

BRITISH UFO ASSOCIATION SUMMER 1963

BUFOA JOURNAL



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objects:

TO CO-ORDINATE investigation and promote research
into UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT phenomena.

TO DISSEMINATE KNOWLEDGE and facilitate the
exchange of information on this subject.

UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS - often referred to as "flying saucers" are
mysterious aerial phenomena which do not in any way resemble any known
kind of machine or natural phenomenon.

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ARTICLES and LETTERS for publication in BUFOA JOURNAL should be
addressed to the ASSISTANT EDITOR:

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TIME often seems to have trailed the Middle Ages into the 20th century. There is even now an incredible amount of near-medieval prejudice and suspicion attending the investigation of unexplained phenomena.

HAPPILY, where Ufology is concerned there is evidence that much of this is being overcome. It is a prospect which has been made infinitely more real by the formation of The British U.F.O. Association.

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NUMBER 1

THE UFO organisations of Britain are now, for the first time, in a position to pool their resources. A great deal is being learned from the steady stream of information reaching the London U.F.O. Research Organisation (LUFORO), the central branch of the Association.

LUFORO is developing a punch card system which will facilitate comparisons between sightings on a wholly scientific basis. Its Croydon section is initiating a scheme which will have a similar result.

WHEN these two systems are in operation, we shall discover any laws or tendencies which may exist in UFO activity. These results will be published in the Journal after presentation at the annual conference of the Association.

THEY are hoped for soon.

THE breakthrough is at hand.

MYSTERY LIGHTS AT SOUTH LOWESTOFT

The following well-authenticated sighting is still being thoroughly investigated by the Cambridge University Group. This summary is taken from a preliminary report by Mr. D.W. Parry, of Magdalene College.

Darkness had fallen on December 19, 1962, after a cloudless, sunny day, when a man at Brooke (East of Norwich) noticed two very bright lights, one slightly below and behind the other. They were moving slowly East towards the coast.

This was at 4.15 p.m., and between then and 5.30 p.m. they were seen by numerous witnesses. They appeared as three very bright lights, one of which disappeared, then as a group of yellow lights changing in number and formation according to different witnesses, but always with one brighter white light following closely behind.

Finally, at 5.30 p.m., a farmer and his son watched in amazement as three huge objects, each consisting of about eight yellow lights in arrow-head formation with a bright white light behind, the three groups also in arrow-head formation, passed slowly overhead.

Mr. Parry, who learnt of the sighting from a short report in the local paper, has interviewed 30 witnesses. He reports that many of them only came forward after several television and radio programmes and a number of letters on the subject in the local papers. Even now, he says, more witnesses are being found.

At this stage in the investigations Mr. Parry draws the following conclusions:

1. That the close correspondence in time, direction, appearance and characteristics of the UFOs makes it probable that the same objects were seen by all the witnesses.
2. That (by calculation) the UFOs were probably between 100ft. and 200ft. across, flying at 10 to 40 knots, within half a mile of many of the witnesses.
3. That they were probably three circular objects, each with a bright light at its centre and yellow lights at the rim.
4. That they were in close formation, banking like aircraft, doing turns and overlapping considerably so as to obscure one another.

More research is being undertaken, and it is expected to publish a fuller report when this is completed.

FROM SHIPS AT SEA...

The following two sighting reports, received from ships at sea, each describe UFOs seen on November 1, 1962. The possibility of them being the same or related object cannot be ignored.

Mr. R. Blackburn, a navigating apprentice on board S.S. British Architect, was in the Mediterranean on November 1, having left Port Said the previous day bound for the U.K. He writes:

"On Thursday evening (Nov. 1) I noticed a rather peculiar cloud in the sky. It was leaving practically due South and was circular in shape.

"I soon noticed it was moving quite fast in a northerly direction, and that it was the only cloud in the sky. In size it seemed to be a little larger than a full moon.

"I told the Extra Chief Officer about it, and through the binoculars we were able to see that it was a very dim satellite and the cloud was a halo around it. This was most peculiar as the moon, which was in its first quarter, had no halo.

"The satellite went overhead then started to disappear, and finally disappeared altogether in the region of Cassiopeia.

"This makes the second sputnik I have seen that has disappeared in mid-flight."

Mr. P.A. Griffith, also a navigating apprentice, was in the Red Sea on Nov. 1 in M.V. British Loyalty on passage from Suez to Little Aden. He writes:

"Capt. Mason and I sighted a glow in the sky underneath the star Vega. It was moving across the sky in a northerly direction and slightly increasing in altitude.

"It was circular in shape with signs of a horizontal elongation and in the centre could be seen a star of poor brilliance. It appeared to move at the speed of a sputnik or Echo satellite in orbit.

"No sound of aircraft was heard at the time, and in any case it appeared to be of too great an altitude. There was absolutely no cloud in the sky and visibility was excellent; so good, in fact, that we were able to watch a moon of only four days right down on to the horizon as it set.

"The object was visible for only five minutes and disappeared bearing approximately due North."

