

CLOSE

**Kidnapped
by a flying
saucer—
or just a
dream?
Only you
can decide..**

WHEN John Mann and his family saw what they are convinced was a flying saucer, it was the beginning of the most bizarre hour in their entire lives. A "lost" hour in which the three adults and two little girls now believe they took a trip on a Spaceship and talked to alien beings. The details of their experience have been probed by scientific and medical experts. And a hypnotherapist has taken them back in time to relive that lost hour. Yet the family's stories are so consistent that they challenge the most sceptical.

Could it all *really* have happened? Or did the family imagine the whole thing? Whatever you believe, you will agree that the Mann family's story is as fascinating as any science fiction. But the beginning was ordinary enough...

IT happened just as the car reached the top of a small rise outside the Oxfordshire village of Stanford-in-the-Vale.

John Mann's sister, Frances Farrow, was in the passenger seat beside him.

Gloria, John's wife, and their two daughters Natasha, 5, and Tanya, 3, were dozing on the back seat of their old white Vauxhall Victor.

The family had left the home of John's mother in Reading, Berkshire, at 9.30 that Monday evening.

Just before they left, Frances Farrow telephoned her husband Ronald in Thrupp, near Stroud, Gloucestershire, to say they were on their way.

John glanced at his watch, as he was anxious to reach a Pangbourne garage before 10 p.m.

It was 9.30 p.m. exactly.

When they arrived at Pangbourne at 9.50 p.m. the garage was closed. They drove on to Wantage, stopping on a self-service forecourt. Then they continued along the A417 — very familiar to them — that led to the Mann home in Brockworth, Gloucester.

They reached Stanford-in-the-Vale about 10.15 p.m.

It was now dusk after a hot early summer day. One or two clouds were beginning to form high in the darkening sky, but with a near full moon they could see for miles.

[The British climatology department at Bracknell Weather Centre confirms that in that area on the night of Monday, June 19th, 1978, there were variable amounts of medium-to-high-cloud with very good visibility. The Royal Observatory at Hertsmonceur, Sussex, says there

was a full moon on June 20th, 1978.]

With so little traffic on the road John had no doubt that they'd get home about 11.15.

As the car mounted the rise John and Frances spotted a brilliant white light in the sky, about a mile ahead.

The light was the size of a car headlamp.

John joked: "Wake up, Gloria, look over there. It's a UFO."

His wife jerked awake and clearly saw it, too. She said: "It's too large to be a star."

They drove on for a mile. The light did not change its position.

swishing sound and the scoring noise of a train's wheels against a track.

"The moon re-appeared and through the dusk I could make out a vast circular shape over a hundred feet up in the sky. It was moving very slowly.

"It came directly at us, went over the car, and drifted over trees on the right into a field.

"As it swung away we could see the underside of a massive saucer-shaped object, its undercarriage lit by a circular rim of brilliant coloured lights."

The children had woken up and were pressing their faces against the car's rear window.

The noise from the craft stopped. In the silence Gloria's panic-stricken cry brought John to his senses. "Quick, John, get back into the car—it is going to land,"

she shouted.

John had driven another hundred yards when he realised that they were no longer on the familiar road home. He remembered no turnings on either side that he could, in his dazed state, have driven into.

The journey was a dream-like experience. "It was suddenly pitch black," he recalls.

"I could no longer see over the hedges. We seemed to be tightly hemmed in on either side by a tall, dense hedge.

"The road was no longer straight but wound up and down small humps and rises, with sharp bends.

"I looked at the speedometer and we were doing about 40 mph, in top gear.

"I had the strange feeling that if I took my hands off the wheel the car would drive itself."

They rounded a final bend and found themselves just inside Faringdon. But they hadn't passed the Faringdon sign at

Sunday Mirror special report by JEAN CARR

Curiosity got the better of John. He decided to stop the car and get out to check if he could hear any aircraft noise.

He slowed right down to 5 mph and was about to brake when Gloria said: "Don't stop here. We are right outside a house. We might alarm the people inside."

