

What the children saw

Eileen Buckle

EARLY this year a new magazine for children was launched. Its name is **Countdown**† and its main theme is travel and adventure in outer space. Since its inception, more than a dozen articles on UFOs have appeared in its pages, the author of most of them being our Editor, Charles Bowen. The readers were invited by the editors of *Countdown* to write in to FSR giving us details of any personal UFO sightings they may have made. The good response surprised us all.

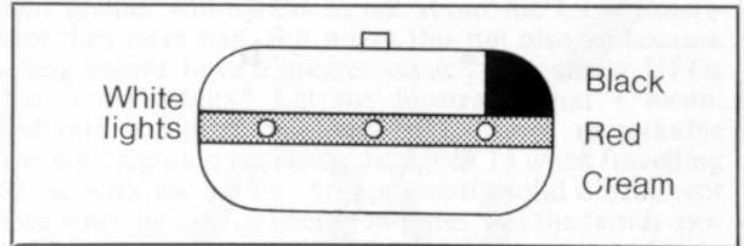
To date, 150 letters have been received, and most of them seem to be of *bona fide* sighting reports, judging by the contents and manner of narration; only a minority are deemed probable leg-pulls or exercises in imagination. A good many are probably sightings of weather balloons, satellites or aircraft, but there are other reports of objects not so easily identifiable, and the reports are often accompanied by well-executed drawings. Lack of descriptive detail and sighting data has marred a good many reports, though in general the standard of reporting has been high. Parents have rather obviously helped in the writing of a few of the accounts, and we are glad they have encouraged their youngsters in this way.

It might be argued that children make poor witnesses. Certainly a limited vocabulary and undeveloped observation technique lessen the accuracy and overall value of a sighting report, but on the other hand, it has been noted that children are generally more objective in describing an experience than most adults, and they are less inhibited about telling it.

It was difficult to select the best accounts for publication here. Almost all had their merits, and I would like to thank all those children who wrote to us.

The following letter came from **John Child** of Gorleston-on-Sea, Gt. Yarmouth, Norfolk:

"In August 1969 I was outside for a P.E. lesson with the rest of my class and I sneaked behind the changing rooms so as to miss a game of football. I sat down and kept my eyes fixed on some television aerials on the block of nearby flats. I was a keen aircraft spotter at the time and I heard the noise of jet engines. As quick as a flash my eyes were fixed on the sky. Immediately I saw a De Havilland Comet (I think!) leaving a heavy vapour trail across the sky. Then my attention was drawn by two objects moving slowly across the sky southwards, apparently appearing from nowhere while I was looking at the other aircraft. The UFOs looked like this:



UFO observed over Peterhouse Junior School

"Then I heard another aircraft noise and I turned away. My keen eyesight searched the sky for about 30 seconds but I could not see any aircraft. My eyes turned to the spot where the UFOs had been, only to find that they had gone. So I regret to add I did not see how the UFOs came or went, but just their swoop over Peterhouse Junior School."

I wondered if this next sighting, by **David Humphry** of Enfield, Middlesex, was of a similar luminous object to that filmed at Newark by Mr. W. H. Huntington*:

"In issue 1 of *Countdown* it said that if you see a UFO write to this address. Well, when we were going to my aunt's in Chesham on the 20th December, 1970, we were just passing Radlett on the M10 when my sister spotted a large, long flame of fire in the sky, about 1 mile from Radlett aerodrome. It seemed as though a plane was on fire. But it started to come down on a diagonal slant; it then started to come down vertically, but for some reason got stopped. We then saw a small charter plane that seemed to be circling it. The flame of fire then started to rise again. We stopped at some toilets and when we started again we lost sight of it.

