

Volume 2 No. 4 Spring 1968



BUFORA

JOURNAL

BRITISH U.F.O. RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

The BRITISH UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

Founded 1964

(Incorporating the London U.F.O. Research Organisation, founded 1959,
and the British U.F.O. Association, founded 1962).

THE BUFORA JOURNAL AND BULLETIN

Volume 2 Number 4

Spring 1968

CONTENTS

Editorial	...	...	...	...	...	2
The Unique Syndrome	...	...	...	...	...	3
The Spring Skies	...	...	...	...	...	5
Letters to the Editor	...	...	...	...	...	7
Scientific Sky-Watching	...	...	...	...	...	10
Bootstrap Liftoff ?	...	...	...	...	...	12
BUFORA Information	...	...	...	...	...	14
The Fallacy of the Antique U.F.O.	...	...	...	...	...	15
Association Jottings	...	...	...	...	...	16
Book Review	...	...	...	...	...	17
Notes & Quotes	...	...	...	...	...	18
The 'Mary Celeste' — What Happened to Her Crew ?	...	...	...	...	...	20

LECTURES : The Association sponsors monthly meetings in London. Details of meetings arranged by member societies or branches, should be obtained by writing direct to them.

OFFICERS (honorary):

President : G. W. CREIGHTON, M.A., F.R.G.S., F.B.I.S.
 Vice-Presidents : L. G. CRAMP, A.R.Ae.S., M.S.I.A.
 Dr. G. G. DOEL, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.M.R.E.
 R. H. B. WINDER, B.Sc., C.Eng., A.M.I. Mech.E.

B.U.F.O.R.A. Executive Committee :

Chairman : Capt. I. MACKAY (and Librarian)
 Vice-Chairman : L. E. BEER
 Honorary Secretary : M. C. HOLT, B.A.
 Honorary Treasurer : N. T. OLIVER
 Journal Editor : J. CLEARY-BAKER, Ph.D.
 Projects Officer : E. HATVANY
 Miss E. BUCKLE
 G. G. DOEL, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.M.R.E.
 Miss C. HENNING
 B. SIMMONDS
 S. L. SMITH
 Mrs. A. HARCOURT
 A. WEST
 Co-opted Executives : Mrs. A. LLOYD, R. CRAWFORD

AIMS :

1. To encourage and promote unbiased scientific investigation and research into Unidentified Flying Object phenomena.
2. To collect and disseminate evidence and data relating to Unidentified Flying Objects.
3. To co-ordinate UFO Research on a nation-wide scale and co-operate with persons and organisations engaged upon similar research in all parts of the world.

MEMBERSHIP : The annual subscription for individual members is one guinea ; \$3 U.S.A. and Canada. Membership is open to all persons supporting the aims of the Association and whose application is approved by the Executive Committee. Application/Information forms are obtainable from the Hon. Secretary, Vice-Chairman or other Executive members.

JOURNAL : Published Quarterly. Available only to individual members and member societies or by exchange. EXCHANGE PUBLICATIONS should be sent direct to the Journal Editor.

ADVERTISEMENTS : Readers' classified advertisements : 3d. a word. For details of whole, half and quarter page rates, please write to the Publicity Officer : Mr. L. E. Beer, Flat 15, Freshwater Court, Crawford Street, London, W.1.

CORRESPONDENCE : General correspondence and subscriptions should be sent to the Hon. Secretary : M. C. Holt, B.A., Claremont Road, Claygate, Esher, Surrey. UFO reports should be sent (or 'phoned) to the regional or central information officer, as indicated elsewhere in this journal.

Please send editorial material direct to the Editor
 3 Devenish Road, Weeke, Winchester, Hants.

EDITORIAL

There is an American contactee who tells of conversations with UFO visitants from the 'Galaxy' Coma Berenices. He appears to be blissfully unaware that the stars composing the constellation in question are located within our own Milky Way Galaxy. Another contactee, this time an Australian, retails an incident involving extra-terrestrials who stated that they came from a point near the Galactic Centre and had passed through the constellation of Orion on their way to Earth. Reference to a drawing of the Galaxy in plan reveals that the region of the sky on to which human imagination has projected the figure of Orion is almost opposite to the location of the Galactic Centre as viewed from the environs of the Solar System.

It may well be that both of these contactees are lying or deluded. There are, however, two other possibilities which must be kept in mind in considering their stories. The contactees may be the honest dupes of untruthful aliens. Or both aliens and contactees may have come together with the best of intentions but there may have been a failure of communication, a 'crossing of wires,' resulting in the promulgation of misleading statements.

There is really no way in which, in the absence of fuller data, we can decide between the alternatives. Open-mindedness, of course, is not the same thing as omnivorous credulity. We are justified in rejecting out-of-hand narratives in which major improbabilities jostle gross absurdities in a Saturnalia of folly. However, on the assumption that alien visitants are haunting our skies — and after 16 years of UFO-research this Editor believes that the evidence in favour of the assumption is overwhelming — it behoves us to handle carefully contactee narratives of the more restrained type. In such cases, healthy scepticism ought to be tempered by the realisation that we know very little about the motives of our visitors or the difficulties of communication between them and our own species.

One thing is certain, we shall not progress far in our study of UFOs if we confine ourselves, as some ultra-conservative students would have us do, to observation of moving lights and allied phenomena of a strictly aerial nature. It is in the examination of landing and near-landing incidents, 'operator' encounters and even a few contactee narratives, that we must hope to unearth the clues which may lead us eventually to a fuller understanding of the UFO Mystery. Unless, of course, our visitors, or some section of them, embark upon overt intervention in terrestrial affairs, when we may come to know whatever there is to know very quickly indeed.

There are still, at this late date, a few persons within BUFORA who cling to the outlook which pervaded UFO-research in the decade following Kenneth Arnold's climacteric sighting. These students would have us continually weighing-up such possibilities as that all UFOs may be balloons or electrical discharges. Others desire that we should expend our time and resources in bringing pressure to bear on the Authorities to divulge information about UFOs which, in all probability, they do not possess. Others again are obsessed by the idea of collecting data for presentation to 'the scientists,' the assumption being that these godlike beings will seize upon it with avidity and promptly move in mysterious ways to perform the necessary wonders of interpretation and explanation. It may well be that the report of the Condon Panel will quench this particular ardour once and for all.

We are up against a widespread inertia generated by subconscious resistance to the idea that there may exist in the Universe forms of intelligence higher than our own. Scientists and officials are not exempt from this failing. It is a long and arduous task to undermine this particular manifestation of human vanity. Until we succeed in so-doing, or until alien action does the job for us, it is to be feared that we UFO-researchers will be left to plough a lonely furrow.

THE UNIQUE SYNDROME

For generations, man on this earth considered himself unique in the universe, indeed the very centre of the universe. This attitude, mainly fostered by the Church, for reasons best known to itself, rapidly lost favour when it became apparent that the planet earth was but an insignificant speck of dust on the rim of a minor galaxy somewhere in the vast reaches of space. This discovery prompted speculation as to life elsewhere and in turn reduced mankind's obsession with himself as the only form of intelligence.

