

THE CASE OF CARLO ROSSI

Mary Boyd

THIS interesting, and possibly very important Italian case occurred at 3.00 a.m. on July 25, 1952, in the district of San Pietro a Vico (Lucca). Brief accounts of it have appeared from time to time in European UFO journals but the present version, which I have translated from the new book *UFO In Italia* (Vol. 1),¹ where it is listed as Case No. 51, seems to be much more complete than any previously seen.

FSR Vol.15, No.1 (Jan./Feb. 1969) carried a letter about it from Dr. Jacques Vallée, in which the latter pointed out that it was not true (as Janet Gregory had appeared to suggest in her letter about "Men in Black", in FSR Vol.14, No.6) that "witness intimidation" was confined to the United States. According to Dr. Vallée, who evidently takes this as a genuine "MIB" case, the original press report of it appeared in the newspaper *La Nazione* (published in Firenze (Florence), for September 25, 1952.²

On the night in question Carlo Rossi, a keen fisherman, was on his way to a spot where the river Serchio deepens and widens in a broad curve opposite San Pietro a Vico, about 4 km. from Lucca. While walking along the footpath in the dark, he suddenly noticed a strange light on the river. At the point where he was the river bank is very high and the water invisible. His curiosity aroused and somewhat alarmed, Rossi quickened his pace until he was parallel to the light, then he climbed the embankment and leant over. To his amazement he saw hovering low over the river an enormous circular craft apparently taking in water by means of a long tube. Completely silent, it seemed to hover by means of propellers.

Rossi described it as follows: "I judged its diameter to be about 25 metres; a round disk painted black with no appendages. Along its depth of about 2 metres were oval apertures like mouths. I should guess that through them it sucked in air which probably operated its mechanism. In the centre a small turret protruded 3 metres below the disk and half a metre above it. It was as big as a room, transparent like glass or plastic and with a diameter of 5 metres. Inside were visible four thin tubes attached to a large cylinder in the centre. A bluish flame shot with orange passed from one cylinder to another and alternately rose and fell. These flashes coming from the transparent turret lit up the disk by reflection on to its surface. The craft had five propellers underneath it and these extended about half their length from the black cylinder band or depth around which they were placed at equal intervals. Attached to the upper part of the turret were three more propellers, the lowest being the breadth of the disk and the other two above it being proportionally smaller."

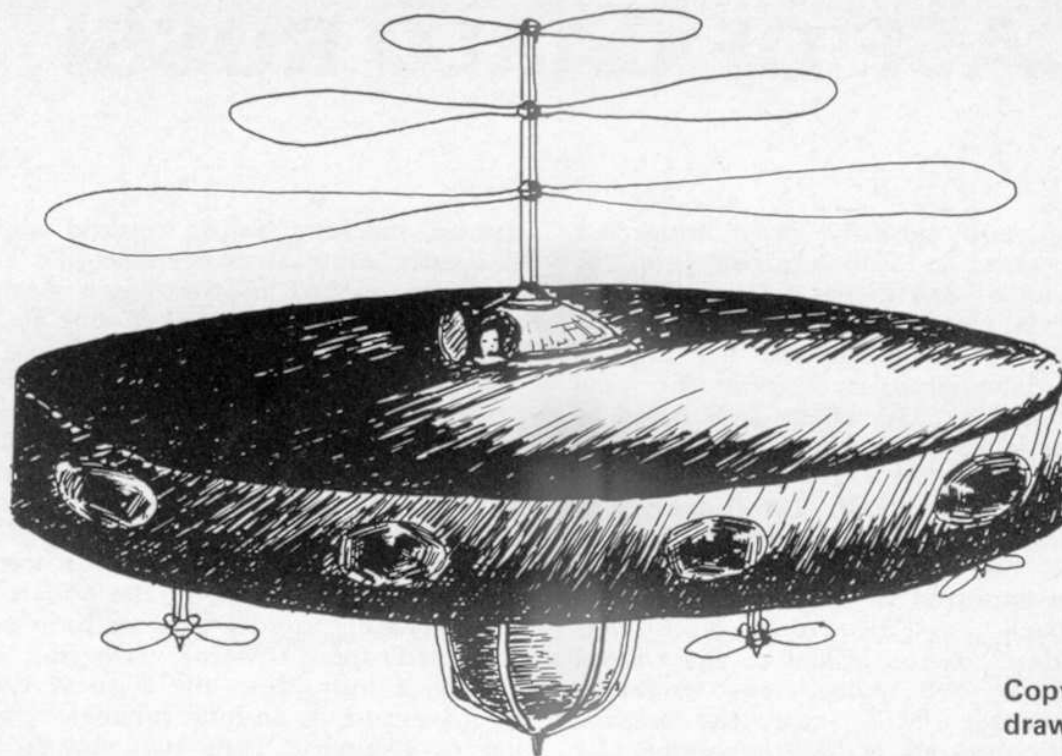
The astonished Rossi remained motionless and half afraid, half curious, continued to watch the