'GET BACK—IT'S GOING TO LAND'

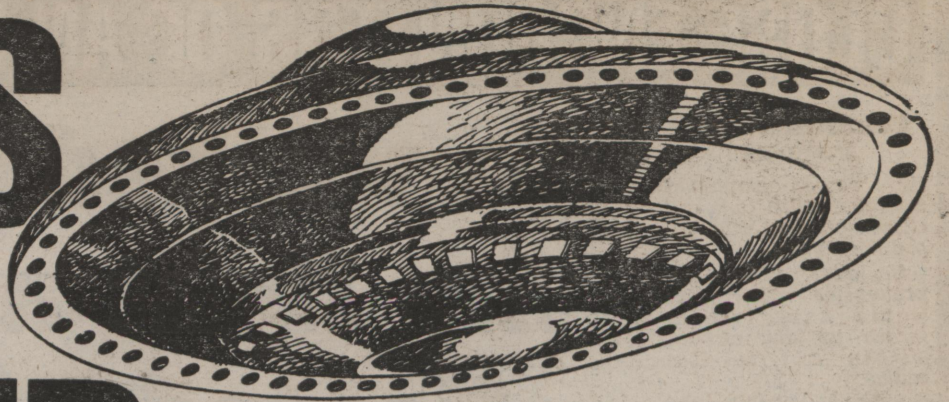
John drove another hundred yards. He and Frances saw a red light flash on and off on the right side of the white light, which now seemed to be coming straight at them.

John put on the hand-brake and leaped from the car with the engine still running.

Suddenly the moon was eclipsed by pitch blackness and John could hear a noise, getting louder.

He says: "It did not sound like an aircraft noise, but a mixture of a

ENCOUNTERS OF AN ENGLISH KIND



Out of a summer sky came terror.. and they 'lost' an hour of their lives

the entrance to the town.

Although a quiet country town it was unusually empty for 10.30 p.m. when people would have been leaving local pubs. But the family saw no one.

They drove on towards Cirencester. Frances said quietly: "I don't want to worry anybody, but look behind us."

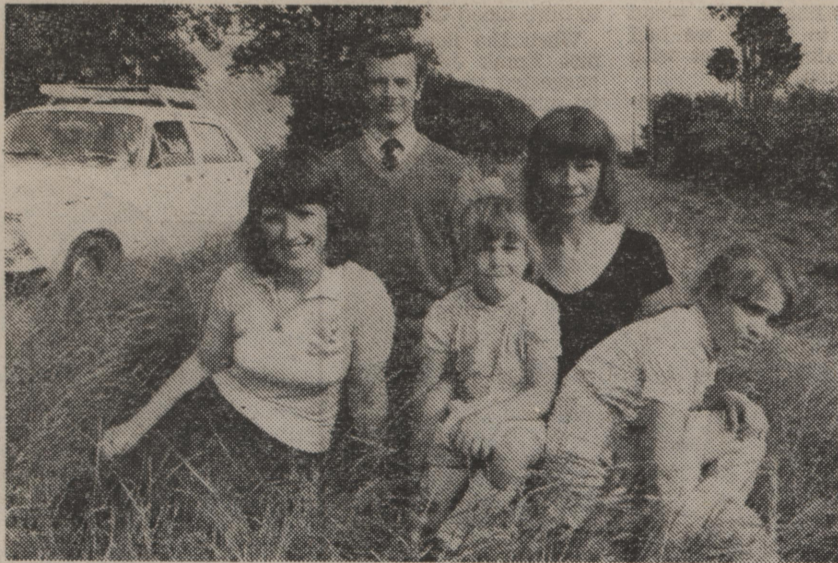
TRACKED BY A BALL OF LIGHT

To the right of the car, about 200 feet away, was a ball of brilliant white light, pacing the car.

It disappeared whenever the car approached houses or villages, only to re-appear once they were back on the deserted road.

As the car entered Cirencester the ball of light disappeared. During the last twenty minutes of their journey they did not see it again. When they arrived home at Court Road, Brockworth, John phoned RAF Brize Norton, the largest base in Britain, about seven miles from Faringdon.

He said he wanted to



Beside the road where they believe the Spaceship landed: John, 32, with sister Frances, left, wife Gloria and daughters Tanya and Natasha.

report a mysterious low-flying object they had seen about an hour ago in the Faringdon area.