In more recent times, with the continuing appearance of U.F.O.'s or Flying Saucers, a resurgence in the thinking of man's unique place in the universe has been instrumented by the 'cultist' element within ufologism.

They have argued that if this is not the case then why is the Universe so interested in us? Why have we been singled out to become a freak show, or a Bank Holiday tourists attraction? It is this thinking that has tended to solidify the theory among some people (notably vociferous) that mankind is in some way unique; the centre of attraction.

Or perhaps a better or more explicit theory to conjure with is that a collective neurosis is striving to maintain the Old Order, even though contemporary science has tended to consider that life in all its forms is in no way uncommon in space. Our branch of homo sapiens must always remain unique. After all, it may be argued, the one God is our God, and His Son lived and died on our earth.

This fallacious thinking is also presented in various forms by the innumerable so called 'contactees' who continually claim to have been given some special knowledge, entrusted to them alone by space beings, for the ultimate benefit of mankind. It would seem that the only people who ultimately benefit from this 'special knowledge' are the contactees, who write books on the subject and go on world-wide lecture tours with a collection of simple, if unoriginal truisms. Of world-shattering truths, we have yet to hear.

If we are to believe in the doubtful premise that mankind is in some way a unique attraction to 'space beings', then the reasons must be obvious.

In consideration, the most obvious attraction this earth holds for visitors is our use of atomic energy, for peaceful as well as warlike purposes. If the contactee claims are to be believed, we have been informed through them that atomic bombs are dangerous, and that atomic warfare would annihilate mankind. All too true, but mankind for all its faults must be credited with a little common sense of its own, and this factor connected with atomic energy has been obvious for the last two decades. Space visitors or not, this conclusion would have been reached in any event. However, the 'Master Plan' to put us on the correct road to peace and happiness has not materialised.

The next main attraction could possibly be our attempts to navigate space. For beings who have apparently conquered the boundaries of space travel, our feeble efforts must hold some amusement value for them, but this hardly seems to justify the travelling of countless millions of miles just to have a laugh. If they really have our welfare at heart it would be more probable that they would do more than just watch from a distance. If space travel is in any way dangerous (as it might well be) then surely we should be instructed before it is too late? After all it is futile to simply warn us about possible dangers if we are technologically unable to rectify them in time. Again, for some reason these 'great teachers' have remained silent and our clumsy space shots continue regardless.

Many theories have been produced to explain why these 'Flying Saucers' are here. One intriguing idea is that they are keeping a close eye on the fault lines in the earth's crust for some reason. Again, if these fault lines present any kind of danger then why haven't the proper authorities been informed? Why haven't possible danger areas been evacuated? And if the authorities have been informed why are these craft still apparently watching these faults?

Again, if these questions remain unanswered, we ask ourselves, what then is the Big Attraction? If, as has been suggested, mankind is some sort of evolutionary and sociological experiment, then this might seem to explain the constant surveillance and silence of the space visitors. Their reticence may not be that they fear us and our actions, but more that they don't want to handle the test tube too often for fear of ruining the experiment. But on the other hand the contactees tell us that these space visitors are here to help us to see the 'Truth' of what ever that 'Truth' may be. If we are to see the truth then why haven't we been shown the cosmic microscope we are under? Perhaps these space beings are also adept in the earth game of deception? A game hardly conducive to the truth.

If this earth and its peoples are little more than a Solar side show, then this realisation can do no more than deflate man's already oversized ego. In the past man was unique because he was made in God's image. Today, science has told him he is but one of many images, and man being what he is will need a panacea. The Flying Saucer mythology has helped to retain man's regard of himself and retain also his sense of destiny what ever that might be.

In this present technological age man has difficulty in envisaging a God in a heaven, but he can envisage a god in a space-suit, in a space ship. A god with flowing yellow hair and who communicates telepathically. To extemporise further, perhaps man believes he can become a god too. After all, he now has space-suits and space-ships. All he now needs to become a god is the Universal Truth, the truth that the Flying Saucers can give him. The fallacy of this thinking is that mankind can never be like God, and in this way perhaps he is unique.

Dick Howett 1967.

BUFORA CONFERENCE IN BRISTOL 1968

The **BRITISH FLYING SAUCER BUREAU** will be acting as hosts to a conference in Bristol on Saturday, 20th July 1968. The meeting will last from about 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. in a well appointed hotel.

Admission strictly by **TICKET ONLY**.

For full details, send a S.A.E. to:

Mr. Graham Knewstub, Hon. Treasurer, B.F.S.B.,
27 Station Road, Shirehampton, Bristol.

(This cancels all previous announcements.)

THE SPRING SKIES

In my last article I made frequent reference to the magnitude of various stars, and before proceeding further this term requires explanation, as it is a common misconception that this refers to the star's size; actually, it refers to the star's apparent brightness, — apparent brightness since one star may appear very bright because of its 'nearness' to us, not because of vast size or intrinsic luminosity; another, on the other hand, may look very faint since despite being intrinsically brighter it is very much farther away. For example, Sirius, the brightest star to our eyes is very near as stellar distances go — only about $8\frac{1}{2}$ light years away, whilst Rigel in Orion, not all that much fainter than Sirius is in the region of 900 light years distant.

A star of magnitude 6 is on the threshold of visibility, but each successive magnitude is about two-and-a-half times as bright as the preceding one, (i.e. magnitude 5 is two-and-a-half times brighter than magnitude 6; whilst 4 is two-and-a half times brighter than 5 and so on.) This table of magnitudes was first worked out many years ago, and since then has had to be revised somewhat when some stars were found to be brighter than the standard first magnitude; these stars are now designated with a minus magnitude; Sirius for example comes out at -1.4 , whilst the planet Venus can be over -4 . Conversely, the largest telescopes at present in existence can distinguish stars down to about the 24th magnitude.

A word about stellar distances; light travels at around 186,000 miles per second, and the term 'light-year' as applied to the distance away of celestial objects means the distance light will travel in one year, — that is to say $186,000 \text{ miles} \times 60 \times 60 \times 24 \times 365\frac{1}{4}$ — work it out yourself! It is quite a lot of miles, and the nearest star — Alpha Centauri is four-and-a-third times as far away as this, so you will see that space is by no means crowded! One final point before moving on to the stars of Spring; the total number of stars the human eye can see, — from about magnitude -1 to $+6$ works out at around five thousand, and bearing in mind that only half of these are to be seen at any one time, and also that those near the horizon may well be obscured by mist or cloud, you will be very lucky to see more than two thousand wherever you may be no matter how clear the sky, and no matter how many million stars it seems are visible.

To return to the constellations themselves, however, for the Spring skies, again taking the time of observation as 10 p.m. to 11 p.m., and this time the date as May 1st., the Great Bear is again a good point to start our tour of exploration from, as the three stars in its 'tail' will now be almost directly overhead, and if one draws an imaginary curve through these stars and continues the curve southwards, this curve will come to the 1st. magnitude star Arcturus, a magnificent orange star in the constellation of Boötes the Herdsman; this star I always think of in the same breath as UFOs (excuse the mixed metaphor!), since the occasion on Cradle Hill, Warminster when it was pointed out to me as a UFO and had me fooled for some minutes it being twilight with high thin cloud, and there were no other stars visible at the time to assist matters! Arcturus is Alpha in the star group, but if the eye moves upwards, slightly away from the tail of the Great Bear, the remainder of the constellation will be seen as a 'kite shape' of five stars above Arcturus.