No further details were given by Mr. Blackburn, but Mr. Griffith provides the following information about his sighting: Position of the ship 13°03'N. 43°11'E.; Time 740 GMT, 2040 Zone time at ship; Bearing of Vega 307° true, altitude 26°; Vertical diameter of UFO (as near as could be measured by sextant at night) 3°10'; Approximate altitude of UFO 22°; Barometer reading 29°80; Temperature 83°F.; Wind 160° true, 1-2 Beaufort. In a simple sketch of the object, Mr. Griffith indicated a halo and its brightest part. As it moved across the sky other stars could be seen through the halo, he said.

We are indebted to B.P. Tanker Co. Ltd. and the Meteorological Office for these reports.

THE BERKHAMSTED SIGHTING

The Berkhamsted Sighting so alarmed the two people involved that they immediately reported it to the police. The similarity between this report and the two from the ships at sea on the previous page is worth noting.

Mr. R. J. Neighbour, 22, a carpenter, of Wigginton, Tring, Herts., was sitting with his girl friend in his van on Berkhamsted Common on Oct. 2, 1962. His companion first noticed the object. She explained later that it attracted her attention because they frequently parked there and she had never seen a star in that part of the sky before. The time was 9 p.m. Mr. Neighbour described it as "just a pin head." He continued:

"It moved up and round and then started to come towards us. As it bore down on us it got much larger. When it was nearly overhead a distinct shimmer could be seen all round it, like a halo. There was an enormous white light in the middle which appeared to be four lights close together.

"A distinct humming sound could be heard. It moved very slowly over us until it was out of view from the front window. I was very scared and started the van, putting on my headlights. My girl friend was still watching it, and she said the light of the object went out as I put on my headlights."

Moving lights with halos have been seen many times over Brazil, according to Dr. Fontes in his articles in the March-April and May-June, 1961, issues of Flying Saucer Review.

Mr. G.F. Oakley, 41, of Lockett-Rd., Widnes, Lancs., reports the following sighting on the same day as that at Berkhamsted.

"About 1.40-1.45 p.m. on Oct. 2, 1962, I was looking through an upstairs window of 29, Lockett-Rd., (facing North) just after a shower of rain. The sky was blue with large white clouds. I noticed a small white object (I took to be disc shaped) moving (skimming) across the sky from West to East (E.N.E. compass bearing) silently with great speed.

"It skimmed under one cloud and behind the next, but reappeared in the blue area to the East of the cloud, still keeping its straight course and shape. It did this twice more, reappearing from clouds, unaltered in shape. Eventually it disappeared in the clouds, high over the eastern horizon.

"I first noticed it because it was a moving object in an otherwise still sky "picture". It moved fast, like a plane (as opposed to birds etc) and, obviously not a plane, I was curious about it."

On the same afternoon, at 4.10 p.m., nurses at Sunderland saw a "white, silvery, round object, about the size of a lady's open umbrella," which remained poised over the hospital grounds for some seconds. Also in County Durham, at 11.45 p.m. the same day, two women at Gateshead saw an object, travelling "very fast and bright gold in colour" shaped rather like a rectangle, but with the corners rounded off and the sides slightly curved.

GREEN "STAR" AT VENTNOR

On three occasions Mrs. L. Spanner saw an unusual green "star" from her home in Grove-Rd., Ventnor, Isle of Wight. The second time it moved out of sight, and the third time it took on an extraordinary shape. The following summaries are taken from her reports.

APRIL 18, 1963. 11.30 p.m.

Mrs. Spanner noticed an exceptionally bright star in the eastern sky at an angle of about 50 deg. to the horizon. It was bright green and behind it there seemed to be a cloud of the complementary shade of red composed of dots of colour. It twinkled and flashed, but the rays of light came only from the sides. The night was moonless but almost cloudless. Mrs. Spanner wrote to the Royal Observatory, but was dissatisfied with their suggestions. She resolved to look again.

APRIL 28, 1963. 1.30 a.m.

The night was overcast with very thin, high and ragged cloud. Mrs. Spanner saw the object again, this time at an angle of 75 deg. to the horizon. The colours were the same, but then the red cloud became much larger and appeared to envelop it for a moment. Her eyes became confused, and when she looked again the red had reshaped itself into a tail resembling a rocket exhaust. It moved southward towards the zenith, not apparently at any great speed, and disappeared behind an adjacent house.

APRIL 29, 1963. 10.45 p.m.

The object appeared again, this time at an angle of about 55 deg. to the horizon and slightly north of the previous position. Mrs. Spanner called her daughter as a witness and they observed it through a spy glass at intervals over the following two hours. It was without the red cloud and was moving its position. At 1 a.m., when the object was E.S.E. at 85 deg., Mrs. Spanner saw a small red light leave it and travel north east towards the horizon. The sky appeared to be cloudless and soon afterwards she had a clear sighting through the glass. She writes:

"I could see quite distinctly two long narrow cylinders, very vividly green. Each had a brilliant red light at the forward end (i.e. in the direction of travel). It now resembled not the traditional cigar, but two bright green lighted cigarettes held together. This appearance did not alter until it passed out of sight."

Mrs. Spanner's daughter described the object at this point as "like two thin, oblong tubes, or one oblong with a dark, horizontal line across it." - Isle of Wight U.F.O. Investigation Society.

STRANGE WHITE LIGHT SEEN FROM DOWNS

Mr. A.J. Rawden, 35, a technical author, of High-St., Ryde, Isle of Wight, reports a 30-minute sighting on April 19 this year.

