

# WEST VIRGINIA'S ENIGMATIC "BIRD"

*A special report by John A. Keel*

APPROXIMATELY 200 miles west of Flatwoods, West Virginia, site of the celebrated appearance of the "Flatwoods Monster" in 1952, a new kind of creature materialised in 1966 and has apparently been lingering around Point Pleasant, W. Va., ever since. Unlike its unearthly predecessor, the Point Pleasant critter is equipped with a pair of wings and is reported to be able to fly as fast as a speeding automobile without flapping them! Local citizens refer to it as "The Bird", but newspapermen from coast-to-coast have labelled it "The Mothman".

Whatever it is, the "Bird" has managed to frighten a great many people and confound a wide variety of scientists, biologists and ornithologists. Since December 1966 I have visited Point Pleasant five times and have interviewed many of the witnesses at great length. Some of their lives have been drastically changed after their fleeting experiences with "Mothman". I have kept in constant touch with many of these people and have carefully compared developments in West Virginia with the UFO developments in other sections of the country. There is now no doubt in my mind that Mr. Mothman is related to unidentified flying objects in some very special and terrifying way.

## The Bird and its Habitat

Although winged creatures are no strangers to Ufologists and have appeared repeatedly since 1878,<sup>1</sup> they—if we can call them "they"—have never before returned consistently to one area, as they now seem to be doing in West Virginia. The accompanying chart outlines 26 basic sighting reports between November 1966-November 1967. In eleven of these cases the creatures either pursued automobiles or made direct approaches to the occupants of parked cars. This is not only a familiar UFO pattern, but is an apparent behavioral trait of the tall, odious, hairy man-like creatures which turn up every year in California, Michigan and many other places<sup>2</sup> around the United States. Perhaps we should start entertaining the possibility that all of these assorted and very elusive creatures are not only related but that they are cunning *disguises* and that the masqueraders are in fact more than just curious about the products of Detroit. "They" may have a special interest in the occupants of the automobiles being approached, and they conceal that interest—their true purpose for existing at all—by manifesting themselves in weird guises. There is now mounting evidence to support this somewhat outlandish notion.

The people in the Mothman country are not hillbillies. Many of the witnesses are intelligent, well-educated people enjoying fine reputations in their community. The Point Pleasant section of West Virginia is highly industrialised. There are many large chemical factories lining the Ohio river valley, employing highly skilled labour. Another factor in their favour is that they are

part of the "Bible Belt" and are highly religious. Point Pleasant, a town of about 5,000, has 22 churches and no bar-rooms.