I have used the word 'Alpha' in naming Arcturus, and I should here explain that all the brightest stars are given Greek letters to designate their brightness in the

constellation to which they belong ; thus Arcturus is Alpha Boötis, (Alpha of Boötes) the second brightest star Beta, then Gamma, Delta, Epsilon and so on down the Greek alphabet.

To return again to the star-groups ; high up in the south-western sky will be seen the zodiacal constellation of Leo, the Lion ; farthest to the west in the group is the bright star Regulus, the lowest star of a sickle-shaped group of six, whilst nearer to the observer, a little west if due south is Beta Leonis named Denebola. Between Denebola and Arcturus and somewhat higher in the sky is Coma Berenices — Berenice's Hair, which appears as a rather scattered cluster of stars of the 4th. magnitude and lower, which will however be well worth viewing through even a low-powered pair of binoculars. Just to the east of the 'kite' portion of Boötes, there is a magnificent little semi-circle of stars known as the Northern Crown (Corona Borealis) which has as its brightest member the star Alphecca, whilst underneath the Crown is a group of moderately faint stars straggling southwards called Serpens, the Serpent. On the opposite side of the Boötes 'kite' below the tail of the Great Bear are two stars known as Canes Venatici, — the Hunting Dogs, the brighter of them, — the one nearer Boötes, being Cor Caroli.

The last notable star group of Spring is the zodiacal constellation of Virgo ; this is to be seen approximately due south of the observer, and Alpha Virginis — Spica almost exactly forms an equilateral triangle with Arcturus and Denebola ; the remaining prominent stars in the group are seen as a wide semi-circle of five stars below and to the east of Denebola ; one final little constellation that is well worth looking for is an irregular rectangle of stars beneath Virgo whose correct name is Corvus, the Crow, but which is somewhat delightfully known as Spica's Spanker, — a spanker apparently being a sail which has roughly the same shape as the constellation.

On any clear night there are bound to be a number of meteors seen ; these are usually only visible for a second or so as streaks of light, some bright, some faint, depending on the size of the meteor (it may be anything from a speck of dust to a large chunk of rock) and the speed at which it was travelling. What this interplanetary debris does, of course, is to burn up with friction caused by entering the Earth's atmosphere. Should it be very large, it may be that a small part of the meteor will not burn up, but will reach Earth ; when this happens it is known as a meteorite, but such occurrences are comparatively rare. Meteors may appear from any direction, but every so often there is a 'shower' that appears to emanate from a particular point or radiant ; these 'showers' (a bad term really, because it only means they are seen at intervals of perhaps as much as half-a-minute, a minute or more) are seen annually when the Earth reaches a particular point in its orbit around the Sun which happens to be occupied by the debris of a former comet, and are known by the name of the constellation from which they appear to emanate, thus we have Lyrids, Orionoids and so on.

In the Summer issue besides describing the summer skies, I shall be referring to our own Galaxy, — the Milky Way, and other galaxies, nebulae and star-clusters.

Planetary positions.

Mercury.	Not visible.
Venus.	Not visible.
Mars.	Pisces, Aries, Taurus.
Jupiter.	Leo — Virgo.
Saturn.	Pisces.

Meteor 'showers' :-

'Aquarids'	First week in May.
'Perseids'	App. July 27th. — August 17th.

Norman Oliver

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

134, Weston Road,
Stafford, Staffs.
27th February, 1968

Dear Doctor Cleary-Baker,

I am writing to ask you to print in "B.U.F.O.R.A. Journal" the material which follows this introductory paragraph. It expresses a shade of opinion clean contrary to that of your Editorial in Volume 2, No. 3 of the Journal and will, I trust, serve to present the opposite side of the coin for the consideration of all readers of the Journal

THE 'SPACE-BROTHER' IMAGE

The Editorial in Vol. 2, No. 3 Winter 1967/8 of "B.U.F.O.R.A. Journal" is quite uncompromisingly scathing about the 'Universal Brotherhood of Man' philosophy propagated by the more mystic-type contact-claimers in the U.F.O. story of our time.

Simply because they are, or were, in the main somewhat woolly, inexpert pie-in-the-sky 'preachers' of non-violent, non-partisan, universal co-existence the George Adamskis of this age and time have been contemptuously dismissed by more erudite people who embrace far stiffer philosophies.

Were he still alive I like to think that the late Wilbert B. Smith of Canada would lay down a challenge, but as he is not around to do it I make no apologies for using his words to do it myself, merely acknowledging the pioneering work, the knowledge, and the beliefs, of that pre-eminent Canadian U.F.O. investigator while extending to "Flying Saucer Review" credit for the transcribed text of W. B. Smith's talk to The Ottawa Flying Saucer Club on the 31st March, 1958, of which talk the following is a verbatim extract :-

" Our civilization here on earth now is only one of many that have come and gone. This planet has been colonised many times by people from elsewhere, and our present human race are blood-brothers of these people. Is it any wonder that they are interested in us? To orthodox thinkers this may seem strange, but not nearly so strange as our orthodox ideas on evolution. The question might be asked — if these people are our brothers, and are interested in our well-fare, why do they remain so aloof? The answer is available.

There is a basic law of the Universe which grants each and every individual independence and freedom of choice, so that he may experience and learn from his experiences. No-one has the right to interfere in the affairs of others — in fact, our ten commandments are directives against interference. If we disregard this law we must suffer the consequences, and a little thought will show that our present world state is directly attributable to violation of this principle.

When we enter this life, we do so to participate in certain events, the sequence of which was established before our birth, and which if altered substantially would deprive us of experiences necessary to our development. We have built-in protection against altering substantially the sequences in that we do not consciously know of them. But these people from outside have a much greater knowledge than we have, and have means of perceiving sequences which must not be changed.

Therefore, while they have every desire in the world to help, and stand by ready, able and willing to do so, they are not permitted by cosmic law to interfere. The dividing line between help and interference is very delicate indeed, and sometimes hard to perceive, but it is a demonstration of individual and collective progress as to how well we can be guided by it.

..... There have been many published instances of contacts between these people from outside and the people of earth, and a very great many more that have not been published. (My underlining — W. Daniels)

As is always the case in any new and romantic field, there are those who prevaricate and exaggerate, but it is not too difficult to establish that the vast majority are honest and authentic. For instance, when a dozen or so independent contacts, having no common connection and each alone believing that he or she has been favoured above all to receive this message, and tell the same message even to names and descriptions that tally perfectly, one has little choice but to believe that they are telling the truth. Furthermore, when the material given to us through the many channels is all assembled and analysed, it adds up to a complete and elegant philosophy which makes our efforts sound like the beating of jungle drums.

