, the main component of the gaseous material, into helium. This process releases large amounts of energy.

During this process the star comes to a steady state and is positioned in a group termed the 'main sequence'. The relative position in the main sequence is determined by differing factors but the principal one is the star's mass: the more massive the star the greater its luminosity, the more luminous the higher up the sequence. This will be seen clearly in Fig. 19. The majority of the star's lifetime is spent in this position of stable state; however, there are many factors that need to be considered in predicting the length of time a star will remain in this state. However, it may be said

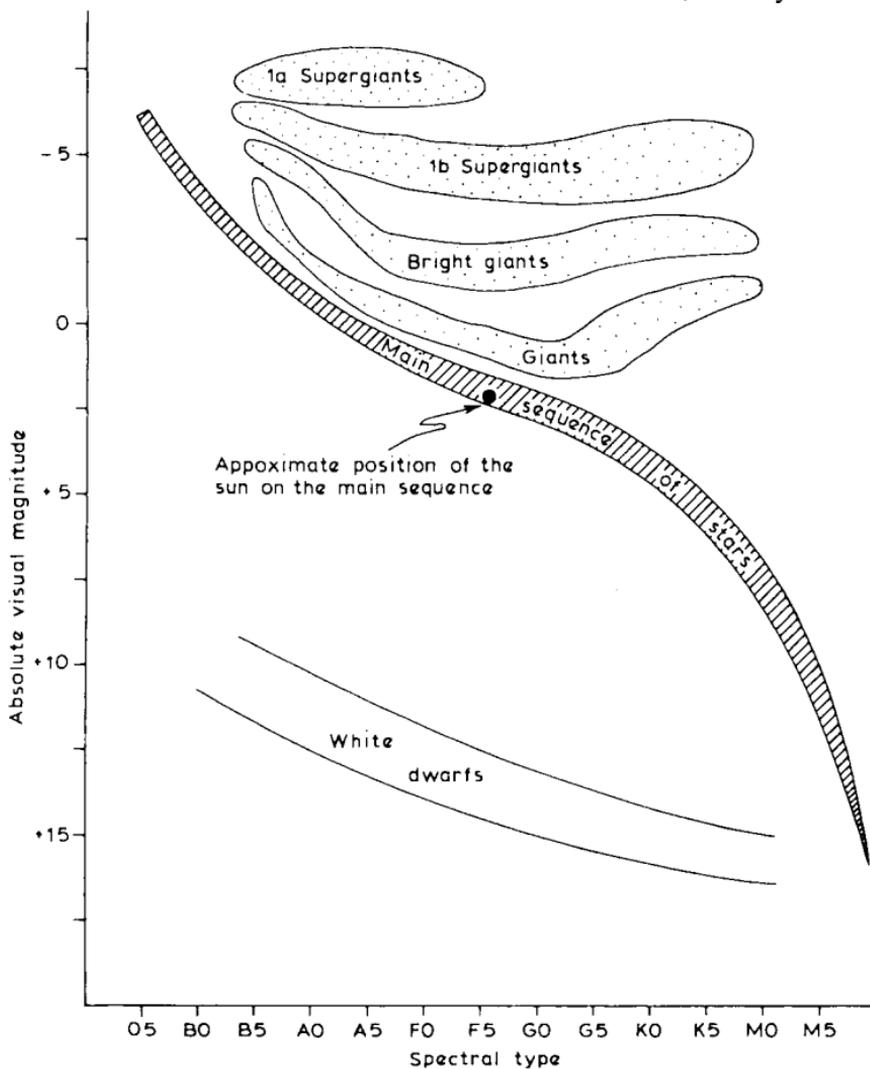


Fig. 19 A simple Hertzsprung-Russell diagram showing the basic evolution of stars

that the more massive the star the quicker it evolves and the shorter its lifetime. As an example the Sun is expected to remain in this steady state for some ten thousand million years. Other stars will remain here for less and others for still more time.

This stage in stellar evolution is followed by the nuclear reactions' slowing and the luminosity increasing whilst the surface temperature decreases. During this stage the physical size of the star increases to the point at which it is known as a red giant. After this point has been reached the fate of the star largely is dependent on the mass. A low mass star such as the Sun is thought to evolve to the state known as 'white dwarf'. In this state the star's surface temperature is fairly high and the luminosity very low, the physical size of the star has also reduced—hence the term 'dwarf'. Eventually the star will cool to a point where it is non-luminous. It is thought that stars of a greater mass than the sun, perhaps one and a half times as massive, evolve in a different way. They collapse into a far denser body than do the white dwarfs. Their collapse would cause them to reach the super-dense state of the neutron star. Stars of a mass even greater than those that evolve to the state of neutron stars are thought to collapse into 'black holes'. Modern astronomy texts offer information on these fascinating stars. Briefly they represent a situation where the collapse is so violent in its proportions that nothing will stop it. The star then becomes so dense and small that no radiation of any form can escape its gravitational field, not even light itself. That in very basic terms is the way in which stars evolve through their life.

The different types of star are known by a classification system that allots letters and numbers to identify each category. They are as follows: O B A F G K M R N S. The groups are then subdivided into sections by adding a number between 0 and 9. Thus a group B5 star is half way between B0 and A0 stars. The method by which stars are grouped in this way is very complex indeed, but the main criteria are based on the spectral analysis of the star which indicates its composition. For the purposes of this discussion we will refer to stars by their classification. The Sun is a typical star of the group 'G', in other words very much a middle of the road type of star.

It will be immediately obvious to the reader that not all stars would be suitable as parent bodies for planetary sys-

tems. Whether a planetary system could occur around a star mainly depends upon the star conforming to various specifications, such as luminosity and sufficient lifetime in a steady state. A high proportion of all stars are components of multi-star groups. That is to say many of the possible parent stars are members of binary systems (a pair of stars with proximity to each other which creates tremendous gravitational interaction). This is bound to cause problems for any planetary system.

In turn there are a number of considerations that need to be met with regards to actual planetary conditions. For example, the planets mass should be enough to produce a sufficient gravitational field to retain the chemicals required to synthesise life. The time for this lengthy chemical process should also be readily available.

Let us now consider these factors in greater detail. Initially the parent star must be of a suitable category to enable it to remain on the main sequence for long enough. It is considered that this time is of the order of three thousand million years, which is the length of time that the Sun has supported life-producing conditions on Earth. The first 700 million of these years was spent in the development of simple organisms such as protozoa. Only stars of classification between F2 and K5 are suitable. Stars below the F2 limit would not have been on the main sequence for long enough, and beyond K5 the luminosity is not sufficient.

This question of luminosity has a great importance as to whether or not a star will produce life-bearing planets. Luminosity is generally regarded as being the total radiation output of the star. This determines the positions of an orbital tolerance region of space around a star in which planets bearing 'life as we know it' could form. This is known as the 'zone of habitability' or the 'ecosphere'. The temperature range is obviously critical, and therefore a planet must not be too close or too far away from a star. A range of between minus one hundred and plus two hundred degrees centigrade is considered adequate as colder temperatures would slow the rate of synthesis to intolerable levels and higher temperatures would cause the chemicals to break down and prevent the process of development of complex molecular chains.

Within our own solar system we find Mercury so close to the sun that the conditions are too hot to support life and frozen Pluto on the extremities of the system where the rates

of formation would be much too slow. The ecosphere for the sun lies between the orbits of the planets Venus and Mars, with these two on the edges of tolerance. Only Earth is truly within the ecosphere.

The position of the ecosphere for each star is dependent upon its luminosity. This also controls the size of the ecosphere. An early type of star in the O or B category would possess a wide ecosphere, existing deep into the planetary system, whereas a dwarf of K or M type would only have a shallow zone. In some cases this may even be the equivalent of lying inside the orbit of the planet Mercury.

This further constrains the possibility of life evolving because, although the larger stars have deep ecospheres and obviously have greater chance of producing habitable planets, their lifetime within these types are short and there may not be adequate time for life to evolve. However, in the mid range stars, as suggested, there is a reasonable balance between size of ecosphere and length of stable lifetime. There is no reason to suppose that such locations are common.

Earth is so well suited to life because it lies at the centre of an ecosphere surrounding a star which is almost ideal. Its stable lifetime still has many millions of years to run and we must consider the possibility that life is unique to Earth because of its special advantages.

Given that a planet does form within an ecosphere the output of the star must remain constant. Geologists tell us that the luminosity of our sun has remained constant within a figure of about 0.3 per cent over the past few hundred million years. Small fluctuations in this output may indeed have led to the ice ages on earth, with their devastating effects on life. It is, therefore, quite clear how important this consideration is. Those stars with variable luminosity are most unlikely to support life.

Another important factor is the mass of a planet, which in turn is dependent on the chemical composition of the planet itself. In general terms this determines the rate of escape of atoms from the atmosphere of the planet.

Take the earth and moon as examples. Even if temperatures are considered to be similar (as high temperatures would speed up the rate of escape) then the differences in mass have led to the moon losing most of its atmosphere whereas the earth has retained some of its own. Light gases

have escaped from the earth during the lifetime of the solar system whereas gases such as the life-giving oxygen have not. The moon, however, has released even the heavy gases and any residual atmosphere from planets of comparable mass would come from the interior.

Planets which do not retain chemicals in the atmosphere are obviously incapable of developing the chain reactions which lead to the formation of life. This is probably true even for 'life as we do *not* know it'.

Given the situation where a planet possesses a very high mass the possibility of life is not excluded. The original atmosphere of such a planet would be retained and would thus be rich in the light atoms such as hydrogen and helium. The formation of a solid surface, therefore, becomes somewhat questionable. Any life on such a planet would be very different from our own.

Provided that these conditions of mass and atmospheric composition are met, and sufficient time is available for the life created to develop intelligence, then it may be supposed that life may be reasonably abundant in the universe. The question of just how abundant is best answered by estimating the distance from the earth to the nearest centre of intelligence.

All these estimates must be regarded as highly speculative. However, the degree of such speculation can be reduced by supposing an optimistic and a pessimistic figure. The authors accept that an optimistic figure might be 50 light years, whereas a pessimistic one around 300 light years (a light year being the distance light travels in a year, which is many millions upon millions of miles).

Clearly these vast distances cannot be traversed at whim as suggested by some witnesses to Close Encounter III and IV cases.

