

A REMARKABLE CASE FROM MENDOZA, ARGENTINA

Antonio Baragiola

IN a covering letter to Monsieur F. Lagarde, I wrote:

"For those who have behind them years of experience in these matters, the job of analysing the data furnished by witnesses of UFOs has now become, as one might say, a matter of habit and routine, and all too frequently the testimony of the witness is so poor, with so few details of any scientific value whatsoever, that sometimes it would perhaps be better just to fling it into the wastepaper basket than to give it any mention.

"This time however the situation is far different indeed, for I am so intrigued by this fantastic sighting that I am making an Editorial on it—not at all like my usual modest circulars. But I am doing so in the hope that the various data contained in this piece of reporting will at last produce an explosion—and a violent one—amid the blind indifference of the bureaucrats who have set themselves up as investigators.

"But let us hope it will be an explosion that will blow open the windows; that it will let in the fantastic, flitting to and fro like a butterfly; that it will open the way for the extraterrestrial that is already present, here and now, among us. For what ails mankind is not so much its lack of knowledge of the unknown, but its *mental myopia in order not to want to see* what lies beyond its own constructs.

"Señor Julio Suárez Marzal is a Mendozan painter of world renown. He is recorded in a bibliography which is so impressive that it would take several pages to put it down on paper, and even then without mentioning actual paintings. Just to give an idea, we may say that his *curriculum vitae* shows him to be Professor of the Department of Painting (a full-time university appointment) in the School of Plastic Arts of the National University of Cuyo. He is the founder of the "Emiliano Guinazu" Provincial Museum of Fine Arts, Casa Fader de Mendoza. He has taken part in many art exhibitions and has many times been mentioned by the most discriminating of art critics. He is an intimate friend of Victor Petorutti ("the Argentinian Picasso"), and a great expert on the Andes, for his sensitive spirit feels strongly drawn, ever since his childhood, towards the majestic summits of the Andean peaks. He is a specialist in mural paintings, etc.

"As regards those who, in addition to Sr. Marzal, also saw the UFO, we will mention that in fact the latter was only a few metres from the Headquarters of the 8th Mountain Infantry Brigade of the Argentinian Army. The importance of the scene of the sighting lies in the fact that, being of high security significance, it is where the Headquarters of the 8th Brigade is located, and the building houses not only the quartermaster's department and the Intelligence department, but also the permanent communications centre (radio) through

A French rendering of this report appears in *Lumières dans la Nuit* (No. 115, December 1971) and Monsieur F. Lagarde of their Editorial Board has very kindly sent us in addition a full copy of the French text with the message that it is the express wish and hope of Señor Baragiola that we too will find room to publish the case. As Monsieur Lagarde observes, it is indeed most remarkable and most important, on account of the circumstances, the new and highly valuable details recorded, and the exceptional calibre and standing of the eyewitness, Professor Julio Suárez Marzal. We express our thanks to all parties concerned for the special permission to publish the account.

It must be borne in mind that Gordon Creighton's translation is not from the Spanish original (which we have not yet seen) but from Mme. Boulvin's French rendering. The processes of double translation are bound to have impaired much of the style and flavour of the original, but we feel confident that our version contains no error of substance.

—EDITOR.

which contact is maintained via the army radio network with all military garrisons in the Mendoza region.

"What follows is Sr. Marzal's own account, and all the sketches and analyses are by him.

"*Publication of this report in the daily press or in journals of general circulation is forbidden unless the special consent of the investigator and of the eyewitness has first been obtained (this implies no commercial considerations).*

"*Lumières Dans La Nuit* and those other journals to which the present letter is addressed are authorised to publish the story, and I request that they will publish it in full."

* * * * *

Before we proceed with the report I would like to emphasise the great skill of the witness, Sr. Marzal, in grasping and explaining details. He was so impressed by what he had seen that he spent a considerable period of time in going over in his mind and recording with precision every least detail of the phenomenon he had observed.

Statement by the witness, Señor Julio Suárez Marzal

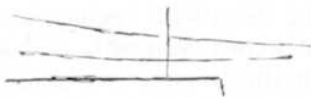
The Place Where It Occurred

The observation took place on May 24, 1971, from a dentist's surgery on the first floor of a building on the calle Pedro Molina, right in the very centre of the city of Mendoza, with a wide open space towards the south, extending as far as the promenades of the civilian quarter. We observed, in the direction of the Military Circle, far off and high in the sky, an unidentified object.