These people tell us of a magnificent cosmic plan, of which we are a part which transcends the lifetime of a single person or nation or civilisation, or even a planet or solar system. We are not merely told that there is something beyond our immediate experience — we are told what it is and our relation therewith.

Many of our most vexing problems are solved with a few words — at least, we are told of the solutions if we have the understanding and fortitude to apply them. We are told of the inadequacies of our science, and we have been given the basic grounding for a new science which is at once simpler and yet more embracing than the mathematical monstrosity which we have conjured up. We have been told of a way of life which is Utopian beyond our dreams, and the means of attaining it.

Can it be that such a self-consistent and magnificent philosophy is the figment of imagination of a number of misguided morons? I do not think so.

If the only evidence we had was philosophical, we might justifiably suspect it. But when coupled with the reality of observations — thousands of them — we cannot dismiss it so easily. This is especially true when we consider that the science which has been passed to us by these people from elsewhere explains in a manner in which we have been quite unable to do, why the saucers behave as they do, and how it is that they can do things which to us are virtually impossible. The science and the performance check perfectly. Again, we have been told where our scientific ideas are wrong or inadequate and experiments have been suggested and carried out, and in every case the alien science has been vindicated.

We may ask, if all this is known, why has it not been publicised? Why are not these matters being studied instead of atom bombs? The answer — it has

been publicised. Books have been written and hundreds and thousands of copies sold. There are available many periodicals containing this material which may be had for quite a nominal sum. Reports have been prepared by serious investigators and presented through the proper channels, but it is truly said that one can lead a horse to water, but one cannot make him drink!"

Suffice it for me to say that this was no pie-in-the-sky mystic preaching — this was a top-ranking scientist in the service of the Canadian Government talking!

Wilbert B. Smith was nobody's fool and U.F.O. researchers the world over are 'missing out' if they have not open-mindedly pondered the man, his background, his training, his qualifications, his work, and his beliefs.

He was only fifty two when he died on the 27th of December, 1962, but he probably knew more before his death about Flying Saucers and their crews than anyone else. It is an open question whether he had a very large following, even amongst fervent U.F.O. - believers, but then as he said himself

"You can take a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink."

Yours, etc.,

Wilfred Daniels

I have the utmost admiration for the work of the late Wilbert Smith and no desire at all to dispute his general conclusions on the subject of the UFOs. Nevertheless, I feel that his summary of the evidence overlooked the undoubted fact that a proportion of our extra-terrestrial visitors are of a 'negative' temper, i.e. willing to seek their own good without regard to our interests and very possibly, on occasion, to our detriment. The lack of overt intervention in our affairs by the UFO-denizens is more probably due to a conflict of interests between the 'positive' and 'negative' elements among them than to any mysterious law of non-intervention. (What would be the nature of such a law and who would enforce it?)

The 'Space Brother' concept breaks down under the weight of the inherent absurdity of the assumption that an alien race would despatch a fleet of manned spacecraft to cruise in our stratosphere year after year, unable or unwilling to accomplish anything more than to descend surreptitiously, now and again, in order that a handful of unimportant individuals might become the recipients of an indigestible mess of pious platitudes.

— Editor.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

Group for the
Investigation of
Unidentified
Flying Objects
Dear Sir,

Secretary : Stewart Miller,
Clare College,
Cambridge.
Jan. 3rd 1968

Recently Messrs International Business Machines Ltd. have agreed to give the Cambridge and Imperial College Groups jointly a generous amount of free computer time, for the analysis of UFO sighting reports. This means that we are now going ahead with the accumulation of data for the establishment of a complete file of all UFO sightings since the War — restricted at first to the British Isles but extending later to the whole world. If we get this complete file, we shall then be in a position to offer all UFO researchers a service, in which they can ask us for specific categories of data, which we shall be able to supply at merely the cost of the stationery and other expenses incurred.

If you as UFO researchers feel that such a service would be desirable (how often have BUFORA committee members received requests for 'all the sightings in this area in the last 5 years' — a request which would take many man-hours of

sorting without the computer), and you want the information you will ask from us to be complete, then we will need your help. The completeness of the files depends on the amount of information we receive from you. So, if you have some reports that you have investigated and never shown to anybody, or a collection of newspaper cuttings in a box or scrapbook, then this is what we need. We want sightings, not comment on UFOs in general, and we want to know the dates and times of the sightings as accurately as possible. If you do send stuff to us, we shall keep it until we have copied out the relevant details onto our standard formats, and then we shall send you back the stuff you originally sent us.

So, if you can help us, please write to me and tell me what you have got, and how much space it takes up. We are already working through the Bufora files and the regional groups' files as fast as we can, so it is now up to you, the individual researchers.

Yours faithfully,
Stewart Miller

SCIENTIFIC SKY-WATCHING

A novel approach towards solving the UFO enigma.

Since Aime Michel's dramatic disclosure that UFO sightings appear to be aligned along straight lines, there has been little scientific progress towards a logical solution of the UFO puzzle.

Actually, if we were to term present UFO research retrospective, this would not be uncomplimentary to our diligent investigators, because they are working under an inevitable handicap, namely: the time lapse between sighting and action. Unfortunately, all the follow-up of a sighting report takes place well after the actual observation. With luck, this may be only hours; more often days have elapsed and the witnesses' story may by then have received publicity and consequently the first vivid impressions become clouded by various influences. This greatly reduces the reports' scientific value.

This not too happy state of affairs has prompted Dr. J. Allen Hynek to urge investigators to give witnesses a 'credibility index' rating. Furthermore, this eminent researcher has divided UFO study into two categories. First there is the passive method — study past reports and evaluate. Secondly, the active method — get out with cameras, instruments etc. and record accurate observations.

Many other eminent scientists (alas, no experts in Ufology) have stated that they will not be convinced until they can study this UFO phenomenon under laboratory conditions. I believe we can do just that, and I hope all technically minded members will join me in this unique experiment. Our laboratory: the vast expanse of the observable sky; the catalyst: a newly discovered time-factor; the ingredients: an array of scientific detectors and measuring instruments.

Fortunately, the pendulum of discovery is slowly swinging in favour of the activist. This assumption is based on the mathematical fact that during a 'good' UFO year, there will come to light, eventually, about 300 apparently reliable reports. This high figure is the sum total of all reports from various sources. Some like the Ministry of Defence publish theirs many months after the events occur.

Armed with this knowledge we can go out with some confidence, and meet this UFO phenomenon. For purely figuratively speaking, during a 12 hour nation-wide sky-watch there is a 41% chance of at least one of the groups seeing a UFO, assuming that the whole sky is being observed. The range of visibility from a good vantage point is quite unbelievable. This becomes evident on reflection of observations of vapour trails. Most of us have watched on a clear day a high flying aircraft — it appears like a small dot and is visible for several

minutes. If we watched it for say five minutes, then it travelled 50 miles during the period of our observation. (Most modern jets fly at approx. 600 m.p.h.) Therefore anything within this 50 mile circle and flying below 8 miles altitude (modern jets rarely fly higher) should be visible to us, if its size is similar to the size of modern aircraft. Many cigar-shaped UFOs have been reported as several hundred feet in length. Night time observation is even more rewarding — objects that are hundreds of miles up become visible due to the intensity of reflected sunlight. Many satellites are only a few feet in diameter, yet they are readily visible.

