

A Light Look At UFO's

As I have a lifelong interest in flying matters, with the folklore of such old Suffolk research stations as Martlesham Heath, Felixstowe, Orfordness and Bawdsey wrapped about my ears. I have always filed UFO press stories.

But, while I have never paid much serious attention to UFO sightings simply because there were so many other unsolved incidents nearer home. I did have my eyes opened in Soho, London, at lunch time on May 7, 1977, when, clawing through a box of old books on a street cart, I discovered a solitary, military-like manual of fifty pages entitled *UFO Guide and Handbook*.

by Christopher R. Elliott

With the introduction dated London, 1957, which is quarter of a century ago, the manual stated that "the USAF at first investigated, then denied, and finally admitted the existence of UFOs"

Interestingly, the contents of the manual were dateable because the compiler, Clifford Thornton by name, said his analysis covered sightings made "during the last nine years" which meant that we were concerned with the early post war years into the middle 1950s.

The manual, which I added to my UFO file, claimed that in 1957 there were "14 different types of UFO, in five broad categories... type I — large cigar-shaped craft; type II — flying saucers; type III — annular craft; type IV — disc-shaped low-flying craft; type V — small spherical remote-controlled craft".

Referring to type IV, the manual described one version as descending almost to the ground. It was "thought to be a manned low-level reconnaissance photographic craft, perhaps topographical survey." The description concluded: "Not many sightings have taken place as, usually, the machine operates late at night or early in the morning, but

always after dark".

In 1938-1939, when my brother was an apprentice at R.A.F. Halton, in Buckinghamshire he told me in a letter of experiments he had seen round London involving "coloured searchlights" — an effort, it transpired, to find a coloured beam that would not immediately tell the pilot of a plane that he had been detected from the ground.

10, informed him: "Last Sunday I was taken near one of those secret ray or beam stations which they are building here and there". The station was Bawdsey.

Thus wonders never cease and we should always try to be rational in our conclusions when, as often happens today, we are faced with manifestations for which there seem to be no ready public explana-



I have no idea to this day what resulted from these weird probings of the night sky. All I know is that all the Suffolk searchlights I saw waving around between 1939 and 1945 (some waved all night to detect crippled planes) were of the ordinary kind.

But a relative of mine, who spent most of his working life in America, worked for an American company during the war which developed a form of "invisible light" which enabled aircraft carriers, as an example, to land planes at night on blacked out decks when enemy planes were about!

When Britain established the first radar stations along the east and south east coasts in the 1930s, many strange stories circulated as to what they could do. One tale in Suffolk was that they were capable of "upsetting the carburetors of aeroplanes and motor vehicles". So a letter I wrote to my brother on March 12, 1939, when I was

Although the phenomenon of UFO's was known centuries ago, they were first publicised only towards the end of world war two. The Basel Brood-sheet of 1566 depicts a happening on August 7 of that year, at sunrise, when "many large black globes were seen in the air moving with great speed".

tion.

I wonder what the *News Of The World*, which in 1980 turned up an alleged UFO sighting in Suffolk, would make of the following war time happening in Suffolk?

On the morning of February 19, 1941, while foresters were cutting fires lanes in the middle of Compartment No. 20 of the forest of Eyke, the point being 2,200 yards east of Bromeswell Church on the north side of the Butley-Melton road, they found a map portion of East Anglia. Curiously, the top of the small Scotch fir tree, under which the map piece was discovered, was found broken. The facts were reported to the police and the tree left undisturbed for expert examination.

While some of us might well suggest that a German spy landed by parachute, clipping the tree, or that the R.A.F. dropped someone by parachute they were bringing in secret from the continent in order to hide the success of the rescue mission, I am inclined to believe that an ordinary R.A.F. or Army parachutist, perhaps on a routine escape and evasion exercise, clipped the tree.

As for mysterious lights (lighthouse beams sometimes rotate inland when mirrors or reflectors are out of their usual position), I have never heard it suggested that, with all the thousands of pieces of space vehicles now orbiting the earth, it is conceivable that the gyration of sections of, for example, tin-foil insulation cladding could be the explanation of mysterious spots of light brushing us on earth caused by sun rays or moon beams catching them.

Lastly — and it is only a lay view because UFOs don't mean a great deal to me — I suggest that, considering all the radio and radar pulses (and much else) emitted from the earth during and after world war two, there is a remote possibility that extra-terrestrial forms, about which we know little, may be responding in the shape of what we term UFOs.

What is certain is that, unlike us, they are unwarlike as I've no record of anyone being hurt or snatched from the earth by such a machine.