

LIVING CREATURES, EARTHQUAKES AND UFOs

Gordon Creighton

SOME readers may wonder why I included the Tashkent item (No. 110) in Part VII of *A New FSR Catalogue*.

The fact that animals and birds and fish can detect the occurrence of earthquakes hours or even days beforehand is too well known to merit much discussion, hundreds of such cases being on record. There is a species of small ornamental fish in Indonesia which has such an unerring faculty for detecting the approach of 'quakes that it is now in high demand in Japan where people keep them in a tank or bowl in the home and watch them carefully from time to time. When an earthquake shock is coming these fish give clear warning by bunching together in the corner of the tank furthest from the future epicentre of the 'quake (and facing towards the epicentre), and thus provide an

excellent warning system.

I included a reference to this phenomenon of animal warnings about earthquakes in the Catalogue because there are still various mysterious factors. For example, we do not yet know the relationship—if any—between UFOs and earthquakes, but it is important to bear in mind that a good many investigators believe that there is such a relationship, and indeed *some investigators even think that UFOs "cause" earthquakes.*

What we do know is that there are numerous cases on record, as for example in the great Japanese 'quake of September 1, 1923, in which "lights" were seen overhead in the sky at the time of the shocks; in the severe Algerian 'quakes of September 9 and September 26, 1954; in the strong English earthquake which shook eleven

counties of the Midlands on February 11, 1957, and during which "tadpole-shaped UFOs" were reported as having been seen overhead in the sky. Similarly, there have been numerous reports of "UFOs" and "flying saucers" observed over or near the menacing San Andreas Fault in California since at least as far back as 1896.

The scientific explanation for these "lights in the sky" which accompany earthquakes is that they are *piezo-electrical phenomena*, and it is no doubt correct. But there obviously still remain some mysterious areas. It may, for example, turn out that in some cases the *piezo-electrical* explanation is entirely correct, while in other cases what has been seen may well have been a UFO which was engaged in observing an earthquake. (Or in producing one?)

World round-up *of news and comment about recent sightings*

ENGLAND

Rainham low-level saucer

The *Brentwood Argus* of August 20, 1970, told of an alleged near-landing—

"A flying saucer was seen at Rainham last week. In fact it almost landed, says Mr. Richard Jones, 20, of Burwood Gardens.

"Mr. Jones was driving in Rainham Road, with 19-year-old Pauline Routledge of Newlands Road, Billericay.

"Mr. Jones told police they stopped about 10.50 p.m. on Wednesday after they heard 'loud electrical noises.' He thought there was a fault with his car.

"He says the object, about 20 feet long and 10 feet wide, hovered only a little way above the ground for a few seconds before flying away towards Hornchurch. It was glowing red with four white lights along its underside.

"A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence said: 'We have absolutely no idea what this could have been. There were no other sightings reported. But if anyone did see it, we would welcome a letter stating the time and place of the sighting. This one is a mystery to

us, we have no idea what it might have been.'"

Speedy "magnesium flare" UFO

An item now from *Pulman's Weekly News* of November 3, 1970—

"A ball of white light that made a slight whistling sound as it shot across the sky over Sidmouth puzzled many early risers on Thursday. (October 29, 1970.)

"Local trawlermen were among those who said they had seen the strange 'thing' at 7.20 a.m. just as the sky was beginning to become light.

"Another witness was Mr. John Pratt, of 7, Church Street, who said he was near the Market Place when he saw the ball of light go whizzing across the sky and disappear behind Knowle.

"He described it as being like a magnesium flare. But he added, 'When a plane drops a magnesium flare, it either falls straight down to earth or floats down gently on a parachute. This thing was moving at a terrific speed across the sky. I watched it for about 20 seconds before it

vanished.'

"As it travelled through the air, it left behind a trail of vapour or white smoke about 1,000 feet up.

"'At first,' said Mr. Pratt, 'I hesitated to talk about it because people might think I had imagined it, but I have since met several others who saw it.'"

Credit: Mrs. Clare Branch of Honiton.

Unusual object over Cornwall

With the Huntington film (taken from the A1 road, near Newark—see FSR CASE HISTORIES *Supplement 2* of December 1970) very much in mind, we were interested to read the following account which was published in *The West Briton and Royal Cornwall Gazette* of Thursday, November 26, 1970—

"An 'unidentified flying object' seen high over Redruth and Falmouth yesterday morning mystified keen-eyed workers and schoolchildren.

"Some of the staff of Tolgus CS School, Redruth, certainly saw the object, and 15-20 pupils saw it from