He was looking out to sea from the top of Brading and Ashley Down, Isle of Wight, when he saw a whitish-coloured area, oblong in shape, suspended motionless in a sea mist belt between the sea and brilliant sun-lit sky. The time was between 7.15 and 7.45 p.m.

This sighting occurred the day after the first of Mrs. Spanners' three sightings (see facing page). There was one witness.

"FLYING SAUCER AT THE BOTTOM OF MY GARDEN"

THIS WAS THE HEADING GIVEN TO A UFO REPORT WHICH APPEARED IN THE DAILY EXPRESS OF MAY 8, 1963.

ROBERT HIRST, 13, OF MOTTRAM CLOSE, KIRKBY, LIVERPOOL, LOOKED THROUGH THE KITCHEN WINDOW AND SAW WHAT HE CLAIMED TO BE A FLYING SAUCER. HE SHOUTED AND WAS QUICKLY JOINED BY HIS MOTHER. ✓

"IT WAS ABOUT 16ft. IN DIAMETER AND WAS HOVERING JUST OVER THE GARDEN - IT SEEMED TO HAVE TWO AERIALS AND A RED LIGHT FIXED TO IT," SHE SAID. "THERE WAS A LOW BUZZ COMING FROM THE FLYING SAUCER AND THE LIGHT KEPT FLASHING ON AND OFF. IT STAYED FOR NEARLY A MINUTE AND THEN WENT OFF OVER THE ROOFTOPS."

BOTH ROBERT AND HIS MOTHER WENT TO THE LOCAL POLICE STATION TO REPORT THE INCIDENT.

HEAP BRIDGE PHENOMENON

Another claim that a UFO touched down within yards of their home comes from Mr. and Mrs. L. Greenhaigh, of Essex-Av., Heywood, Lancs., According to a report in the Heywood Advertiser of May 3 this year, the sighting was made from the Green haigh's bedroom at five minutes past four on Sunday morning (April 28). The report is conspicuous through its reference to noise heard at the time. ✓

The couple said that they heard the sound of an engine approaching and from the window saw a "saucer" speeding overhead.

Mrs. Greenhaigh: "It almost touched the roof and then we saw it swerve away and hover over a partly built house across the road. It stayed there about ten minutes and then touched down.

Mr. Greenhaigh: "The light from the object was amazing. It was the brightest light I have ever seen and the noise of the engines was just like a rocket taking off. As it passed our window, it illuminated the whole bedroom.

"All the light seemed to be projected downwards, none above. I got no impression of shape or size because the light was too bright."

After ten minutes or so the engine noise was heard again and faded away in the distance. "This time there was no light or anything," Mr. Greenhaigh said. Other residents in the street appear to have slept through the incident, but a woman who lives in Bolton-Rd., Bury, maintains emphatically that she heard the same noise at precisely the same time. She works at the same Mill as Mr. Greenhaigh.

INTERVIEWING AN EYEWITNESS

G N P STEPHENSON

The following notes are taken from a lecture* on the investigation of UFO reports by Mr. G.N.P. Stephenson, Secretary of The British U.F.O. Association and Chairman of the London U.F.O. Research Organisation. In his lecture Mr. Stephenson looked at some of the difficulties a would-be investigator can expect to meet. Advice was offered and the techniques which have been found to produce the most effective results were outlined.

The difficulties of seeing a witness at his home are often exaggerated. Usually the best thing to do is to call without warning at a time which would seem to be convenient. Knowing the witness's job will obviously help in determining this. Certainly a strange voice on the telephone may find the witness reluctant to make an appointment, whilst a letter may prove even less rewarding. It is much easier to make an excuse in writing.

A respectable-looking investigator should have no difficulty in being admitted to a house if courteous, yet persuasive. It is unwise, however, to offer any forms to the witness before crossing the threshold. This is a very quick way to a rebuff.

Many witnesses become exasperated when badgered by different UFO groups to describe their experiences. The co-ordination achieved by The British U.F.O. Association will happily prevent much of this. Visits from the local press are inevitable, however, and indeed it is often thanks to the local press that we first hear of a sighting. The most we can hope for here is co-operation.

In the wake of exasperation in a witness there often follows confusion. The witness may try to cover up an error in his memory due to this confusion, with the result that the investigator dismisses his story as false. In circumstances such as these the investigator will benefit much from an understanding of human nature. A witness who embroiders his story to impress is unlikely to go on repeating his exaggerations if he realises his listener is seeing through him.

It is important to remember that he who tells lies also tells the truth. Any number of falsehoods do not entirely invalidate a story. Failure to realise this has been a major set-back to UFO investigations, particularly when people have claimed contact with UFOs and their pilots. On the other hand complete hoaxes are perpetrated, and when a story begins to collapse the possibility of this should not be far from an investigator's thoughts..

contd.

* Mr. Stephenson delivered the lecture from which this article is taken to the Cambridge University Group for the Investigation of U.F.Os. on February 8, 1963, and the Oxford University U.F.Os. Study Group on May 8, 1963.

An effort should be made by the investigator to discover the degree of illusion in a witness. Both optical conditions and the emotional state of a witness during the period of sighting may have affected his perception of the object. The right results are usually obtained by merely causing the witness to consider the possibility of illusionary factors.