## First Cases

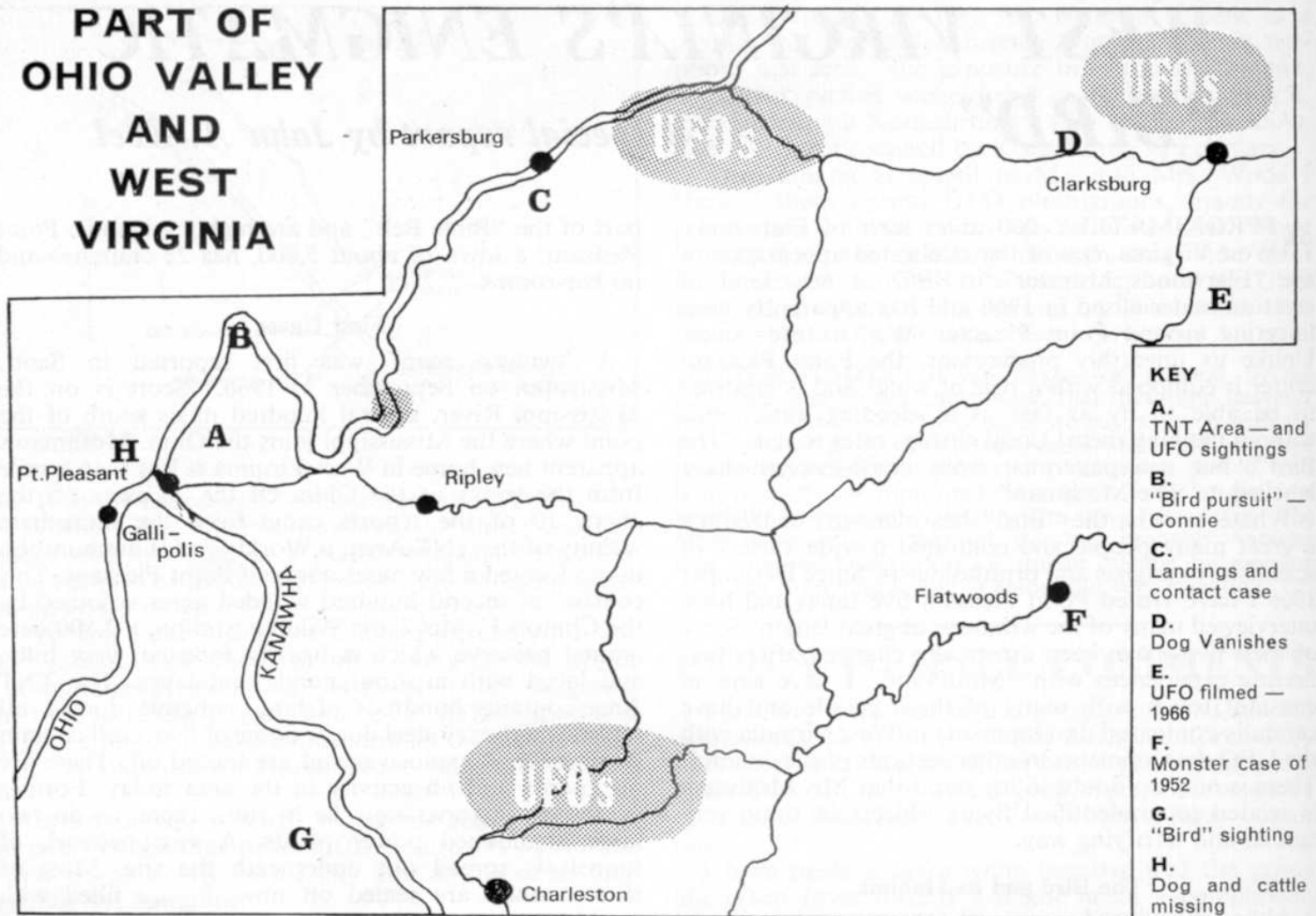
A "winged man" was first reported in Scott, Mississippi on September 1, 1966.<sup>3</sup> Scott is on the Mississippi River, several hundred miles south of the point where the Mississippi joins the Ohio. Mothman's apparent new home in West Virginia is less than a mile from the banks of the Ohio. Of the 26 cases on the chart, 10 of the reports came from the immediate vicinity of the TNT Area, a World War II ammunition dump located a few miles north of Point Pleasant. This consists of several hundred wooded acres adjoined by the Clinton F. McClintic Wildlife Station, a 2,500 acre animal preserve which is heavily forested, very hilly, and laced with artificial ponds and lakes. The TNT Area contains hundreds of large concrete domes, all sealed with heavy steel doors. Some of them still contain stores of high explosives and are fenced off. There are no guards and no activity in the area today. Former explosives factories now lie in ruins there, as do two large abandoned power plants. A vast network of tunnels is spread out underneath the site. Most of these tunnels are sealed off now, or are filled with muddy water.

One of the first "Mothman" sightings (No.4) occurred at midnight, November 15, 1966, directly outside of one of the abandoned power plants.<sup>4</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Roger Scarberry and Mr. and Mrs. Steve Mallette were driving along the rugged dirt road that passes by the plant when they suddenly saw a grey figure as tall as a man, according to their description, which had large eerily glowing red eyes and wings. It turned and shuffled awkwardly towards the door of the old plant, they said. Badly frightened, they accelerated and fled the area. As they hurtled towards Point Pleasant at over 100 mph, all four claimed that the creature appeared overhead and flew along with them without flapping its wings! They reported the incident to the police and Deputy Millard Halstead drove out to the area with them. The creature was gone but Halstead's police radio began to emit a strange sound . . . like a speeded-up phonograph, he said later.

## Poltergeist Effect

That was the beginning of a long and bizarre chain of events. The Scarberrys, who were living in a trailer house at the time, began to suffer a series of poltergeist-like manifestations. Although Mr. Scarberry is now in the army and his wife, Linda, lives with her parents in Point Pleasant, the poltergeist seems to have moved with her. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Park McDaniel, have been having unusual problems with their telephone and they suspect it may be tapped by some unknown party.

# PART OF OHIO VALLEY AND WEST VIRGINIA



Strange lights have appeared in the McDaniel home in recent months and objects have moved of their own volition, or seemingly so.