This summer we will have in our armoury some very useful instruments; their efficiency will be greatly enhanced by the communications network organised by Mr. Roy Winstanley. This will give us a warning about approaching objects, indicate the direction of anticipated entry into our field of vision, apparent speed and luminosity. Every sky-watching post always has a few amateur photographers, in the past they have been caught unprepared, and only managed to stand and stare.

Some novel, but scientifically verifiable evidence that we shall try to collect : **Spectroscopic confirmation.** All observation posts will be issued with diffraction gratings, these 2in. x 2in. framed 'portable spectroscopes' can be held in the hand and rotated so that the spectral lines of the source of light become visible, and can be recorded on colour film. No one has yet been in a position to record a UFO spectrum, not because it is so difficult, but because the combination of availability of diffraction grating, colour film and UFO has never arisen.

Electromagnetic effects. These have up till now always been incidental. No specialist instruments have been devised to record their effect in exact detail. We are now engaged on the design of a 'UFO propulsion analyser', but as this is a complex project, it is doubtful if it will be ready for the June sky-watch. However, the many UFO detectors available will be fully utilised, and their effectiveness field tested.

Altitude calculation. This should be no problem to achieve, with a fair degree of accuracy, based on triangulation of the object from three or more known (exact map reference) positions. If this is synchronised with observations through binoculars a fairly accurate estimate of the size of the object can be obtained.

We shall be prepared, and if the UFOs decide to come and have a look at us, we shall be delighted to reciprocate.

NATIONAL SKY-WATCH DAY — SATURDAY, JUNE 15th, 1968.

OBJECTIVES.

- 1) Country-wide watch for unidentified flying object activity.
- 2) To test the radio communication network and eliminate the element of surprise by being forewarned about approaching objects.
- 3) To obtain verifiable scientific proof by the use of modern instrumentation.

DURATION.

A 12 hour watch to extend from 7 p.m. on Saturday, June 15th to 7 a.m. Sunday June 16th.

ORGANISATION.

BUFORA is encouraging all interested persons to form themselves into widely dispersed local groups, so that watching can be maintained constantly and efficiently.

By the beginning of June, all locations will be established and a comprehensive list of rendezvous points — where you can join an organised group — should be available (please enclose a S.A.E.) from: Edgar Hatvany, BUFORA Field Observation Officer, 19 Richmond Ave., East BEDFONT, Middlesex.

BOOTSTRAP LIFTOFF ?

Can gravitational power ever be used for space-craft propulsion? Will it ever be possible to generate artificial gravitational fields? How could these fields be used to drive spacecraft to the depths of space?

My object in this article is to study the possibilities for gravitational power systems in space-craft propulsion. I do not intend to consider here whether in fact it is possible to generate artificial gravitational fields; but merely to study theoretically how such fields could be used.

Before describing the effects of various field configurations it would be best to clarify our thoughts on gravitational fields and their action. The gravitational field is the most enigmatic of the present known fields. It can be measured with considerable accuracy. Its underlying mathematical theory is well known and is used for computing the astronomical and astronautical data necessary to predict planetary motion and plan rocket launchings to the Moon, Venus and the other planets with incredible success as we have only recently seen.

Despite this precision in use we still do not know exactly what physical mechanism causes one mass of matter to exert a force on another mass, even across vast distances in space. However leaving aside this enigma of nature, we can still treat gravity theoretically and obtain the right results.

Naturally occurring matter radiates a gravitational field outwards, which causes other matter within its field to experience a force in the opposite direction to the field direction, namely towards the original mass. I shall call naturally occurring masses and fields positive. Since all matter radiates the same sort of field, every mass is affected by every other mass. Because the gravitational force between two bodies is proportional to the product of their masses, each mass is acted upon by the same force, though, of course, the resultant accelerations and velocities will depend on the relative masses of the two bodies.

All the above may seem old hat to many readers but I feel it is best to clarify the basic theoretical structure of the positive gravitational field before postulating the generation of a negative (repelling) field. Such a generated, reverse field would create an apparent (mathematical) negative mass at the generator. In the field a positive mass would move away from the generator and an apparent negative mass would move towards the generator. Here we have the relationships between gravitational "poles": like poles attract, unlike poles repel.

Now I have outlined the effects of positive and negative masses and fields on one another, I will presume that they can be produced by artificial generators and that these can be installed in a spacecraft. I will now examine the possibilities for controlled flight. Of course, as has been pointed out by other writers (1) (2), the great advantage of gravitational control and propulsion is the universality of the gravitational effect. By its use crushing acceleration forces can be avoided, thus allowing living crews on deep space missions to sustain high accelerations so saving journey time and thus the weight of logistical support required.

There are three basic configurations of generators that can be envisaged: a positive, a negative, and a bipolar field generator. Other generator's combinations can be reduced, as regards effects external to the craft, to one of the above three basic systems.

The first two systems are radically the same, being single sources of gravitational fields and only differing in respect of the direction of the field. External to the craft, the generators would give the effect of a craft with variable weight. As such, the generator would allow the craft to move along the local environmental lines of gravitational force in either direction, but not across them. Clearly these first two propulsion systems are not much use as a means of control of a craft since it could only be flown 'up' or 'down'.

A bipolar generator has interesting possibilities. Since both negative and positive poles are generated in equal strengths, the overall effect exterior to the craft will be to produce no apparent craft weight change. The bipolar generator's field pattern will be very similar to the pattern produced by a bar magnet in iron filings, and subsequently will be acted upon by surrounding gravitational fields in a manner analogous to the effect of a magnetic field on a bar magnet, that is the bipole will tend to align itself along the field direction.

It should be pointed out that this similarity of action is only produced by the mathematical equivalence of gravitational and magnetic fields in this situation. The similarity ends here and does not imply any equivalence of 'modus operandi' and cannot be used to create theories of gravitational action by analogical argument.

The property of a gravitational bipole to align itself with any surrounding field means that a bipole at some distance from a planet will orientate itself with its positive end 'down'. Unfortunately since the bipole has no effective weight, the craft as a whole will weigh the same whether its bipolar generator is switched on or off. Consequently the bipole is no good for generating lift, only for orientation purposes.

The considerations outlined above have eliminated the three basic generators as useful spacecraft propulsion units. The generators will rotate or propel a space craft but only in the direction of the local gravitational field. Such a limitation on manoeuvrability would render a gravitationally powered spacecraft a very unsophisticated travelling machine. Launch and planetary approach and landing would be straight-forward functions, but outer space flight would depend on local conditions. The gravitational drive of itself would not allow ease of course determination, there being only two, opposite directions in which the drive force can act, that is 'up' or 'down'.

It has been suggested (1) that another system can be devised whereby a gravitational field is generated external to the spacecraft by means of secondary field emission. Arguments have been put forward suggesting that such an arrangement would constitute a propulsion system. The argument goes something like this:

"The craft emits a primary field which is focussed by some system on a point outside the craft. The focussed field has the property of stimulating the emission of a gravitational field from the focus. The mechanism of this stimulation is very obscure but is assumed to work. The secondary emission, gravitational field radiates from the focus in all directions. The craft is in this field and experiences a force towards the focus. Thus the craft moves towards the focus, which in turn is carried forward because it is generated from the craft. By altering the position and strength of the secondary field via the primary field, propulsion and steering of the craft are achieved."

