

POSTSCRIPT TO NEW ELGIN

Patricia Donaldson

IN FSR Vol. 23, No. 4 there was an account by Jenny Randles of an investigation conducted by herself and Bryan Hartley into a report of a landed UFO and entities seen by two girls in the small town of New Elgin, Morayshire, Scotland on May 18, 1977. At the time UFOIN had only just commenced operations, and its membership in Scotland was almost non-existent. The investigation was, therefore, conducted by the unsatisfactory methods of telephone and postal communication.

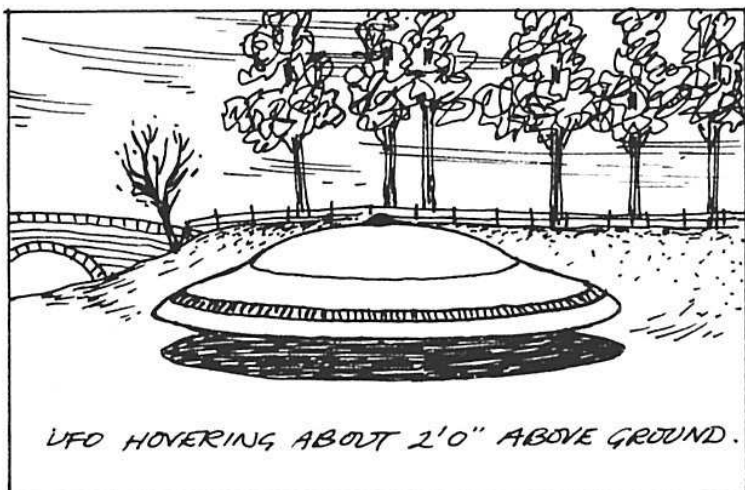
However, early in 1979 I joined UFOIN and was asked to visit the area to make a full report for the UFOIN files. Some points of interest are noted here.

Firstly, I was struck by the way that the story was described to me almost in the precise terms that it had been given to the previous investigators. I was able to add little to the detail and found only one or two small discrepancies. It should be said that the participants had not seen the issue of FSR which carried the report until, after my interview, they were given one.

As the photograph indicates the actual site is somewhat different from the sketch drawing with the original report. It consists, in fact, of rather overgrown and bumpy terrain. It lies behind a pub, the Coter House, and consists of an old disused railway track with a small bridge. A grass bank surrounds the heavily overgrown depression where the tracks once were. This is three or four feet wide on either side. There are just a few trees surrounding the site and none blocked the view that the girls had of the landed object. The fence was in fact behind the railway and the object. The area is very quiet and almost traffic-free.

When the object landed, it straddled the depression of the line, resting on the grass bank on either side. When it took off it left to the witnesses' right (and not left as stated in the original article).

The only major difference in testimony concerns the entity seen. Height was about six feet and the suit was a



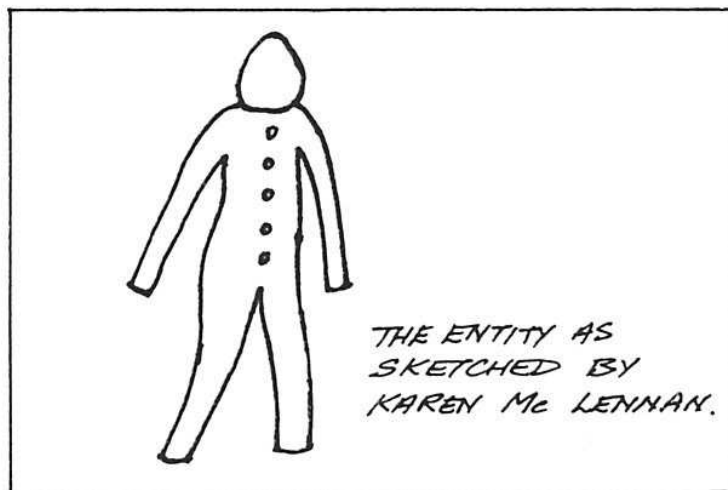
UFO HOVERING ABOUT 2'0" ABOVE GROUND.

Sketch by author of UFO at landing site.



New Elgin landing site — mid foreground — with fence and trees in background.

shiny silver all over. No facial features were observed but a line of silvery buttons down the middle were seen. The arms were now stated to be disproportionately *long* where previously they were said to be short. This latter claim was also made to *The Sun* newspaper in March 1978 (less than a year after the event), and on *Radio Highland* a few months later.



THE ENTITY AS SKETCHED BY KAREN Mc LENNAN.