On January 11, 1967, Mrs. McDaniel saw the "Bird" herself (No. 22) in broad daylight. She was outside her home when she observed what appeared to be a small plane flying down the road almost at tree-top level. As it drew closer she realised it was a man-shaped object with wings. It swooped low over her head and circled a nearby restaurant before going out of sight, she told me later. I might add that Mrs. McDaniel enjoys a fine reputation in Point Pleasant and works in the local Unemployment Office. I have often been a guest in the McDaniel home and they show no signs of being a hysterical or over-imaginative family.<sup>5</sup>

Both Linda and her parents state that they have received visits from people whose descriptions tally with those of the legendary and controversial "Men In Black". Their reports of these incidents were among those which have led me to take the M.I.B. seriously.<sup>6</sup> The last "visit" was on December 23, 1967.<sup>7</sup>

The McDaniel home lies just off of Route 62 which leads past the TNT area.

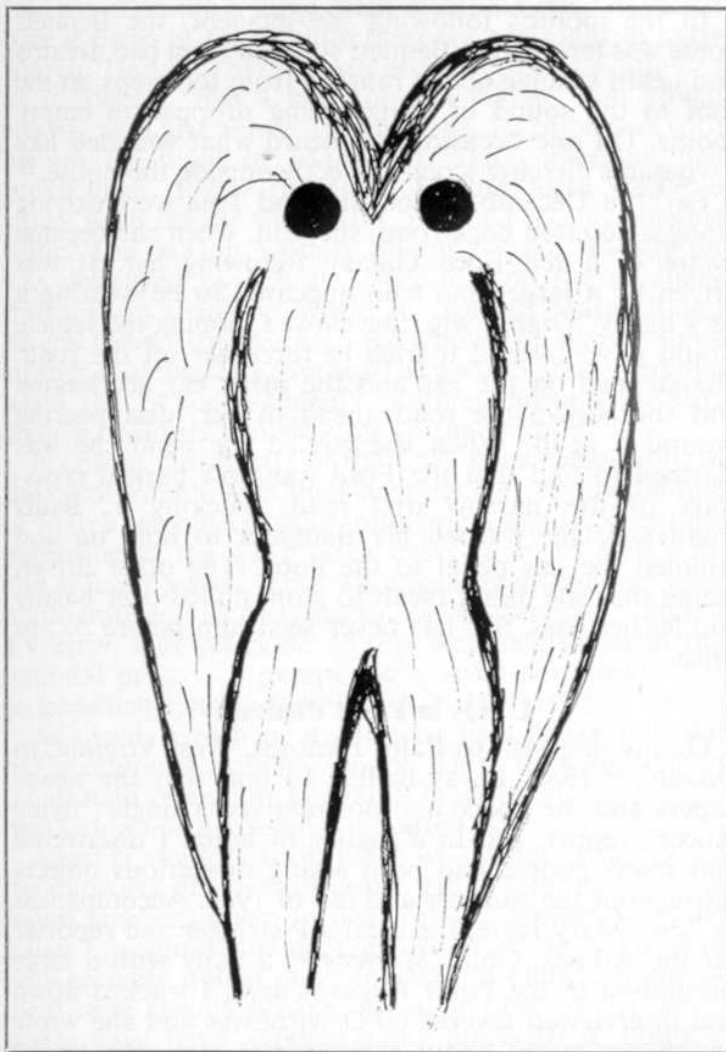
In the majority of the Mothman cases, the witnesses managed only a brief glimpse of the creature. Its most outstanding feature seems to be its glowing red eyes. Few witnesses have been able to describe the "Bird's" face, but most have noted the eyes and have admitted being terrified by them. While some people have

claimed that Mothman was brown, most have described it as being greyish in colour. All witnesses seem to agree that the wings do not flap in flight, making its incredible speeds all the more unaccountable. Those who have seen it walk say that it shuffles or waddles. Those who have seen it take off claim that it rises straight up like a helicopter.

Thomas Ury, 25, of Clarksburg, West Virginia, was driving along route 62 at 7.15 a.m. on the morning of November 25, 1966 (No. 10) just above the TNT Area when he saw a large grey figure rise from a field next to the road. "It came up like a helicopter and veered over my car," he said. He stepped on the gas and accelerated to about 75 mph but the "Bird" not only stayed with him, but circled casually above his speeding car. He described it as being about six feet long, with an 8 or 10 foot wingspread. Like most of the others, he didn't get a look at its face. He was too frightened. He was driving a convertible and was afraid it was going to come down on him.<sup>8</sup>

Another witness swears that she saw Mothman's face but she has been unable to find words to describe it. "It was horrible . . . like something out of a science-fiction movie," Connie Joe Carpenter told me the first time I interviewed her, (No. 13).

