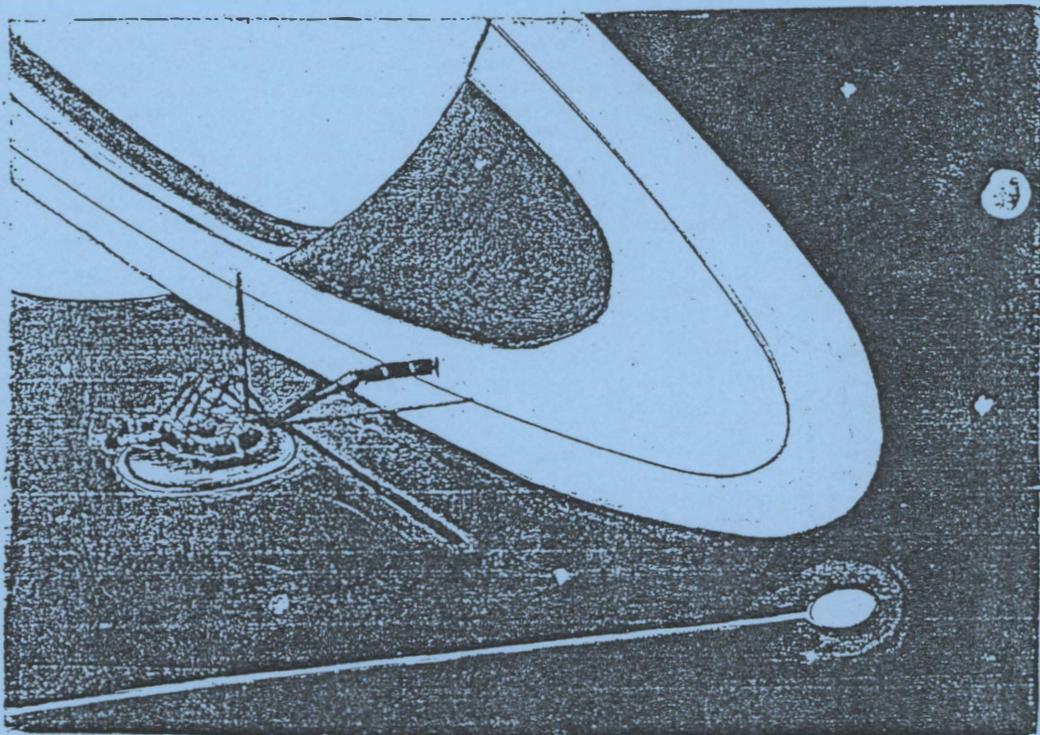


NORTHERN NEWS

UF

128

November
December 1987



HAPPY CHRISTMAS NORTHERN UFO NEWS

CONTENTS: Usual features plus; pp2-3 UFOs on the box ; Welsh Waves from Margaret Fry pp 6-7 ; Cases from:- Cheshire, Derbyshire, Humberside, Lancashire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Worcestershire and West Yorkshire. **CASE HISTORIES...** A landing at Menwith Hill, North Yorkshire, The Darwen, Lancashire, lights, The Great August Wave (pp 12-15) **PLUS** (on page 16)...A great competition to win a **F R E E S U B S C R I P T I O N !!!**

EDITOR: Jenny Randles 37 Heathbank Rd Stockport Cheshire SK3 0UP
C.O.V.E.R.: Bill Callaghan

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J.R.Comments... *This issue its a tale of two TV shows,both very different in their approach and yet I wonder how different in their outcome?*

First off was a 'Halloween' special on Channel 4 entitled *Is there anybody there?* This 90 minute programme was written and presented in CSICOP style (with heavy CSICOP input) by psychologist Nicholas Humphrey. Anyone familiar with the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of claims of the paranormal will have known up front what to expect. A one-sided debunking exercise.

Technically the show was all about ghosts and mediums and featured Humphrey and his team jetting around the world destroying a few cases with ease. That ease was facilitated by the notable absence of either witnesses or investigators, who 'accidentally' got forgotten when the format was decreed. This doubtless saved on costs and allowed Humphrey to afford all that free travel. What it certainly did not do was provide a balanced debate.

Within this, for some reason difficult to fathom, considerable space was devoted to the Rendlesham Forest case. This was the only UFO aspect of the programme. The fact that it was mentioned in newspaper publicity was what first alerted me, since Humphrey did not contact any witnesses, or investigators... in fact NOBODY who knew anything about the affair... with one exception... Ian Ridpath! He was credited at the end for all his assistance.

It was about two weeks before transmission when I discovered that the case was to be included. I checked that I was not imagining this utter lack of research and once satisfied (remember not even Ridpath has spoken with a single witness to the case!) I suggested that Grafton, as publishers of the current edition of *SKY CRASH*, ascertain where the programme material came from. After talking to the film company they came back and advised that our book was indeed the main source.

Grafton suggested we watch carefully for breach of copyright. We did. The book's cover was on screen for some time with a voice-over explaining that it (hence I) had promoted the idea that a spaceship had crashed... a complete fabrication. One of Ian Mrzyglod's copyright illustrations was also used as a cheap visual aid on the programme... very cheap, as (surprise, surprise) neither he, nor us, nor the publishers had granted them permission.

The feature itself saw Humphrey wandering around the forest trotting out the lighthouse explanation and adding a new one of his own, after agreeing that the lighthouse alone would not work. His solution was that the UFO is the revolving light on top of a police car!

Because Humphrey's research did not exist, and so no facts were checked, endless errors and distortions, plus some provably false statements, were made. Even *New Scientist*, favourably reviewing the programme (12 Nov), pointed out one glaring mistake, but acknowledged that "the Orford Ness lighthouse... is accepted as the source of the lights of the visiting spaceship".

What bloody insolence and arrogance.

Those who have previously considered Ian Ridpath a reasonable critic (which did include myself) should note how he thinks it fair to let lies be screened to millions of people and, like a sneaky rat, hope you can get away without bothering to tell anybody who might disagree. That apparently means avoiding all the witnesses and the investigators who actually bothered to interview people or spend YEARS looking into what really happened.