There is always the danger, of course, that the witness, having recognised illusionary factors and thinking that the explanation is probably more simple than he originally thought, will elaborate his story to save face. This danger can perhaps be overcome by the investigator explaining that he is interested in the sighting whatever the explanation.

On the other hand, a witness may be in no doubt whatever that the object appeared and behaved just as he remembers it and then exaggerate only to convince a sceptical investigator. The moral here is self-evident.

Some common illusionary factors are as follows:

1. SIZE: A single light is often exaggerated in the memory.
2. MOVEMENT: A slow, moving light may appear to be moving in fits and jerks, and a fading light may give the impression of moving away into the distance.
3. LIGHT: Variations in luminosity are often confused for variations in size.
4. TIME: Objects seen only for a few seconds are often inaccurately remembered.
5. SOUND: An observer concentrating on a sighting may think he hears sounds.

The aim of the investigator is to reconstruct the phenomenon as it really appeared to the witness.

When a sighting has been witnessed by several people in the same house, it is desirable to interview each witness separately. This is perhaps best achieved by having more than one investigator there at the time.

When a tape-recorder is to be used, it is best to have a preliminary non-recorded interview to allay nervousness. Any difference in tone of voice between the two interviews should be mentioned in a report to The British U.F.O. Association.

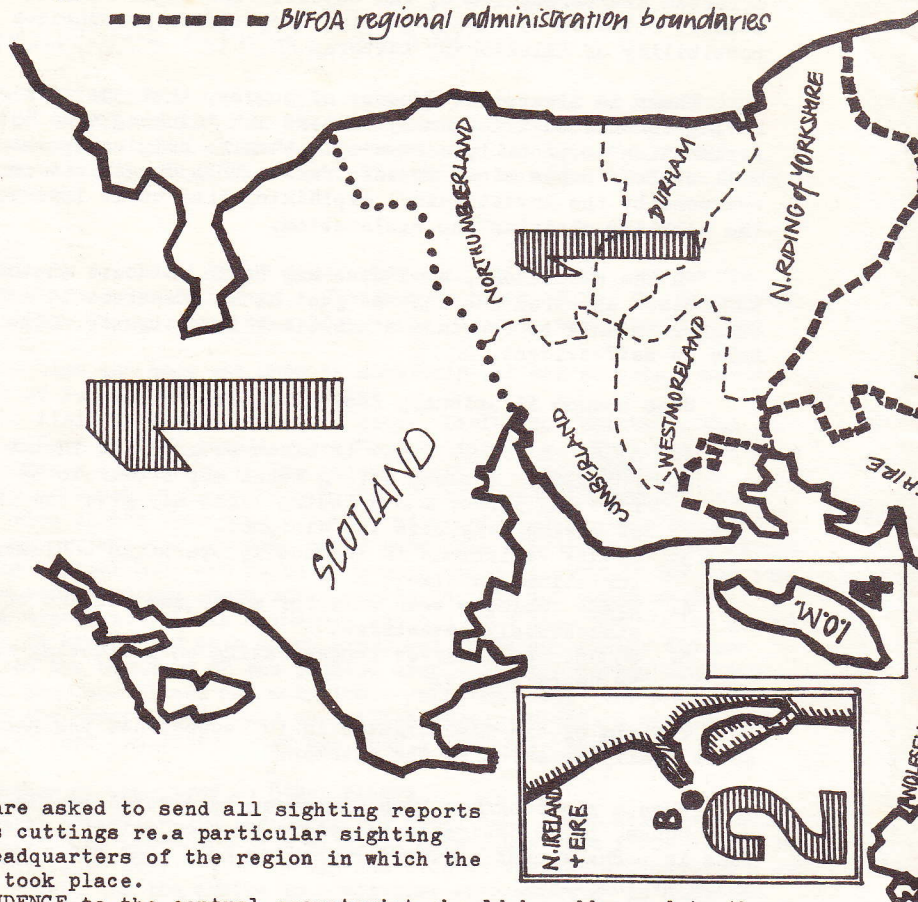
A brief written account of a sighting for The British U.F.O. Association will be very valuable, both as a record and a form of evidence. Such an account must be supplemented by a report from the investigator explaining any discrepancies he has noticed.

Shorthand, too, should be used only with care so as not to cause too much nervousness in the witness. Reports of interviews should be written up immediately afterwards, before one's mind has time to become confused by discussion with colleagues.

Asking questions in a definite sequence will help one both to write an account of the interview and recall the next question during the interview. NEVER PHRASE QUESTIONS IN SUCH A WAY AS THEY CAN BE ANSWERED "yes" OR "no." NEITHER OF THESE WORDS INDICATES THE QUESTION WAS UNDERSTOOD.

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE

..... national boundaries - - - - - county boundaries
 - - - - - BUFOA regional administration boundaries



MEMBERS are asked to send all sighting reports and press cuttings re. a particular sighting to the headquarters of the region in which the sighting took place.

CORRESPONDENCE to the central secretariat should be addressed to the Assistant Secretary: L G Moore, 19 Broad Lane, Hampton, Middlesex.

