

PROTECTED BY ANGELS? ...More on Paul Bennett; psychic contactee

### Introduction:

In 1977, when UFOIN first set up its policy of in-depth reports into high-strangeness cases, one of the first really peculiar such instances fell upon the worthy shoulders of Nigel Watson. Nigel is never one to shirk a challenge and simply thrives upon situations which would make less broad-minded imaginations wamp, creek and eventually collapse in utter despair! Certainly he was tested in the case of Paul Bennett, then a 13 year old schoolboy from Shipley, West Yorkshire. For Paul claimed the most remarkable track record for seeing UFOs, entities, ghosts, robots and so on. Not for him occasional glimpses of these other worlds. They impinged directly upon his reality and he lived with them.

Northern UFO News has carried the odd report of Paul's various UFO sightings (such as the one concerning an object over a stone circle on Ilkley Moor which led to a site investigation and an alleged electric shock to the young man from the stone itself). Indeed Paul became fascinated enough to seek out local stories and write them up in 'books' which he compiled from all his notes for his own benefit. These books, now several in number, contain a truly fascinating picture of sightings in what is certainly one of the most active window zones in Britain.

But Nigel's investigation proved so complex (it is lodged at Nottingham on the UFOIN files) that he eventually published just a summary of the events to mid-1978 in a major two-part series: 'Anatomy of a Percipient', which can be found in MUFOB (forerunner of MAGONIA, and available from the same address ...64 Alric Ave New Malden Surrey KT3 4JW) (This was in issues NS 11 & 12, Summer & Autumn 1978). Included within here are some of his UFO encounters, an October 1975 meeting with a robot that scooped earth from the ground (and left traces) seen by Idle Hill Reservoir; an October 1976 joust on the street with a tiny two-foot tall being with a head like a squashed tomato (that left tiny footprints after stepping in a puddle), various ghosts and a December 30 1977 meeting with Sigma - the angel. Sigma had folded wings, was two-and-a-half feet tall and wore an astronaut's helmet! He reappeared on January 4 1978... Nobody seems to have noticed an odd coincidence here. Winged entities are, to say the least, rare. But on January 4 1979 (precisely one year later) Mrs Jean Hingley met winged angels in her living room at Rowley Regis, West Midlands. (Nigel's report in MUFOB was published 5 weeks before this).

It should be said that Nigel was of the opinion that Paul Bennett was creating his own reality, and that it had a lot to do with how one learnt to distinguish between reality and imagination by growing up. Suggested explanations were proffered for the various experiences (eg the tomato-man was viewed by Paul's mother as a shaggy dog only... Paul disagrees). Nevertheless the case is a most fascinating one, which hopefully will form a part of Nigel's book... if any publisher is intelligent enough to purchase it, some day. Meantime I saw the obvious parallels between Paul and the Sunderland children and referred to this in Alien Contact, with the aid of Nigel's still unpublished notes.

The Paul Bennett story goes on. He is now 19 and has moved out of the area, but still maintains his great interest in the subject. He has also forged a friendship with Nigel Mortimer, who has been investigating UFO events in and around West Yorkshire since his own close encounter in November 1980. Paul meets Nigel quite often and I am most grateful for the report which I am now going to relate, precisely as Nigel has submitted it. This discusses the most fantastic thing that Paul Bennett claims since the MUFOB articles. Nigel has promised further reports, to bring the story right up to date and to offer information about Paul's more than interesting views about the paranormal. When these arrive they will be published through this magazine or Northern UFO News.

But in the meantime let us look at the experience where Paul Bennett believes his life was saved by a UFO!:

Jenny Randles, Birchwood

Until Paul Bennett was 9 years old in 1972 he was not in the least interested in anything that seemed unreal or paranormal. He wanted no involvement in UFO studies, especially as he had no interest in astronomy, and like many more well known skeptics he would explain away all unusual sightings without any hesitation, as nothing more than natural or man-made objects. But unbeknownst to him, his own fate was to change all that. It would be such a change that, whether he liked it or not, he would become unable to focus his life onto the same mode of normality that all the other young people around about him seemed capable of doing.

In the days leading up to his very first encounter (May 13 1972) he had a 'feeling' that something was about to happen, although he did not know what or how it would manifest to him. In his own words... "It was in the early months of 1972 that I first entered the world of flying saucers, the impossible and other such oddities, after witnessing a glowing, flying 'white disc-like object' as it passed by my bedroom window, late one evening... I haven't been the same since. You ask anyone who knows me!" He continues... "Since that early date I have changed my entire way of thinking. Prior to that I had all the elements of becoming a 'proper little Einstein'. I have been searching for many truths."

