

UFO-WITH OCCUPANTS? - NEAR MAIDSTONE

Patricia Grant

Report of an investigation conducted for UFOIN and *Flying Saucer Review*. Data: July 25, 1975 Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent CE3d Level A

THIS case concerns a middle-aged lady (about fifty years old) who works as an Invoice Typist. She wishes total anonymity. Her testimony was first given to the BBC a few days after the sighting, but they did not pursue the case. She then wrote to the *Daily Express* UFO Bureau in early 1978 — from which I came to investigate the case. Investigation has taken some time due to the frequent unavailability of the witness.

The Events

The day in question was warm and sunny with a clear blue sky. The time was between noon and 1.00 p.m. and the witness (whom we shall call by the pseudonym Mary) was hanging out her washing in the garden of her home in a popular residential area. She took a casual glance at the sky "as one would do occasionally" and spotted a strange object quite high up. She was transfixed as she watched it descend to hover over a clump of trees in the adjoining garden. She estimates at this closest point that it was only 25–30 feet off the ground and in size appeared 18 inches at arm's length (i.e. very large).

In shape she describes it as like a spinning top. She has done a drawing of it at low level, but this basically just shows the top view, as it was tilted slightly towards her on hovering. This had two portholes in the top — through which occupants were seen. As for the side-on shape, she had been given a large selection of shapes to choose from and had picked out three — each of which is totally distinctive. It is most uncertain which is the closest. Of A she says "the one I distinctly saw whilst hanging out my washing" while B "...does not appear to have much room to be able to see two men as I have described them." The colour of the object was silvery all over and it made no sound, even at closest approach.

The witness felt no effects during the sighting, but does say that the area was very quiet. After watching the object start to move off she went inside to tell her husband. He thought she was seeing things. When she went back outside it had totally disappeared.

The occupants

Mary says that she saw two occupants through the upper portholes. She could only see them from their shoulders upwards but they seemed to be dressed in a silver suit and had "divers" helmets on. They were sitting and seemed to be in control. They had a very

fair complexion and had staring blue eyes.¹ No attempt has been made to draw them.

Subsequent Events

Whether they be of any relevance whatsoever is another matter, but for the record the witness did respond to the question about other unusual events in the following way...

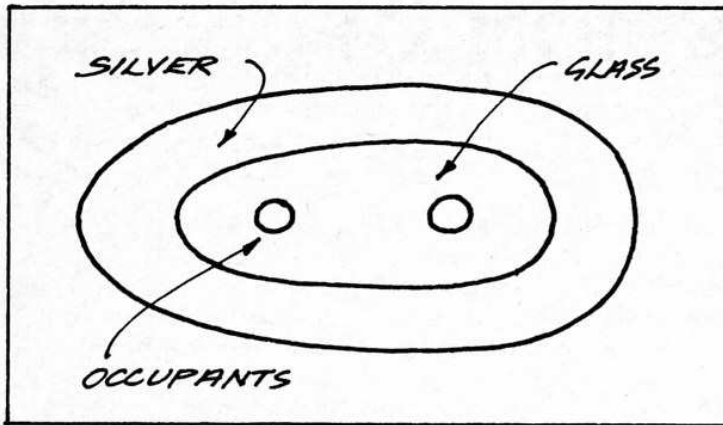
On June 3, 1979, during the investigation, her home was broken into. The police were puzzled because there were no signs of a break-in and nothing was apparently stolen. Nevertheless Mary had been awoken at 1.30 a.m. by someone trying to open the locked bedroom door. On later inspection the only thing amiss was that the telephone had been broken. She claims that only the "0" digit on the dial would turn. The others all stuck. The police succeeded in fixing it to the extent that it could be used for outgoing calls but when the GPO finally came they could not make it receive incoming calls. She was advised "Whatever they did, they have KO'd it this time" and the phone had to be replaced. It should be mentioned that several local burglaries were reported on that same night.

She further recounted an experience from earlier in 1979 when a light was seen flooding into her bedroom through the open curtains one night. The electric lightbulb that was on in the bedroom then went out — at the same moment as the light outside disappeared. She assumed that the bulb had just expired in the normal fashion, and thought no more about it.

Unfortunately, at this point, the witness was becoming somewhat nervous and sensing a connection between the break-in and the investigation. I asked her if she wished the investigation to continue and she requested that we did not do so. Naturally I obliged, despite several matters being outstanding.