This is what a debunker calls 'integrity', but it differs markedly from my definition. In SKY CRASH we gave Ridpath space to air his views. We even invited him to speak at our BUFORA lectures on the case. The way he tried to con the public without an opposing word suggests to me that his case is a crock and he knows it.

Incidentally, Grafton decided not to act. Humphrey wrote asking for permission to use our work... AFTER they phoned him up for an explanation... just days from

transmission! But Grafton do not own the rights so could only forward the letter. It was then too late to grant permission even had we wanted to!

Channel 4 have failed to answer my letters. Humphrey has refused to comment. And even the Channel 4 programme "Right to Reply", designed to let viewers speak out, rejected our complaints.

I got mild retribution with a letter published on ITVs *TELETEXT*. But if this is what debunkers call objectivity then I am proud to be a 'believer'.

The other programme began its research about the same time and I spent three weeks consulting with BBC-1 setting up the November 26 transmission on the *Kilroy* show. This current affairs format is presented by former Labour MP Robert Kilroy-Siik and is a 35 minute 'debate' with an invited studio audience.

That is where the problems immediately began. The BBC wanted me to get 50 people; witnesses, sceptics, investigators of all shades, and so on. I argued all along this was unreasonable. There was no way all could be involved and it seemed grossly unfair to drag people hundreds of miles, to take time off work and then not to get a look in as many obviously would not.

But the BBC insisted this was the 'style' of the show and we compromised. I was able to advise a range of 'experts', including Tim Good, John Rimmer, Andy Roberts, Albert Budden and others on the 'pro' side and sceptics ranging from Dr Sue Blackmore to the utterly obnoxious Adrian Berry (whose pathetic attacks on the subject for the *Daily Telegraph* have long been a nuisance). However, I tried to restrict them to four good cases... mainly the Peter Day movie film, the Alan Godfrey and Gaynor Sunderland 'abductions' and the Elsie Oakensen car-stop case.

In my view the programme could only cope with that amount of input, but the BBC insisted on dredging up endless witnesses to lights-in-the-sky, which wasted so much valuable time. This seriously diluted the value, exactly as I had warned it would. It also meant that we really only got time to have witness 'a' tell their story before jerking on to witness 'b' and 'c'. Little in the way of reasoned discussion on any one story was possible and this inevitably left viewers with countless unanswered questions.

If only TV companies would understand the advantage of moderation and not try to cram so much into so little time.

For instance, Berry saw the Peter Day film for the first time on set and (without knowing a thing about the case!) yelled "it was a meteorite" as if he knew what he was talking about! I tried to explain why it could not possibly be one, but was muffled by a hand on the shoulder from Kilroy himself. By then we were already off at a gallop on a different subject. However, I did at least take the chance to tell the 52 people in the audience (including Berry) why it was NOT a meteorite off air, before we were allowed to leave the set. The 'journalist' was noticeably silent and quickly went home.

There were good aspects to the programme. I think most British ufologists who spoke on it acquitted themselves well and sensibly played the line of 'UFOs exist, we don't know what they are and shouldn't presume that they are spaceships... but something is going on'. It struck me that many witnesses accepted this as well as the serious sceptics (such as Sue Blackmore). There was a lot of middle ground in evidence, and two extremes... the outright aggression of Adrian Berry and the 'spaceships' solution extensively promoted by Tim Good.

Some good cases resulted and (as always) a lot more emerged off air than ever saw the light on camera. But the biggest surprise to me was the way 'Dr' Richard Lawrence of the Aetherius Society spoke so much sense in his few moments on camera. I agreed with every single word he said!!!

Now I have definitely seen everything!

NEWS ROUND-UP

** The Northamptonshire Network have kindly changed their name to the Northants UFO Research Centre to avoid having the same NUFON initials. (See p.16)

FOR YOUR PERUSAL:-

Major articles elsewhere



Just one new title to record this time, *MUFORC Newsletter*. It says (at least I think it says!) that it is the publication of the Northamptonshire UFO Research Centre (see p.16). However, it has been put together by one of those fancy 'Desktop publishing' systems, which I have got for NUM...but haven't dare inflict upon you...yet!

What a DTP does is allow all kinds of text to be mixed onto the same page, which is great fun to play with but very hard on the eyes, especially if you suffer from migraine! I do...so it is sometimes not a pretty sight, with its garish headings that sometimes look like they have been concocted by Stephen King on a bad night.

However, this one really is quite aesthetic compared with some of the DTP offerings around. The contents too is nice and informative. So, if you are interested in South Midlands UFOs this may well be up your street. No price quoted but write to the M UFO RC address on the back page.

BUFORA BULLETIN 26 (BUFORA Sub, #14pa:-16 South Way Burgess Hill Sussex RH15) A good issue with a variety of articles and only one letter from ,and another about Steuart Campbell and his mirages. An excellent and revealing in-depth interview with Whitley Strieber.

FATE Oct 1987 (\$19 US, Monthly, 500 Hyacinth Place Highland Pk Illinois 60035) Nothing of real UFO interest for months, but Jerome Clark does devote most of his book review column to 'UFO Conspiracy' (the book and the overall subject)

FOCUS Sept 1987 (\$20, US, Monthly, 4219 W Olive, Suite 247, Burbank, Ca 91505 USA) Edited by William Moore, one of those at the centre of the MJ-12 documents controversy. This is the place to go for state of the art material on the proponents side, including answers to the debunkers.

FORTEAN RESEARCH Oct 1987 (\$15, US, 4 issues, PO Box 94627, Lincoln, NE 68509) Yet more on MJ-12, from a middle of the road stance this time. But compensation in the form of plenty of little news items on current US Fortean mysteries.

IUR Jul/Aug 1987 (\$35, US, 6 issues, 2457 W Peterson, Chicago, Illinois 60659) Running late, very expensive ,but if you can afford it still the best. Smashing issue on the abduction theme, with a superb investigation of a new case from Scott Rogo, Eddie Bullard on his folklore abduction project and more.