John says: "The man I was speaking to said, 'That must have been about 11.15.'"

"Without thinking about what he had said I looked at my watch to

check that would roughly have been the time.

"But according to my watch it was gone mid-night—which was ridiculous because we should have got home an hour earlier."

"I was too confused to start explaining to the man on the phone and

briefly told him what we had seen.

"He said he would check it out and either call us back or we could ring and ask for him—Corporal Gibson.

"I put the phone down and saw Gloria staring at the clock on the wall and Frances examining her

brooch watch—it was just after 12.15 a.m.

"We decided for argument's sake we must have spent longer than we thought on the mystery road."

After their strange experience Gloria did not like the idea of her sister-in-law driving home alone and asked her to stay.

But Frances, a very calm and capable woman, wanted to get home.

John and Gloria and the children walked with her to the car.

SUDDENLY THAT NOISE AGAIN

As Natasha kissed Frances goodnight she said sleepily: "You had better keep your windows winded up, Auntie Frances, in case you get sucked up."

They went back indoors. Gloria says: "I was still feeling a bit dazed and told John I felt sick. He said he felt a bit queasy, too.

"We were just about to go to sleep when we both heard the same noise we had experienced when

John had stopped the car.

"It was directly over the top of the house.

"We sat bolt upright. John ran to the window but the noise suddenly stopped and he could see nothing."

When Natasha got home from school the next day she mentioned to her mother that she had told her teacher she had seen a flying saucer.

She said her teacher had asked her to draw what she had seen, and noted her story in the classroom news diary.

By the time John got home from work — he was a building contractor — he had decided to return to Stanford-in-the-Vale and retrace their journey.

He wanted to see if he could find the mysterious road they had got lost on and time how long it took to drive from there to Faringdon.

Gloria, Frances and her husband, Ronald, decided to accompany him.

They left Stanford the same time as the night before and slowed down at the exact spot where John had originally intended to stop and Gloria had told him to drive on because of the lighted house.

There was no house at that spot—just an open field.

[Having driven along that stretch of road myself from Stanford to Faringdon I can confirm that there is no house.]

When they reached the spot where John had stopped the car, it was too dark to see if there were any markings in the field on the right where something could have landed, and they decided to return the following Sunday afternoon.

The distance from there to Faringdon—just over one mile—could in no way account for the lost hour.

On Thursday evening John examined the lower part of his chest which had been itching all day. There was a red band of heat spots.

"The following day I had a similar rash on my left arm and leg from the knee down," says Gloria.

"There was nothing on the children. John rang Frances and mentioned our heat rashes.

"She said she had been scratching her head and neck the day before."

On Saturday night the Mann family went to stay

with Frances and Ronald Farrow.

Frances casually remarked: "I don't know where the rashes came from, but someone certainly kicked me."

Just below her right knee on the outer side was a three-inch oval bruise.

On Sunday morning Gloria noticed a small round dark blue mark below her right knee.

She rushed into John who was still in bed, and pulling back the sheets, saw a similar mark on the outer side of his leg below his right knee.

In the afternoon, they returned to the field where they had seen the strange craft apparently landing. They found no marks in the grass.

And within a few days the marks on their legs had vanished too.

NIGHTMARE OF STARING EYES

The next week Natasha woke up in the night, confused and upset. Gloria heard her crying and went to her. She didn't recognise her mother and kept saying: "Where is Mummy? I want my Mummy."

It was the first of three or four nightmares. Gloria tried gently to find out what was frightening her, but says: "She was at first reluctant to say anything.

"Then she told me in her dreams she could see lots of strange people with funny eyes staring at her and someone had taken Mummy and Daddy into other rooms.

"When I tried to get more out of her she got very cross and said, 'You should know, you were there.'"

"After a couple of weeks the nightmares stopped."

John had unsuccessfully tried to contact Corporal Gibson a couple of times at Brize Norton.

On the third attempt he was put through to someone who told him they had made inquiries following his report. There had been no civilian or military aircraft in that area at that time of night, and no one else had reported seeing anything.