I remained alone in the dentist's surgery, while Dr. Walter Griehl ran to get some binoculars, returning just as the object was disappearing.



The sequence of movements as the UFO floated down



The location of the sighting; MENDOZA.

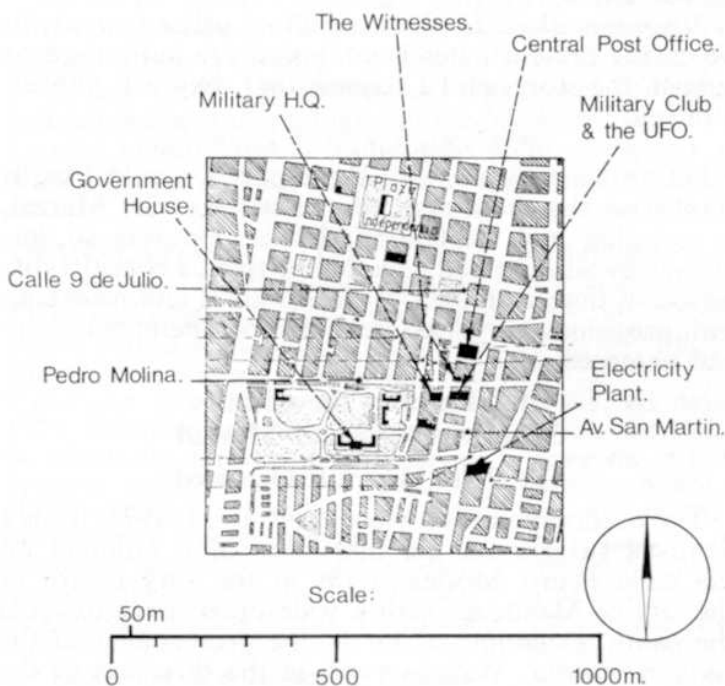


FIG. 2

Figs. 1-3

During his absence from the room, in just a few seconds of time, a whole series of events had occurred: I had seen the object come closer and perform the most curious movements.

A Previous Sighting

Six years earlier, in 1965, I had already seen a ball of fire in the sky. At the time, I thought it was a rocket burning up, although it was not descending in a straight line but with an undulating movement. It vanished from my view behind tall buildings just as night was setting in. I awaited an announcement of its imminent fall on the town: but it did not happen.

Details of the Mendoza sighting

What I saw this time, that is to say on May 24, 1971, in Mendoza, was no ball of fire, no light that passed overhead or approached or halted. What I saw was the actual flying saucer itself—just as one sees a motor car—in broad daylight, at 12.10, just after noon-day, at a distance of 70 metres from me, approaching to as close as 40 metres from me, performing evolutions for a period of 90 seconds, in the most strange and different positions, confining itself meanwhile to one apparent and identifiable objective. With regard to the principal features that I was able to make out, I have made ink sketches of it, as well as coloured paintings of it, and in this way it has been my aim to record the facts of the matter as objectively as possible, and set them down in sequence as follows:

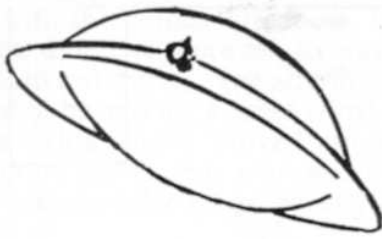
i. The object is moving silently, floating and drifting along very slowly from east to west, at an altitude of some 1,000 metres and somewhat over 1 kilometre towards the S.E. from me (rough guesses). The colour is a pearly-grey, faintly bluish, dull. Its brightness makes it stand out sharply against the deep blue of the sky. At once it starts to descend, with a rocking movement, and I perceive that it is slowly revolving, at least so I judge from a small bright circular mark which stands out on its surface.

ii. The object rapidly descends towards where I am, and approaches eye-level, with the astonishing speed which characterises the close-up as shown by the camera, as it registers a dizzying succession of gradations of approach.