MUFON Journal Sept 1987 (\$30, US, 12 issues, 103 Oldtowne Rd, Seguin, Texas 78155) The cheapest way to receive a good quality regular UFO journal from the US. It is always packed with cases and articles. True we have MJ-12...but also an excellent long research study into the cause of vehicle interference effects from J Thomas

BOOKS OF THE MOMENT

Some dates to look out for in an already packed 1988. 4 Feb will see the paperback release of "Communion" from Arrow (£3.50). Since Strieber isn't coming to promote it they have an amazing poster campaign planned. Watch the billboards! The softback (B Format) of "UFO Conspiracy" comes from Javelin on 18 Feb (£4.95) (simultaneously in the USA from Sterling Books at \$8.95).

Then the McDonald/Futura encyclopaedic *BUFORA* book ("Phenomenon") comes in hardback and paperback on 17 March (prices unknown so far). In April my in-depth look at the abduction phenomenon is published in hardback by Robert Hale (titled simply "Abduction"). And in July Tim Good will release an edited version of his huge book "Above Top Secret" in a Grafton paperback. Its a long time since we've had so many new titles lined up...and the glut has already begun....

FATIMA: A Close Encounter of the Worst kind? £2.95 198pp paperback by David Barclay from:- Mark Saunders Publications, Austin Close, Irchester, Northants

A book from a regular reviewer with 'The Unknown' who made his mark with a dreadfully researched piece on the Zigmund Adamski death. Having quit his job to write professionally, it is nice to have a new British UFO author to report.

The content of the book is interesting. It concerns the famous Fatima visions of 1917, when the 'virgin' appeared to some children, issued prophecies, then promised a miracle-which was duly witnessed by thousands. This involved the 'sun' spinning in the sky. This is a summary of already published material, with no new stuff at all. But useful and quite well written, considering little is available in English. Barclay has a theory, which I will not spoil by discussing, but obviously links the case into the UFO theme in a very diabolical manner. He has some evidence to support his rather disturbing conclusions.

There are problems with this book, including a few factual errors in data I knew about (what the accuracy is of most of it-from Portugal 70 years ago-I don't know). The production quality of the book has some trouble too, as it seems to be put together by a DIY publisher. This might mean you will have trouble finding it in bookstores and certainly means you should ignore the awful photos which are virtually indecipherable. However, all in all, not a bad first effort.

MEDIA MATTERS:-

A look at UFOs in the public eye



New Scientist, whose 'impartiality' towards UFOs is legendary, have been commenting a lot lately. When Peter Varrington and I published *Science and the UFOs* in 1983 who did they get for their objective review? Ian Ridpath-who ranted on about his own beliefs and hardly mentioned the book. Now (22 Oct) they chose to review the *BUFORA* book, *UFOs 1947-1987*. Guess who they picked this time? Philip Klass! his title "The development of a pseudoscience" says it all, and (aside from damning by faint praise Hilary Evans introduction) he rambles on a bit about the ufologists who contribute to the book being non-scientists.

Remember who it was that in 1984, LIED by having the audacity to accuse *BUFORA* of feeding the UFO rumours in the 'mystery circles' affair? Remember who refused to publish a retraction or to review 'Mystery of the Circles'? So much for the objectivity of scientists!

Another book receiving attention has been Gary Kinder's endorsement of the infamous old hat of the 'Billy Meier' hoax. Serial rights went to the *News of the World*, who (13 Sep) devoted the cover of their supplement to it with another set of lies. "Exclusive!" it screamed, which as any ufologist will know is a four letter word that rhymes with the 'trap' fallen into by the commissioning editor of this junk!

The report tells how scientists have been 'shocked', 'baffled' and unable to prove the one armed Swiss farmer wrong. Yet his awful photos are all taken straight into the sun (poor photography, but great camouflage for strings) and his story has more holes in than a mouldy cheese. Remember the *Unexplained* five years back? It published the truth about these pictures, which I at least managed to persuade the *Manchester Evening News* to publish (17 Sep).

In "UFO tale is out of this world" I explained, "In view of the difficult task we face attempting to persuade science that UFO researchers do not believe in little green men or alien spaceships, we wish to put the truth on record so that nobody need be fooled. Let any Sunday newspaper or other publication which may again be misled by wild intergalactic claptrap take note" No minced words there, eh! But when the Kent Evening Post (23 Sep) (amongst others) comes back with a long piece entitled "Midget saucer people out to get us"-you wonder what's the point!

Our friend Stuart Campbell has been on the warpath again, Yorkshire Evening Press (16 Oct). He, quite sensibly, replied to a UFO sighting from York in which he suggested the witnesses had seen...wait for it! Nope...you were wrong. Not even Stuart considers a "large red semi-circle seen just before dawn" as a mirage. It was, he believes, the sun. Considering how rare that's been this summer who can be surprised at it being taken for a UFO?

However, by far the silliest UFO tale of the year came on 17 Sep from Celebrity...another preview to a series by Peter Hough, uncredited, but he again assures me he definitely didn't write it (sad to say!) This conveys the claims of a Scottish farmer (Garrison Starkee...sounds a bit fishy that name) who saw lights over his field south of Glasgow and then discovered a herd of cows that should not have been there. "They look and act differently to my cows. They seem dazed and confused. And they don't mix with the other cows" he claims. According to the magazine Garrison is "convinced the cows are creatures from another planet disguised to observe us"

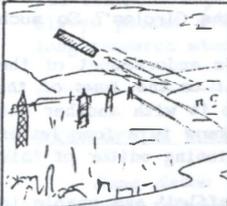
Doubtless they will soon be observing that strange earth building known as an abattoir. Let's hope the emergency teleport is working!

WELSH WAVES From Margaret Fry

It has not been as hectic in the past year as in the heyday of early 1986, but things have still been happening.

Case 8649 tells of Mr and Mrs B who live on the coast road at Prestatyn overlooking a caravan site. On several days in November 1986, around 23.00, they observed a "very bright light towards Rhyl" (ie south-west). Via binoculars it was "definitely a UFO" and drawn as a metallic disc with flashing multi-coloured lights. It hovered for hours on these various nights and I think most of you will already be suspecting what seems certain...that this was either Jupiter or Venus. The 'UFO like' appearance through binoculars is a common illusion, but there really is no alternative to this solution when a 'bright star' hovers for hours over the same part of the sky and reappears on many other nights. Sorry Margaret.