Even if a habitable planet were, by chance, very close to us then we must also assume that the life upon it may be of a similar level of evolvement. If we remember that the earth is between four and five thousand million years old and yet civilization has existed for just a few thousand years we can see the difficulty. If we consider the age of the earth as being equivalent to one day then man as an animal first came onto the scene a minute or so ago and our primitive civilisations began less than a third of a second ago! One can see that a million civilizations on this neighbouring world could have

easily come and gone before we crawled out of the mire. It could now be uninhabited completely, even if it was habitable once.

On a general level it can be imagined that a situation might occur where life in the universe is very abundant and a new planet with life is practically an everyday event. In this situation we would be just one lifeform amongst many, of no special interest at all. If the converse were true and life was rare in the universe there would be so few companions that the chances of our being found in the immensities of the cosmos would be infinitesimal. We seem to have arguments against vast armadas of space travellers to planet earth from both sides of the story.

This question is a crucial one, because it remains true even in the face of arguments by some that the incredible distances between lifeforms in the universe may be quite traversable when we discover 'new' methods of transportation. Whilst this cannot be totally ignored it is a defence that can be put up against virtually anything, and all we can say at the moment is that on present evidences we have no indications as to how the constraints of relativity can be overcome. This limits all speeds to less than that of light and requires very long journeys in real terms, although time on board any spacecraft travelling at such speeds would be subject to some amazing effects which could much shorten relative travel time. Quite how it is possible to envisage a civilization which could launch space ships to earth on a regular basis, in the knowledge that on their return that civilization will have probably crumbled into dust, is hard to imagine.

Even if means of proliferating life, such as colonization, are considered the discussion is not significantly altered. Sagan and Page⁵ quote an interesting point made by Hong-Yee-Chiu who explains the total impossibility of frequent contact with intelligent life on the grounds that the material used in the manufacture of enough spaceships to cross the great distances involved would add up to a significant proportion of the mass of the entire galaxy!

Regardless of these practical reasons as to why the ETH seems unlikely to be valid, we have seen that the phenomenon appears to be quite deliberately leading us in this direction when in the past it has led us in very different directions. Our interpretations always seem to be consistent

with the degree of development our civilization has reached and since we have been misled so easily in the past it seems that we should not jump so quickly to the assumption that we are right this time.

The problem when trying to assess where *true* UFOs come from is that we tend to look for exotic explanations. Hollow earths, visitors from the stars, time travel—they all capture the imagination although they seem to be significantly less probable as answers than more mundane ones. We are not saying that these do *not* represent the truth, only that we ought not to accept them so readily without sufficient evidence in their favour—evidence that does not, as yet, appear to exist. We should now turn and face the problem square in the face and pose the all too obvious question we have apparently overlooked: “Does the phenomenon need to have travelled from anywhere?”

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Subjectivity—the Key to the Mystery

“A thousand of your years are but a day to us”.—
Quotation from UFO contactee and from ‘Gary’ to the
authors

It is now time to pull all of the facts together and to try to see what lies behind this baffling problem. As we have seen there have been ideas in abundance throughout the last thirty years, but none seems to account adequately for the mystery that confronts us. It is important that we look at the data for what it represents and not what we should like it to represent. This means that we cannot ignore the contactee cases, despite their inconsistencies, nor can we view the subjective elements as being unimportant. Indeed it is this inherent subjectivity that seems to offer us the key.

Let us accept for the present that there is a solid, objective phenomenon there in some form. This seems to be proven by the evidence we have put forward. We have tried to show that it is not essential to view the UFO phenomenon as a ‘machine’ and that many apparently physical factors could have non-physical causes. The intention of this was not, as might be imagined, to disprove the physical reality of *true* UFOs, but only to point out that this assumption was not necessarily valid. However, we do have to accept that a solid phenomenon of some type is required to explain all the observational facts but (and here is the crucial point) it is also essential to interlink this directly with the non-physical factors. One cannot ignore one and accept the other. Both are present as a part of the UFO phenomenon and both must be explained by any hypothesis about it.

There is little doubt that when most people speak of 'the UFO phenomenon' they are talking about several different things at once. There is not one clearly defined solution. Even the *true* UFO, as we have postulated it, is not simply one thing. We have seen, particularly in Chapters Four and Five, that at the lower end of the definition scale we have at least one, probably more, new type of physical phenomenon. This may be, indeed probably is in some instances, related to plasma fireballs or ball lightning. It may also be connected with rare forms of optical and meteorological phenomena.

Of course, these do not sound anything like as romantic as visitors from the stars, but it is nonetheless an inescapable conclusion. The study of such phenomena is important and ufologists have a vital role to play in continually monitoring the data on them. At the present moment science is not looking too closely at these observations because they are too intermixed in the general taboo of Ufology. Yet cases such as the ones at Stretford (p. 73) and Barnsley (p. 74) are in need of an explanation and there are many more such as these on the files of ufologists. Our time is most definitely not being wasted in collating them.

For those ufologists daunted by this prospect let it be remembered that it was amateurs who not so long ago laid down the foundations of astronomy and meteorology by carefully recording their observations. In a few short centuries this work has led to the possibility of rockets to other star systems or the control of the earth's weather. All of this has resulted from counting craters on the moon, or noting down whether it rained or not each day. Romantic endings can indeed come from very unromantic beginnings.

Of course, we do not pretend that these comments 'solve' the UFO mystery. It goes much deeper than this. As we move towards a higher definition of sighting we find less and less that these phenomena become applicable as explanations. The *true* UFO that we find there demands a different solution. However, it must be realised that the incidence of this *real* UFO (as we shall now call it) is even lower than most ufologists would believe. It is rare indeed.

If we accept the often quoted figure that about 10 per cent of UFO reports represent *true* UFOs and, as we have seen, most low definition and medium definition sightings of these are in fact new types of physical phenomena, then, because

the incidence of UFO reports *increases* with a *decrease* in definition the majority of our 10 per cent *true* UFOs have now been accounted for. The *real* UFOs which are left mostly fall into the close encounter category, and may be as little as 1.0 per cent of the overall total of sightings made. Indeed, as we have seen, many close encounter effects (such as physiological or electro-magnetic disturbances) may be related to purely physical, non-exotic, UFOs.

This is quite a startling fact because it means that most UFO researchers probably only handle a very small number of *real* UFOs during their active lifetime. This is an additional reason for the existence of UFOIN (see Chapter Two). It seems essential that ufologists specialize, and just as collation of the lower definition *true* UFOs, and their study, is needed so is concentration on the *real* UFO reports—the working principle of UFOIN.

Looking at the problem in this new light we see the subjective elements increase considerably as we move up the definition scale. The Close Encounter III and IV cases are on such a high level of subjectivity that many investigators totally dismiss reports such as those made by Mrs Hamilton or Mrs Bowles (Chapter Ten). This is most unwise. They usually justify this by saying that these cases clearly constitute a totally separate type of event. Someone who claims telepathic contact with UFOs or visits them, as Mrs Hamilton says, "by being lifted out of my body into a spiritual body" is in need of a personalised appraisal. The event described cannot be 'real'. However, if we take all things into account it does seem probable that it is just as 'real' in most senses as the object at Nelson really hovering over the car and stopping its ignition system. The difference seems only to be one of degree of subjectivity involved.

This question of degree is important. In Chapter Ten it was indicated that there were reasons for suggesting that contact witnesses were of a different type from those who experience all other kinds of UFO event. This need not be taken to imply that the phenomena involved are different, although it may indeed mean this. The stimulus for the two could be the same. The mechanism which leads to their precise format could be different.

It could be that all witnesses to *real* UFOs are affected in such a way that subjective elements appear in their experience, but certain individuals have the correct com-

combination of psychological, physiological and sociological factors to lead to a contact taking place. This latter is just the extreme of a sequence of possible experiences which include the many forms of close encounter.

Let us now try to piece together some of the factors that we have seen time and time again throughout our case studies. We would obviously not expect them to be present on every occasion. Not only might the right questions not be asked by the investigator but the witness himself may not feel that the subjective aspects are important enough to mention, or may not connect them with the UFO phenomenon, or in fact may not even be consciously aware that they have occurred. After all, if one is subtly informed that one is about to see a UFO by a little voice inside the head (precognition, telepathy, call it what you will) and then one sees a large saucer-shaped object land in a field and disgorge tiny entities, it is the latter part of the experience one is most likely to remember afterwards.

We have seen that there appears to be a sphere of influence surrounding the *real* UFO. If one is seen over point A it is unlikely to be seen by someone at point B x miles away. At the moment we do not know what value to place on x , or even if this is a constant or variable factor. Certainly it does not appear to be large, and there are instances on record where a very prominent object was seen in one location but not detected at all a few miles away. It seems unlikely that this is because an object appears suddenly, passes over just three or four miles, and then disappears rapidly. This may occasionally happen, but there are too many examples of objects following long, straight paths to accept this in all cases. In instances where a phenomenon is seen over a wide area a natural explanation may often be forthcoming, such as a weather balloon or a meteor. Indeed, knowing the phenomenon as we do we may even be tempted to suggest that it cannot be a *real* UFO if it is seen over a wide area.

Typical of this is an object seen on August 24th 1977 at Peel Green in Greater Manchester. Described as being the apparent size of a tabloid newspaper at arm's length it was seen by just one woman in a densely populated area in broad daylight. If it had been there in a 'real' sense, as we normally accept the term 'real', then this phenomenon would have been seen by hundreds of witnesses.

We, therefore, have to accept that a *real* UFO can only be seen if you happen to be in a fairly narrowly defined area at a given time. Those inside it will experience the event. Those outside it will not.

There are also cases where two people virtually together did not both experience the event. An example here is the Cairo Mill incident (p. 108). In addition we can think of the sighting at Barnsley (p. 74) where certain aspects of the phenomenon present were only witnessed by one of the percipients. Is it necessary to suppose that one must have special attributes in order to see a *real* UFO? This seems unlikely in view of the many good multiple witness cases that there are on record (where witnesses were either together or in a small geographical area). What seems more probable is that there are certain factors which inhibit the observational abilities. Perhaps it would prove valuable to study non-witnesses, such as the colleague of security guard John Byrne at Cairo Mill, who by all respects ought to have seen or heard something but did not.

We must also ponder why actual descriptions of the event vary so much. We have seen that witness testimony is unreliable and that personal interpretations are bound to occur if a group observes an event. However, it also seems possible that subjective visualization on a personal level takes place with witnesses.