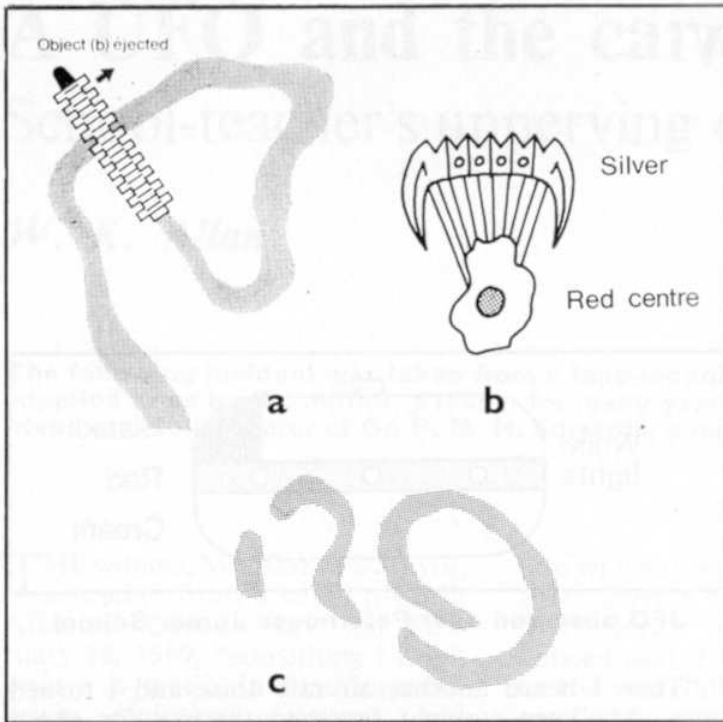
"As we were going down a hill in Hemel Hempstead we caught sight of it heading towards London. We came to the conclusion that the flame of fire was the main jet of fire to the UFOs main engine. We could see no spaceship, only the long flame of fire. From where we were standing the flame of fire was about 14 inches long and about 4 inches wide [sic]. As far as we can judge, it was about 250 feet long and 20 feet in diameter. It was about as high up as a Vulcan jet plane.

"The people who saw it were my mum, dad and sister and I. The time was about 5.30 p.m.

Next, here is the sighting account of a most peculiar object by **Dean E. Morris**, aged 10, of Chislehurst, Kent:

† Published by Polystyle Publications Ltd., Polly Perkins House, Paddington Green, 382-386 Edgware Road, London W2.

* See Case Histories Supp. 2, p. 3.

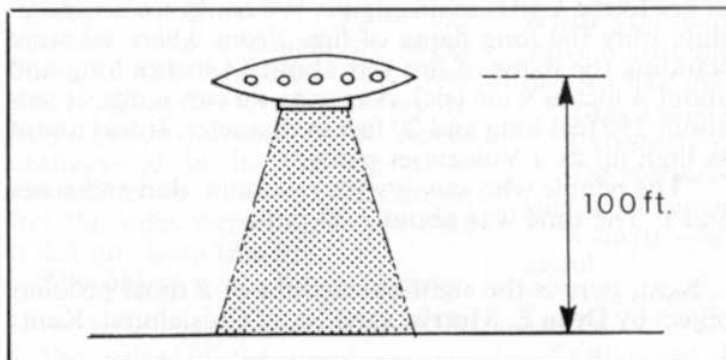


(a) Object observed at Chislehurst
 (b) Detail of object ejected from UFO (a)
 (c) Approximate shape of vapour trail

“One morning at about 8.25 a.m. I was walking along in Chislehurst High Street. Just as I was entering a bridle path, I looked up and I saw a very unusual sight. It was a funny kind of rocket (like the drawing). The weather conditions were fair, but breezy. The colour of the object was matt-black at the top and silvery grey at the bottom. It was moving slowly south-west. I do not know the date, but it was on a Wednesday. There were no other witnesses apart from people in the street, but I did not see them look up or see it. Two minutes later, I was still looking at it, and it suddenly twirled round and I saw a small shoot of fire come out of the top just under the matt-black nose cone through a hole. Then suddenly a sort of silver cloth thing came out with a sort of round bumpy thing hanging on it. I could not quite make out what it was, but this is what it looked like.”