strange machine as it hovered above the water. The only sound was a rustle like silk. Suddenly a porthole opened in the upper part of the turret and a human figure looked out as if searching for someone. He evidently spotted the indiscreet witness for he pointed to him as if indicating his presence to someone inside. Rossi, seized with panic, scrambled down the embankment, but he had barely reached the bottom, where he was quite out of sight of the craft, when a green ray passed over his head. Simultaneously he felt an electric shock through his whole body. Terrified, he threw himself down and on looking up he perceived the sphere rise above the embankment, rapidly gain altitude and disappear at a fantastic speed towards Viareggio.

For a long time the witness did not mention his adventure to anyone for fear of being taken for a liar or visionary. Then two months later something else happened. On September 15, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, Rossi, on arrival at his usual fishing spot, found another unknown fisherman there. He looked like a foreigner, wore blue coveralls and carried a short fishing rod. Tall, very thin, with a pointed nose and strange grey eyes, he at once began to speak in correct Italian but with an unrecognizable foreign accent. After a few minutes he asked Rossi if he had ever seen an aeroplane or other flying object over the river. Rossi at once thought of his earlier experience, but sensing danger in some curious way, he replied that he had never seen anything. More words were exchanged, then the mysterious stranger offered him a cigarette which the witness noticed was different from any, including familiar foreign brands, that he knew. This one was long and thin and had a unknown gold mark stamped on it which he didn't think to examine at the time. Scarcely had he lit it, however, and started to smoke, than he began to feel dizzy and sick. Instinctively he extinguished it and was about to put it in his pocket, when the individual unexpectedly seized his wrist, snatched the cigarette from him, tore it into shreds and threw them into the river. Then, without a word, he rushed off, leaving the witness terrified and perplexed.

After regaining his composure, Rossi decided that this time he would report his experiences to the Authorities, because this last episode made him fear that someone was bent on securing his silence. On September 26, therefore, he went to the Lucca office of the Public Prosecutor and testified to an extraordinary experience that had endangered his life. The Press took up the matter, the trustworthiness of the witness was acknowledged, but nothing further came to light.

Recently, however, the case was investigated by the Prato Ufological Research Group under its chairman Siro Menicucci. They succeeded in tracing relatives of Carlo Rossi (who until then had only



Copy of Carlo Rossi's drawing of the object

been known by the initial N). At the time of the incidents Carlo was 53 and despite the loss of his left arm in a railway accident back in 1926, he continued to work actively with agricultural machinery. He died about ten years ago, but Menicucci found his son Sergio and family, who still live in the same district. Sergio well remembers the agitation of his father who kept repeating: "They are surely not going to harm me because I saw that thing!" Sergio also said that the man who had offered his father the cigarette had been seen again. However it was clear to Menicucci that for some reason Sergio did not wish to pursue that point. The Prato research group was also able to contact several elderly friends of Carlo's, including the Bandelli brothers who lived near the footpath that Carlo was in the habit of using. Mario Bandelli told them that the mysterious individual who had given Carlo the presumed poisoned cigarette, was a soldier who had been seen in the village, and this was confirmed by Sergio Rossi, another old friend of Carlo's.

Notes

1. Published by Corrado Tedeschi, Firenze (Florence), 1974. (See Note 3 to Mary Boyd's *An Early Italian Cross-Country Case*, in FSR Vol.20, No.3.)

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2. September 26, 1952, according to *UFO In Italia* (p. 140). Perhaps the newspaper carried reports on the case on two successive days.

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