Moving away from the witnesses themselves we also need to explain the lack of ground evidence for landings and other cases of physical contact. To be sure it does exist on occasion, but we need to know why so frequently apparently real events seem to become so unreal on subsequent examination of the scene of occurrence.

We can consider three basic types of subjectivity when we look at UFO data. We shall call these: Investigator Evaluation, Witness Appreciation and Witness Interpretation. Firstly we shall consider the investigator's role. Take this case as an example.

On November 4th 1972 some young men went on a 'UFO hunt' near Winsford in Cheshire. Winsford had been the scene of a localized flap at the time and it is hardly surprising that such trips proved productive. As with skywatches, when the object is to 'spot a UFO' awareness is heightened, making one possibly more susceptible to *real* UFO manifestations, but rationality also seems to diminish and ordinary

phenomena become much more easily misidentified. Anyhow, on this occasion the men spotted a red glow rising from behind some trees, followed by two blue lights flashing inside the tree cover. The lights stopped and the air went cold. Then heavy footsteps filled the air but there was nothing to be seen.

It is very easy to dismiss this whole story as being due to a combination of excitability, the cold weather and the desire to see something unusual. Any slightly peculiar event would take on UFO connotations and the witnesses would quite innocently misidentify what was experienced. However, the BUFORA investigator summarizes his case report as follows:

“I believe these men most likely stumbled on a UFO which had landed in the wood and the flashing lights were not flashing lights at all, but in reality one or two blue lights rotating slowly around the moving rim of the UFO, which was only visible through the trees at two points. Taken that a UFO was in the wood, in my opinion one of two things happened that night:

- 1) The aliens concocted the sounds of footsteps to frighten off the observers,
- 2) The activity of the UFO somehow triggered off real spirit activity.”

Well, yes—it is possible! But then is it not more possible that the men saw a flare, a police car, an ambulance or many other things (no checks were made into these possibilities). They may then have become frightened and simply not seen who it was that made the footsteps. Their reports did say that it was very dark, and indeed even that it was misty!

Clearly such thinking on the part of an investigator can easily turn a completely ordinary event into the strangest kind of experience in ufological folklore. One wonders how many such instances of investigational prejudice have led to the creation of classic cases in the past.

Now let us look at the situation from the point of view of the witness. It is simple for him to appreciate the phenomenon in differing ways.

There was a case at Shadsworth, Lancashire in January 1976. Three young women were frightened by an object made up of a series of domed layers. They all drew what they thought they had seen and it turned out that they had ‘seen’ quite different things. Although there was something

of a pattern in what they depicted all three objects could quite easily have been taken to be different had their sightings occurred truly independently.

Then again consider this story from Mrs Marilyn Preston of Saltash, Cornwall. She ran a spiritual healing hospital for animals and claimed to be very psychic. On October 23rd 1971 she saw a UFO. With a friend she watched a strange object for half an hour. It changed shape no fewer than six times during this period. Each change followed a discussion between the witnesses when they said, "Oh, the experts will say 'That's a so-and-so'." The object promptly changed so that it was decidedly not reminiscent of whatever each particular 'so-and-so' was!

Clearly in this instance the witness had some direct control over how the object appeared. It was very personally orientated towards one or both of them.

Witnesses can interpret events in a different way also. This is an interesting case which happened at Wellingborough, Northants on April 6th 1966 at 9.45 p.m.

It is not a spectacular sighting, but involves three members of the Hill family who saw an orange/red cylindrical object hovering in the sky. After a few minutes observation it suddenly vanished leaving an orange-tinged horseshoe-shaped cloud which slowly disintegrated and drifted downwind.

The interesting point about this case is that it would never have been discovered had it not been for the family seeing the BBC TV news the following night. This showed a piece of movie film shot by a woman who was flying over Staffordshire in an aircraft. On this appeared a cigar-shaped object which was suddenly seen in the window frame, altered shape and then vanished. The shape was somewhat unusual, with protruberances from the edges, but was exactly the same as that seen by the Hills—so they told their story. The odd thing is that it was later proven that the film only showed a reflection of the aircraft's tail fin in the window glass by the side of the witness. So what indeed did the Hills experience?

It has often been remarked that there is a strong overlap between *real* UFOs and psychic phenomena. 'Psychic' is, of course, a term which could be applied to a wide range of situations, and it is not easy to define. When *we* say that a witness is 'psychic' we simply mean that they claim to

possess abilities which are paranormal to our accepted senses and which do not occur on a sporadic basis, but often enough to warrant consideration as being important by the percipient.

It is probably true that almost every UFO witness will be able to claim that at some point in their life they experienced a strange thing, be it a feeling, a dream or whatever. Indeed many readers of this book will be in a similar position. Although these events *may* be of a psychic nature this does not necessarily make the individual concerned psychic in an acceptable sense.

There are four main aspects of this overlap, apart from general similarities in the format of the phenomena (such as those considered already in this chapter).

The manner in which observations of ghosts can be linked with certain Close Encounter III and V cases has already been alluded to. It seems to form a pattern which is often not recognized by researchers.¹ An interesting example concerns Paul, a teenage boy from West Yorkshire. Between 1972 and 1977 he claimed to have seen several UFOs, many with other witnesses present. One or two of these would fit into the close encounter category. He has also seen a twelve-foot tall robot like creature with legs like those of flies and huge scoop-like arms which collected soil samples. In addition to these bizarre events he has been visited in his room by a two-foot tall black figure with a head like a squashed tomato! When one contrasts such stories with his account of a trip to a haunted house where a ghostly figure with no eyes appeared, one sees that they all form a part of a consistent pattern. It matters little whether this pattern is just a product of his mind or not. The overall stimulus seems to be interlinked.

The second aspect to be considered is that of poltergeist phenomena. The exact causation of the many anomalous phenomena grouped together under this term is not yet understood, but it seems to be centred around a human focal point (in other words a human, normally of the age of puberty, is central to the incidents).²

Here is a case which was investigated by ufologists, although it is not the kind of thing one would normally expect to read in a UFO publication.

Mrs Burrows had moved into her new home at Great Bourton, in Oxfordshire on September 1st 1971. She was

awoken at about 12.30 a.m. to find an arc of rainbow lights on the bedroom wall. This consisted of small globular balls of white light which could not be obscured and which cast no shadow. They seemed to come out of the wall. The lights remained absolutely stationary and after about ten minutes went out just as suddenly as they had appeared.

Mrs Burrows awakened her husband, but he felt so sure that there was a rational explanation, such as the reflection of car headlights, that he went back to sleep.

The next morning it was found that the electrical systems of the house had gone haywire. The fridge had frozen over, the central heating clock mechanism had gone askew, and the cooker timer was so badly affected that the electrician could do nothing about it. A completely new cooker had to be delivered to replace the old one.

That night the light balls appeared again, and this time Mrs Burrows got out of bed to investigate. The surroundings were very quiet, and there was no traffic or other potential source for a reflection. Mr Burrows tried to move all of the mirrors in the room around to see if any stray reflections were being caused. In the end he gave up and went back to bed. Mrs Burrows stayed awake and saw the balls vanish again, exactly as the previous night.

Over the next few months further odd things occurred. A puddle of water appeared overnight on the stairs. The house suddenly became terribly hot (causing an elderly relative who was present to be taken ill with raised blood pressure). The lights suddenly went out, although there were no fuses blown and the lights of adjacent houses remained on.

These descriptions are fairly typical of a 'haunting' with mild poltergeist effects. No apparitions were seen, and nothing which can really be classed as a UFO. The authors investigated a very similar type of light-ball phenomenon in North Manchester on May 17th 1975 (just hours before the Rainhill landing with physical traces, referenced in Chapter Eight). In this latter instance the witness felt hypnotically attracted towards a circle of white balls which suddenly appeared on his curtains.³ This is interesting because the object which landed at Rainhill was, if you recall, described as looking like three white tennis balls in formation.

Clearly what we have been talking about here are not UFO events in the strict sense of the word and yet, as we have seen, there are such similarities that it would be unwise

not to consider them in the same light. It should also be remembered that Mrs Bowles was a classic witness to contactee phenomena, and she had had experiences with poltergeists around her home prior to the series of UFO contacts.

Lights moving about inside bedrooms are not totally unknown, and one wonders if these qualify for the description of a UFO. One instance which occurred in Spain in June 1972 has been featured in *FSR*.⁴ A small spherical object was seen to float around the room projecting a beam of light towards a rather startled young witness.

Such events as these are often referred to as 'solid light' cases, and there have been occasions where they have been associated with 'normal' UFO phenomena and produced light beams which have actually seemed to pass through objects as if they were solid.⁵

The third area of overlap concerns various mental faculties, especially telepathy. We have seen how witnesses are sometimes aware of the presence of UFO activity before actually seeing it, and indeed how on occasion an element of precognition has been involved and witnesses have been able to predict the sighting of a UFO. Mrs Hamilton, the contactee from Belfast whom we mentioned in Chapter Ten claims that she was given precognitive data by the 'space-men' whom she met. What is one to make of the following report?

On June 13th 1972 Stella Barlow was asleep at her home in Old Windsor, Surrey. She awoke for no apparent reason at 2.15 a.m. and observed a straightforward low definition sighting of a white light, which changed in brightness and at one point illuminated the whole area. Her fiancé was also sleeping in the house and she awoke him to watch the light for fifteen minutes or so before it just 'went out'.

What makes this particular report of more interest is only known because the BUFORA investigator, Bob Skinner, decided to delve into aspects of the case which most investigators would have totally ignored. It seems that both witnesses claim to have a telepathic rapport with one another, and both have seen apparitions of some kind. Even more peculiar is that Stella's brother-in-law, who was in a different house quite near by, had suddenly awoken at the same hour of the morning also for no apparent reason. He had gone downstairs and looked to see if anything had

disturbed him. He found nothing, but remarked to Stella, before he was told of her sighting, that the area had seemed to be unusually bright.

Bob summed up his report in the following terms, which we fully endorse: "I wonder how many other *true* UFO sightings, if investigated to greater depth, would bring out factors that may at first seem irrelevant, but may later prove the key to the whole mystery?"

Finally, we can consider something which seems to include both paranormal mental and physical processes, telekinesis—the apparent ability to move objects with no direct causation.

