

# A FRIGHTENING LATE NIGHT DRIVE

*Brian Fishwick*

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**MARCH 17, 1980 Rainhill, Merseyside CE-1 (EM)? Level A**

THE Merseyside village of Rainhill, a few miles south of St. Helens, has a place in history. It was the scene of the famous locomotive trials which led to the introduction of Stephenson's *Rocket* on the first proper railway in the world. The 150th anniversary of the event was celebrated with a grand re-enactment in May 1980.

The picturesque village has a place in UFO history too. It has been the scene of a number of interesting encounters over the years, far more than one ought to expect. In May 1976 a landed UFO and single silver suited entity were seen nearby. Twelve months before that, a UFO resembling three spheres of light (in a cone shape) was seen to land in a copse. Subsequent investigation discovered a large, heavy boot print — with tracks that started and ended suddenly in a sea of mud. On January 11, 1978, two police officers on the motorway here observed an inverted "T" shape (i.e. conical once more), and on February 9, 1979, the three lights in a triangle were seen yet again. This time, however, the witness had a closer view. Underneath this part of the object was a zeppelin-like carriage, hanging as if suspended from the main body.

This is the background with which to consider the following case.

## The Witnesses

There are three witnesses. Mrs. Margery Sherrard, her adult (but unmarried) daughter Deborah, and Teresa Malvaney, a friend of Deborah's. The Sherrards live in Amanda Road, which has a line of semi-detached houses, and is flanked by farmland to the north, east and west, while the village lies to the south. Teresa lives in Knowsley, about 5 miles away. On the night in question the three women had visited a keep fit class at a school in Rainhill, and had gone back to Amanda Road for coffee.

## The incidents

At 11 p.m. (BST) they decided to drive Teresa home to Knowsley. Deborah took the wheel. Her mother sat in the front with her, and Teresa was in the rear.

They drove out of Amanda Road on to Longton Lane, and then headed south west along Holt Lane. Half way along here Margery noticed a bright light high in the sky, but descending. She pointed it out to Teresa. It was visible in the east over some playing fields.

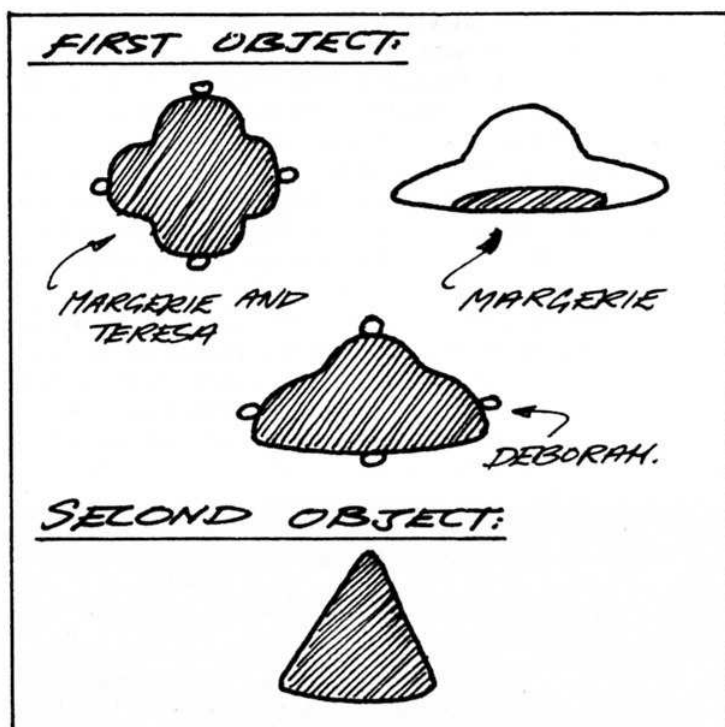
The immediate reaction was that it was an aircraft heading into Speke (Liverpool Airport). This is situated several miles South West, and the course of the object was taking it in that direction. However, as it came closer the women could not see any lights. Eventually Deborah was persuaded to stop the car and switch off the engine to have

a look for herself. They watched for several moments as the light approached. When it came closer they could make out a clear shape. This was described as being like a "clover-leaf" with white lights on each of the four corners. The underside was a dull orange colour.

There was no sound, and the women were beginning to get a little wary. The light seemed to have changed direction and was now heading towards them. Afraid that it would hit the car, Deborah drove away fast. The last sight Margery had of it was just before it vanished behind houses. It looked like a bowler hat, but still with an orange underside. It seemed so low that it was bound to land on the fields, but the women did not stay around to find out.

At the bottom of the lane they turned north west into Warrington Road, which led them through the small town of Prescot. After this they turned north into Knowsley Lane, heading towards Teresa's home. They dropped her off and immediately started back. With the stop, the normal 20-25 minute journey had taken a little longer, and it was now about 11.35 p.m.