Paul not only feels that the UFO sightings from around the world are very real, but also claims that the phenomenon which governs UFO manifestations has itself a very deep need and awareness of the human being from earth named Paul Bennett.

Prior to August 1st 1978 Paul had a somewhat strange feeling for several days (Gaynor Sunderland went through similar phases - as Alien Contact indicates ...JR) Paul began to feel that his whole self was rather 'insecure' and suffered transitory sensations of bewilderment, anxiety and worry. His feelings were subdued by a sense of the ominous and he could not find any reason for these problems. But then, on August 1st 1978 he was suddenly given a full explanation for all his ill-feelings. They came in one dramatic, sudden thought. He knew that they were 'visions of death'! What was more he knew this was his own death and that he would be coming face to face with it in the very near future. So sure was he of these deeply depressing beliefs that he practically became a recluse, shutting himself away inside his own house. It would seem that he needed to have something he could regard as security from the horrible situation he was in.



'The Robot'

He decided to let those who cared for him (his family) and his close friends know about the predicament he faced. But, perhaps not surprisingly, he was greeted by a barrage of ignorance and laughter. He tried to find a more rational explanation so that he could agree with them, but precognition, or ESP, call it what you will, he knew. At the time he did not know if what he was feeling was working entirely within his own subconscious. This seemed logical. But later events were to suggest to him that it was in fact an external source that created this terrifying period of premonition.



'Tomato man'

On Monday, August 21 1978, a group of more than twenty teenagers were camped on the moors a number of miles south of Patley Bridge, close to Paul's home. All was quiet in the middle of the night when one of them noticed a small group of objects in the clear skies above. He alerted several of his friends and they all continued to look skywards at the amazing sight. At first the lights were quite stationary, and the whole group of campers came out to view the phenomenon, which had now turned into a celestial circus. Other lights had joined the first group and they were all moving about erratically in a manner which, according to Paul... "were defying all laws and physics..." After dancing about the skies for about half an hour they shot off and 'vanished' in all directions. Paul was now convinced that this personal sighting definitely indicated the coming end of his life. He viewed it as a dreadful omen.

Actually there were many other sightings in this area during August 1978, which were investigated by Graham & Mark Birdsall of CONTACT. They were said to be connected with the top secret communications base at Menwith Hill, which is nearby. For more on these fantastic light shows and the mysteries of Menwith Hill the reader is directed to The Pennine UFO Mystery (Granada, 1983) which will discuss these matters. (JR)

To continue... The following evening, August 22nd 1978, at about 9.05 pm, Paul was out playing with some friends on their bicycles. Racing up and down a rough track they soon became exhausted and stopped for a rest. Just at the moment when they were about to resume racing Paul happened to glance at the horizon. There he saw a very unusual cloud, low in the east. "Hey, look at that cloud... its just like a bird of prey," one of Paul's friends said. Paul gazed at the form, strikingly low and suspended in the sky. "My God, it's superb! Its almost jet black." But his voice turned in mid sentence when he found himself reflecting on what he had read in folklore and supernatural books... "Hey... its a black bird of prey... A bad sign... usually connected with death!"

Paul's friends laughed at his outburst and set off for another race, Paul trundled after them. It was to prove the last race of the evening.

Paul's eyes flickered open. He looked around at the strange and uncertain surroundings. He could just discern faint visions of others like himself, lying in beds. But however hard he fought he could not keep his heavy eyes open. They drew him down into a pitch black void. He was not to know at that point that it was now Friday, August 25th 1982. That three days of his life had just disappeared.

Eight days later Paul found himself back with his family, totally recovered from an ordeal which he had no conscious recall of. It was explained to him by others afterwards. But it still remains a mystery to him even today.

It seems that at about 9.10 pm on the Tuesday he had raced around the corner in pursuit of his friends when the chain of the bicycle had come off. This had unfortunately entangled itself into the rear wheel instantly reducing the momentum of the bike and rider to zero. Paul was catapulted a great distance into the air, and lay crumpled in a heap at the foot of a tree where his skull had struck with a sickening impact. Those who came to rescue him and rush him to hospital were not optimistic about his chances. Survival of this horrendous accident seemed improbable. He lay in a coma.