However, Margaret and her husband were witness to an interesting sighting themselves, on 8 December 1986 (Case 8650). It was 11.30 on a bright, sunny day and they were on the B 458 road heading for



Abergelee, Clwyd. Suddenly an object "with the force of a Harrier jet" swept low over the hills from the sea and came down to 40 feet and about 300 feet distant. It moved so fast they could see nothing. But felt the backwash as it tore by. In size they estimate it to be about 3/4 feet long only and cigar shaped with blunted ends. It was muddy white in colour. It just cleared electricity pylons as it shot away.

Margaret feels that they did not see the entire object, as it was surrounded by a 'force-field' which distorts human vision. What is undoubtedly true is that the RAF perform low flying exercises around these Welsh hills all the time and we might speculate about this being some kind of experimental device such as an RPV. Is there such a thing as a supersonic Remotely Piloted Vehicle?

Only a couple of 1987 cases have surfaced so far. Case 8712 reports that on 6 April a young woman aged 22 and her mother saw a bluish white ball rise from Denbigh moors at 20.15, lengthen into a balloon shape and vanish inside seconds. A good guess here would seem to be a distress or army flare.

Then (case 8713) we have a report from 21.15 on 13 September when 28 year old Mr G and his 32 year old brother observed a light about 300 ft above the horizon at Betws-yn-Rhos. It was seen in the south-east and twinkled like a star. It then zig-zagged a bit and "shot vertically into the sky at high velocity". It is tempting to find this report interesting, because Mr G says he is ex-RAF and an amateur astronomer. But the zig-zag and rapid vertical ascent are exactly what you find in connection with autokinesis on bright stellar objects...and can it really be a coincidence that at this time the planet Jupiter was spectacularly bright in the south-eastern sky? (Indeed it still is in late evening, although less prominent than in mid to late September)

BRIEF CASES :-



Some current investigations

The case of the photo that got away

This report comes from a reader of 'UFO Conspiracy' who lives in Wales. We have traced the date to 29 August 1949, at approximately 3.30pm. He was on Folkestone beach at the time when the girl he was with said "What's that?"

It turned out to be a small silver cloud, flat and circular, estimated as the size of a grain of rice at arms length. It was completely silent and passed across from south to north west in just sixty seconds. He realised immediately that this was a flying saucer and desperately tried to find a way to photograph it. He was a semi-professional photographer, had two expensive camera systems with him, but instantly realised that the one that would offer the best shot would take too long to set up and the other would produce nothing that showed more than a dot which could easily have been faked.

Another complication was that Mr C (aged 29 at the time) was married...as was the woman (aged 28)...but not to each other! They looked for other witnesses, but despite the beach being crowded nobody was looking skywards.

Mr C was ex RAF and had seen many V 1 bombs during the war. This allowed him to compare speed and height, although there were no clouds to judge by. Such was this object's speed of motion that it seemed faster than a V 1 and at a height similar to a jet of today (ie 30,000 feet). No contrail was visible. He made careful note of the angular rate of change, which was small, and this indicated great height. But it crossed half the sky in under a minute, which given the horizon to horizon visibility suggested phenomenal speed.

There does not seem any reasonable explanation for this. If we could find the lady who was with him that day it would be extremely helpful (she would be about 66 if still alive). At the time she was a hairdresser who lived on the Folkestone-Dover road, with her young daughter (aged about 4) and had the most unusual Christian name of Jewel. Mr C has kindly supplied a copy of a photo he took of her on the very day of the sighting. So if by some remote chance one of our Kent readers knows of, or can find, a lady named Jewel who met a man named James 38 summers ago and then saw a UFO...well do let us know!

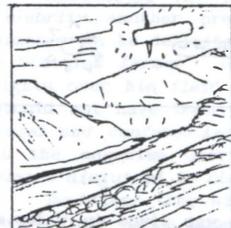


An Anonymous Encounter

This letter from a reader of *UFOs: A British Viewpoint* arrived anonymously with just the initials MW. "I think your ideas are all wrong" it politely advised. The two UFOs she saw were "solid and metallic" not psychic.

The first was on 2 September 1954. She was going to a Rock Hudson picture at the cinema. It was 6pm. Suddenly she saw a 'big light' which moved as she moved and stopped as she stopped. It then dulled to a grey plate and flew vertically upwards very fast. Since Venus was quite prominent in that autumn sky, setting an hour or so after the sun, it seems a good candidate for this 'metallic UFO'.

The second sighting is more interesting. This was on 4 August 1973. Setting off in the early morning for a holiday in Llandudno they were crossing the Buxton/Macclesfield moors (one of those real UFO 'hot spots'). At 8am on descent into Macclesfield she suddenly saw a huge object, like a giant tin can, low in the sky. It was stationary and tilted so that it looked as if it would fall from the air. She called to her husband, but he looked at the road and by the time he looked skyward it had started to move and sailed into a big cloud to completely disappear. Two 'aerials' emerged from it. Living on a flight path into Manchester airport Mrs MW is certain it was not a plane; although they can look spectacular from around Macclesfield as they are descending through about 2500 feet and you are yourself at about 1000 feet so they are relatively much lower. That said, we must remember the many other sightings in the Macclesfield area recorded in recent *NUNs*.



Back to the Moors! MUFORA Case 77-344 Level C SP 4-4 Mid October 1977

Mrs IL was aged 58 at the time and lived in Harpur Hill, Buxton, Derbyshire. It was 5.30 pm and she was about to draw her curtains and put on the light when a fast moving cigar appeared in the sky. It crossed the hills at the rear of her home heading from south-west to north-east and had lights or lighted windows all along its side. About half an hour later she thinks she briefly saw the same object heading back in the opposite direction. It was now dark.

All our remarks about aircraft apply here and MUFORA has no reason not to suggest this was an aircraft with cabin lights on heading into Manchester Airport. Alternatively it could have been a Pennine rescue helicopter.

The night the moon moved IUN Case 79-178 Level C SP 6-4 25 July 1979

Mr DP is a Green Keeper who was out on this warm summer's evening at 22.15 closing his greenhouse door at Finstall, Bromsgrove in Worcs. The moon was in view to the north and when he saw a bright white LITS in the south his initial thought was that the moon had moved! Reassuring himself that it had not he then believed that the spectacular object heading straight at him would pass overhead. But instead it flipped onto its edge, revealing that it was like a car hubcap with a dome on top and ring of white lights round the side. It instantly changed direction at a 90 degree angle and shot away from him towards the east, disappearing out of sight in just 4/5 seconds.