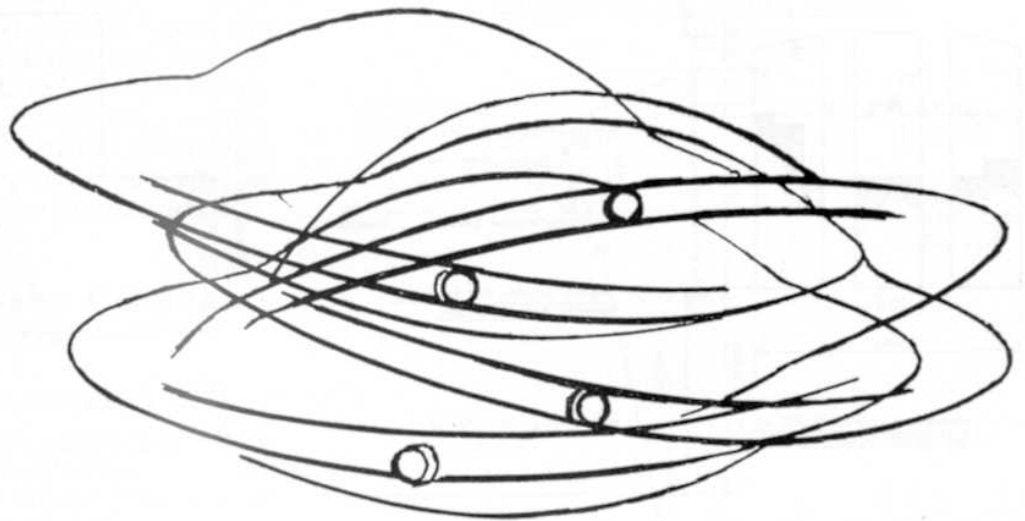
Now the object pours forth a dense cloud, like steam in turbulence, which surrounds it and grows. As it draws nearer it grows larger. It worries me that I can't see it clearly (the witness is here referring not to the UFO itself but to the bright point on its surface, as will be perceived by what follows). However, I imagine it must be some kind of view-finder adapted to a tubular axis.

iii. The UFO darts sideways at such speed that it suddenly vanishes; then surprises me by reappearing, much lower down, where it immediately stops, rocking to and fro slightly. When it first arrived it was incandescent, of a dark orange colour, and without the cloud around it. Now it is a clearer pearly grey.

It is very near me, at about 70 metres, and at 16°, to the S.E. While remaining stationary it now seems to glide along horizontally, moving away and then im-



Detail of the "Viewer"
Colour; Dark Bronze.



The rocking motion & lateral movements of the UFO.

Left Fig. 4

Above Fig. 5

perceptibly approaching again, like a photographic close-up. At this point in its approach I see only those parts of it that interest me and I pay no heed to the total appearance, which moreover seems cut off visually.

For about four seconds it is completely stationary in the air, silent, vibrating very slightly. This is the actual flying saucer itself, a solid object, a sort of metal. I have a magnificent view of it, with absolute clarity, bathed in the sunlight. I suddenly feel myself very much alone, I experience an indescribable loneliness at the weird realisation of the presence of this strange reality.

iv. After a quick glance to take it all in, my eye is caught by one detail: the bright point mentioned previously is now close, in three-quarter profile, like an external telescopic eye; it is a short cylinder, bell-shaped, the colour of old bronze, with shining frontal areas. Attached to the upper part, on the projecting, clearer portion of the cylinder, is a tubular central fin (we could call it a handle) of the same greyish colour as the whole surface of the craft.

I examine the structure of this viewer in every minute detail, and while I am studying its strange upper part the saucer gives a slight shudder and climbs away obliquely, travelling off rapidly towards the N.E., leaving me as it does so with a general view of the said upper part of the viewer; it seemed to have several other details on it, and I could make out a reddish contour on the back portion.

v. To my surprise, having lost sight of the saucer for some four seconds, it reappears, and even closer, and now in complete and total view, making great strange rocking movements.

The thing I had taken to be a sort of "eye", a viewer, assumes the position of a focussing lens (or, as we would say, a *sight*) and follows any given point by means of marked corrections, upwards, downwards, right, left, centre, with the speed and the touch of someone who wants to take precise and rapid aim because of the movements of the whole body of the flying craft, including too a pronounced to-and-fro rocking motion through about 35°.