It has been found on a couple of occasions that witnesses to UFO experiences when queried about their involvement with psychic phenomena have admitted an ability to perform telekinesis. A specific example concerns a man from Irlam, Greater Manchester, who spotted a silvery oval shape in August 1976. He was able to make watch hands move about irrationally. It also seems common that witnesses to close encounters have excessive problems with their wristwatches (perhaps unconscious telekinesis).

Perhaps the most famous instance is that of Uri Geller, the man who has mystified millions on television. He claims to be able to perform feats of telekinesis as well as other psychic phenomena (the most notable being his supposed ability to bend metal spoons just by stroking them). Geller also says that he is a contactee and has seen and conversed with spacemen from distant parts of the galaxy.⁶ It is irrelevant whether he is 'genuine' or otherwise.

One starry night in 1974 a young couple were standing outside a cottage near Halifax, West Yorkshire. They observed two white lights dart across the sky in random fashion. They headed from star to star, stopping instantly and streaking away to the next star in the same manner. The lights never passed in front of a star.

Now, of course, the stars which these lights were passing are millions upon millions of miles away. Wherever these lights were they had to be closer than the stars in such a proportion that to all intents and purposes they were just as far away from the stars as we are on earth. It is ridiculous to interpret this sighting, as did the witnesses, that the lights "knew where they were going and always stopped by the side of a star". The apparent placement of the lights by the

side of the star was due entirely to the relative positions of the lights and the witnesses.

Either the lights were UFOs installed with super computers calculating their movements exactly to make them appear to stop by the side of the stars (for the exclusive benefit of these witnesses). Or the lights were in some way telekinetically controlled by the witnesses. There are no other alternatives, and in this instance the later possibility seems the more plausible.

This seems to be a most interesting question. Do the witnesses actually create the UFO and subsequently manipulate its behaviour? These two cases might provide some food for thought.

We have a story brought to us by a Canadian magazine which, if true, provides some most important evidence in this direction. Of course, the details produced are so scanty as to not allow conclusions in any direction, although names were named by the magazine and it is to be hoped that further information will be forthcoming.

It seems that on July 9th 1959 the head of the American Air Force study into UFOs held a private session with a woman who claimed that she was in direct contact with UFOs. Several high-ranking CIA officials were present at this affair and allegedly have sworn affidavits to the experiences that followed.

They claim that the woman said that a UFO would appear and that upon going to the window those present did indeed see an unknown object. The woman then said that she had telepathic contact with the occupants of the said craft.⁷

A better defined report comes from Bridgend, South Wales, in the mid-1960s and tells of a sighting by a man and wife from their back garden. Hearing a noise like a distant jet they saw a white patch of sparkling mist appear low on the horizon, where nothing but a building site stood. A reddish light then materialised by the side of the mist, joined up with it and then started to blink. The mist then began to glow and pulsate, dividing into two sections. These sections began to spin around and around. The smaller of the two now moved on top of the larger one, giving the overall impression of an object looking like a squashed bowler hat. Lights of many colours now came on the bottom of the object which now began to solidify into a metallic

looking disc shape with a dome on top broken only by a reddish glow underneath.

After this object spun around for a few minutes the noise similar to a jet engine began again. Once again the object became mist-like in appearance and the blinking lights reappeared. Then suddenly the whole thing disappeared. Was this an instance of a UFO phenomenon actually being created and then returning to the state from which it originally came?

Our appraisal of the UFO phenomenon has taken us into some areas which at first sight appear to bear no relation at all to Ufology. Yet an open mind is essential if we are going to comprehend this mystery. Ufologists must be prepared to lay aside personal prejudices and look at any problem which confronts them, no matter what its terms of reference. It was from this point of view that we, the authors, became involved with a very strange experience which was destined to lead us personally along new pathways and become highly important in our dawning conception of the UFO phenomenon.

When we first became involved in the UFO scene we both made an effort to be open-minded and to look at the whole spectrum. Nobody, has, as yet, defined limits for the phenomenon, although there have been attempts.⁸ Therefore, it was impossible for us really to decide what constituted a part of our investigations and what did not. Often cases with psychic implications are ignored by ufologists, but this seemed to be dangerous to our point of view.

We were able to envisage the situation that might occur if an individual researcher were approached by a complete stranger who claimed to be an alien being. Indeed we had come into contact with researchers who said that they had met 'aliens', and it seemed that they took their word for granted. Clearly, if one simply views the logical arguments against a person being an alien the reaction of the majority is liable to be total disbelief, possibly tinged with some sarcasm.

We became confronted with such a claim in November 1975. The man who made it was called Gary. For obvious reasons we cannot divulge other personal details.

He simply walked up to us at a meeting and said, "I have come as a representative of the aliens and have something to say to this meeting." Our initial reaction was to retreat, to

laugh at him behind his back and then to apologize when his sincerity remained. We did not let him address the meeting as we were obviously highly sceptical of his claims, to say the least. We did, however, agree that we would listen to his story at a more convenient time.

Gary seemed to exude a powerful aura which almost willed one to believe in him. It may well have been akin to hypnotic control. Certainly without the utter belief in his story which he radiated strongly it is most unlikely that we would have gone very far in the investigation.

The first thing that Gary did was to show us an anagram, which he claimed was a letter of introduction. This had been culled from the prophecies of Nostradamus, a sixteenth-century mystic who has apparently predicted some of the major events of world history, although his writings are so veiled in ambiguity that one can never be certain whether he has predicted something or not. Indeed many of the predictions of Nostradamus have been used several times to account for a different event in history, and only on a very few occasions has he been remarkably exact in giving names or dates.

It is safe to say that this anagram did not impress us. It could have been concocted by virtually anyone, though Gary insists this is not so and attempts to reproduce anagrams in a similar fashion have shown that, though possible, it is not as simple as one might first imagine. Nevertheless as the evidence it purported to be it was remarkably weak.

Much of the subsequent 'proofs' that Gary provided were in a similar vein. He would juggle passages out of books to try to show that they revealed him as a deliverer of the human race, and it quickly became clear that he was claiming not just to be a representative of the aliens, but an alien himself, reincarnated into an earth body. The earth in fact, was said by him to be a planet where the rejects were sent to try to straighten out their eternal lives. He had made immense sacrifices by agreeing to try to help us, much as Jesus Christ had done in centuries before.

We were now finding it very hard to understand just why Gary had contacted us and what he expected us to do. We had decided quite firmly that he interested us, and that he was not simply mad, although we found it hard to keep our minds open to the possibility that he might be telling the

truth. We proceeded with the investigation as individuals, keeping out any UFO organisation with which we might be involved. This we viewed as essential until we could get a clear grasp of what we were dealing with.

It was, of course, quite simply a matter of nothing ventured, nothing gained. Whatever the source for Gary's claims it was becoming increasingly apparent to us that we needed to study them. Even so we were finding it hard to discover anything tangible in what was being said.

Gary had contacted a local UFO investigation group in the town where he lived, which was many miles from the authors' home town. They had been unsure what to do, but it had soon become obvious that they were being used to guide Gary towards ourselves. Within weeks they were asked to bring him to see us, hence our initial meeting.

Gary tried hard to convince us of reasons as to why we had been 'chosen' to spread the word, so to speak. He pulled out many vague references to our locality and even spoke of beneficial energies generated by the male/female polarity of our working relationship. However, it seemed that the main factor went unsaid. We were in a ufological focus position, which presumably enabled us to be of more use to him if his intentions were to gain publicity. But surprisingly we quickly found it odd that he did not seem to want publicity. Indeed he often referred to the great mistake he had made in getting married. This was not because he was unhappy, but because his wife would inevitably suffer when the truth became known. He seemed prepared for that day, but was certainly not hastening it. He made no efforts to force us along. Indeed all progress was left in our own hands and he seemed to lack impatience.

We naturally spoke to Gary's wife and found that at first she had thought that he was going mad, but that, although she could not bring herself to believe what he was saying, she did accept that *he* believed it all. Apart from these claims he was a perfectly ordinary family man. He looked an impressive figure, tall and bearded, but he never claimed that he was anything but human in body. Indeed he often talked of his body as deformed because it was human.

At work, where he held a responsible job connected with chemical research, he was respected. His colleagues did not know what to make of him, but he seemed happy enough and did his job well so they did not complain. With no

record of medical or psychiatric disturbances it was clearly very hard for us to decide what to do. One might feel that it would have been best to send him to see a psychiatrist, but this would really have been evading the issue. It would be quite simple to diagnose some illness, such as schizophrenia, yet the central problem was the stimulus behind his claims, which paralleled and superseded those of many contactees.

Gary wanted to meet two specific people, one a broadcaster and one a scientist. After some trepidation, and sounding out the situation carefully, we contacted the two men involved. Both were very interested, and it did indeed prove possible to arrange a meeting with the scientist. In fact to say that the scientist was interested in Gary is an understatement. He was totally fascinated by something it seemed he felt Gary might offer.

The meeting was held in London in April 1976 and we travelled to it not knowing what to expect. We had fully warned the scientist that we could not promise that it would be of any use and that we were not endorsing what Gary would say.

Prior to the meeting we had no idea that the scientist concerned had any interest in UFOs. He was in fact well known for some brilliant work he had been involved with, which was not related to the paranormal in any way at all. However, it became clear during the meeting that he was indeed interested and that he was currently engaged in research which was certainly interlinked with Ufology. This was very secret, and it seems unlikely that Gary would have known the details of what the scientist was working on. Even more remarkable than this was the fact that the scientist had been approached before by people like Gary who claimed to be aliens, and his work had indeed been greatly assisted thereby!

The meeting was strange because it did not go in the way we expected. It consisted of a series of discussions between Gary and the scientist on topics which ranged far and wide. Many notes were taken and interested eyebrows raised at several points. At the conclusion we were able to have a few moments with the scientist alone and he confirmed to us that Gary had been helpful to him, although he made it clear that the details of the meeting (which we tape recorded) must not be revealed until such a time as his research had reached

a point where this proved possible. In view of the nature of the work, and the demonstrations thereof that we witnessed that day, we have been prepared to comply with this request.

A very interesting point that arose from the meeting concerned an important turning point in the research of the scientist. He had been faced with a problem, the solution of which was highly important, for some months. This problem was solved fortuitously by him only days before we met (and after the meeting with Gary had been arranged). The reaction of the scientist to Gary on this point was the question, "Are you sure you have not had a time slip?" This interesting comment was not elaborated on for our benefit.