Philip Mantle points out that it was too transient and long ago to adequately investigate, so it must be left as insufficient data. But no obvious solution seems to spring to mind.

Three from Hull Report by Gary Anthony, BUFORA

Gary has followed up three old cases from local press cuttings. Case 6915 refers to 5 July 1969 when Mr W and his wife were sunbathing in their garden. Two ping pong balls appeared high in the sky, stationary at first, then moving. One shot off to the north-east and the other south-west at amazing speed. There is also an uncorroberated story that two local youths were scared out of their wits by a low flying UFO that day.

A second sighting, Case 8098, refers to Mrs M and her son who saw an object at 19.00 on 13 August 1980. It was a dark saucer shape and it moved slowly across the sky taking two and a half minutes to do so.

The final case, 8099, is a little more detailed. This dates to 5 September 1980 at 21.00 and involves Mr O and his son of Thorngumbald in North Humberside. They first saw a triangle of 'stars' but the top one moved and headed away south very fast. Mr O saw it through binoculars as a red orange glow. But it was quite visible to the son without any optical aid.

Thanks to Gary for taking the trouble to flesh out these very brief press cuttings. He is hot on the trail of other local cases, I gather.

Case 80-100 12 September 1980 03.50 Northampton Investigation: LUF0IC (Susan Pollock & Clive Potter) Level A SP 2-2

Mr G was having a restless night and made himself a drink. Deciding to check the garage he went to the house door and saw a strange orangey light in the east. It was bright and had tentacles shooting out. It was observed on and off for hours and over several subsequent nights, only vanishing as the sky brightened. Mr G is short-sighted and the anamnesis carried out by Susan Pollock revealed a tendency to believe in spaceships. There is little doubt from the details of this report and astronomical records that the 'UFO' was once again the planet Venus, which rose in the east about 3am.

Case 8646 8 February 1986 22.00 Wortley, West Yorks Investigation: IUN (Martin Dagless) Level A SP 4-7

Mr S, a 29 year old printer from Pudsey, was driving home with his wife and mother in law. The latter has since died and Mrs S has refused to cooperate.

Mr S has proven helpful and is known to the investigator personally. He considers the witness reliable. The object was seen in the north and was a pinkish ball with a greyish 'smoke' trail behind it. This travelled parallel with the car for approximately a minute and then faded out.

The investigator considered the most likely explanation to be a flare, but could find no location where flares might be launched, regards the horizontal flight improbable and the witness has seen flares before and is sure this was not one.

Martin Dagless labels this an unknown, possibly of earthlights type. However, I would point out that this occurred in the middle of the fireball meteor storm that produced the famous 'red glow' seen by Prince Charles' pilot. If the duration has been exaggerated (say from 10-15 seconds) it might possibly have been a fireball meteor. But were there any other recorded sightings of such a spectacle?

ALLO! ALLO! IT's a UFO Investigation: IUN (Martin Dagless)
Case 8647 29 July 1986 20.50 Cottingham, Humberside SP 4-7

The witnesses, Mr M and his children Alex and Beverley (aged 9 and 7) had watched ALLO! ALLO! on TV and had gone outside to put their bikes away.

Alex, who is keen on aircraft, saw a 'rocket' and sent his sister in for their father. It was rocket shaped, like a wingless aircraft, heading west to east. The rear glowed bright like a 'jet burner'. Essentially just a silver tube it was in view about half a minute and disappeared when the glow at the rear went out.

By checking the position of the sun the investigators found that it was very close to setting and low in the west. This, coupled with the directions of the sighting, suggest an aircraft reflecting the sun in such a way that the wings were obscured and the tail fin 'glowed'. When the angle changed it moved out of the rays and seemed to disappear. Seems a very likely diagnosis.

Case 8644 10 October 1986 19.15 Newbold, Derbyshire Investigation: IUM (Dave Kelly) Level A SP 2-2

Mr and Mrs D, in their sixties, had been watching TV when Mrs D decided to draw the blinds. "Come and look at this bright star" she said. Mr D was puzzled so went to the window, where both watched two white lights, slightly overlapping, which seemed stationary in the north. They had a yellowish tinge and did not flash or scintillate like stars.

Mr D went for binoculars, but before he could focus them it was obvious that the object was moving towards them and now had three winking lights on underneath the two large ones. These were red, blue and green. As it passed over a faint humming sound was heard. The witnesses said later, "It seemed that it had an electric motor not a combustible one"

This is a classic description of a light aircraft with landing lights on, initially obscuring the navigation lights as it flew line of sight towards the couple. Story first reported in the *Derbyshire Times*.

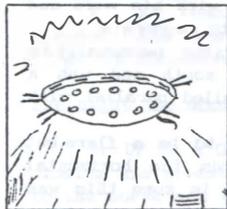
UFO over the M 1

Investigation by IUM (Philip Mantle)

Case 8648 14 October 1986 21.00 Nottingham, Motts Level A SP 6-7

This is a fine example of a puzzling case that requires careful investigation but which is then totally explicable.

The witnesses were Mr S (aged 20) and his 19 year old girlfriend. They had been on holiday to Eastbourne, spent the final day in London and were returning to their home in Leeds via the M 1 motorway. They only know that they were on a



stretch between junctions 22 and 25, south of Nottingham. No other traffic was nearby. Suddenly, coming at right angles from their right, a strange object appeared. It was like a round grey disc, surrounded by lights or windows, and it poured down enough light to illuminate the road surface. Its height was so low that Mr S felt it was going to crash onto the road. He slowed right down, but the object passed overhead and over open fields to their left, seeming to 'land' there. The couple drove on, a little shaken, and stopped at the

first service station, where they described what they had seen. The attendant found their story amusing but answered their question about any airbases nearby with reference to East Midlands civil airport. They resolved to tell nobody else, until they heard of IUM some months later.