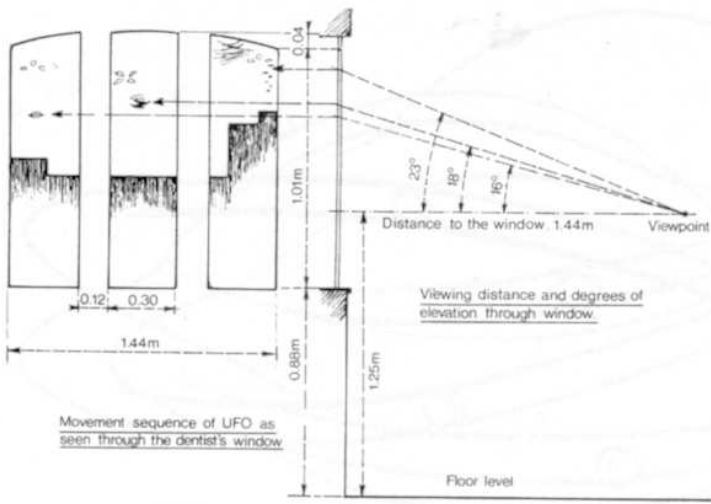
The viewer is pointing towards the parabolic short-wave antennae of the Central Post Office.

The sunlight shows up the viewer more clearly, and I can now actually feel the presence of someone who, with precision and intelligence, is directing the viewer's movements from inside the craft. (This scene lasted ten seconds in the opinion of the witness, who is accustomed to film-making.) The two appearances of the stationary saucer could have been filmed perfectly, or recorded on colour stills, for the saucer was magnificently revealed by the sunlight, thus permitting the sharpest, clearest vision. The remaining views of the saucer were extremely rapid, dancing, so that the eyewitness could not hold it well in focus.

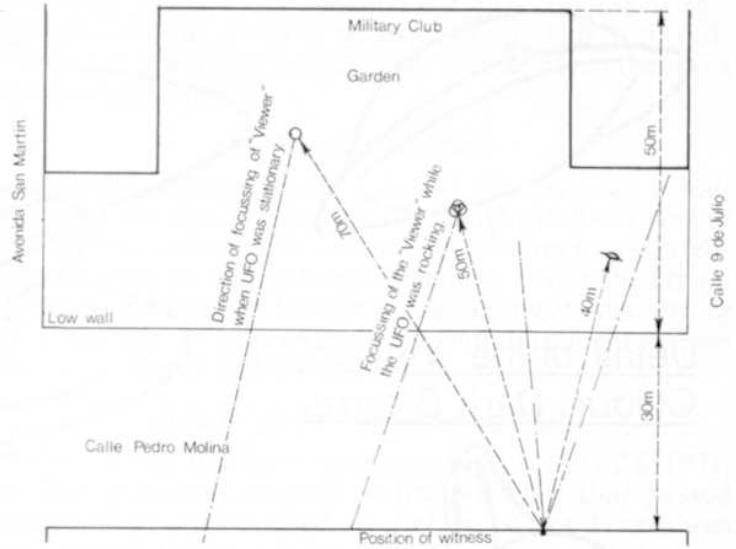
When I first observe the saucer, it shoots away from the foreground like a bullet (see sketch 9), vanishes in the sky, then reappears instantly afterwards at a height of some 1,500 metres and at approximately 29°, towards the S.W.

It slowly floats, as at the outset, from east to west. It changes shape, as when a conjurer does his tricks: at one moment it is elongated, then it is a globe, then it looks like a little hat, then it is oval, as it drifts along with a rocking motion.

Suddenly, as though taking its bearings, it quivers two or three times in rapid succession, then does a right-angled change of direction and moves off fast towards the south leaving an ever-darkening veil of vapour (which assumes a pale old rose shade) that hampers vision, till finally it is lost to sight.



Above Fig. 6 Right Fig. 7 Below Fig. 8

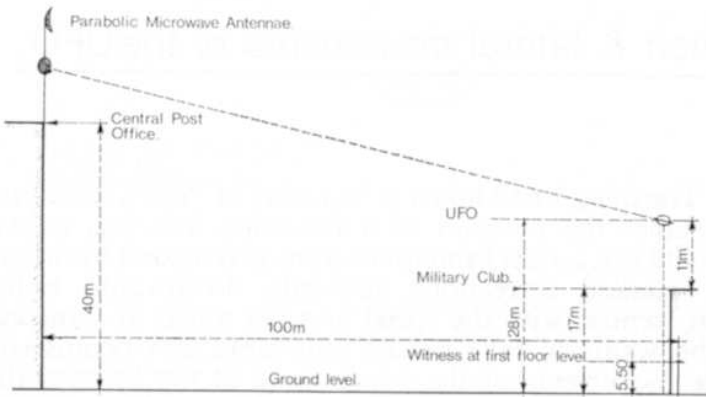


DRAWING SHOWING RELATIVE DISTANCES

It is very hard to say what size it was, seeing that it represents the unknown. Perhaps 6 metres in diameter and 2 metres high at its centre, as arrived at by a few calculations and sketches.