REGIONAL ADDRESSES

- 1 J L OTLEY (Tyneside UFO Society) 41 Deanham Gardens, Fenham, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 5. (Newcastle-upon-Tyne 38025)
- 2 see 9
- 3 H BUNTING (Direct Investigation Group on Aerial Phenomena) 34 Bowerfield Avenue, Hazel Grove, Stockport, Cheshire. (Poynton 3956)
- 4 F M BULL (Halifax Branch) 14 Battinson Street, Southowram, Halifax Yorkshire. (Halifax 2165)
- 5 Miss M ROSSLOVA (Cheltenham Flying Saucer Group) 92 Monks Croft, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. (Cheltenham 59524)
- 6 ROBIN SADLER (Cambridge University Group for the Investigation of UFOs) Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge.
- 7 J D LLEWELLYN (Stratford-on-Avon UFO Group) 63 Masons Road Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire.

If members cannot contact their regional H Q in the event of an important sighting, they can telephone the secretary:-

G N P Stephenson, (London) VIGilant 1773



- 8 C J TUCKER (Oxford University UFOs Study Group)
Oriel College, Oxford.
- 9 and 2 C A STICKLAND (London UFO Research Organisation) 22 Roseberry Street, London S.E.16
BERmondsey 5021
- 10 D RUDMAN (British Flying Saucer Bureau)
43 Elton Road, Bristol 7. (Bristol 47035)
- 11 A SZACHNOWSKI (Anglo-Polish UFO Research Club)
75 Oakfield Road, Anerley, London S.E.20
- 12 F W SMITH (Isle of Wight UFO Investigation Society) 4 Connaught Road, East Cowes, IOW.

Crater Mystery | what happened at Charlton?

CHARLES STICKLAND B.Sc

In the Daily Express of 17th July 1963 there was an intriguing report of a hole in a field. As this seemed worth investigating, Nigel Stephenson and I went down the next day and I paid a second visit on the 24th and 25th. The following is an account of the facts ascertained.

The Site

This is a field at Manor Farm, Charlton, Wiltshire, just to the east of Shaftesbury in Dorset. The farm is owned by Mr. Roy Blanchard. Captain John Rogers, head of a bomb disposal unit, was investigating the site.

The time the hole was made is uncertain but was somewhere about the end of June or beginning of July.

The field is divided into two crops, barley and potatoes, the potato ridges running parallel to the dividing line. The site was on this boundary but mainly in the potato section - see diagram (1).

The measurements given are probably close to the correct values but in view of the fact that a number of people had visited the site before we arrived the outlines could have been disturbed to some extent.

The central hole was about 5" across and 3' deep. It was not completely empty but had loose rocks inside it. It was situated in a shallow depression, 8' in diameter, but not more than 3-4' below ground level. In the barley were three gaps, but these apparently did not extend to the boundary of the planted area. All the barley had been removed from the places and only loose soil remained. The cutting through the potato ridges was very ill-defined. Within a circle of about 12' from the centre very few potato plants remained.

Disturbance of the Crops in Other Places

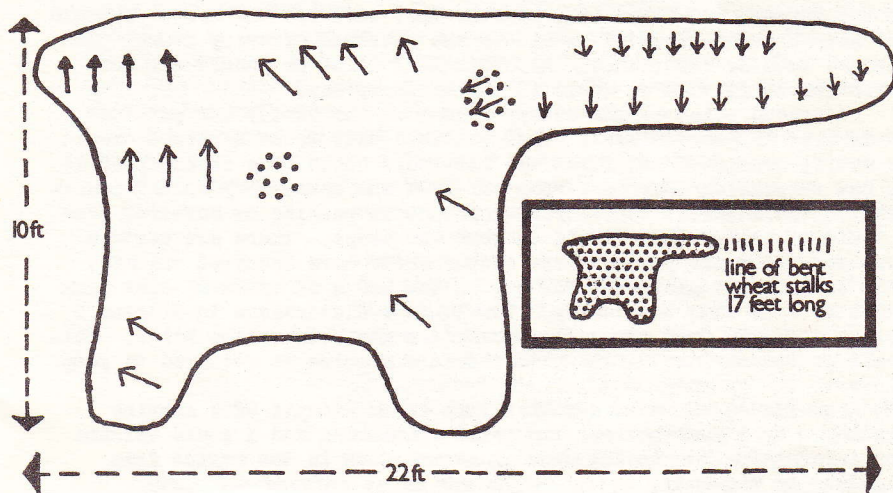
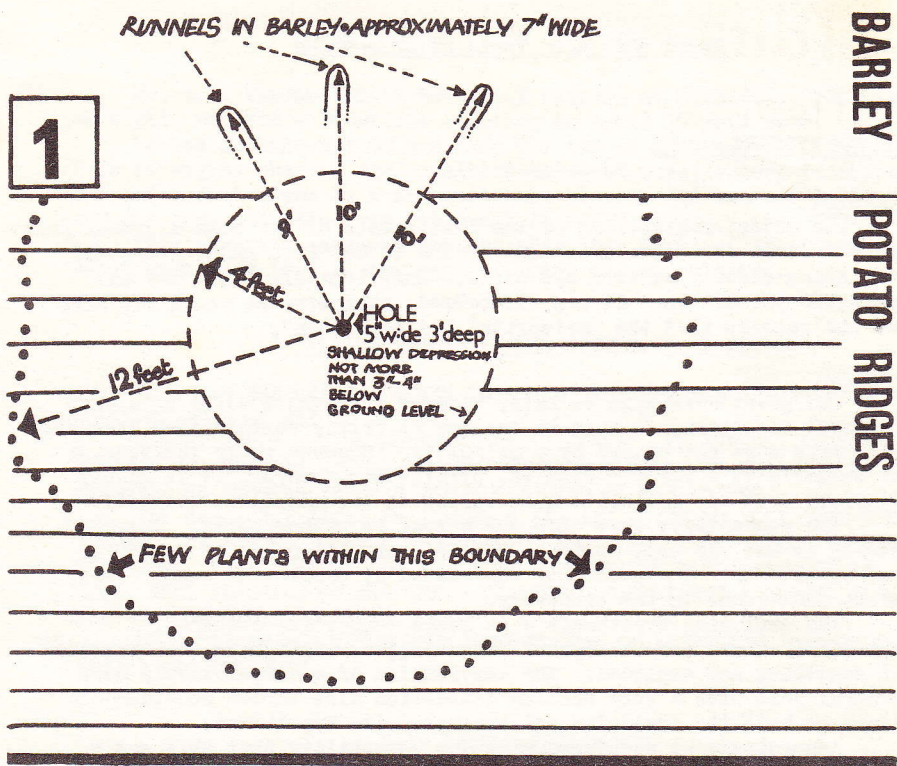
As it was not until Thursday, the 25th, that I was able to examine the barley I am unaware of its original appearance when first discovered. The first place is situated on the far side of the barley, beneath a gap in the hedge. In the centre is a circular area about 2' in diameter from which the barley was missing. The surrounding region was much trampled down, probably by the feet of sightseers, and its original extent could have been anything from 6' - 18'. I give no drawing of this since the site may have presented a very different picture when it was first found to that it had when I saw it.