As my earlier analysis of the positive field generator has shown, the effect external to the generator is that of a variable mass at the generator. Since it is not possible to detect from outside the generator whether a real or fictitious variable mass is present then the actions of the generator will be identical to those of a mass. This observation also applies to apparent masses created by secondary emission.

In this situation the craft focus system becomes indistinguishable from a two-mass system: one mass is the craft, the other the apparent mass generated at the focus. With the power source of the craft active, the craft and mass at the focus will be held apart by the energy being supplied to the generator, a phenomenal power requirement. Each 'mass' however will exert a force on the other equally and so, in the absence of an environmental gravitational field, no movement of craft or focus or both will or can occur. If an environmental field is present, then the two masses will move as a single body counter to the local field direction and the craft will be poorly manoeuvrable as the craft with one of the three basic systems discussed earlier.

Unfortunately the system involving the generation of a repelling focus below the craft to lift it, in other words that generating negative secondary emission, is just as crude system as the bipolar generator coupled with a monopolar generator. The craft could be aligned with the local field direction and moved along it in either direction, but no more.

So each of the systems I have examined boils down to one or other of the three basic systems that I started with, and I find that the performance of a purely gravitationally powered craft falls far short of both the behaviour patterns reported in some UFO cases and the aspirations of Earth-bound saucer designers.

1967 October 30

S. L. Smith

References:

(1) 'Space, Gravity, and the Flying Saucer' by L. G. Cramp.

(2) 'Piece for a Jigsaw' by the same author.

'Gravity Powered Objects' by P. Norman (F.S.R., 11, 2).

BUFORA INFORMATION

All details of recent UFO sightings from whatsoever source they may arise should be sent at once to either:-

Mr. Richard Farrow, 78 Paxford Rd., North Wembley, Middlesex.

Tel: 01 - 904 3586 (Southern Area Information Officer), or:-

Mr. Roy Winstanley, 33 Westwood Rd., Queens Park, Blackburn, Lancs.

Tel: Blackburn 51508 (Mon - Fri: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sat: 9.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.)
(Northern Area Information Officer)

At a National Executive Committee Meeting held on the 6th of April 1968 it was Resolved that in the interests of the Association in preserving the efficient running and well-being of the Committee, the services of Mr. Nigel Stephenson as a Committee Member were no longer required.

(Under section 3 (g) of the Constitution.)

THE FALLACY OF THE ANTIQUE U.F.O.

When Mrs. M. E. Carey, writing in the Summer issue of "Spacelink" gave to readers of that magazine an account of her insight into the true nature of Stonehenge, she presumed too much. Prompted by mystical intimations to which, one assumes, she was susceptible beyond the norm, by means both devious and obscure, the reader was led to a conclusion challenging historical knowledge right back to point A.

The carving of a fish subsequently found somewhere at the Henge seems to suggest either a) its builders were Christians and native, or b) Christians and extra-terrestrial, both of which are entirely beyond substantiation. Nor is there any logical reason, but only pure fancy, that will find great statues instead of mere slabs of stone. For the only truly wonderful thing about Stonehenge, as about all other such monuments, is size. They can hardly be said to be splendid in much else, and are certainly not indicative of a highly-advanced intelligence which can produce a space-vehicle and yet needs to use rough-hewn stone to house its religious rites. Nor can one draw any comparison between the Henge, Avebury, and the Egyptian pyramids, also alleged masterpieces of the extra-terrestrial visitor.

These Henges, dating from roughly 2000 BC and apparently being maintained for up to 500 years, are, it is agreed, still beyond definite explanation. No longer considered Druidical temples, the existence of an inner bank suggests a vast theatre or temple where onlookers might witness some spectacle lost to us entirely. There is little evidence for their being connected with burial practices . . . finds in such Henges of prehistoric funerals are almost as rare as are pieces of prehistoric UFO. Two miles away from Stonehenge lies a similar place of stone, suggesting it was a subsidiary or a ground plan of the larger and present Stonehenge. Experts have decided that Stonehenge is Neolithic in origins with subsequent alterations and rebuilding during the Beaker period. Neither of these have rendered us anything suggesting advanced technical knowledge which might truly be said to support the extra-terrestrial origination of Stonehenge.

When burials have been found at Henges, such as Llandegai on the Menai Strait, they have been crematorial and generally involving several persons, suggesting sacrificial offerings, entirely out of keeping with the picture of a Utopian prehistoric society.

Petrological sectioning and minute investigation of pottery fragments has revealed, I would point out, no single reason to suggest anything other than prehistoric workmanship, certainly nothing of exquisite beauty rare when compared with world-wide finds of the same date, nor a clay representation of a space-craft, and certainly no metallic items of any nature other than dateable and undoubtedly recent bits and pieces.

Further, one should not consider Stonehenge as the edifice of the area, when both Avebury and Durrington Walls possess diameters of over 1,300 feet compared to Stonehenge's 320 feet. What is relevant when all the fancy theories are rejected as inconsequential is why so many henges in such a small area? Stone, Wood, Avebury and Durrington henges vie with one another for the archaeologists' attention, and it is little wonder that no definite answer as to their purpose has been forthcoming. Perhaps the lack of evidence to be uncovered, little pottery and other domestic refuse, suggests the henges were visited rarely if at all once they were built. Whatever the reason for them, be they temples or theatres, tribal centres or land perimeters, we must discount 100% all notion of their extra-terrestrial origin unless concrete evidence, however minute, is brought to light. Half-baked theories and mystical "feelings" are the stuff novels are made of, not the bed rock of scientific or archaeological research.

Peter R. Newman.

ASSOCIATION JOTTINGS

Christopher Rose (17) one of our northern Members has thought up a most ingenious fund raising scheme. On his own initiative he wrote various UFO articles, got them typed and duplicated, and then sold them at 1/-d. a time. The result was most encouraging and he sent the profits to the BUFORA Mobile Research Unit Fund — over £3. All of us at H.Q. thank you for your efforts.

Our Halifax Branch have begun a data processing system based on edge punched cards. Trevor Whitaker informs me that they are carrying out a pilot scheme based on all the sightings mentioned in F.S.R.'s "The Humanoids". Lets hope this is only the beginning of something worthwhile.

The Association now boasts well over 700 Members (715 at the time of going to Press). This means that in the two years that I have been Membership Secretary the size of the Association has doubled. I hasten to add that the two events are not necessarily connected ! !

S/Ldr D. E. B. K. Shipwright (BUFORA Member) an ex Member of Parliament was recently invited to speak to the Mid-Group Chertsey Conservative Association on the subject of UFOs, and he tells me that his talk was well received and that genuine interest was shown. This is most encouraging.

The Surrey Investigation Group on Aerial Phenomena have produced some car-window stickers publicising UFOs. These are now seen quite frequently in the Guildford area. It might be an idea for other Groups to follow suit.