Philip Mantle contacted the MoD, who admitted that they had received 17 reports in October 1986 but would release none of them. East Midlands airport could not specify any particular aircraft so long after the fact but their 'Divisional Operations Manager', John Day (!!!) did state, "the only flight path to East Midlands Airport which crosses the M 1 motorway is that just south of junction 24...at right angles" This is in EXACTLY the right place and the runway is in fact just over a mile to the left of where the car would be. So the witness account of an inevitably very low aircraft is precisely correct.

A smashing UFO

Investigation by IUM (Philip Mantle & Rodney Howarth)

Case 8715 17 May 1987 04.00 Earby, Lancashire Level A SP 5-5

Mrs M, aged 47 and a company secretary, was awoken in the early hours by a fearful crash. It turned out to be a chopper board which she had stuck onto the fridge the night before that had fallen down, hit a glass and smashed it all over the kitchen floor. Having two dogs she had to ensure all the glass was cleared away.

Returning to bed the normally sound sleeper was then disturbed by a deep droning noise. "It seemed to be directly over our bungalow" she said. "It seemed as though it was mechanically driven". Mrs M notes that they live in a part of east Lancashire where military aircraft frequently fly at night and she knows the sounds of low level Tornados, Jaguars and helicopters. "I can honestly say, 99 per cent, I don't think we have had any noise like that overhead"

She rushed round the bed (her husband who is deaf was not disturbed) and pulling back the curtains saw an "immense light". It was green and the size of an orange at arms length. She felt that it was coming from within a transparent 'glass' but could see no shape. It had obviously passed directly over the house from the north and was now moving (gliding) to the south towards Kelbrook and Foulridge. It was visible for just ten seconds.

The sighting seems to have some similarity with helicopter activity and may well be linked with military manoeuvres (eg RPVs). However, the geography of this location is important. Foulridge is the most haunted spot in Lancashire, as its evocative name suggests, and strange devilish phenomena in its vicinity have been well documented by Burnley researcher Terence Whitaker (those who heard the programme on ghosts in my 1986 BBC radio series will recall Terry discussing the goings on around this village which included many objects being smashed on their own)

Another key factor is that Earby lies on the Yorkshire border, just 8 miles south of the Skipton-Cracoe-Appletreewick area so noted for all its amazing UFO activity in recent years.

Case 8714 28 September 1987 21.15 Helmshore, Lancs Investigation: DIGAP (Arthur Tomlinson) Level A SP 3-4

In the original letter sent to MUFORA the witness, 14 year old Luke, reported seeing a "particular star...lower in the sky than the rest. It was an extremely bright white colour" He said it was at 15 degree elevation, in the SSV, moved about in jerks and curves, flashed colours and was seen through binoculars as a dome shape. Spurts of light came from it when it moved. His father saw it too.

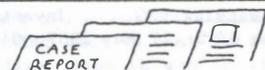
Frankly, MUFORA was certain this was Jupiter, low and bright in the SSE at the time. All the witness descriptions fit- the scintillation, autokinetic movements and appearance of a bright planet through slightly out of focus binoculars. But DIGAP agreed to check it out with an on-site visit. This confused matters no end.

Measured with a compass the direction was seen not to be an error for SSE but almost due west! The 'star' also moved relative to two trees, thus covering a few degrees of sky in a jerky motion. Luke's father reported that through the binoculars he just saw a "white mirror"...which is exactly what Jupiter would have looked like.

DIGAP believe the object could not be the planet and it remains unexplained. MUFORA, whilst accepting that to do so means calling the witness testimony into serious question, finds it almost impossible to believe this was not Jupiter- so exactly do all the descriptive features match.

Any comments?

CASE HISTORIES...

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A LANDING AT MENWITH HILL ? IUN Report by Philip Mantle & Rodney Howarth

Case 8337 23 December 1983 Nr Blubberhouses, North Yorks Level A SP 7-5

This is another case from the region of North Yorkshire where all the recent strange activity has been going on. In this instance it centres on the US military base at Menwith Hill, noted for its strict security and use by the NSA in satellite surveillance. It is *not* an air operations base, although helicopter traffic is normal. Sightings around here have been reported in the past; note for instance those from 1978 in "The Pennine UFO Mystery".

The witness to this encounter is 50 year old AD from Blackburn, Lancashire, a security guard and HGV truck driver. It was a dark, cloudy and cold winter morning with a slight drizzle. Time was 05.45.

AD was on the A 59 road and travelling towards Harrogate. Passing Blubberhouses there is then open road with almost no habitation for several miles. The valley of the River Nidd lies north. But immediately on the side of the road there is the huge complex of the Menwith Hill base. This area is strictly out-of-bounds to civilians, bar the route passing through.

At this point through the mist AD saw *"this object come across the road like an aeroplane coming into land...it went behind the fir trees and I lost sight of it"* He had initially been attracted by a blue flashing light on top which was very distinctive and had for a few moments believed that a plane was about to crash onto the moors. As the object crossed the road and vanished behind trees he anticipated an explosion. But none came.

AD thought at this point that it was a helicopter of some sort and stopped the truck on this deserted stretch of road. He switched the engine off and stared across the trees on the left of the road straight at the thing. It now appeared to be only seventy five or a hundred feet away and no more than about 20 feet

above the tree level. It was completely and eerily silent, which immediately caused him to suspect his original diagnosis. More than that he now had an excellent view of the object hovering over the tree tops. Whilst it was about the size and dimensions of a Chinook it had no rotor blades or other obvious protruberances. It was thus a sort of elongated egg shape which was dark. But several squarish windows or portholes were plainly visible along the edge of the craft. These gave out a yellowish light and were about half a dozen in number. The blue light was no longer visible from this position.

From his viewpoint the UFO remained in view about 30 seconds and drifted very slowly downwards towards open moorland in the dark beyond the fir trees. These were not apparently disturbed, as they might have been by the wind from helicopter rotors. And, of course, it is completely impossible for a Chinook to be silent at the sort of proximity necessary for it to be seen in outline. AD commented on the manner in which the object descended, *"It was just like a balloon floating along. It just moved slowly away and that was it. I went forward along the road but I could see no sign of it at all."*

The investigators considered it pointless attempting to check civilian air movements so long after the events, but they are greatly restricted in the vicinity of this top secret base. In addition, there is no prospect of receiving assistance from the American authorities at Menwith Hill itself.