As they drove back down Knowsley Lane they passed Lord Derby's estate on their left. Margery now noticed another light, reddish in colour, over to the east (as with the first light). This seemed to be travelling on a parallel South West course with them. Deborah was able to take quick glances at it as she drove. When they came to Elm Cottage they could see the new object clearly in a gap



Based on witnesses' sketches of the UFOs

between trees. It was now very definitely a red conical shape. Deborah put her foot down and they sped away. At last sight the colour had turned more yellowish. The object was lost behind trees but when they came past these it was no longer there.

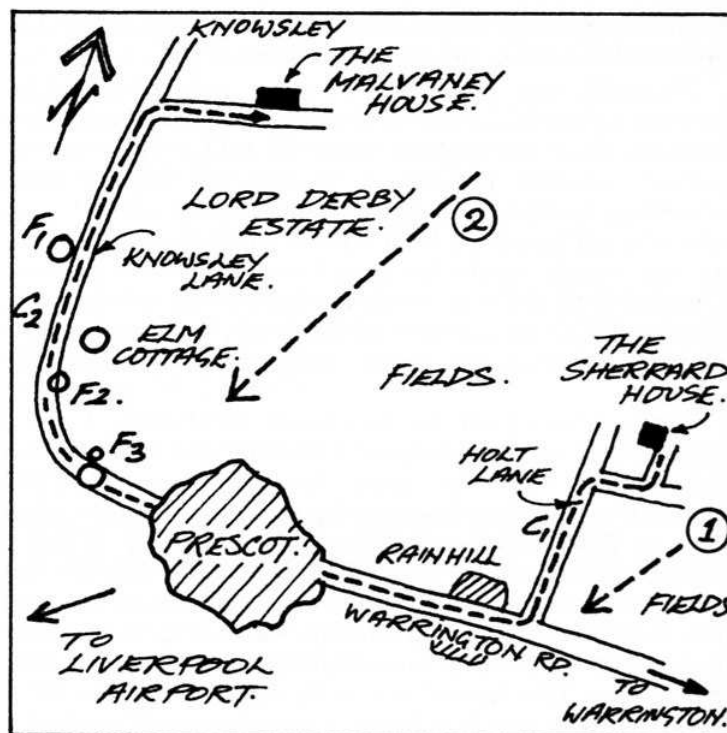
The two women returned home, arriving sometime shortly after midnight.

### Subsidiary events

At first the witnesses did not want to report their observation of strange figures, but ultimately picked up courage to do so.

These figures which may have been two or three individuals (one figure may possibly have been seen twice) were all on Knowsley Lane. They were identical in appearance. They looked about 50/60 years old and each had a long, thin pale face with long grey hair. They were dressed in white mackintosh coats. None of the figures looked at them, despite their approach in the car, and did not move off the road, upon which they were walking, to avoid the vehicle. On all three occasions Deborah had to swerve to avoid hitting them. The first figure was seen just north of Elm Cottage by all three women. The second was seen only by Margery and Deborah, on their return journey, in the vicinity of Elm Cottage. The third was seen as they approached the roundabout towards Prescott.

No effects were noticed on the car during the sighting. However, next morning the radio (which is used regularly, but was *not* used during the sighting trip) failed to work. That evening Mr. Sherrard examined it and found that a fuse had blown. This was replaced and there



(1) First UFO. C1 Position of car  
(2) Second UFO. C2 Position of car  
Figures seen at F1, F2, and F3

has been no trouble since. The car is a 1973 Morris Marina.

(Concluded on page iii of cover)

# RESEARCH REPORT — No. 3

## The spatial distribution of UFO events

*Jenny Randles*

IT is a well known fact of UFO life that sightings are not randomly distributed. Aimé Michel was probably the first to notice this with his now famous discourse on "orthoteny." Several articles around this theory of straight-line alignment have been featured in FSR, with particular reference to the so called BAVIC (or Bayonne to Vichy) line in France. The existence of this has been verified on computer by Dr David Saunders in the USA.

Following on from this Dr Jacques Vallée noted in the mid-sixties how sightings tended to be inversely related to population density. In other words UFO events were much less likely to occur in an area of major population than in somewhere remote or lightly populated. Clearly this constitutes a major piece of evidence about the true nature of the phenomenon, and we seem to have overlooked this fact. Very few studies have been conducted which have taken these preliminary conclusions any further. However, there are a few recent pieces of work which I think can be drawn together at this moment. They seem to offer scope for more detailed appraisal of this whole question.

Over in Sweden A.F.U. recently decided to test the Vallée hypothesis with a research project which would certainly merit duplication for other areas. They divided the country into units (akin to English counties) and obtained accurate population statistics for each unit. On the basis of the total population of the country they calculated what percentage of a sum total of UFO reports each unit should receive, assuming random distribution. In order to test this against actuality they could not simply use every UFO report on file for a number of reasons. The chief one of these was that there would be a bias according to the placement of UFO investigators. In order to attempt to overcome this they eliminated all cases which came to light through investigators, retaining only those received through channels such as military or police installations. From the final sample of reports they were able to calculate the expected total for each individual unit and compare it with the real total. The results showed quite conclusively that the less densely populated units had more than the expected number, and the more densely populated units had fewer. Indeed they even