So we were now left in a very strange position. Something about Gary seemed to be important yet he was surrounded by a smokescreen of nonsense. We could not quite understand what it was that was genuine and why it was working through the medium of Gary.

After this meeting Gary promised to us that we would be rewarded for our help. It was then that we began to notice the coming together of a long series of meaningful coincidences all around us. We did not look for these. They just occurred.

The examples that could be quoted are quite numerous. They will almost certainly seem trivial to the casual reader, and we can well understand how they will be dismissed as purely coincidence by those who did not experience them. Yet neither of us are prone to experiences of this nature and we can find no explanation for the way in which they continually added together at specific points in time.

The coincidences were not continuous. They seemed to occur in spasms, which were highly concentrated at the time. Often they referred to quotations that Gary had produced for our benefit. The important points seemed to be emphasised within days by things just happening. Often if we wanted to ask a specific question of Gary and were having difficulty finding a way of doing it a means would present itself to us by remarkably convenient methods. A book might fall open at a page with a quotation atop which could be simply read to Gary to provide the required affect. These things did not just happen once, but several times. Many of the coincidences were concerned with our meeting

with the scientist and cannot be publicly discussed as they would reveal his identity.

Perhaps the most remarkable series of coincidences occurred about two months after this meeting. We were looking for material for a television programme which was being produced about contact cases. There was a considerable dearth of such events in Britain and we were struggling to find material. Suddenly, about five such cases appeared overnight and fell right into our hands, so to speak. They were of a highly subjective nature and several have been referred to in this book.

One of the most remarkable of these concerned Mr L (*see* Chapter Ten). The most interesting thing about this case, however, was that the witness said that the alien gave him an answer which went, "A thousand of your years are but a day to us". This exact same phrase had been given to us by Gary weeks beforehand. It meant nothing to the investigators of the contact case, and appeared to be personally directed at us. There were several other aspects of this case which tied in exactly with things that Gary had told us. Another contact case in this series of incidents produced a drawing of the entity made by the witness. When we saw it we were amazed, because she had drawn a remarkable likeness of Gary himself!

All of this began to make us aware that the phenomenon might be homing in on us. At first we could see no significance for the coincidences. Yet in retrospect it was obvious that they were having a profound effect on our viewpoints about the UFO phenomenon. Indeed, it may be said that they were subtly guiding us along a pathway towards new conceptions. This situation may parallel the illumination experienced by religious people who say that they have 'seen the light', only placed in the framework of our own experiences.

Gary told us both that we had been monitored for some time prior to our meeting him. He quoted an exact period and we both found that it was during that period that our lives had suddenly taken a turn for the better. Events of great importance had led to the feeling that we almost had a 'guardian angel'. Though we never literally believed this Gary told us that we in fact did! It was indeed during this period that the authors got together to form a working liaison which eventually led to this book, and only very

much later was it discovered that there were very strong background ties between us, which are too numerous to mention and which seem to surpass the bounds of pure chance.

We can well appreciate how these comments will be taken after writing what we hope is a logical and straightforward book. The dangers of talking in this fashion are apparent to us. Our credibility may well not be enhanced thereby. However, one has to speak plainly and we are only here relating incidents which we feel need to be put on record because they seem to be important. We can as yet only speculate on what this importance is, but unless someone is prepared to be brave enough to risk their reputations and discuss such things we shall not find the real answers.

We feel quite certain that other investigators have had subjective experiences of the type we have just referred to. We would hope that they might be encouraged to bring these out into the open so that we may see the full scope of what we are dealing with.

Just what are we to make of Gary? We did not find any evidence that he was what he claimed to be, and after the meeting with the scientist he seemed to degenerate and become lost in fantasy of his own making. His claims became wilder and wilder and he began to contradict himself. Those who met him for the first time at this point became convinced that he was mentally ill, and we have passed the case over to others better qualified to handle it. However, we are still maintaining a low level monitor on Gary.

Yet we cannot simply dismiss the incidents out of hand. It seems that there was something present of a paranormal nature, perhaps only in the one specific instance of the meeting with the scientist. Why did the events that we refer to as our own personal education process take place? Were they caused by Gary, or is it that some external phenomenon acted through both Gary and ourselves to produce the desired effect. In this instance the external phenomenon does not necessarily have to be external in the sense that it is an 'alien spaceman'. 'Alien' could be utilised in a different sense, in that we were subject to something which went beyond the normal mental processes of both Gary and ourselves.

We cannot be certain of where the truth lies, but we can

see the parallels that this case provides with contactee experiences outlined in Chapter Ten. Gary in many respects is just an example of an extreme contactee, and in some ways we can be justified in wondering whether or not Gary was the catalyst for what happened or whether we were. In view of the fact that these events only seem to be related to our meeting with Gary, and now that this contact has diminished so too have the other phenomena, it would appear that we must accept some type of phenomenon utilising Gary in order to fulfil a specific purpose.

Gary, of course, would have to have certain characteristics in order to be able to act in a catalytic fashion. He does appear to possess certain psychic faculties and experiences which can be termed psychic have played quite a part in his life (whereas this is decidedly not true in the case of the authors). It now seems that, whatever the motivating factor was in previous parts of the Gary affair it has now disappeared, either permanently or temporarily, and what we are now seeing is Gary performing entirely on his own, and perhaps truly schizophrenic.

What was the reason for these events? Indeed need there be a reason at all? We have speculated that the purpose was to motivate us along a new pathway, and of course this pathway may well be a false trail leading up a blind alley. We are fully appreciative of the possibility that any phenomenon which did want to create its own misleading solutions or, as Keel suggests in his work, play with us, could quite simply provide the whole Gary affair purely in order to confuse an already highly confused situation.

With Gary the phenomenon took him over completely, but there are occasions where there has just been a very deep effect on the witnesses. UFO researchers Gary Lanham and Chris Rutkouski tell of a most interesting case which occurred in a deserted part of Ontario, Canada, in August 1977.

The witness was out camping at the time when a diffuse white glow accompanied by a low humming noise and then a high-pitched whining appeared outside his tent and shone through to the inside. His body grew hot and his ears became very painful, although his dog was asleep outside the tent and remained totally unaffected. The witness was unable to find any source for the mysterious light.

Immediately following this experience the man's life

suddenly altered. He had been having marital problems, but these cleared away within days. He had been unemployed, but suddenly found employment. Everything seemed to go right for him. His perception of certain sounds, especially those generated by electrical equipment, had been enhanced. He attributes all of these things directly to the experience with the light source.⁹

Earlier in this book we referred to the incident at Aveley in Essex, where a family found their lives altering dramatically after encountering UFOs, a green mist and 'alien' entities. It seems, therefore, that the kind of experience that we came into contact with by means of Gary is not unique. Yet diffuse lights with strange noises, green mists and men who claim to be reincarnated aliens are hardly typical UFO stories. Perhaps, the effects noted, however, offer us some clues to the nature of a phenomenon which seems to be presenting itself to us in many different guises.

In her book, *Mind power*,¹⁰ Nona Coxhead talks of "Psi Mediated Instrumental Response" (PMIR). This is a mechanism which parapsychologists are suggesting to explain all manner of things, including coincidences. The theory is that the PMIR 'causes' the coincidences to occur in the same way as it 'causes' events to occur that have been precognitized. On this basis the mind would scan ahead and foresee a beneficial situation or possible danger. It then mediates so that we take advantage or avoidance action. Probably, however, we would not notice this because it would take place in the deepest levels of the subconscious and the result would then appear to be something like a coincidence.

Whatever else we hope this book has shown, the aim was to illustrate that the UFO phenomenon is highly subjective in its application. The biggest factor in any UFO experience seems to be the witness. Certainly an objective stimulus seems to be there in the first place but the whole thing is channelled through our own personalities and comes out as an experience with greater or lesser 'non real' elements. The crucial question we now have to answer is, "What is the source of this objective stimulus?"

The UFO phenomenon undoubtedly shows indication of being influenced in some respects by an intelligence. Some researchers believe that the evidence points towards a superior intelligence. This may be so, but is it really neces-

sary to postulate that this intelligence comes from outer space, the inside of the earth or some secret civilisation? May it not be that this superior intelligence is ourselves?

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“An Answer with a Thousand Questions”

“As knowledge increases, wonder deepens”—Charles
Morgan

Summarising this book is no easy task. There are no clear-cut answers. All that we ever seem to do is to produce yet more questions. The phenomenon seems almost alive, running away from us like a slippery eel just as we think we have found the truth. It seems to have hundreds of different facets to it, and we are never able to be quite sure if we are close to the truth or as far away as ever.

It would appear that we are likely to remain in this frustrating situation for some while to come. Indeed it could even be that we are not meant to find out the answers. Their very purpose could be in the mental stimulation produced in searching for them. It is certainly interesting to recall that past ‘solutions’ for the UFO mystery, such as fantastic airship inventions of the late nineteenth century, have led to direct advancements in our scientific progress. Who is to say that our current viewpoints in favour of an extraterrestrial solution, as right or wrong as they may be, will not lead us into new and greater dimensions of space travel.

Yet, assuming that there are some answers there to be found do we have any real likelihood of finding them? We believe that if we utilize some of the new approaches suggested by this book, and examine the phenomenon from a slightly offset standpoint, then we may well have some hope. Principally, we are proposing that we consider the phenomenon as a human experience, and consider its importance to the percipient. Perhaps it is related to the individual, perhaps he is simply a medium. In either instance

we feel recognition should be made of the validity of integrating the methodologies of parapsychological research within the framework of Ufology.

Looking at *real* UFOs in very simple terms it would seem we have three broad possibilities for their origin. Firstly, the whole phenomenon could be based on hoaxes or non-real events. This would not seem to explain the basic consistencies of some of the reports. Secondly, the problem can be clearly defined as 'beings' who fly remarkable craft from some unknown origin to the earth and occasionally contact humans. This is hard to equate with the inherent subjectivity of the phenomenon, and does not give adequate answer to the many inconsistencies we find. It seems that the third possibility is the only one which we can advocate as likely to take account of all the facts. This is a mechanism which is basically a stimulus, but which is personally experienced in many differing ways due to the individuality of the observer. This initial stimulus promotes belief in socially acceptable forms, and is presently being viewed mainly as extra-terrestrial in origin. The same stimulus has given rise to many other origins in the past, none of which were probably valid. We are constantly being led along a false trail.