In conclusion IUN believe it most likely this was the misperception of something connected with the base...although what exactly must remain unknown. The misty drizzle probably added to the problems of observation.

However, it should be said that whilst IUN were investigating this case MUFORA was engaged in following up a sighting from fifteen years ago. This involved a couple who saw a very similar object land in fields near Harrogate. This case (found as a press cutting in small print at the back of an old issue of FSR) turned out upon a fortuitous and initially routine re-investigation to be extraordinarily important...involving MoD interrogation of the witnesses, time lapse elements and more than a few hints of an abduction. A report will feature in MUFON News when we have some space for it.

THE DARVEN LIGHTS

Report by MUFORA

This is a highly complex set of light in the sky reports centring on Darven in Lancashire, and all involving the same witness, a 22 year old labourer called Ashley.

Ashley is clearly very interested in UFOs, often reads books and watches movies on the theme and skywatches regularly. It is his close inspection of the mid Lancashire skies that has produced a huge plethora of sightings by him.

It would be impossible to cover them all, as mostly they involve flashing white lights or other mundane things which could (and probably do) have normal explanations. All we can do is focus on one or two of the less simple reports.

We can start with a sighting on 20 October 1979. It was precipitated during the night by a strange humming sound which Ashley heard on several occasions. This was akin to a generator operating at high pitch. Nothing was visible through his bedroom window, although he did not get out to look. A woman in the Marsh House Lane area apparently saw a UFO that same night and reported it to the local Blackburn paper. It was Ashley's time and effort checking with that source, and their kind assistance, which has provided the exact date for this encounter.

Later on the 20th, at about 21.30, after telling friends about the noise and being alerted to the woman's sighting, he saw a *"star...moving smoothly and silently travelling vertically downwards, descending onto a cloud bank."* Then two red lights and a strange white light appeared. The red lights resolved into the shape of a helicopter, which was plainly visible as such by virtue of its rotors. The white light disappeared. Then *"all of a sudden this big green light appeared out of nowhere...really bright with a shimmery outline. But it looked solid and definitely self luminous. It moved around for a second like a jelly on a plate."* It was joined by another one and they traversed the entire sky very slowly, finally disappearing about 22.20. His parents refused to lend him their loaded cine-camera to film the objects.

On 12 July 1987 a series of encounters began which take this case into the discussion of the great August wave that follows. On this first occasion nothing but a big white lightbulb was seen at 21.30, when Ashley and a friend came onto Pole Lane after leaving a pub. It dipped and bobbed into cloud on the horizon towards Chorley. At this point it was still twilight and no other stars were visible. His friend said it was just the sun.

On 6 August 1987, after a night watching satellites and meteors, Ashley spotted two faint red lights low on the horizon in the east. They flickered as they moved to the west, fading in and out. These were seen from 01.30 off and on for about 40 minutes. He told his father, who was convinced they were just aircraft.

A whole gaggle of strange lights (white and red) were seen around 01.00 and 02.20 on 14 August 1987. These were interspersed with other lights that had a droning sound associated and were obviously aircraft. The fact that so much aerial activity, plus some 'unidentified' lights, were visible to this experienced skywatcher on this particular night is mentioned for a reason that will become apparent when we look at the August wave in a moment.

More flashing white lights were seen regularly between midnight and 02.00 on the 15th and several other isolated red and white lights between later on the 15th and the 18th of August. In a follow up letter of 20 November, Ashley confirmed, "I have had other sightings since August but I got upset with myself seeing so many lights in the sky and believing they were mostly UFOs. But I'm sure not all were. So I stopped writing them down... I only remember the 100 per cent ones (see above)... I tried to take photos of sightings since but a couple of films haven't turned out because of lack of light... I'll just have to drive to the area and get close enough to photograph one."

THE GREAT AUGUST WAVE

UFO magazines are already indicating just how much UFO activity took place in Britain during the August wave. It was the biggest spell of sightings since late 1980 events when we had the Alan Godfrey abduction and RAF Woodbridge case.

There is evidence of close encounters in this new cycle. DIGAP have a possible abduction. MUFORA has a CE 3 case to be reported. And IUN have a car stop incident under investigation. But the vast majority of the sightings were like those recorded in the 'Darwen lights' saga above.

Already *BUFORA Bulletin* and *UFO Brigantia* have referred to some of the scattered sightings, but this report will provide a brief chronology of the cases and in the process fill in details of some of the stories.

Many of the early sightings were outside our area, and seem to have tied in with air bases in Devon and Cornwall. You will recall the 'exercises' on 2 August involving airships over Northamptonshire and the 6 August LITS at Darwen. It seems that between 22.30 on 4 August and 02.00 on the 5th there were many eye witnesses in the west country. The Plymouth UFO Research group under Bob Boyd have been stating that they offer "comprehensive proof of UFOs in west country skies" and recently Tim Good has appeared in the local media lending his support to what he alleges to be the most important batch of UFO events for ages.

So what happened? Essentially brilliant lights were reported, in delta shapes and cross shapes. These spectacular phenomena maneuvered for hours in



silence. Cross shape lighted UFOs in this area have previously been identified as aircraft refuelling exercises and that suspicion is enhanced when reports from the same period in Lancashire and Yorkshire lead to MoD claims that there was a major NATO exercise on at the time. Police officer Tony Dodds advised IUN that they had indeed been warned to beware extensive air activity during the first

two weeks of August. However, all is not so clear cut. Bob Boyd says that his witnesses include a number of amateur astronomers, an ex MoD officer and a former RAF navigator and all were suitably baffled by the light formations. "Like a flying fairground" was how one man described the lights, which at times merged into one another and provided a huge mass of glowing light in the air. This in turn produced the expected RAF explanation that a refuelling exercise was underway.

But was that the truth? Such an exercise does indeed involve well lit aircraft flying slowly and 'merging', in the sense that they approach one another

in disturbing proximity. It fits what the witnesses say they saw very well. So it was a shame that RAF Culdrose made things worse by suggesting that Sea King helicopters were also flying at night. A huge media battle ensued in which the witnesses, understandably, were adamant that they did not just see helicopters and Culdrose insisted they never said they did! Meantime the cries of 'cover-up' began from the ufologists involved and the truth seemingly got lost in the melee.