[Flight Lieutenant Jim Kenefick, at Brize Norton, confirmed that on the night of June 19th, 1978,

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CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF AN ENGLISH KIND

Continued from Page 21

'We walked into the light and floated up'

there was an operational assistant called Corporal Gibson on duty who logged the inquiry.

He adds: "Our comprehensive radar scan would have clearly picked up any aircraft within a fifty-mile radius."

At the end of June John had a heavy cold. He was lying in bed early one evening dozing.

"I began to see myself as if in a dream, driving along that dark, narrow, winding road that we knew did not exist," he says.

"I saw myself stop the car in front of a brilliant beam of yellowish light coming from the sky.

"We all got out of the car and walked into the light beam and floated up into some sort of aircraft.

"We walked along a corridor until we reached three identical doors. Without speaking I entered one, Gloria and the children another, and Frances a third.

"The room I was in was fairly dark but I heard a voice telling me to sit.

"The voice told me I was going to have some sort of medical and the others were having the same thing.

"I was aware of some-

thing attaching itself to my right leg below the knee. After about five minutes the leg clamp retracted.

"I returned to the corridor and the others came out of their rooms. We walked without speaking back to where we had entered the craft, floated back down the shaft of light, got in the car and drove off.

"I woke up."

THE NETWORK IS CALLED IN

A couple of days later his sister revealed she had a similar dream two days before his.

Gloria had no similar dreams

The more the family

talked among themselves and their closer friends the more they were convinced they had made contact with the UFO.

Gloria went to the local library to try to find an address of an organisation that could help them explain their experience.

From some of the books she copied out the telephone number of Ken Phillips who, from his home in Springfield, Milton Keynes, manned a 24-hour hot line for reports on UFO sightings.

John phoned Mr. Phillips, who says: "From John's report I realised he and his family had undergone a profound experience.

"I sent him a preliminary questionnaire to fill in. When he returned it, his report was passed on to Frank Johnson, the

UFO investigator who lived nearest the family."

Frank Johnson, a retired senior lecturer in zoology, from Aston University, Birmingham, had been with the British UFO Investigators Network about 18 months.

Before he got in touch with the family, Natasha had finished the school summer term and on the last day brought home all her work books.

HER STRANGE DRAWING

Among them was the drawing she had done at school the day after their journey from Reading.

It showed a saucer-shaped Spacecraft ringed in coloured lights hovering over the family car.

A beam of yellow light splashed down from the Spacecraft on to the road—just as her father had dreamed.

After half a dozen meetings with Frank Johnson, the family could provide no further details of their original story.

John says: "When we told him about the rashes and bruises and that Gloria and I had felt sick on the night of the sighting he suggested that we might like to take blood tests to see if we had come into contact with radiation."