What of the basis for this stimulus? This is of course the critical question. Our examination of the problem has led us towards two possible forms, both of which may be intertwined and partly true within their own right. The probability of these being responsible for the *real* UFO phenomenon would appear to us to be greater than many of the other theories which have been speculatively proposed to date. However, we recognise that nobody can say with conviction that this, that or the other is true in such a difficult subject as Ufology. Consequently, we offer the following ideas tentatively as answers which seem to fit the facts as we know them today, but which may not fit the facts as we shall know them tomorrow. If there is one thing we can say about Ufology with some certainty it is that it constantly confounds our beliefs. Produce a law which the phenomenon follows, and nine times out of ten an event will almost immediately occur to reverse this law.

However, be that as it may, we shall look at these two suggestions. These are that there is an undiscovered mental faculty within ourselves capable of actually providing the UFO experience; or that there is an intelligent species which

exists contemporaneously with ourselves on the earth, but on sensory planes of which we are not normally aware. Either way the whole experience revolves around the percipient, who may be responsible for it in the first place or simply in a unique position to appreciate it.

In this book we have tried to show that certain abilities which some individuals possess, often referred to as psychic or paranormal, tend to overlap in many areas with phenomena associated with the *real* UFO (remembering here that *real* UFOs are almost exclusively found in the close encounter categories). This seems to suggest that the latter may be just an extension of the former.

Let us consider the possibility that certain human beings have developed a new talent, which in essence means they are capable of producing UFOs. It would be fair to assume that those able to do this regularly would represent but a small proportion of humanity, although the talent may be buried deep within us all. As with many other psychic experiences the right combination of circumstances may very occasionally give all of us the opportunity to create a UFO. However, this would be a once in a lifetime experience.

Perhaps we have made our mistake in not recognising the distinction between witnesses who have frequent ufological experiences, and those which see things on a very sporadic basis. This may be because the former tend to have many psychic or subjective sub-effects related to them (psychic and subjective may almost be assumed to be interchangeable at this point). Of course on the basis of the theory we propose this would be exactly what we would expect. The fact that these psychic contactees, who have UFO sightings almost every week, do exist must not be ignored. They have to be important as a key to the UFO mechanism.

The investigator of psychic phenomena recognises that there are two types of event; spontaneous and repeatable. Spontaneous events can occur to anyone but take place only under special circumstances. He will record these but will normally not spend too much time probing the individuals to whom they occur. On the other hand repeatable events involve 'mediums', a word which can be used to cover anyone with inherent abilities capable of producing paranormal experiences frequently, even if this is not repeatable in the strictest sense of the word. A psychic investigator

would be much more interested in such individuals, as is seen by the in depth work that has been done on people such as Uri Geller.

Should not we, as ufologists, be much more concerned with repeater witnesses therefore? The contactee also seems to be a potential repeater witness, and vice versa. Consequently our studies ought to concentrate on these people. Some scientists such as Berthold Schwarz in the USA, are beginning to explore this fruitful field.¹

If we were to propose that this effect was wholly psychological, perhaps the production of a mental image which could be viewed by others, we would be in a somewhat difficult position. Whilst this would fit many of the contacts or landings it would not immediately explain the ground markings or physical effects. We cannot deny this evidence, insufficient and randomly present as it may be.

What we seem to be dealing with, therefore, is the ability of such people to manipulate energy with their minds and to make this briefly appear on a physical plane in the apparent shape of a *real* UFO. Motions would be controlled in much the same way as telekinesis.

This idea sounds startling, but it is not really. It seems that mediums are able to do many similar things. There is evidence to suggest that a image of the body can be projected over distance in such a way that it can be viewed and even touched in rare instances. The real body in this case may be hundreds of miles away, perhaps asleep, whereas the image actually walks about in a different environment.

The existence of such images has been attested to in many cases. They are often referred to as *dopple-gangers* or 'Out of the body experiences' (OOBEs).² The projections stem from the mind of the individual concerned, and there are even supposed techniques for learning to do this!

Clearly, if this is possible, energy has to come from somewhere and matter has to exist to produce the *dopple-ganger*. This may well come from the person responsible. All that needs to be postulated to extend this into UFO creation is that the medium creates a mental image of the *real* UFO experience and using mental energy moulds matter which is drawn from some source into a briefly durable objective phenomenon existent on a physical plane. Perhaps this creation is necessary to release deep-rooted psychological forces. The psychologist Carl Jung showed the importance

of the UFO archetype to human consciousness. Just as dreams act as safety valves to work out our frustrations perhaps we need to create UFO images to release these basic and potent forces within.

The method of projection may often be something similar to a hologram. In essence this is a three-dimensional picture. It does not physically exist and cannot be touched, yet it appears real because one can walk around it and experience the effects of perspective. Yet it cannot be exactly the same *if real* UFOs physically exist.

When we think in terms of taking matter from one dimensional plane and transferring it onto another we are not talking in the old-fashioned science fiction way about travel from one universe to another. The process could be much simpler.

All matter is vibrating. The atoms which comprise the room around you, or the chair on which you sit, are all oscillating rapidly. The speed of oscillation is connected with the density of the matter. Think, for example, of a block of ice. The vibrations in this are relatively slow, although still too fast to observe. If you heat the ice energy is added to it and the vibrations speed up. The ice melts and it becomes liquid. It changes form quite dramatically from a solid block to a shapeless flowing substance. Add yet more energy in the form of heat and the vibrations speed up further. The water now undergoes another change of state and becomes steam. This invisible gas spreads over a vast area compared to the original little cube of ice.

What would happen if we added further energy? Perhaps another change of state would take place. It seems quite possible that many vibratory levels for matter exist, and this is just another way of saying many different dimensions are to be found.

We are providing an analogy here, and not pretending that this is in fact what actually happens. Yet we can see the possibilities. A psychic person may well be able to produce this change in state and bring matter from a higher vibratory level into one which would be plainly visible to us all.

We could have a roomful of steam. This may be totally invisible. Yet if we suddenly cool the room, some of it will condense. Water will appear, as if by magic. If the ambient conditions in the room remain as they were before, with the temperature above the boiling point of water, when this

temporary cooling factor is removed the water will vaporise yet again. It will disappear from view. In other words water will only manifest for a limited period of time due to the application of external factors.

Perhaps we can think in simple terms of our psychic person 'cooling' this high vibratory matter by some mental application. This would alter the rate of vibration and make it exist as a phenomenon in our physical world for as long as he continues to apply this mental force. Afterwards it will return to its original state, where it could exist around us all the time without our really being aware of it. Whilst it is visible he may have the ability to mould its format as he wishes, hence the creation of *real* UFOs.

This situation has many implications. The energy required to alter the vibratory level has to come from somewhere. As suggested this may be from the medium or from the environment by means of the medium. In other words we may have an explanation for the many associated effects of the UFO phenomenon, sudden increases in heat, physiological effects on witnesses, ground markings etc. All of these require energy either being applied or being taken away, and it is energy exchange which is important in the alteration of vibrational states.

Exactly how this energy is redistributed may vary from case to case dependent upon the conditions at the time. This would explain why all associated effects are not present in each instance. It may also be that on the odd occasion when no affects at all are noticed this is because they occur at a location which is distant from the actual phenomenon observed. The focal point for the created UFO would be the medium, but if it is not the medium, or one who is at the time in close proximity to him, who reports the sighting to us then the effects which occur may well go undetected.

This hypothesis seems to explain why subjectivity increases with higher definitions of report. Since associated effects need to occur for this mechanism to be possible it would necessarily only apply to close encounter cases (except, of course, as suggested when the close encounter incident is not reported). What we seem to be faced with is the prospect that *real* UFO phenomena all have a central close encounter event at their core with possibly medium and low definition incidents resulting as spin-offs when witnesses simply observe the created UFO. Ideally we need

to correlate these events, and this has sometimes been possible. However, since we only find out a small proportion of the total amount of UFO activity which takes place the chances are that we will not get the complete picture of a set of UFO experiences (see Fig. 20).

We are also able to explain why a field of influence seems to surround the *real* UFO. The psychic witness responsible will be at the focal point, but the change in vibratory levels may well be such that some degree of sensitivity is still required by a witness to detect it. This threshold of sensitivity may be low at close distance to the actual UFO, but as most energy patterns show a decrease in intensity with distance from source then a witness at a point a mile or two further from the focus may need a much higher level of sensitivity to observe the phenomenon. In other words there will be a fall off in witness numbers with increasing distance from the event. Since we are proposing some degree of sensitivity in order to perceive the event this explains the difference in witness appreciation of it. Different witnesses would have different levels of sensitivity.

The person responsible for the creation of the phenomenon may or may not be aware of it. It is possible that they would not see the *real* UFO themselves. This situation is well known with other paranormal events. This could help to explain the time distribution of *real* UFO reports also.

Taking the parallel situation once more, many psychic phenomena seem to occur when normal senses are restricted, almost as if these provide a restraining effect on the development of supernormal abilities. Telepathy and precognition are often interwoven with dreams, and periods of sleep seem to be the ideal conditions for paranormal manifestations. If one thinks in terms of a time distribution curve for the number of people asleep it would peak quite clearly in the middle of the night and have a considerable minima during the day. If we superimpose on this a graph to represent the potential number of witnesses we find some remarkable results (Fig. 21). During the day both of these are very low, corresponding with the low number of UFO reports. As evening approaches the number of witnesses rises sharply causing the combined graph to show an increase. This increase reaches a peak in late evening as the number of people asleep begins to climb, and then drops away somewhat since the number of potential witnesses falls off.