On the other side of the hedge is a grass field and beyond that another stretch of barley. This latter appeared to have been considerably disturbed. Drawing No.2 shows one of these patches. In the area outlined the dots represent barley standing upright. The arrows represent stalks of barley leaning in the direction shown. This part of the disturbance extends about 22', but beyond this there is a 17' line of upright barley stalks with the fruiting portion bent over at the top.

There was a considerably larger area than that shown farther into the field, but I did not examine this, since I did not see quite how I could reach it or measure it without trampling part of the crop that was still standing.

BARLEY

POTATO RIDGES



2

CRATER MYSTERY contd.The Find

The object registering on the instruments of the bomb disposal unit (at the first site) was eventually found to be 'iron pan', a deposit consisting chiefly of iron hydroxide. Unfortunately there was no geologist present when it was discovered, otherwise we would not have had the reports that the 'meteorite' had been found.

Comment

One great advantage we have, because this was treated as a bomb disposal operation, is that we can now be fairly certain that this hole and marks were not caused by a meteorite. Because their instruments no longer gave a reading when the pyrites was removed, it is highly unlikely that any meteorite lies buried in the immediate vicinity.

The probability that this was a hoax is rather small. The site itself is not one that would be visited very often and is rather out-of-the-way. The publicity was caused by people who came on the scene subsequent to the discovery.

The explosion hypothesis also lacks supporting evidence. Apparently there was no sign of scorching, as might have been expected if something had exploded. The combination of a comparatively deep central hole with a very shallow depression also throws considerable doubt on both the explosion and the meteorite hypotheses.

Accordingly we are faced with the possibility that this was a landing of an extra-terrestrial machine. There are various portions of evidence which support this. Not the least of these is the belief of the farmer, Mr. Blanchard, himself that such was the case. I would not have thought that this would be the reaction of every farmer that has had such an experience. Accordingly I think we should pay more attention to it than we would in the ordinary way.

A second point is the disappearance of the barley and potatoes. It is over 11 years since I first realised that these machines create or modify gravitational force and once this basic idea is accepted it is not surprising that in taking off from the earth they should remove some of the adjacent vegetation, nor that in passing or hovering over a field of barley they should disturb the crops. There are certain features about the places where disturbances have occurred which fit into the general picture. The gap in the hedge is an ideal spot from which to look down the valley. The 39-foot disturbance in diagram 2 points directly down the valley towards a gap between two hills. This would be the obvious flight path should a machine be required to keep close to the ground.

Summing up, I would say that this is an example of a genuine landing. My investigations are still continuing and I would welcome any information concerning unusual occurrences in the region from mid-June to mid-July.

Charles A. Stickland, B.Sc.,

Information Officer, L.U.F.O.R.O.

MYSTERY CRATERS (continued)

The extensive publicity given to the Charlton mystery in the British press, radio and television, prompted other farmers in different parts of the British Isles to report similar holes that they had found. "The Scotsman", July 25, reported the discovery of two sixteen feet craters, two to three feet deep, on the 1300-foot hillside called the Meadows at Middle Monynut farm, 21 miles south of Dunbar. The craters were 12 feet apart, with 12 channels varying in length up to 44 feet radiating from them. Large blocks of earth lay scattered up to 40 yards from the craters, and there were also a series of square holes one foot wide and two feet deep.