Paul claims to have memories from this time when he was unconscious and barely alive. Above, below and all around him he says there was a sea of darkness and nothingness. Yet he felt that he was moving gently through this void in a sort of back and forth swaying. Yet although he was floating all alone in this blackness he felt terribly happy. He had a great desire to stay in this void, far away from earthly worries.

Then the thought... Where am I? Where am I going? came to his (presumably sleeping) mind. And with it there seemed to be an answer, from somewhere in the distance before him. He could now discern a faint light somewhere in the vastness towards which he was heading. But he could not see what it was. All sense of time had disappeared. He had no idea how long he had been in the void. His senses were merely filled with ecstasy as he rolled ever onwards towards that light. "I must be dead" Paul said verbally. But as he continued to propel himself towards the light he was thwarted.

Paul Bennett never reached the light... he was dragged back into reality. But he says he knows the situation he was in and 'has a pretty good guess what the object was' (God, one presumes, he is implying... JR) Physically he was in a critical condition for several days, until his spontaneous recovery on the Friday. His skull was broken up so severely that doctors had to put it back together again like a jigsaw puzzle. He had also lost several pints of blood. Afterwards he was told he was very lucky to be alive. Paul does not regard it as luck. Indeed the only unfortunate consequence, he says, is deafness in his left ear. But he happily accepts this as a substitute for the death he believes he was rescued from.

Paul had not died that night, but he feels that he came as near to doing so as anyone ever has. (It is true that what he describes is very similar to many other near death experiences...see for example Raymond Moody's book Life After Life...but can we be sure Paul did not know of such claims from his wide reading within the paranormal?...JR)

When he left the hospital the doctors and nursing staff were allegedly amazed at his incredible recovery from the jaws of death. They had no idea how he could recover his health from such dreadful injuries in just mere days. As for Paul, he simply gained the total removal of all fear of death. A precious gift. But then fate brought a new twist to the remarkable story.

It was early September 1978 (still just a couple of weeks after the crash) Paul was fit enough to visit a friend, David Lawson. David was interested in the paranormal as well and handed over a collection of press cuttings he had saved for his friend. The first two cuttings referred to simple LITS reports. But the other shocked him. For it told, in black and white, that an orange shaped object had been seen hovering directly above the hospital to which Paul had been admitted in Bradford! Even more incredibly this sighting was on the Thursday, August 24th 1978...the day before Paul made his spontaneous recovery and whilst he was lying, perilously close to death in a coma!

Paul says, "To say I was excited at this report is an understatement. I was ecstatic! If the sighting was a coincidence it was a very remote one..." He does not believe this. The connection with his recovery was too much, especially in view of all the warnings he received and his earlier experiences..."Somebody or something, somewhere, wanted for some reason to keep me alive!"

When he had opportunity Paul dug deep into the Yorkshire records to find any other UFO reports. During the eleven days he had been in hospital, so he now claims, there was a major flap of unusually short duration. (NUFON records partially bear this out...certainly for the remarkable period September 1 to 3 1978)(JR)

During the period when Paul had the premonitions of his death various mild poltergeist effects were noted by members of his family, including the twisting of one of his photographs (another folklore sign of an imminent death) Many of these were in his grandmothers home and will be described in a later part of the story. But I can do no better than to leave the final word for now to Paul himself. Despite all he has gone through and the incredible and deep effect this has on his life today (as you will see from the next part of the story) he can look at things in a light-hearted way...He says "So there it is...the beginning of a story about bizarre activities, centred around my head-butting session with that flippin' Elm tree! Little does that tree know, though. I am going to get him back...Perhaps I should call in the 'special branch' to investigate!"

Nigel Mortimer

### Conclusions:

How does one summarise such a fantastic story? It is tempting to think that it must all be due to childish imagination, but such a hypothesis becomes harder and harder to sustain the older Paul Bennett gets. It has to be said that in February 1978 Paul wrote to the Daily Express UFO Bureau and said that his ambition was to become well known as a UFO investigator. Did this act as a motivation for exaggeration? However, more recently Paul has found himself concerned with earth mysteries and the numerous tumuli and circles that dot the hillsides. It is perhaps interesting that in this very area where Paul resided the conditions for the development of Jung & Paul Devereux's theoretical ideas become optimum. Can the case of the extraordinary person in an extraordinary location result in a plethora of extraordinary events? Certainly I feel that the connection with the Sunderland children is more than superficial and that very fruitful grounds for a comparative study must exist.