A new and very active Group has been started in South Hertfordshire. Any BUFORA Member living in this area and wishing to participate in the activities of this Group should write to R. Holmes Esq., 72 The Fairway, Abbots Langley, Herts.

The most interesting press cutting that has come my way for some time concerns an organisation that calls itself "UFO Tours Inc." An advertising letter reprinted in the Christian Science Monitor includes the following information :- "Our organisation is now able to offer actual cruises in UFOs either for weekends or for longer periods — and at most reasonable rates." According to the aforementioned newspaper, UFO Tours Inc. offer its clients "trips to destinations throughout the Universe in unidentified aerial phenomena of all the latest models". Anyone for the F/S Moonlight Special? (Note. Enquiries concerning this offer should NOT be addressed to us at H.Q.)

This year sees the 21st Anniversary of Kenneth Arnold's sighting of "nine shining discs". May we at H.Q. wish all our Members good UFO spotting, and ask all Members to report any UFO information they may come across to us as quickly as possible. Thanks !

On January 25th., Dr. Cleary-Baker lectured to over 150 students at Southampton University, afterwards answering 47 questions from the floor. The lecture, which was very well received, was under the auspices of the newly-formed University of Southampton U.F.O. Research Group.

M. C. Holt, B.A.

BOOK REVIEW

"THE REFERENCE FOR OUTSTANDING UFO SIGHTING REPORTS"

Published by the UFO Information Retrieval Centre, November 1966.

Edited by T. M. Olsen, Esq., M.S..

This American publication covers some 160 cases from the period 1947 June 24 to 1964 August 15. The object of the book is to present the raw data of sightings reports in an accessible form for further discussion. The book is assembled on a plastic binder to which sheets may be added and subtracted as the reference evolves, though it ought to be pointed out that this can only be done neatly and easily with the correct paper punch and binder manipulator.

The 160 cases quoted have been selected because each is clear-cut, detailed, unambiguous and unconventional in a manner to preclude all explanations bar hoax, hallucination, and genuine unusual phenomenon. The first two categories have been eliminated by a subjective appraisal of the data and of the witnesses. The editor, T. M. Olsen, considers the remaining cases to be good for future examination.

I would agree with this conclusion. The selection criteria seem to be reasonable and logical though it must not be forgotten that they do not exclude from the final selection such phenomena as are of natural explanation (excluding alien spacecraft) i.e. those rarely observed events of nature that fringe the UFO field.

There are too many sighting reports to review them all here. A dip into the chronological index brings to light many well-known names: Gaillac, Port Moresby, Quarouble, Oloron, Loch Raven, Ivinghoe, and Socorro. The last named case is given more space than any other perhaps because of the availability of first-hand evidence rather than its useful information content.

The illustrations accompanying the text are a mixture of witnesses' sketches, movement diagrams and maps. The maps are particularly welcome, as are the witnesses' sketches. It is pleasing not to find any artists impressions among the illustrations because these can be so misleading in many cases. There are however many redrawn sketches, and errors and bias may have appeared owing to transcription.

At the end of the book are sections on the formulation of a reliability index, the information sources used, and the USAF sighting questionnaire (on which the BUFORA questionnaire is based). The last two sections are useful additions, but some of the assumptions made in the formulation of the reliability indexes leave much to be desired of the quality of that section. Each factor (witness, investigation, transcription) that is used to compute a general reliability index is consistent within itself, but the step to the general index involving multiplying the three factors together, begs many questions on its statistical and absolute value.

Despite pointing out the crudity of the estimation of each factor the authors quote their computed index values to five places of decimals. With mechanical means of computation, such calculations are far too easily made and the values of the answers too easily inflated above that of the basic data used. In the case of the reliability index, the answer should not be given to better than one place of decimals, i.e. to 10% accuracy, though maybe in some sighting cases, well documented evidence could be quoted to 5% accuracy; but to suggest that subjective data can be estimated to 1 part in 10,000 is ridiculous.

The printing of the main body of the text has been done directly from a teletype font, sans serif, as produced by computer peripheral equipment. This makes reading of the text very difficult especially as many letters have lost their lower half, their important half for quick reading. The text however is for reference purposes, not for light reading, so the quality of the format is of secondary importance. Leaving aside its shortcomings of presentation, the "Reference" is of good value to the UFO researcher. It sets out the raw data of 160 strange UFO reports; many of them relatively little known; each without comment or evaluation; each in a form to initiate discussion and suggest new ways of approach to the problems of UFO investigation. In particular discussion of the sighting reports in the reference can pinpoint the data omissions in each report, leading to better investigation techniques as each omission is avoided in future research. Perhaps the first lesson to be learnt from the publication is how to make a useful geographical index of sightings.

1967 December 27

S. L. Smith, B.A..

NOTES & QUOTES

BARROWS & UFOs.

If, as some students believe, the Long and Round Barrows of our prehistoric forbears are related to cylindrical and discoid UFOs respectively, the probability is that those who constructed the Barrows believed that the UFOs they had seen in the skies were vehicles of their gods, despatched to earth in order to transport the souls of the dead to the Other World. This, at anyrate, seems a more plausible hypothesis than some of the extravagant notions currently circulating.

NOT SO BAD AS IT LOOKED.

Following correspondence with Mr. Arthur Shuttlewood of Warminster and a fuller exposition of his current views, I am happy to state that, so far as I can judge, a recent passage in the 'Israel Jerusalem Post' represented a bowdlerisation of his true opinions. I need hardly say that there was no intention on my part to give pain to my friend Arthur by my initial reaction to the news tidbit.

SO SAY ALL OF US!

"It's like a study of cancer without any cancer patients. I wish one of these damned things would land right here so that I could go out and take it to pieces."

— Dr. Edward Condon, Director of the University of Colorado UFO Project.

THE MINISTRY & THE UFOs.

Since 1959, the Ministry of Defence has received 808 UFO reports, of which 225 were found to relate to aircraft and 211 to artificial satellites and assorted 'hardware' of terrestrial origin. This leaves 372 reports, of which, apparently, 84 are without explanation and 7 are still under investigation. One observes — and the fact is not without significance in itself — that in the last 15 years the percentage of reports left unexplained by British official investigators has remained consistently around 10% of the total received.

APOLOGISTS FOR HOSTILE UFOs.

"There is, of course, the inane 'self-defence' plea of certain apologists, who maintain that, because the UFOs are somehow menaced by us and our weapons, (puny in comparison with those the UFOs possess), they must strike back to save themselves. Thus, the F-89 at Kimross Air Force Base was abducted because the UFO had to 'defend itself' — a curious notion since, rather than fleeing, which it could easily have done, the saucer flew directly towards the aircraft."

— Quote from an article by Jerome Clark
in 'Flying Saucer Review,' Nov/Dec. '67.

UFOs & THE THIRD REICH.

I note that issue No. 15 of the News-Bulletin of the Belgian Interplanetary Study Circle, ascribes some UFO activity to concealed Nazis based in the South Polar Region. It seems an exotic hypothesis. However, remembering V-7, it may not be considered wholly outside the scope of rational investigation.