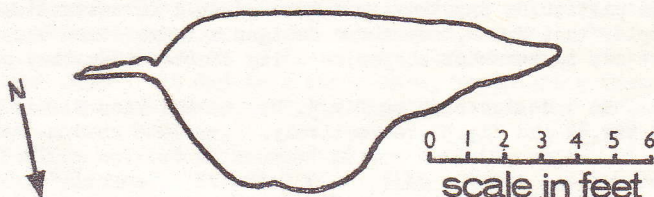
On the slopes of Dufton Fell, Westmorland, a giant crater, 60 yards across and two feet deep, was discovered, according to "The Yorkshire Post", August 2. Reports on these two events will be published in this Journal when investigations are completed.

Another hole was discovered at Flamborough Head, Yorkshire, and F. Malcolm Bull, Director of our Halifax Branch, who investigated the site with his colleague Trevor Whitaker, sent us the following report.

Near the end of June a plough boy, not named, was cutting the grass on the edge of a field (which is on the headland) at North Moor Farm, when he noticed that the grass and hay near the edge had been disturbed. He thought nothing more about it until on the 19th July he was cutting the hay in the field when he saw that the earth had been thrown up; his first thought was that a pig had been rooting and thrown up the soil, but when he examined it closer he saw that it could not have been made by a pig. He told the farmer, Mr. Hood, who contacted the coastguard to see if anything had fallen out of a 'plane in the area, but this was not so.

He called the Army disposal unit who examined the hole and after digging to follow one or two cracks looking like rat holes they filled the hole in.

About the time at which the hole was first detected there had been a thunderstorm and one particularly loud clap of thunder and flash suggested to Mr. Hood a possible explanation of the hole, that it had been caused by lightning; but he would not say that this was definitely the case.



It was difficult to determine the shape of the hole exactly due to the scattering of soil around when filling it in and also due to grass growing around. Mr. Hood said that the (here) right extremity was made by the Bomb Disposal Unit digging along one of the cracks, one of which is shown on the left. There were several of these cracks running in all directions when the hole was found but they were not apparent when examined on 31st July, 1963.

The hole had been 12 to 18 inches deep at the centre and shallower at the edges. The "crack" on the left was 3 inches deep.

TESTS of OBSERVATION

F Malcolm Bull

Look at the two drawings below. What do you see in fig.1? Is it four complex polygons, or is it only the three letters of the word ELF? What about fig.2? Are we looking down on a tube standing upright, or are we looking along a cylinder lying on its side?

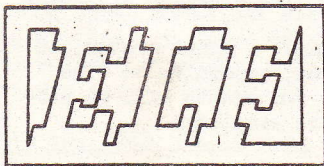


fig.1

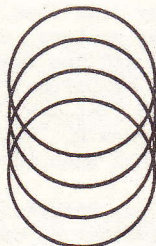


fig.2

These two examples, designed for the purpose, demonstrate that many designs and shapes admit of more than one interpretation, and in research such as that into ufo's perception, memory and description of an object are the only means of identification. Since very few people who see ufo's are trained in observation, artists for example, there is a chance of error in reporting the details of the sighting; this, coupled with the (usually) brief time for which the object was observed and also the (often) long time which may elapse before the sighting is reported, may produce results suggesting an object quite unlike the one actually observed.

Clearly we need some method by which we can assess and evaluate the perceptive powers of persons claiming to have seen ufo's. Although this may smack of a 'Big Brother' or 'Police State' system it should not be so, and everyone may consent or refuse to participate at his own discretion. Whilst modern psychology favours specialised tests to investigate one particular hypothesis, a more general investigation would show, for example, that Mr. A. remembers designs narrower than they are, and Miss B. tends to remember shapes as being shorter than they really are.

Thus, in a design such as fig.3, Mr. A. and Miss B. may later draw it as in fig.3A and fig.3B respectively.



fig.3

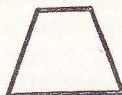


fig.3A



fig.3B

Extreme cases? Perhaps. Try some of the examples given later and see for yourself.

TESTS OF OBSERVATION contd.

The points which we want to study are:-

1. Perception,
2. Memory,
3. Description.

These three headings are closely connected, and any one cannot be discussed in terms which do not touch on the other two.

1. Perception: This refers to the way in which each individual 'sees' an object or design, and how he understands it and tries to realise it and fit it into terms which are comprehensible to himself. This latter term of self-comprehensibility is significant; for example, if we ask a person to estimate the number of people in a crowd, let us suppose that he gives 300 whereas the actual number is 100. Although he would be wrong as far as the facts are concerned, it would be found that if in describing the number of people in another crowd we were to say 'there would be about 300 people altogether', when the real number was only 100, then this same man would visualise the size of crowd which he understands by '300' and this would be a good idea of the true size of the crowd. It is as if we were using a 'code' to remember ideas, in this case number of objects or people, although this man's 'code' was different from our own it would still produce the correct results.

We can detect a similar 'code' for the perception of shapes, as with Mr. A. and Miss B. above, and if this code is known we are then able to 'de-code' their descriptions and from them obtain something nearer to the original shape or design.

2. Memory: The manner in which an image is retained by the individual depends somewhat on the way in which it is perceived, but also on the time lapse between the original being seen and subsequent description of the original. The description will deteriorate with time due to the forgetting of detail and confusion of similar details from other sources.

3. Description: By this term we include both verbal (and written) and pictorial representation of a design. Both these are limited with the powers of description of the individual but this is only in rare cases any great hindrance.