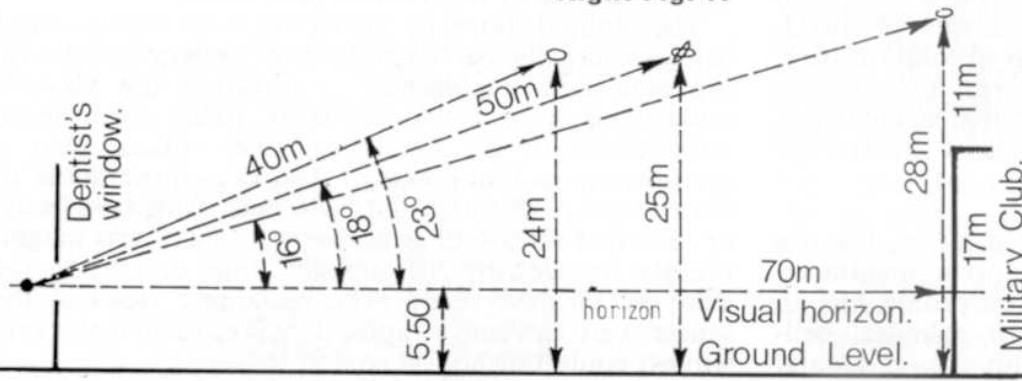
I am now inclined to think that the saucer was also training its viewer on the Central Post Office from other positions: namely not only when stationary, but also when gliding along horizontally, this time as though *filming*, to judge by the long halt and the direction in which the viewer was permanently set.

Quite apart from its moments of immobility, of imperceptible horizontal approach, of rocking or slow

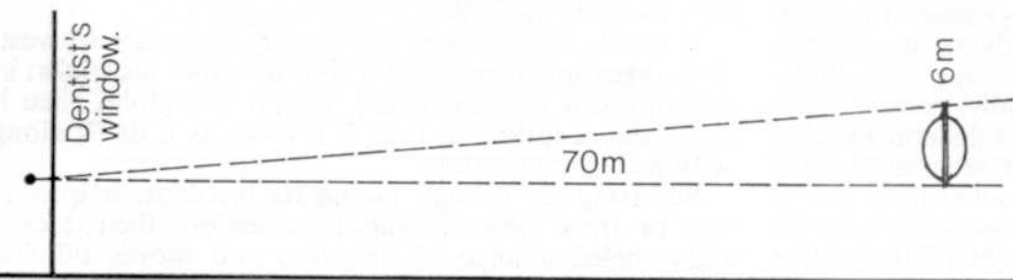


UFO AIMING ITS "VIEWER" FOR THE FIRST TIME

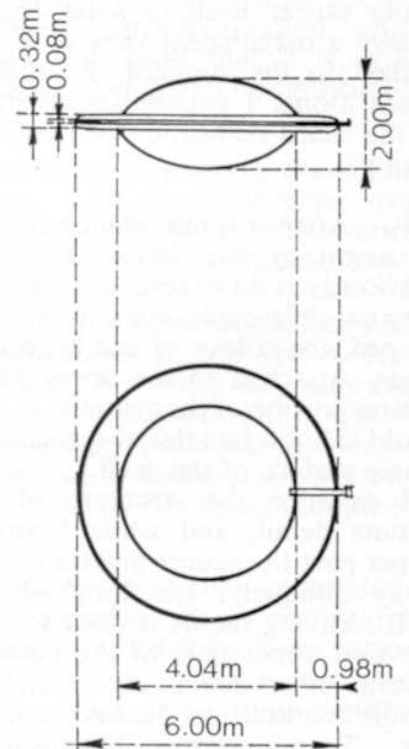
Below Figs. 9-10 Right Fig. 11



Estimated altitude when UFO was on close approach flightpath.



