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'Silpho saucer' secrets revealed

By Iain Meekley

The 31-year-old mystery of the "Silpho Saucer" has given up some of its secrets.

The Evening News has traced what is believed to be the last surviving member of the three-man group involved in the UFO controversy.

And the 75-year-old retired Scarborough businessman — who does not want to be named — now says of the object he saw on the moors after a strange red light swooped from the sky: "I think it was man-made."

The eyewitness to the event, in December 1957, added: "I don't know if

there was a deliberate hoax involved. But I don't believe the object came from space."

The discovery, disappearance, and later recovery of the "saucer" — 18 in diameter, and said to contain copper scrolls inscribed with mysterious hieroglyphics — earned the derision of the press, but excited UFO buffs.

One enthusiast even claimed to have deciphered part of the "message", and announced: "The disc from which these samples were taken originated in Mercury, was launched from a scout ship, which then went on to Yeovil."

But the eyewitness, who was in the car near the scene of the "landing", said: "All I saw was a red sort of orb, which seemed to descend in an arc. When I got out of the car to have a look,

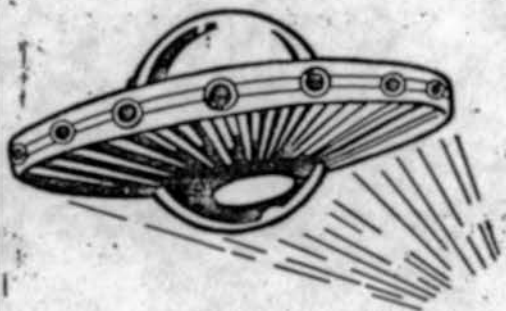
there was this object nestling in the heather.

"There was a young man and a woman near it, and by the time my companions had got out of the car, both it and the couple had gone."

The smartly-suited former businessman said he told local solicitor Anthony Parker — a member of a society interested in space travel — about his experience.

Mr Parker, who, when the story came out, used the pen-name "Antony Avendel", was "immediately interested", and suggested placing an ad in the Evening News, offering a reward to the finders of the object.

The ad was answered, and after one abortive attempt, a handover of the "saucer" was arranged.



"I arranged to meet the people who answered, and Mr Parker gave me the money," said the eyewitness. "It wasn't a bad sum, quite tempting at that time."

At the meeting, he was given the object — wrapped in a lentil sack.

"It was the object I had seen on the moor," he said.

Mysterious

The ex-businessman said he did not see the object opened, and knew nothing of the mysterious scrolls said to be contained inside.

"After Mr Parker collected it, I never saw it again, and I've no idea where it might be now.

"Wherever it came from, I'd say that it was something that had been fashioned by human hands."