It was now the begin-

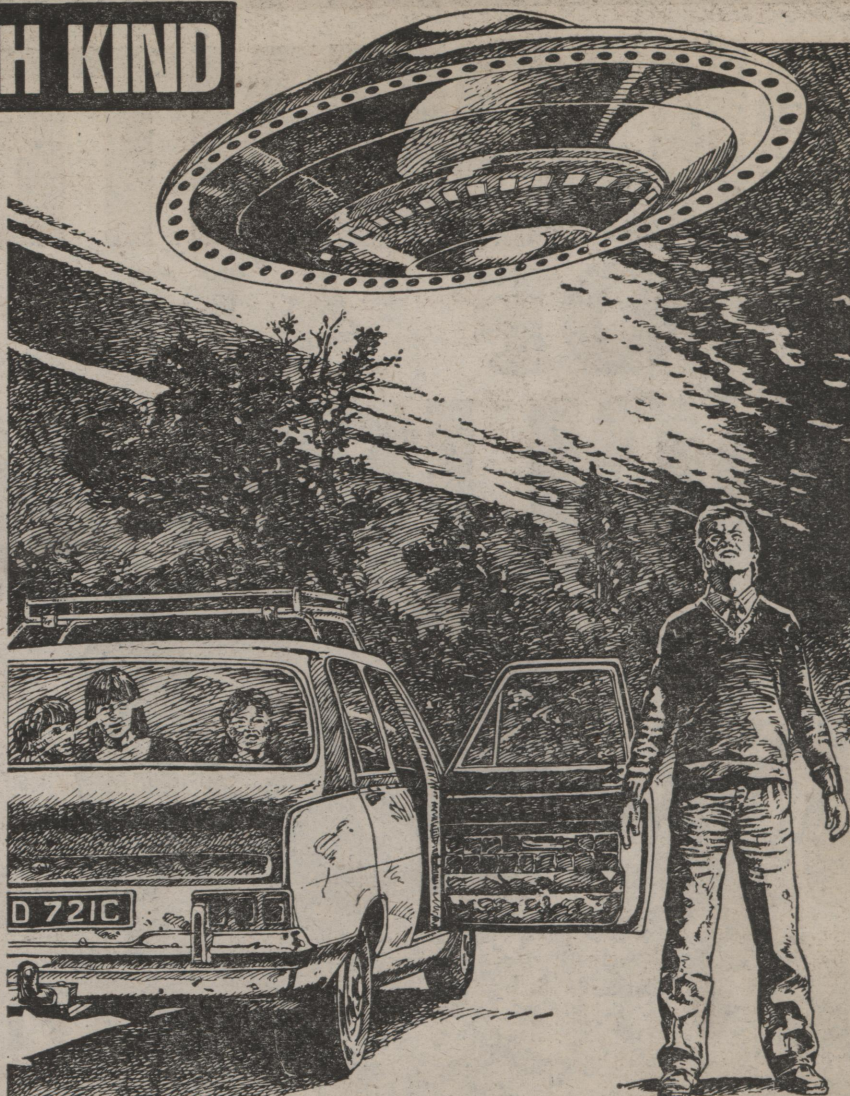


Illustration: ROY WRIGHT

ning of November and Gloria was nearly two months pregnant with their son Gregory.

"The results of the blood test came through and both John and I were perfectly normal. The doctor joked: 'Well Mrs. Mann, I can assure you your baby does not have green blood.'

"Frances' results were completely normal, too; Frank did not feel it necessary for the children to have blood tests."

When the family next met Frank Johnson he suggested that a hypnotist might be able to help

them remember what had actually happened.

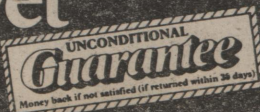
Frank telephoned Geoffrey M'Cartney, a consultant hypnotherapist.

Gloria's doctor advised against hypnosis during her pregnancy, but John and Frances started weekly meetings.

Under hypnosis the family told an even stranger story.

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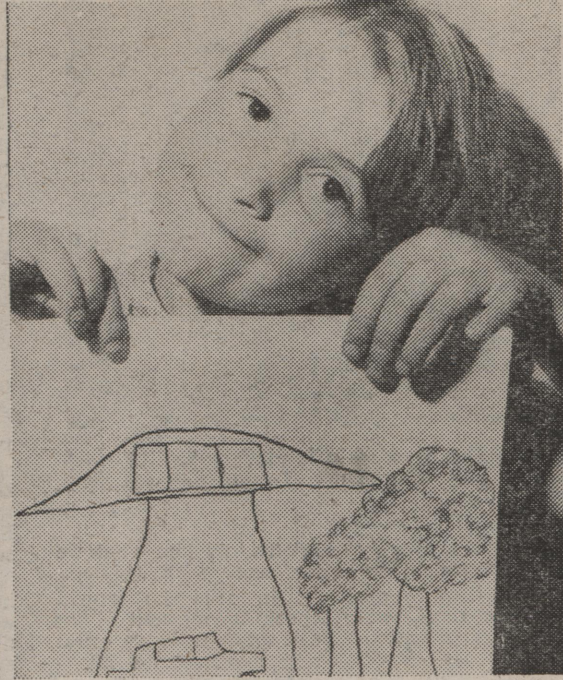
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Natasha with her drawing of the car shrouded in a beam of light from a flying saucer.

The full story of the experiences of the Mann family will be found in *The Janos People*, by Frank Johnson, to be published by Neville Spearman Ltd, on October 9, price £5.25.

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