Drawing at 3.60m for greater accuracy.



Possible dimensions of UFO.

floating, situations all of which enabled me to observe it with the closest attention, I must remark upon the utter difference between its way of moving and the way an aircraft moves. The aircraft seems to be pulled along, and to be making a great effort. On the contrary to this, the flying saucer moved about in various directions, with an agility that is inconceivable, like a butterfly, at an unimaginable speed, beyond our laws of gravitation.

Supporting letter from Dr. Walter Griehl to Sr. Julio Suárez Marzal

Mendoza, August 5, 1971.

"In accordance with your request, I give this public testimony, with the sole aim of furthering your investigations and your studies, that on the 24th day of May, 1971, at 12.10, in my surgery, you, Professor Julio Suárez Marzal, drew my attention, through the glass of the window looking southwards, to an object which I saw and which, by the irregularity of its changing shape, was not identified; it was at an altitude of some 1,500 metres and at an approximate distance of ten *cuadras*.*

"It was moving slowly, silently, in a jerky manner, its colour a dull bluish silver. Out of curiosity I went to get some binoculars from an outbuilding, and when I got back it had vanished.

(Signed) Dr. E. Walter Griehl,
Dental Surgeon,
Reg. Licence No. 204."

* Old Spanish-American measurement, 1 *cuadra* = roughly 100 metres.

TRAJECTORIES and COLOUR CHANGES.

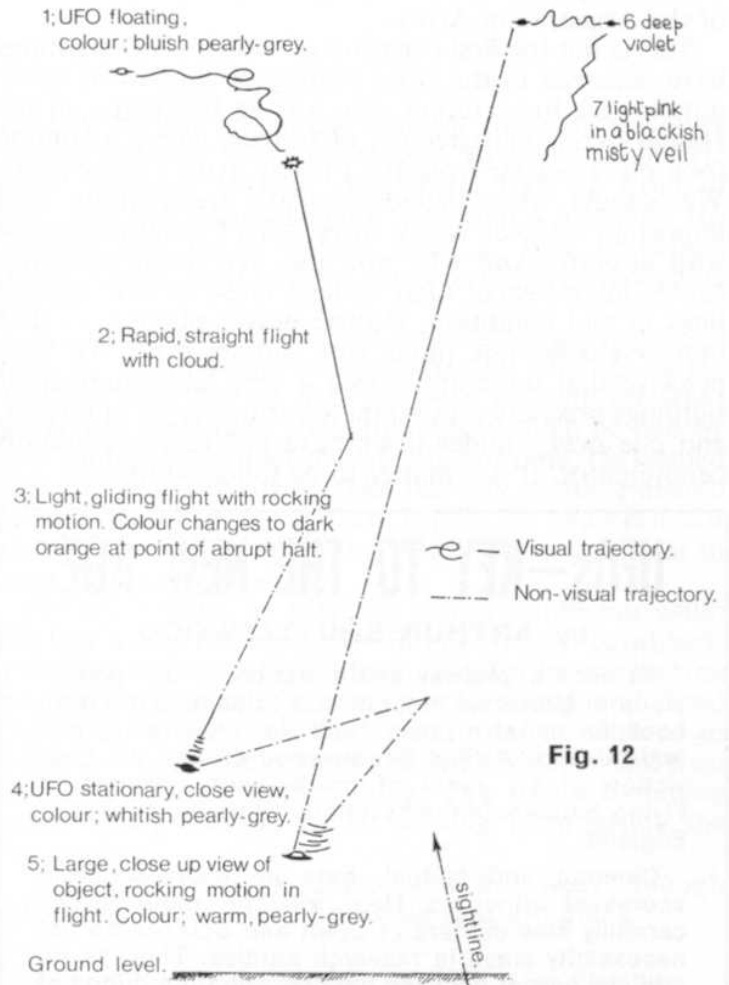


Fig. 12

NOTE ON THE MENDOZA REPORT

F. Lagarde

... in collaboration with members of the editorial team of *Lumières dans la Nuit*

MENDOZA (lying at 32° 54' S., 68° 50' W.), a city of 300,000 inhabitants, is, let us mark this once again, practically on the BAVIC LINE (to be precise, the outer suburb of Rodeo de Mondio, 20 kilometres to the S.E., lies right on it).