If Paul Bennett does create his own reality it would be of enormous interest to see experiments conducted such as psychiatrist Dr Morton Schatzman performed on 'Ruth' (see his book The Story of Ruth, just published as a Penguin paperback) Is there any brave researcher out there willing to try???

Dear colleague,

Some of you may have noticed that NORTHERN UFO NEWS is due to reach its 100th issue in February 1983; when NUFON itself will approach its ninth birthday.

During those nine years ufology in this country has changed beyond all recognition. We have much tighter standards of investigation, with in-depth case files replacing notes scrawled upon scraps of paper. We have the newly devised code of practice to regulate the ethics of investigation. We have resource centres in Britain based upon Newcastle (library archives), Stockport (OSEAP), Nottingham (NUFOIS/UFOIN/NUFON) and Peterborough (BUFORA). We have had two superb international congresses, with the third and best scheduled for next August Bank Holiday. And we have seen the development of the International Committee for UFO Research, involving top names like Hynek, Maccabee, Ballester-Olmos and many others (a British initiative). All of this coincident with new scientific respect for the subject and new theories with a firm scientific basis (such as the piezo-electric effect). In truth we have come a long way...but NUFON has remained relatively static.

Perhaps our problem is put into sharp focus by the BBC-2 HORIZON documentary, to be shown on October 25 (probably). They decided there was no serious ufology in this country. Clearly this is untrue. But perhaps the time has come for NUFON to change with the times, adapt to current circumstances and prove them wrong! This is a discussion document to such effect, from which I am asking you to give a full and a speedy response.

In the Midlands this year the local societies have come together under a corporate name UFO RESEARCH MIDLANDS. The several groups who participate retain individual autonomy up to a point, but are essentially merged under one banner. This precise same system (even using the same names, viz UFO RESEARCH NEW SOUTH WALES, UFO RESEARCH SOUTH AUSTRALIA, and so on) has effectively been operating with great success in Australia. They have just gained access to the Royal Australian Air Force files as a measure of this success.

My proposal is that we bring NUFON and NORTHERN UFO NEWS into line for the eighties. To start with I suggest we change the name to UFO RESEARCH NORTH and agree to forge a direct understanding with UFO RESEARCH MIDLANDS to coordinate activities and work to the same principles. We may then hope that a UFO RESEARCH SOUTH will link the southern groups at some point, and all three will in turn be linked through the National Investigations Committee of BUFORA (in effect UFO RESEARCH BRITAIN).

But that is for the future. All that should concern us at this stage is the creation of UFO RESEARCH NORTH out of NUFON, and its alliance with UFO RESEARCH MIDLANDS. To do this I am suggesting that all northern groups in NUFON be invited to 'sign up' for UFO RESEARCH NORTH (hereafter, for convenience in this letter, URN). Individual members (especially in non-group areas) would be welcome into URN too. That is that say MIGAP, MUFORA and NUFOIG agree to participate (although hopefully others will too). They could keep their local name for internal usage, if they wish, BUT for the purposes of promotion and public relations would agree to use the corporate name and image (of UFO RESEARCH NORTH). This would create a feeling of homogeneity and help overcome the apparently crazy situation of dozens of little groups all with their own initials and names. URN would be run by a committee of (say) two reps from each group (possibly with elected reps from individual members?). This could determine policy matters, whilst leaving much to the discretion of individual groups (who will maintain individual local membership). URN would primarily concerned with investigation and joint research, largely care of mutually defined 'working parties'.

As for NORTHERN UFO NEWS. This sheet is being litho printed <sup>NOT</sup> to the standard it is hoped from Jan 1983 to produce what will be a new, enlarged bi-monthly publication. It is hoped that this increased quality (which will enable good diagram reproduction) will encourage you to sell copies via your membership. It is intended to maintain the subscription rate at £4.20 for 6 14pp issues (to incorporate CASE HISTORIES). But to offer a new 1983 deal. If you persuade a friend (not currently subscribing to NUN) to subscribe for 1983 the two of you can have issues for £3 each. If sales are boosted, via group sales, then all profit will be fed back in, with bigger issues.

PLEASE LET ME KNOW YOUR VIEW.



Jenny Randles



"I read Northern UFO News... why don't you?"