A short account of what must have been a most spectacular sighting came from **Tony Layton** of Rowley Regis, Warley, Worcs.:

“It was in the year 1967 and my Mom and Dad and I were travelling to Blackpool for our holiday, when we

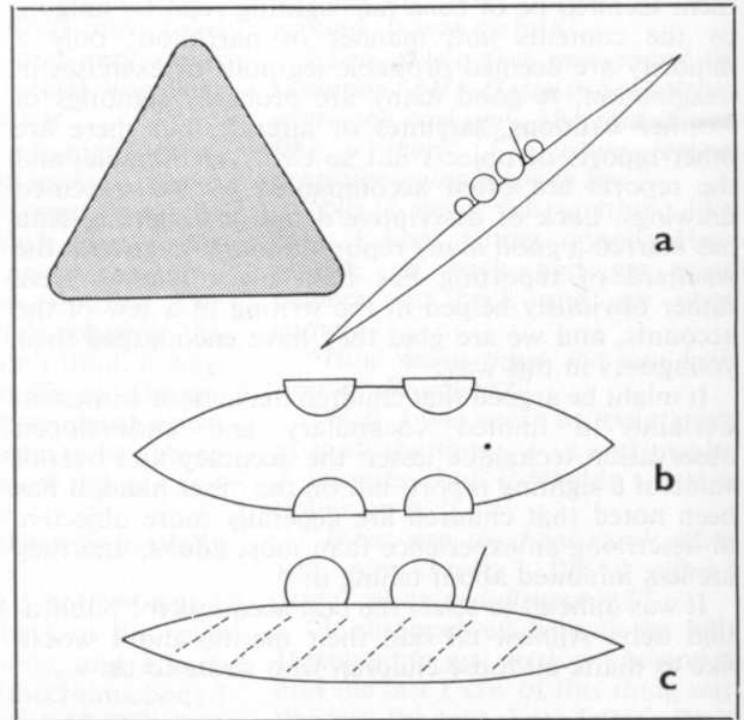


Object observed from M6 motorway

saw a purple disc in the sky that was sending a reddish beam that was cone-shaped. It was sending the beam down on to the grass by the side of the M6 motorway. It was a windy day on September 9. It was at a height of about 102ft.” [Yes! he really did estimate it at 102ft.—EDITOR.]

This next report was signed by **Shane and Miss Shani Koscielniak**, who come from Denham, Middlesex:

“We saw one, along with some other children at school and one adult person. This was a triangular-shaped object. It had no tail and hovered about 10 minutes and then vanished. It was silver in colour. This was at Denham. It had a slightly slower speed than the second one we saw later on. The first sighting was in January, 1968. The second one I am about to describe was also seen in Denham (Denham Valley—nearest town Uxbridge) and was seen in early October, 1970. This was the better sighting and the viewing lasted much longer. It was an unidentified flying object of a



(a) UFO seen over Denham Valley
 (b) Probable view of (a) from above
 (c) Lateral view of (a)

different shape and colour. We saw it from 7.45-8.15 a.m. It was on a very clear, bright morning, with a blue sky and a few wisps of cloud.

“It came suddenly at great speed from the south-west. It flashed across the sky until it came to the zenith, where it stopped for a few seconds. It hovered and then moved on again in a straight line towards the east and stopped once more. This time it stayed and hovered on the same spot for a long time. Then we gradually realised it had got fainter. It appeared to be fading and to gradually render itself invisible. It *may* have been, however, that it was actually still continuing its flight path to the east but had left behind it a smoke screen

trail the same shape and size as itself, and that it was *this* which was fading. However, it looked to us as if the object gradually became invisible.

"Now for a description of the 'vehicle'. At the time it was hovering it must have been about 100 feet up or less, and was clearly indicated and the outlines hard and sharp. It shone with a metallic sheen and was in the shape of a large flattened ellipse. There was bright sunshine at the time, which was reflected off it. Yet it also seemed to be emitting a kind of 'sunshine' of its own—a luridescence . . . [sic]. This lay in streaks around it and seemed to pulsate and glow. It also had two glowing 'eyes'—two very bright round radiances at mid-front centre—and two less bright (fainter and smaller ones) to the left and right of these (or so they seemed to be located—they may actually have been 'behind').

"There was some kind of 'aerial' or antenna on top of the object and this also was seen as a glowing thing. The flying disc itself, however, did *not* glow. It looked silvery-blue with touches of pinky-orange.

"It gave us the impression (the three of us in my family who were there) and feeling of a presence—an almost palpable feeling.

"We since heard that an unidentified flying object of a

similar description has been seen in the same neighbourhood by another (adult) person, both at times before and times after the date we have given."