What we have here is in fact a sighting of a classic "flying saucer", but one that is garnished with a staggering description, with the most precise details, and from a man who has spent his lifetime in grasping detail in order to reproduce it in painting, and who has made this his profession, which fact endows his sketches with all their weight and importance.

A better eyewitness could not be found, and some folk may well wonder whether it was mere chance or whether it was by intention that the machine should have offered a veritable festival of all the fantastic things that the saucers habitually do, right in front of an artist—or rather we might say a "jeweller" in the matter of exact observation. It is in fact all here,

nothing is lacking: the changes in appearance; the colours changing according to the speed; the accelerations producing invisibility; the right-angle changes of direction; the "falling leaf" descent (shown by Aimé Michel); the rocking movement while stationary—all recorded and sketched by a professional who is, on top of that, a teacher.

Was it chance too, or precise intent, ironical maybe, to come down right on noon, bang into the middle of a populous city, 11 metres above the Military Club, 200 metres from the Central Transmitter of the Argentinian Army as well as Government House, in fact right at the centre of things? Who of us will ever know?

But a new fact makes its appearance here: we had frequently wondered how the UFOs could communicate with the outside while in flight. Now Sr. Marzal has seen what he describes as a "viewer", and he seems to have given the answer to our query.

We do not know the purpose to which such an

appendage was put, but Professor Marzal is of the firm opinion that it was aimed at the antennae of the Central Post Office, and at a further distance there are also those of the Argentinian Army.

This is not the first occasion on which UFO sightings have occurred in the close vicinity of shortwave transmitters (the most recent case was at Jonchères, in the Haute-Vienne département of France, where a landing took place not far from the French Army's relay-post). We should also include private transmitters and important airfields where there is W/T communication with aircraft. And why not also everything else that causes interference: high voltage lines, or low voltage lines in bad condition, electric power plants . . . and motor-vehicles not fitted with suppressors. We now perceive that there are indeed a very large number of sightings precisely around these various types of targets, and one may wonder if we have not here a common denominator. It is a matter to be followed up.

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by ARTHUR SHUTTLEWOOD

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The size of the saucer too belongs to a classic series of sightings, and one may well think that Professor Marzal is very close to the truth with his figures. One may well think too that, if the UFO is manned, its occupants are not very tall, and must resemble the dwarfs that have so often been described already.

Our thanks to our friend Antonio Baragiola for giving us the benefit so speedily of this precise and excellent sighting from a witness who provides a very simple account of what he saw and what he memorised so well.

And now, "what will our critics have to say about this case?" asks Baragiola in a personal letter. Well, nothing, alas, *since they are all myopic!*

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REPORT FROM BUFORA

Progress: The Association currently has a first-class administrative team which leaves its research officers free from administrative worries. Late last year, the N.E.C. reviewed research policy and made positive proposals for the future. Several interesting reports are under investigation. Learned speakers have addressed well-attended London meetings. Thanks to the generosity of members, the financial position is good and BUFORA is probably in a stronger position now than at any time previously.

Sky Watch: This year's sky watch exercise is scheduled for 24-25 June; further details are obtainable from: Mr. Lincoln Richford, 14 Playfield Crescent, London SE22.

For details of the **BRITISH UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION**, its publications and activities,

send a 9 by 4½ in. S.A.E. to:

Miss Christine Henning (R7),
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PERSONAL COLUMN

1972 MIDWEST UFO CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS, published by Midwest UFO Network, 40 Christopher Court, Quincy, Illinois 62301, U.S.A. Price \$3.25 U.S.A. and Canada, \$4.00 elsewhere.

COULD I CONTACT a few friends or associates of George Adamski?—Frederick Tuck, 48 Phyfield Road, Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex. Tel. 952-6817.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Readers are reminded that *FSR Case Histories* Supp. 10 has been re-timed to follow FSR for May/June 1972 instead of this issue. This, we hope, will bring FSR back to proper publishing times.

ITAPERUNA AGAIN

Gordon Creighton

IN *Uproar in Brazil* (FSR, November/December 1971) I gave an account of the remarkable recent happenings at Itaperuna in the state of Rio de Janeiro.

The Rio illustrated magazine *Domingo Ilustrado*, of October 17, 1971, brings us a further instalment in the Itaperuna story, and reveals for the first time something that had happened on a Thursday night towards the end of May of that year—probably May 27.