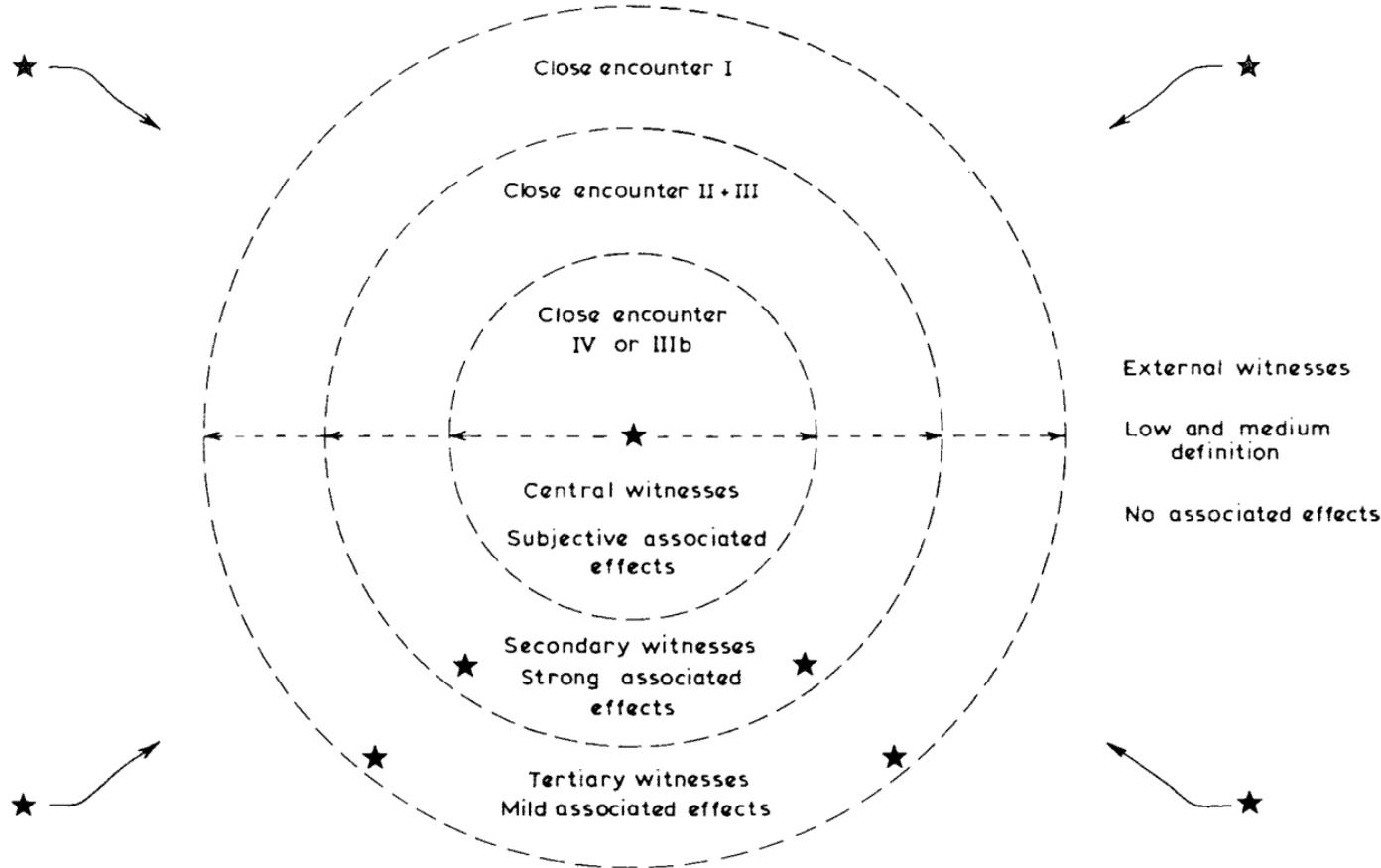


Fig. 20 Illustration of the proposed ripple effect of energy distribution surrounding a UFO phenomenon. On this projected hypothesis the witness at the centre, who possibly experiences an abduction scenario or CEIIIb situation, is responsible for the channelling of decreasing ripples of energy outwards. The farther one gets from the centre the less likely the phenomenon is to be detected and the less intense the associated effects, hence the reducing strangeness of the encounter. External witnesses may view the created phenomenon purely as a low or medium definition event with no effects. The farther one moves from the centre the greater the sensitivity required to detect associated effects from the decreasing energy level.

However, by the middle of the night there is a strong maximum of people asleep, possibly also in the deepest stages of sleep when sense deprivation and UFO creation may well be at their peak. This could give rise to the secondary peak in the early hours, which is a previously unexplained attribute of the time law graph (see Fig. 22). Other close encounters occur when witnesses are alone or in similar sensory deprived situations.

This whole idea is admittedly embryonic. However, we feel that it is beginning to point us in the right direction since it seems to explain the observed properties of the UFO phenomenon by means of possible capabilities of human beings. Since the phenomenon seems to follow 'human' terms of reference and social rules this could be essential. The authors would be most interested to hear any comments from readers on the viability or otherwise of this theory.

No doubt by this time you are wondering about the significance of the UFO entities. These are certainly important to our understanding of the *real* UFO. You will recall that we saw some clear differences between UFO entities in non-contact cases and those where contact does take place. Perhaps, therefore, this *might* suggest a further *real* UFO exists in addition to the mind-created UFOs we have just postulated, although overlap in entity types could be readily explained by the psychic witness/creators basing their UFO and entity models on stories that they have read and which are lurking in their subconscious—in fact Jung's UFO archetype once again.

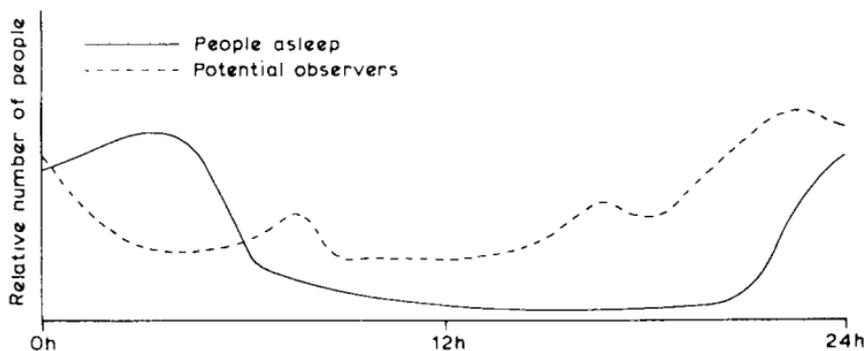


Fig. 21 Graph illustrating comparison between number of people in potential positions to observe unknown sky phenomenon and the number of people asleep

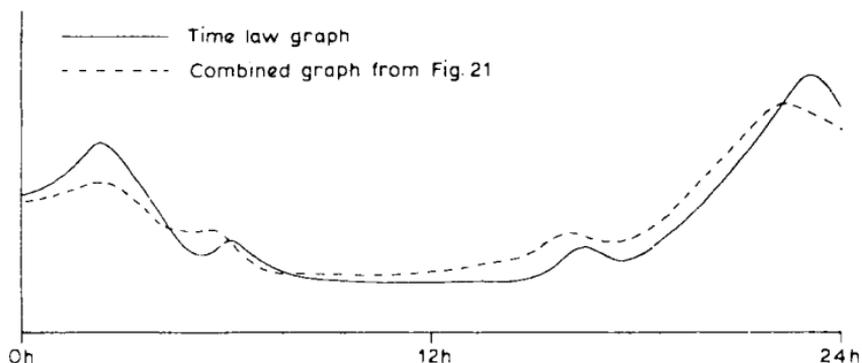


Fig. 22 Combined graph from Fig. 21 showing the potential number of observed UFO phenomena which are psychically created compared with the Vallee Time Law distribution

American researcher, Dr Richard Haines, has discovered by careful experiment that there is no significant difference in our image of a UFO if we claim to have had a UFO sighting or if we do not. We all possess a UFO stereotype. It would be illuminating to extend this research to UFO entity types to see if stereotypes similarly exist.

Of course, there is no reason to suppose that if the actual objects can be mind-created then the supposed occupants cannot in exactly the same way. Everyone has a self-concept about alien life forms, spacemen and such things. Each one is likely to be slightly different. The variety of human imagination seems to provide a much better solution to the infinite range of UFO entity observations than a real menagerie of alien beings.

Perhaps the created UFOs may be representative of the vast majority of close encounters, and certainly the contacts and abductions. In the latter cases, of course, the witness responsible for the creation would have to be central to the contact itself. However, what if the straightforward entity cases *do* indicate something different? It could be that there is evidence to be found for a civilization of advanced proportions, but it should be stressed that the authors remain sceptical and are yet to be convinced of the existence of *any* advanced civilization.

We have seen from Chapter Twelve that the likelihood is against any advanced civilization from another planet being present on the earth. One must also ponder that such a

civilization, were it to exist, would appear to have been here for thousands of years, possibly even longer. It seems strange that any race from some distant star would be interested in us enough to mount a full-scale investigation of such lengths. Indeed, one might also wonder why it has seemingly not discovered what it set out to discover in such incredibly long periods of time. It certainly seems that if the answer were to be found in an advanced civilization then that civilization must be much closer at hand. Indeed it must co-exist with us on the earth.

If a superior form of life did exist on this planet would we be likely to know about it? The answer, quite probably, is no. We do not really have any idea of the level of intelligence amongst the animal species of the earth. We can make guesses that such and such a creature has great potential for intelligence, but this is merely basing it upon our own conceptions. It is rather naïve and perhaps conceited of us to think that ants, for example, are not intelligent. They are able to perform quite remarkable feats of engineering and have a social structure. Their intelligence may not be of the same kind as our own, but can we really be justified in thinking this is inferior? We cannot know how they view our world.

The sensory organs of many animals are very different to our own. Some see in wavelengths that we are not capable of visualising. Others have clearly defined levels of extra-sensory perception. Their viewpoint on the world will be totally different from our own. One wonders how they see a human being.

Consider the world from the point of view of an ant. Imagine that they could observe what goes on around them and think about what they are seeing. They may have reports of UMOs (Unidentified Man Objects). Perhaps these UMOs have to come into contact with the ant world to be detected. They may not be seen all of the time. Even then this perception may take on peculiar forms, and all that they may be aware of is a strange object which appears suddenly and then rapidly vanishes, causing many associated effects when it contacts the inhabitants of the world (for example ants may mysteriously end up being crushed!).

Of course this all sounds very amusing, and we are not proposing that there should be a straight analogy here. We are simply asking you to try to visualize possibilities in this

way, and consider that we may be in such a situation with regards our conception of the *real* UFOs.