Conclusions

Unfortunately I am of the opinion that this story should be considered dubious, despite the apparent sincerity of the witness. There does seem evidence that Mary is prone to fantasy — or perhaps her memory is somewhat disorganised (or both). Another UFOIN investigator (who is a personal friend and who assures me did *not* act in the manner suggested) is alleged by Mary to have asked her for £45 to



The object, as it hovered, as drawn by Mary

appear in a film! The investigator in question can think of no way this can be a simple misunderstanding (nor can I). He in fact, most fortunately, kept all his correspondence with Mary and the only point to be noted on consulting this is a comment by her that goes: "I cannot afford to send the enrolment fee of £5. That is why I did not fill up the form that you sent me." The investigator cannot understand this comment.²

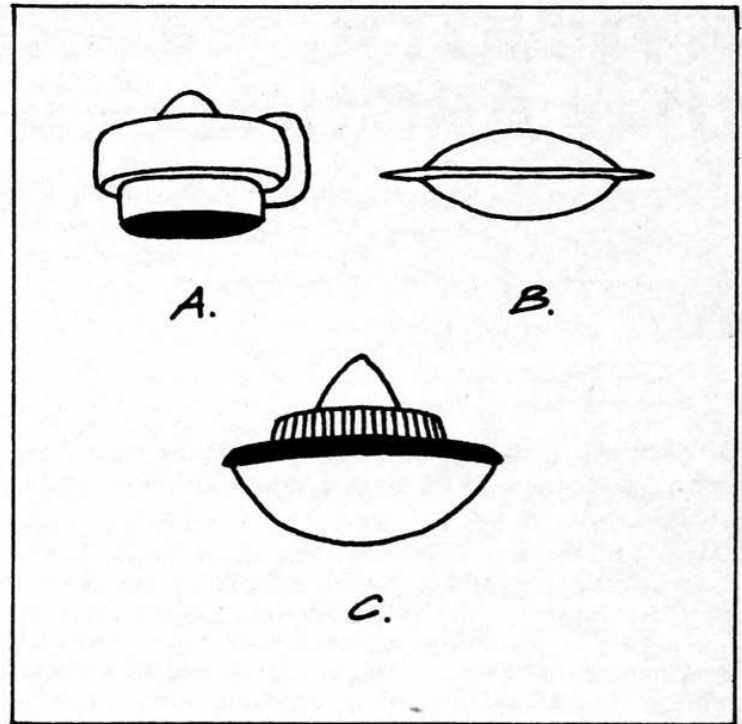
There are other problems too. The varying drawings for example. Her house is also extremely untidy and this indicates that she is somewhat disorganised. One must also ponder how such an object can appear on a Saturday afternoon over a popular residential area and be seen just by her.³

Furthermore Mary says that she has done little reading about UFOs, but does listen to Radio Medway with regularity – and they often produce UFO type programmes. Indeed my daughter has heard Mary on radio describing her own sighting.

I am inclined to treat this whole incident as the fantasy of a lonely and overly imaginative middle-aged lady. However, one must be objective and there are some plus sides to her argument.

Firstly her account given to me is basically the same as that given in the letter submitted to the *Daily Express* a year before. Secondly, she was subject to the typical *escalation of hypotheses* syndrome. She says: "I thought it was an aeroplane coming along and I kept listening. There was no sound at all and gradually it just came nearer and nearer...I waved, thinking it might be a helicopter, but I didn't see the tops of the helicopter in sight..."

My Secretary is slightly acquainted with one of Mary's neighbours, who has assured her that Mary is not regarded as being the least bit eccentric by anyone in the area. It should also be mentioned that her period of unavailability for interview was due to the fact that she was attending a government sponsored course for computer invoicing, as she had been made redundant from her invoice typing job shortly after her alleged sighting, and had been unable to find employment since (possibly causing some financial restraint and leading to the poor condition of her housekeeping). She completed the course successfully and is now employed in a capacity which uses



Side-on shapes, as selected by Mary

this training. I would imagine that if she showed any signs of instability she would not have taken the course, let alone passed it.

In the end, therefore, the decision on this case must be left to the reader.

Notes (by author and Jenny Randles)

- 1 Mary is "far sighted" and wears spectacles for reading only. I have the same type of sight and am approximately the same age. I tested to see if her assertion that she could tell the eyes of the occupants were blue, from an alleged distance of about 35 feet or so, was feasible. Under good lighting conditions I was able to tell such a fact – even from a little greater distance than this. P. Grant.
2. It seems to me that this £5 may be the BUFORA annual subscription (which was notified to all *Daily Express* report writers, along with other details, in a reciprocal arrangement which included BUFORA sending FSR information to witnesses in their batch of reports) I was in fact responsible for the distribution of this data and not the UFOIN investigator in question (who contacted Mary shortly after this 'mailshot' had been sent to her)... J. Randles.
3. This 'isolation' factor is, of course, a hallmark of the close encounter experience and whilst it may indicate a subjective experience of some type it should *not* be counted as a negative factor against the validity of the basic experience...J. Randles

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