I wish space would permit me to print more of our young correspondents' sighting reports, for whatever their explanations may be, some of them were most intriguing.

One final thought about sightings by young witnesses. I have always been struck by the fact that an unusually large percentage of cases appear to involve children or young people. This may be accounted for purely by their greater willingness to tell about the UFO experience they have had. But might this not also be because young people have a greater capacity for seeing UFOs than most adults? Let me illustrate what I mean. Recently a young man related to me a remarkable low-level sighting he had at the age of 15 when travelling by car with his family. An apparently solid object kept pace with the car for twenty minutes. All the family saw it clearly, except the father. Strangely, he was unable to see it at all.

Did the little boy at Chislehurst see an object that the other people in the High Street did not merely fail to notice, but were simply not capable of seeing? I think this matter needs some attention.

Brazilian cases in 1968 and 1969—5

Dr Walter Buhler

INTENSE activity of UFOs, and the resultant spate of reports in the early months of 1969, is reflected by this section of our catalogue which covers just two more months.

MARCH AND APRIL, 1969

94. Beginning of March, 1969. Belo Horizonte, State of Minas Gerais. People working at the Gabriel Passos Refinery in the Barreiro de Baixo area of Belo Horizonte have seen flying saucers on three consecutive nights this month. The UFOs travel at great speed, "but can also remain stationary in the air", as for example in the case of one which remained over the refinery for 15 minutes.

A Notícia, Rio de Janeiro, March 3, 1969.

95. First week in March, 1969. Fortaleza, State of Ceará. Colonel Eduardo Wayne saw a saucer flying over the construction site of the satellite tracking station. The object was silent, and emitted intermittently signals of yellow light from the hatches in its belly.

A Notícia, Rio de Janeiro, March 6, 1969. *Jornal do Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro, March 5, 1969.

96. First week in March, 1969. Presidente Prudente, State of São Paulo. For ten minutes during the night, the doctor A.G.L. and his wife watched various groups of luminous saucers flying in "V" formations over the town.

O Dia, Rio de Janeiro, March 7, 1969.

97. First week in March, 1969. Itaperuna, State of Rio de Janeiro. At 1.00 a.m. in the early morning, when driving in their car from Campos to Itaperuna, the judge Dr. Antônio Sampaio Peres and his wife were accompanied by a luminous hat-shaped object with a purple light on its cupola, which flew along beside the car. With great difficulty the judge finally managed to leave the object behind.

Diário de Notícias, Niterói edition, March 7, 1969.

98. First week in March, 1969. Alexânia, State of Goiás. The fazenda-owner Wilson Gusmão declares that a flying saucer with crew has landed on his ranch.

Jornal do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, March 8, 1969.

(SBEDV Bulletin No. 69/70 contains an extremely lengthy account of this case, in which it seems that photographs were allegedly taken. It is hoped that a translation of the account can be provided in the near future.—G.C.)

99. Early March, 1969. Lins, State of São Paulo. Sr. Josué Lins de Oliveira and his wife and other people saw an extremely bright UFO, at an estimated height of some 500 metres, and saw another luminous object emerge from it and float down to near the ground. (Sr. Josué Lins de Oliveira is the radio-reporter of the Lins Radio Club.)

O Jornal, Rio de Janeiro, March 11, 1969.

100. March 11, 1969. Campinas, State of São Paulo. At 4.45 p.m. Sr. Angelo Randi of Vila Castelo Branco was driving along the road to Hortelândia, when he saw in the distance a powerful light which was moving about in various directions and changing colour, from yellow to green, blue, purple and then back to green again. The object came to a halt in front of the car, whereupon the speed slowed down and the engine gradually was paralysed. Said the witness: "Although I remained lucid, I was totally immobilised, being unable to move any of my limbs."

Diário de Notícias, and *Jornal do Brasil*, both of Rio de Janeiro and both for March 13, 1969.

101. March 12, 1969. Lins, State of São Paulo. At 9.00 a.m. Dona Maria Lúcia and her children saw an oval-shaped object, silver-coloured all over, approximately 1.5m. wide and with a rounded upper portion. It was flying slowly in a straight line towards the local airport, and stopping from time to time.

Diário de Notícias, Rio de Janeiro, March 15, 1969.