What would happen if this superior civilization lived in a world where all matter existed in different vibratory levels? Imagine a civilization of gaseous entities, and extend from this along the lines that we suggested earlier in the chapter. There will be points of interaction between the two 'dimensions', and points where the two are completely isolated from one another. Just as a gas can exist all around us without our being aware of it until a reason for its detection comes about (e.g. when it comes close enough for us to smell it), then beings with matter of a different vibrational rate (i.e. in a different dimension) could be all around us now and we would never know it. This might only be apart from the moments of interaction, such as with UFO events of some form, or possibly more frequently to the sensitive people of this world.

An interesting analogy here is to consider a being which has no thickness and possesses just two dimensions, length and width. If you think of the thinnest piece of paper imaginable, and keep thinning it out, it will eventually reach this idealized state. Think now what would happen if an object which did have three dimensions were placed underneath the paper, but not touching it, and then moved through the sheet and out the top. How would the being which we are representing by this sheet of paper interpret these events?

What in fact would happen, is that he would see the object suddenly appear, remain in view for a brief period and then disappear. If the object passing through were a ball then the being would be unable to visualise this roundness. He would first see just a point (the very top of the ball) which would grow into a circle and then shrink into a point before vanishing. In other words it would exhibit transfiguration, much as *real* UFOs seem able to do.

There are even further comparisons that we can make. As the object passed through the paper it would leave a hole. In other words a pronounced physical trace would be left. Imagine the consternation of the being in two dimensions trying to explain the impossible things that have occurred just because an extra dimensional object has temporarily interacted with his world.

What then if there were a fourth spatial dimension? We

could have no conception of this and anything which existed in this state would probably interact with us every now and again. When it did so it would produce some very odd effects indeed, which may well seem like magic to our eyes—just as *real* UFOs do.

Of course the comparison here is not precise because we earlier spoke of different vibrational levels and here we refer to spatial dimensions. Yet the principle is much the same, and the two could quite possibly be interwoven.

The other point is that the civilization existent in this fourth dimensional state would be perfectly aware of us, although we would not be aware of it. Think of the sheet of paper again. The ball, were it intelligent, could visualise this because it came within its own three dimensions. It is possible to visualize down a dimension, but not up one.

So what if such a race existed in a four-dimensional world with our three-dimensional earth as its base. It could carry on all around us and probably live quite happily with only infrequent contact with ourselves. Being so close at hand, however, it would be much more concerned about our activities. It has often been suggested, for example, that UFO reports have been increasing since the Second World War because the UFO entities spotted our nuclear explosions and were worried that these might do damage to their own planet. This seems hardly likely to be true. It probably would not worry anyone on the moon, were there people on that frozen, airless orb, if we blew ourselves into a billion pieces. Why aliens from a planet light years away are going to be over concerned it is very hard to see. It might, however, worry a civilization with its roots much closer at hand—on our earth itself.

Assuming such a race existed then it may well have been around much longer than we have (indeed to be superior it possibly would have to have been). In that case it is only natural that contacts would sporadically occur throughout our history, and be interpreted in different ways according to the civilization of the time. There are also good reasons why this race should not wish us to realize its true nature, particularly not in these days. Whilst we may be inferior in intelligence that does not mean that we cannot be dangerous. Knowledge of a superior race co-existing with us would certainly provoke intense fear, much more so than a superior space civilization which seems to be so much more

distant from us. Fear could now generate hostile reactions on our parts, and we can be very dangerous creatures when made angry. Just as we would not wish to frighten a rattlesnake or any animal capable of inflicting death upon ourselves, then perhaps this superior species prefer that we do not see the truth and consequently will reinforce any beliefs about their origins that we have at the time—provided that they are the wrong ones! (That could, of course, include an influence in the writing of this book if the UFO phenomenon be something else altogether!)

It is interesting that in medieval times when strange entities were observed they were accepted as fairies or elves. The folklore of many nations carries stories which are remarkably consistent. It was then always accepted that these were creatures which co-existed with us, and lived upon a different dimensional plane. Perhaps at the time we were not dangerous enough to warrant false explanations being given, or at least the people to whom these fairy sightings occurred (mostly poor country folk) were not.

In many respects this second theory brings us back full circle to our first set of ideas. The psychic witnesses will still be critical because they may well be catalysts capable of channelling this interaction of dimensions. Since they may be able to perceive the beings of this co-existent civilization more readily it will be through them that the reinforcement of beliefs takes place. In other words they are contacted by "Aetherius from Venus" and so forth.

Of course, we are speculating here, we hope not wildly, but speculating nonetheless. Clearly it is not essential for us to look into space for a solution to the UFO mystery. Indeed what evidence we do have seems to point us away from there. It would appear that we must look more towards ourselves for the crucial answers, be they purely new abilities inherent within us, or be they the results of an external intelligence catalysing these talents.

Whatever the truth the UFO phenomenon presents a fascinating field of study. It could turn out to have significance of tremendous importance to us. Its ramifications seem more likely to tell us about ourselves and our capabilities than introduce us to new life forms (even if they exist), but whatever the case they are things that we need to know about.

This is a phenomenon which is all things to all men. It can

literally be what we want it to be. The way to the stars may not be found in the truth about UFOs, but the way to ourselves could well be.

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Conclusions

In order to summarise some of the suggestions that have arisen out of the last section of this book we thought it sensible to close with a brief review of what we are proposing. Firstly, let us note the major things we do know about the UFO phenomenon.

- 1) Most UFO reports appertain to misidentifications of known phenomena. Out of every one hundred sightings made public probably as many as ninety can be explained this way.
- 2) The phenomenon has appeared throughout the history of mankind, but was interpreted differently according to the era in question.
- 3) Some aspect of the phenomenon seems to wish to reinforce beliefs in numerous 'exotic' origins; such as demons and fairies, wondrous airships, and now extra-terrestrial spaceships.
- 4) The concrete, physical evidence for a *real* phenomenon in forms such as ground traces, photographic or radar images *does* exist, but is very scarce and indicates either a very rare phenomenon or a basically non-physical one.
- 5) The phenomenon is amenable to analysis and follows clear trends which show that it:
 - i. Occurs more frequently where population density is low;
 - ii. Occurs more frequently at certain times of the day (especially late at night);
 - iii. Occurs more frequently in the presence of certain types of individual;
 - iv. Is highly subjectively interpreted by all those involved with it;
 - v. Generates enormous emotive levels, either for or against its existence.
- 6) The phenomenon is global in extent and most UFO reports are never reported.

Based upon these factors, and others brought out in the text, we set out to suggest mechanisms to solve the remaining ten out of one hundred reports. These reports we call the *true* UFO. Our conclusions were that we needed to look firstly at 'earth based' phenomena before proposing exotic alternatives from external sources. The evidence in favour of these exotic theories does not seem to exist, but this may not necessarily indicate that it is not present if we do not look hard enough. An open-minded approach is still essential. In the meantime we suggest a method of looking at the data in realistic terms to see if acceptable answers are provided without looking farther beyond them. We tentatively opened the debate with the following ideas:

- a) Most *true* UFO reports (probably as many as eight out of the ten) relate to new forms of natural phenomena or to extensions of presently understood ones. Part of the task of a ufologist is to make the subject respectable to science by compiling accurate catalogues, without theorising about the nature of the phenomena included. The subject should then be freed from its mystic or space-linked aura and this raw data handed over to science for its appraisal.
- b) The remaining reports (about two out of ten) do not seem to be explainable in this way, although they may be. These we call *real* UFO reports and suggest that they too may have several solutions. They are almost exclusively close encounters.
- c) The close encounter is basically a witness-orientated phenomenon.
- d) All *real* UFO experiences have at their core a central encounter generated by a sensitive witness, who often has a history of paranormal experience.
- e) Often these central encounters are close encounters of the fourth kind, involving altered states of reality, intensive subjectivity or alleged abduction. These may well be totally non-real, in the form of vivid dreams or hallucinations or similarly intense, but not fully understood, psychological experiences.
- f) Experiences are created by the central witness due to a deep inner need to vent powerful emotive forces inherent within us. The experience acts as a safety valve much as dreams do.
- g) With particular witnesses or under particular circum-

stances energy and matter may be altered in form to project a temporary physical phenomenon which causes objective effects. This would be rare and since it is entirely due to the sensitive central witness would follow human social patterns of some form, although perhaps influenced by external factors such as geomagnetism, sunspots, the weather or (just conceivably) external intelligences.

- h) The witness at the core acts as a medium of this energy transfer but may or may not be aware of this (he may be asleep, in a trance or a similar sensory deprived situation).
- i) The energy itself comes from the central witness, other individuals or animals nearby or the environment itself —giving rise to the close encounter effects.
- j) Energy is rippled out from the core with intensity falling away. This creates a sphere of influence only within which the *real* UFO phenomenon would be experienced.
- k) The farther one is from this central point the greater the sensitivity of a witness required to appreciate the phenomenon fully. Hence non-close encounters may occur as spin-off observed by less sensitive witnesses and witness numbers will rapidly decrease the farther one is from the central occurrence.

Appendix

The authors would like to hear from anyone who has had a strange experience of any kind, which may or may not be of relevance to the UFO phenomenon. They would also like to receive any comments about the ideas expressed in this book:

Correspondence should be addressed to:

Jenny Randles, 23 Sunningdale Drive, Irlam, Greater Manchester M30 6NJ.

If you would like to become actively involved in UFO investigation and research you will be able to find out further details of the organizations mentioned in the text by writing to the authors at the above address. Jenny Randles is Secretary of the Northern UFO Network (NUFON), and of the UFO Investigators Network (UFOIN).

To further your knowledge of UFOs we would strongly recommend that you subscribe to the world's leading journal of scientific Ufology—*Flying Saucer Review*.

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Other recommended UK publications include:

MUFOB: Quarterly journal of the parapsychical implications of Ufology. 11 Beverley Road, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4AW.

Fortean Times: Quarterly chronicle of fortetan phenomena in Britain. C/o DTWAGE, 9-12 St Annes Court, London W1.

UFO Research Review: Quarterly journal of the Nottingham UFO Investigation Society. The 'nuts and bolts' aspect of Ufology. 443 Meadow lane, Nottingham NG2 3GB.

Other addresses to note:

BUFORA: 6 Cairn Avenue, London W5 5HX.

BUDC: 10 Park Court, Park Hall Road, London SE21 8DZ.

Contact UK: 19 Cumnor Road, Wootton, Boars Hill, Oxfordshire.

Center For UFO Studies: 1609 Sherman Avenue, Room 207, Evanston, Illinois 60201, USA.

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