One way to assist the pictorial representation by people who say "I just can't draw" may be found in the institution of some sort of 'Identi-kit' of ufo shapes, but although undoubtedly useful this could be confusing to some observers. This could be one way in which to introduce a quantitative basis to identification and classification.

Description, unlike Memory and Perception, is the only one of these headings which can be directly investigated, being the only means by which the other two can be communicated.

TESTS OF OBSERVATION contd.Conducting the Tests

The observer on whom the tests are carried out would be shown a design (two or three dimensional) and then later asked to describe them by drawing and/or by a written account.

He would then be asked to repeat his descriptions, from memory, after varying intervals of five minutes, an hour, a day, a week, and so on, as convenient. Comparison of his respective descriptions will yield much information on perception and sighting reports.

Probably the main obstacle to this investigation is the psychological one which makes people feel that they are under suspicion, or that they are not quite trusted. This is of course not so, and the feeling should be assuaged when it is understood that we are merely trying to study a phenomenon which every one of us suffers.

You may wish to try these tests for yourself, and accordingly one has been composed and is included in the present journal. Before looking at the designs please read, then follow, these instructions:-

- a) remove the first design by cutting out the top quarter of the opposite page
- b) unfold it, holding the design about 18 inches from the eyes, and look at it for five seconds (count 1-2-3-4-5-6).
- c) destroy the design
- d) draw the design immediately; label this drawing:

" A (immediate) "
- e) draw the design again from memory after five minutes; label this:

" B (five minutes) "
- f) draw the design again from memory after a day or a week; label this:

" C (one day) " or " C (one week) "

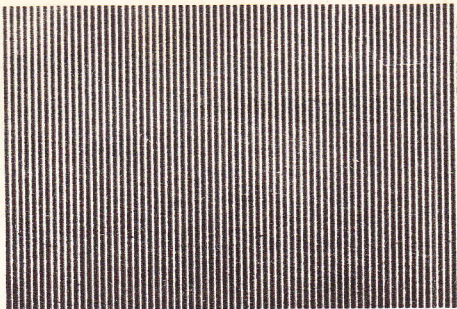
Repeat this with the second, third and fourth designs, and send your results to me:

F. Malcolm Bull,
14 Battinson Street,
Southowram,
Halifax,
Yorkshire.

You may also wish to send a written description made at the same time; if so, please do. One thing I do ask, please mark the descriptions and drawings clearly with the time lapse, e.g. after five minutes, and so on, and please be honest and don't crib from the original, otherwise the whole point of the experiment is lost.

The results will be given in a later issue, but names of individuals will not be given without permission.

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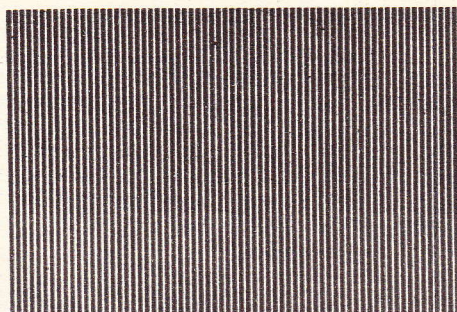
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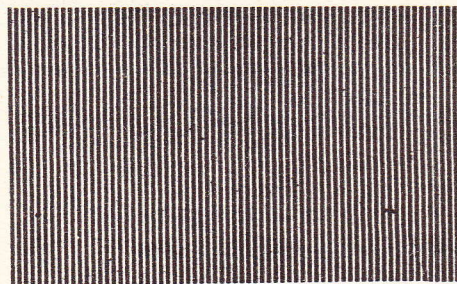
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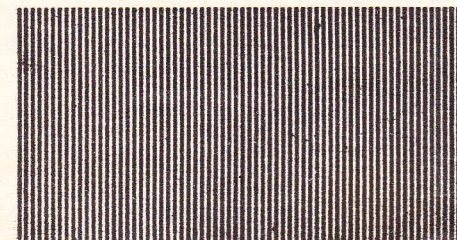
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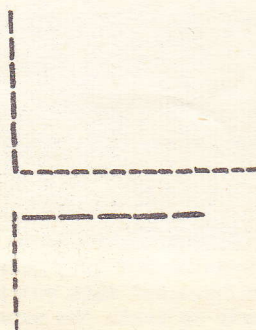
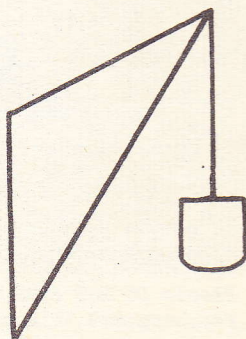
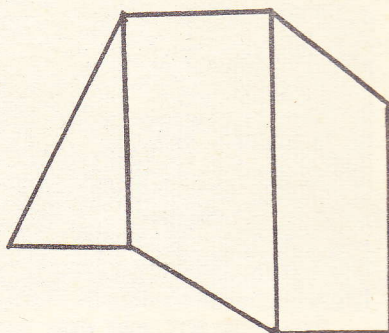
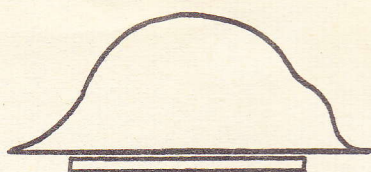
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