There are a few other points to note. The police left the case unsolved, and the samples of burnt leaves that were collected and sent to UFOIN never arrived. This is apparently the second major trace data that vanished in

this way and prompted UFOIN to ban the sending of all important data — including original case reports — by post.

The mothers also found it very odd that the girls did not report the sighting until the day following the event. The girls have no answer for this, but it seems to have been a kind of mental block released the next day after the second report of the humming sound — almost like a post-hypnotic command.* Mrs. Morrison is in fact deaf in one ear, and says that she was most surprised to hear the high pitched humming noise which both mothers, and several neighbours heard at the time of the girls' sighting.

There have been two odd little sequels. Shortly after the case received some publicity Mrs. McLennan received a telephone call from a monotonous male voice which repeated the warning that she should tell nobody about the sighting if she valued her daughter's life. It concluded: "You will do exactly as I tell you. . .do you hear me?" The same call was made several times, but the police could not trace it. It may well be a hoax from someone

with a warped mind but it upset Mrs. McLennan considerably. She had to escort Karen to and from school for some time afterwards.

More recently she says she has seen strange things in the vicinity of the landing site at night. She can see it from her bedroom window. These are lights that move about like torches seen late at night. She does not think they are poachers with flashlights (although they may be), and has been too scared to go and look. Certainly there are no car headlights which could be the cause, and the spot where they are seen is precisely that where the object landed.

Neither of the witnesses or their mothers had an interest in UFOs before the event, and the girls still do not — although the mothers do to some extent. They were all very co-operative and I found no reason to doubt the testimony.

*A similar feature was found in the Gaynor Sunderland CE3 of July 1976 (see FSR Vol. 25, No. 3), although the time delay in this case was longer.

RESEARCH REPORT — No. 2

Jenny Randles

FROM time to time in FSR and other publications, articles have been carried about the great waves of Airship Sightings which took place outside of the USA. So far as Britain is concerned there were two major waves — in 1909 and in 1913. One or two of the more publicised reports within these waves are widely known, but until quite recently their full nature had not been examined.

Now a team of four researchers is working on a highly detailed analysis of the two waves, in particular the more thoroughly documented one of 1913 (which actually began with a sighting in Sheerness in October 1912, and otherwise mostly centred on February 1913). Nigel Watson is co-ordinating the research, and he has been receiving support from John Hind (Ireland), Granville Oldroyd (Northern England) and Robert Rickard (Southern England).

These people have been examining with great care the microfilm records of local newspapers searching for reports and comment (of which there appears to have been a fair amount). The trail led them to Hansard — which records all the proceedings of the Houses of Parliament — with some revealing results. At the time of writing this column there is evidence of an official government enquiry (perhaps the very first official study of UFO reports) and attempts are being made to pursue this.

The team intend to publish the results of their work, either in a booklet or in a series of articles, and from what I have seen of the early results this is going to prove of immense value to ufologists. It will amount to a detailed study of the development of a wave — which was *not* viewed as spaceships, but rather in a context totally relevant to the time (a possible German invasion of Britain from the air). Interestingly the press dubbed these "UFOs" as "scapeships."

I have no desire to steal the thunder of what could be a

very significant piece of UFO research, but I will give you a few tasters of what is to come.

The reports, which are many, appear to concentrate almost exclusively on British ports. There are relatively few sightings inland. They were virtually *all* nocturnal, and rarely were the objects definitely seen as airships. The supposition that they were airships seems to have been much the same mechanism as we see nowadays when UFOs are automatically interpreted as spaceships. So, we might ask, did this presupposition have an effect on the visual interpretation of what was reported? It seems in the main that lights were all that were visible.

The interpretation of the phenomenon as being overflights by German airships was debated fiercely in parliament, and the First Lord of the Admiralty stated in 1913 that German airships were very probably visiting Britain. The First Lord was none other than Winston Churchill. Indeed an Aerial Defence Act was rushed through parliament in double-quick time to try to alleviate what was seen as an ominous situation.

Meanwhile, over in Germany, the press and official sources were having a field day laughing at the British panic. They were adamant that German airships were quite incapable of doing what they were claimed to have done and, as I expect the final report will prove, this hypothesis for the sightings is quite untenable.

There were other important sidelights to the wave — all of which we can recognise from modern day counterparts. Hoaxes were perpetrated (for example people in Humberside were fooled by pranksters with a lighted box-kite). Even our old friend Venus was scientifically "proven" to be responsible for one sighting!

I believe that this research will prove to be of considerable importance because we will be able to compare a UFO wave that occurred *before* the spaceships era with one