This was well explained by RAF Chivenor, who on 14 August explained quite categorically, "One of our chaps saw the strange lights too and could not understand what they were at first. But we checked with RAF Brize Norton (Oxfordshire), who confirmed that two VC-10s were on a night-tanking exercise over the area at the time. They use big lights which would appear to fuse together as the aircraft turned"

I believe that is effectively that and there is no justification for continued suggestions that these west country sightings were UFOs.

As mid month approached a new complication entered the scene in the shape of a Hopi indian prophecy! The *London Evening Standard* of 14 August first mentioned this and connected it with UFOs, a dangerous precedent. Some sort of mystical calculation had led the Hopi to predict the end of the world on 17 August and huge gatherings of cults, Friends of the earth etc, were to meet at certain 'prime sites' to prepare. One such place was "Warminster, Wilts, already famous as a top spot for UFO sightings". Actress, Shirley MacLaine (well known for going 'out on a limb' with her mystic ramblings... and in my view falling right off it!) got into the act by agreeing with this nonsense (as hindsight, thankfully, allows me to say it certainly was!)

Writers of silly headlines had fun ("World to end tomorrow says an astronomer" - *Shropshire Star*). Even the respectable press (*Daily Mail*, *The Times*) carried long stories reporting our demise, thanks to Dr Jose Arguelles who promoted the theory and as a most unwanted side effect I am sure sold 50,000 copies of his explanatory book. Arguelles predicted, "a wave of UFO sightings and a great, unprecedented outpouring of extra-terrestrial intelligence" (*Mail*).

Can this hype be unrelated to the fact that the wave centred on the EXACT days in the midst of this furore? From 14 August through to 18 August (day after the world ended, in case you were out at the time) a huge concentration of events took place. Both the close encounters to be reported in future issues (when investigation is complete) took place that weekend. More LITS than in the rest of the year put together occurred in that three day spell too.

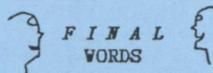
What happened? Was there another air exercise? Did the people out looking for the end of the world and well 'primed' to expect a UFO wave, experience precisely that as a kind of substitute for not seeing the earth fall apart? Or was there actually a 'great...outpouring' of that extra-terrestrial contact so eloquently anticipated by Dr Arguelles?

We will look at the northern sightings in the next issue, but a clue comes from those down south. These centred on the north London area, in the early hours of 16 August and into the 17th... the very day our planet faced the chop. Dozens of people saw dazzling lights. Some took photographs. The national radio news on that Sunday and Monday featured the fracas and a local TV programme debated the sightings on the 18th... only then to be flooded with dozens more sightings!

The ultimate explanation was simple, if disturbing. Inventor Ken Sams, a pain in London UFO investigators' sides for ages, has a "UFO kite" which is designed to reflect light so intensely it looks like a UFO. He's already been fined by the civil aviation authority because of the height it reaches! He and his followers were out to cash in on the 'end of the world' weekend by flying as many kites as they could, hoping they created a UFO wave before the truth was revealed!

Did sales of the kite skyrocket as hoped? God help us if they did!

To be continued in the next issue...



Its SUBSCRIPTION TIME again! But don't panic. There is not going to be an increase for the third successive year, despite big rises in production costs. However, it is quite likely prices will go up early in 1988 so that's an incentive for you to subscribe **NOW!**

As a further incentive, all those who send in their 1988 dues before 31 January can do so at just £5 instead of the £5.40 of the current subs. There will not be another issue before that deadline expires...so act now, while it's fresh in your mind. I cannot promise that if you wait until the next issue's reminder you won't have to pay **MORE** than £5.40, I am afraid. So that's yet another incentive!

And as one final push...below is a competition. Answer the questions, send in your answers by new years day and the one who gets the most right will win their 1988 subscription **ABSOLUTELY FREE!!!**

Can't say more than that, can we? And, if you decide to send your subscription now and are then told immediately after January 1st that you have won, you won't lose a penny. Your subscription will be extended to cover **TWO YEARS**—right into 1989...and that could save you **POUNDS!**

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WILL SEE YOU RIGHT FOR ALL SIX 1988 ISSUES.

COMPETITION!

A number of writers associated with Ufology have also *professionally* published science-fiction in the form of novels or short stories. All you have to do is look at these titles and brief descriptions and name the 'UFO expert' who wrote them...

- 1: *Chekhov's Journey* (How to use regression hypnosis to explore an old UFO case)
- 2: *Made to measure* (A horror story about how **NOT** to get a suit fitted)
- 3: *Contact* (Man's first contact with aliens)
- 4: *Catmagic* (Magic, witches, fairies and cats)
- 5: *Alintell* (An alien intelligence department)
- 6: *Warp* (A thriller/murder mystery...or is it?)
- 7: *Satan: Man of the hour* (God, the devil and a few lost souls)
- 8: *'Ow!' said the sandwich* (a talking ham sandwich?)

CALENDAR

BUFORA lectures at the London Business School, near Baker Street tube, 6.30-9.30pm

2 January "Investigating anomalies" by Tony Cornell

6 February "The Turin Shroud" by Professor Ray Leonard

N U F O N Regional Groups

SPI	(Scotland)	4 Woodlea Park, Branshill, Sauchie, Alloa	FK10 3BG
NLUFOIG	(Cumbria)	89 Bare Lane, Morecambe, Lancashire	LA 4 6RN
DIGAP	(Lancashire)	10 Woodlands Ave, Leigh, Lancashire	WN 7 3HL
MUFORA	(Gtr Man)	6 Silsden Ave, Lowton, Gtr Manchester	WA 3 1EN
IUN	(Yorkshire)	106 Lady Ann Rd, Soothill, Batley, W. Yorks	WF17 0PY
CUFOSC	(Cheshire)	117 Earle Street, Crewe, Cheshire	CW 1 2AG
SSPR	(Derbyshire)	17 Old Quarry Ave, Wales, Sheffield	S 31 8RW
LUFIOC	(E. Midlands)	31 Grove Rd, Leicester, Leics	LE 5 3HJ
BASE	(W. Midlands)	2 Chapel St, Kingswinford, W. Midlands	DY 6 0JU
NUFORC	(Northants)	46 Occupation Rd, Corby, Northants	NN17 2EF