A QUESTION OF DEGREE!

The question of degrees conferred by minor Seats-of-Learning, such as Theological Colleges, has been agitated recently in BUFORA circles. Thousands of scholars throughout the World hold such degrees, which, while they may not carry the 'weight' of degrees emanating from the Great Universities, are by no means lacking in academic validity.

SCRAPPING THE PAPERWORK.

I was recently the Guest-of-Honour at the Annual Dinner of the Isle-of-Wight UFO Investigation Society. I was fascinated to learn that IWUFOIS has streamlined the administrative side of its activities to an extent where these can hardly be said to exist at all. The experiment is proving a success and all concerned are left with more time for UFO investigation. It is a precedent other groups might do worse than note and study.

J. C-B.

SPACELINK

for UFO NEWS and FLYING SAUCER SCENE

(widely recommended)

**LARGE GLOSSY COVER — SPECIAL INTEREST SECTIONS,
INCLUDING CONTACT STORIES and PHOTOGRAPHS**

Sample copy 3/6d. inc. post.

Annual subscription : 13/6d.

Miss C. Henning, SK Sub'n Dept.,
99 Mayday Gardens, London S.E.3.

(Special discounts for Clubs.)

THE 'MARY CELESTE' — WHAT HAPPENED TO HER CREW?

Her name was the 'Mary Celeste,' not 'Marie Celeste' as usually rendered. She was a 236-ton, two-masted sailing-vessel with a length of 96ft. Contrary to the statement, by now almost endemic among writers on UFO topics, that her crew vanished in mysterious circumstances, probably spirited away by spacemen, there is in fact very little mystery about her celebrated voyage which began on 7th November, 1872, from New York.

She was carrying a cargo of whale-oil, fusel-oil and crude alcohol. On board when she set sail were her Captain, Benjamin S. Briggs, with his wife and infant daughter Sophia, aged 2. The Mate was Albert Richardson and the Second-Mate Andrew Gilling. The cook was Edward Herd. There were four ordinary seamen, the brothers Lorenzen, A. Hardens and G. Gonschalt.

On December 5th., the 'Mary Celeste' was boarded in mid-Atlantic by members of the crew of the 'Dei Gratia.' Finding the vessel deserted, the Captain of the 'Dei Gratia' put a prize-crew aboard, who brought her to Gibraltar, where, in due course an enquiry was conducted by the Admiralty Proctor and £1,700 salvage-money awarded to the finders.

The last entry in the log of the 'Mary Celeste' had been made on November 24th and there was a slate entry for 8 a.m. on the following day, the 25th. The ship had, therefore, in all likelihood, been drifting without a crew for eleven days before the 'Dei Gratia' found her.

The vessel's papers, (the Manifest, Register and Bill-of-Lading), were missing. More important — a point which the mystery-mongers consistently overlook — the ship's boat, on board when she sailed from New York, was also missing. There was never any doubt in the minds of the official investigators as to what had happened to the crew. They had, clearly, left in the boat.

Why? The answer would seem to be provided by the fact that one of the hatches was off an entry to the hold. Probably the hold had filled with fumes from the crude alcohol in the cargo and something had precipitated a minor explosion which blew off the hatch-cover. The crew, thinking the vessel was about to blow up, had panicked and rushed for the boat, the Captain snatching-up his papers as he ran. Once in the boat, a sudden squall had carried the ship out of rowing-range of the unfortunates. Their subsequent unhappy fate need not be elaborated upon.

There are cases of ships abandoned at sea which are truly mysterious and where UFO agency is as likely an explanation of the crews' disappearance as any other. The 'Mary Celeste' is not in this category and common honesty requires that there should be an end to attempts to confuse the issue. The details cited above can be checked in existing official records and the solution to the mystery here proposed is in line with the available evidence.

J. C-B.

MEMBER SOCIETIES

BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY UFO RESEARCH GROUP,

c/o P. G. Amos, Esq., Guild of Undergraduates Union, University Road,
Edgbaston, Birmingham 15.

BRITISH FLYING SAUCER BUREAU,

D. R. Rudman, Esq., 54 Sylvan Way, Sea Mills, Bristol 9.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY GROUP FOR INVESTIGATION OF UFOs,

S. Miller, Esq., Clare College, Cambridge.

DIRECT INVESTIGATION GROUP FOR AERIAL PHENOMENA,

Mrs. J. Nelstrop, 5 Ridgmont Road, Bramhall, Stockport, Cheshire.

FLEET STREET UFO STUDY GROUP,

B. W. Woodgate, Esq., 51 Kindersley Way, Abbots Langley, Herts.

IMPERIAL COLLEGE UFO RESEARCH GROUP,

c/o A. J. Wickham, Esq., Chemistry Department, Imperial College,
Imperial Institute Road, South Kensington, London, S.W.7.

ISLE OF WIGHT UFO INVESTIGATION SOCIETY,

F. Smith, Esq., 4 Connaught Road, East Cowes, Isle of Wight.

LEEDS UNIVERSITY UFO INVESTIGATION SOCIETY,

T. Williamson, Esq., 8 Hanover Square, Leeds 3.

MERSEYSIDE UFO RESEARCH GROUP,

R. D. Hughes, Esq., 86 Trouville Road, Liverpool 4.

NOTTINGHAM UFO DETECTION SOCIETY,

J. Wisniewski, Esq., 72 Sneinton Dale, Sneinton, Nottingham.

SCOTTISH UFO RESEARCH SOCIETY,

Miss S. Walker, 69 Northumberland Street, Edinburgh 3.

SLOUGH AERIAL PHENOMENA RESEARCH ASSOCIATION,

S. Salter, Esq., 18 Ennerdale Crescent, Slough, Bucks.

SOUTH HERTS. UFO INVESTIGATION GROUP,

R. Holmes, Esq., 72 The Fairway, Abbots Langley, Herts.

SOUTH Lincs. UFO STUDY GROUP,

Mrs. P. Barnes, 43 Gladstone Street, Bourne, Lincs.

SOUTHAMPTON UNIVERSITY UFO RESEARCH GROUP,

C. W. Osborne, Esq., B.A., Students Union, The University, Southampton.

STRATFORD-ON-AVON UFO GROUP,

J. D. Llewellyn, Esq., 63 Masons Road, Stratford-on-Avon, Warwicks.

SURREY INVESTIGATION GROUP ON AERIAL PHENOMENA,

O. F. Fowler, Esq., 149 Mytchett Road, Mytchett, Camberley, Surrey.

TYNESIDE UFO SOCIETY,

J. L. Otley, Esq., 41 Deanham Gardens, Fenham, Newcastle-on-Tyne 5.

CHELTENHAM BRANCH BUFORA,

J. R. Ledger, Esq., 5 Bushcombe Close, Woodmancote, Cheltenham, Glos.

HALIFAX BRANCH BUFORA,

T. Whitaker, Esq., Elm Dene, 253 Huddersfield Road, Halifax, Yorks.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH BUFORA,

T. Thompson, Esq., 23 Mountainvale Road, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim,
N. Ireland.

