

Close encounter with a UFO

ON THE night of September 19, 1961, Barney and Betty Hill were driving home along a lonely mountain road on the Vermont-New Hampshire border. Both were pragmatists who did not believe in UFOs. That night, however, they were intercepted by an extraterrestrial craft.

It appeared as a bright star which moved erratically; passing across the face of the moon, it looked cigar-shaped, like a flattened disc, drew closer over the tree-tops until they saw its faint red, blue and amber lights flickering around its rim.

Barney stopped the car and entered the woods with his binoculars to view the hovering craft more closely, to dispel his doubts. But what he saw so panicked him that he dashed back to the car, threw in the binoculars violently, armed himself with a tyre wrench, and sped off.

Looking out of the window, she deduced from the blacked-out stars overhead that the craft was directly above them. They then heard a high-pitched "pinging" sound coming

from the boot of their car which vibrated intensely throughout

vibrated intensely throughout.

Both entered a dissociated hypnotic state in which a second set of "pinging" sounds soon interspersed with the first. They subsequently found they were 55km from the point they last remembered, and that, surprisingly, dawn was imminent. Two full hours of their lives together were lost to amnesia.

This is the famous Hill case of a close encounter with a UFO on White Mountains, the subject of 'The Interrupted Journey' by John G. Fuller. The case is unusual because both disputed they had encountered a UFO. Most UFO sightings are made by individuals or groups whose stories soon contradict one another, leaving researchers to ponder blurred photographic negatives; but in the Hill case both suffered severe anxiety symptoms over an event neither could remember. Barney's ulcers flared and Betty was plagued by recurrent nightmares.

Still unaware of the significance of their experience, they were re-





Betty and Barney Hill, above,
and Barney's sketch of an Alien,
right.

ferred two years later to Dr. Benjamin Simon, a reputable Boston neurophysiologist who regressed them, using hypnosis, to their night in 1961. Treatment lasted 6 months and produced more than 40 hours of

**THE INTERRUPTED JOUR-
NEY: Two Lost Hours Aboard
A Flying Saucer. By John G.
Fuller. Souvenir Press. \$20.50.
340pp.**

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taped sessions of Barney's and Betty's separate reports. Never once did their stories conflict despite the most pressured questioning. And their deep terror, under questioning, is testimony of the authentic catharsis they each underwent. The case was the first ever settled by a medical insurance company involving a UFO.

Other facts were relevant. When the Hills returned to their home in Portsmouth, New Hampshire that night in 1961, Barney Hill found the tops of his shoes were scuffed, inexplicably, and the boot of their car covered with small highly-polished circular areas which were intensely

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magnetic to a compass. Under hypnosis, a fuller story emerged.

When Barney Hill entered the wood on the side of Route 3 that night, he saw figures moving within the extraterrestrial craft who telepathically communicated they were about to capture him. Fleeing, he was plagued by a vision of the leader's eyes pressing against his own.

Further on, they saw a powerful orange halo shining through the trees. Barney turned the car off onto a side road but found the way barred by six "men" in uniforms. The car engine stalled. The men separated and approached them on either side of the car, and Barney and Betty offered no resistance. Indeed, they both were hypnotically pacified into a deep trance; they were "carried"

or levitated through the woods, and ascended a ramp into the large disc-shaped ship. Barney's shoes were scuffed during the journey as his feet dragged loosely over the stones and dirt.

The interior of the craft was lit in a clear bluish hue which reminded them of an operating theatre. Both Barney and Betty were given a probing medical examination in different rooms; long needles were used on

rooms, long needles were used on their bodies to take inner tissue samples, though they felt no pain. All communication was telepathic.

The extraterrestrials had grey metallic skin. Their eyes were large, intricate and radiant, like the eyes of a lynx or Cheshire cat, as Barney later described them. They had two nostril slits, and indistinct lips which were dark blue and without any muscles. The extraterrestrials wore shining black uniforms and caps; and one wore a fine black scarf.

After her medical examination, Betty Hill was shown a space map with defined trade-routes marked. She noted the location and nature of various stars marked, and that one star, Zeta Reticuli, was depicted as a binary. Although both were determined to remember their experience, they were told they would not, were returned to their car, and, in an elated peaceful state, watched the intense glowing "moon" ascend from behind the trees and depart.

'The Interrupted Journey' is a concise report of the Hill's close encounter drawn mainly from their sessions under hypnosis. More than half the book quotes verbatim from their sessions. I, like Dr Simon, have no doubt that the catharsis which his two patients underwent was a real and traumatic one. Therapy for their anxiety symptoms ultimately proved

anxiety symptoms ultimately proved successful.

Nine years after their treatment, following computer analysis of the star map which Betty Hill glimpsed aboard the UFO and later drew, the star Zeta Reticuli, was found to be a binary system.

I am not a fervent Ufologist, and there is much in this case which has been influenced by the mental set of the two involved. However, I am convinced of the authenticity overall, and so confidently recommend the book for all those interested in UFOs. As a clear and lucid report, it is compelling reading.