1—Sr. Leite's encounter

The author of the report is the journalist Carlos Chagas, who tells us that the incident befell his uncle, Senhor Néelson Vieira Leite, a prominent Itaperuna farmer and businessman, whom I have already mentioned (FSR, November/December 1971, top of page 28). I had merely stated that this gentleman and his wife had once seen a saucer at their farm. But the recent experiences of the typewriter mechanic and the truck-driver, who encountered the unpleasant little dwarfs and were the victims of their tricks, have emboldened Sr. Néelson Leite to speak out at last about what had happened to him last May.

Sr. Leite, brother of the Prefect of the Municipality of Itaperuna, lives in the town, but frequently goes out to spend the day on his farm, 40 minutes by car from the town.

The day in question had been a very fine one, and he was waiting just before sundown, beside the road, for his nephew Manoel Carlos who was due to come by in his car and take him back home.

Suddenly, despite the fact that he could see the Sun going down in the west, Sr. Leite was puzzled to observe that it had seemingly just appeared over one of his fields towards the east, on the other side of the road. But it was not long before he perceived that, whatever this might be, it certainly was not the Sun. It was a light, quite pale at first, but it rapidly grew stronger and finally was blinding. It was coming down towards him out of the sky and finally it came to a halt just above the long grass of the meadow, without actually touching the ground.

Curious to know what this might be, he went across to take a closer look. The light was now fading again and its brightness was, as he explained, roughly equal to the brightness of the lights on the high poles on top of the Aterro do Flamengo (a hill at Rio de Janeiro that he knows very well). He was now able to observe the light without shading his eyes. And he could see what it was. It was a greenish object, "... resembling a soup-plate upside down." It looked quite a lot bigger than a Volkswagen car, which may indicate that it was in fact a different type of saucer from those seen recently by the two other residents of his town who were "privileged" to have such extraordinary experiences with the dwarfs (see *Uproar in Brazil*).

Sr. Leite continued to draw nearer to the object though, as he admits, not without considerable fear.

Indeed, he was trembling. But his curiosity was even greater than his fear, just as was his desire to protect what belonged to him. And there, right in front of him, was this thing, hanging, less than a metre off the ground, over one of his own fields . . . why, perhaps it might, he felt, even be right over one of his own sleeping cows!

But, when he had reached a point about ten metres from it, he suddenly realised that he was no longer walking, and that he had not been walking for what seemed to have been some minutes, though he had by now somehow or other lost all sense of time. He seemed half-numbed, yes, almost like the way he remembered he had felt when, some years before, he had been just about to enter the operating theatre in the hospital to have a hernia seen to.

However much he tried, he simply could not walk. His legs would not obey him. But he was not paralysed; it seemed entirely different from that, for he was waving his arms about and he even turned round and faced back towards the road. But he was totally unable to go forwards. An invisible barrier halted his steps. And then he noted another strange thing. This was a humming noise, which seemed to be coming from inside the "soup-plate".

The light from the object was still weak, though sufficient to illuminate the whole area around.

A shout in the dark

Suddenly he heard a shout, and from behind him came his nephew Manoel Carlos (cousin of the author of this report, Carlos Chagas), who had observed the whole scene, though unable to hear any sound. More daring than his uncle, Manoel Carlos was not walking. He was *running*. And he was unaware of the invisible barrier that lay between his uncle and the disc. The result was that he knew no more for several hours thereafter. He was knocked right out. Knocked out just as though he had been run over, or had walked into the plate-glass doors of one of the Government Ministries in Brasília, the Federal Capital.

Seeing his nephew lying prostrate, Néelson Leite was now vastly alarmed. And seldom, he says, has he ever known such a *depression* as now came over him—*depression, and a feeling of utter impotence in the face of the whole business*.

He gazed at the disc. It now seemed to him that there was a band of greater brightness right around it, and that this indicated the existence of some windows or port-holes. He reminded himself to keep looking at the ground below it. The "dish" was still suspended above the grass, at a height of a little less than a metre. Nothing was happening, everything was going on just as though it had been just like this for a long, long time. How much time actually did elapse he was subsequently able to estimate: about 20 minutes, at the outside.

But at the time, to Néelson Leite, it was 20 years.