According to her story, Connie, a quiet, sensitive 18-year-old, was driving home from Church at 10.30 a.m. on Sunday, November 27, 1966, when she saw a tall grey figure standing on the deserted greens of the



Artist's impression of the "Bird", based on Roger Scarberry's sketch.

Mason County Golf Course outside New Haven, West Virginia. The figure suddenly spread a pair of 10ft. wings, took off straight up and flew directly at her car. It had large, round, fiercely glowing red eyes, she said, which gripped her. She couldn't turn away. "It's a wonder I didn't have an accident," she commented.<sup>9</sup>

The apparition swooped over her car and she sped home in near hysterics. The next day her eyes were reddened and were almost swollen shut. When I interviewed her two weeks later they were still red and watery.<sup>10</sup> As with many of the other cases, this first incident was only the beginning of the nightmare for Connie.

#### The Kidnapping Attempt

Early in February 1967, Connie married Mr. Keith Gordon and they moved across the river to a two-family house in Middleport, Ohio. They did not have a telephone. At 8.15 a.m., February 22nd, Connie left the house to go to school. As she started to walk down the street a large black car pulled alongside. Since all young people today are very automobile conscious (cars are a major status symbol in American rural society), she said she could positively identify it as a 1949 Buick.<sup>11</sup> "The occupant of the car opened the door and called to her. Thinking that he was seeking directions, she approached him. He was a young, clean-cut

man of about 25, she told me later. He was wearing a colourful "Mod" shirt, no jacket, had neatly combed thick black hair and appeared to be suntanned. He spoke with no noticeable accent.<sup>12</sup>

When she reached the car, the driver suddenly lunged and grabbed her arm and ordered her to get in with him. He did not get out of the car. She fought back and there was a brief struggle before she broke away. She ran back to the house (the other apartment was deserted, the occupants having gone to work) and locked herself in, completely terrified. Later in the day she thought she heard someone on the porch but she did not look.

After her husband came home from work, she told him the story and he said he had also seen the Buick cruising around the neighbourhood. Neither of them had ever seen the driver before.

Connie remained indoors the following day, February 23. At 3 p.m. she heard someone on the porch again and there was a loud knock on the door. She cautiously went to the door. There was no-one on the porch but a note had been slipped under the door. It was written in pencil in block letters on a piece of ordinary notebook paper. "Be careful, girl," it read, "I can get you yet."

That night Connie and Keith went to the local police. They turned the note over to officer Raymond Manly.

One curious and significant thing that Connie noticed about the car involved was that despite its obvious vintage it appeared to be *brand new inside and out*. Not just well kept, she assured me, but brand new.<sup>13</sup>

#### The Police Investigation

The Middleport police force is small (the town has a population of 3,400) and somewhat lethargic. In March 1967, I visited their office and asked to see their file on the case. The police chief produced a printed form containing Connie's name and address and one scribbled line; "Dark Buick, young man". He told me that no such car existed in Middleport and that it was obviously a case of some maniac trying to abduct a young girl. Officer Manly assured me that he was keeping the house under constant surveillance. I had to break the news that the Gordons had moved back to the West Virginia side of the river shortly after the incident and no longer even lived in Middleport. Despite my sheaf of credentials from leading magazines and the North American Newspaper Alliance, both men were overly suspicious of me and asked me repeatedly if I really wasn't from "the government".

Officer Manly conveniently lost the note somewhere along the way.<sup>14</sup>

Connie and Keith moved in with Connie's mother, Mrs. Faye Carpenter, in New Haven temporarily. On the night of March 22, Connie was awakened in the middle of the night by a long beeping sound which she said appeared to be coming from directly outside her window.

On December 22, 1967, a "Man In Black" type visited Connie and Keith and talked to them for about two hours. Mrs. Carpenter was present at the meeting but, strangely enough, she can remember only the man's entrance into the house and his departure. She does not remember any of the conversation that took place. For the past year there have been repeated poltergeist manifestations in her home . . . strange noises, objects

that have been in one place for years suddenly falling off shelves, and so on. She has also been receiving many odd telephone calls. The phone rings and there is nobody there, heavy static and strange mechanical sounds during conversations, and all the other familiar patterns of phone harassment. Mrs. Carpenter leads a quiet life and has received no publicity of any kind. Like everyone else in New Haven, she has seen a number of UFOs in recent months.<sup>15</sup>

### Horror in the TNT Area

Another early "Mothman" witness, Mrs. Marcella Bennett<sup>16</sup> of Point Pleasant, has also suffered a series of traumatic experiences following her encounter, (No. 5).

At 9 p.m. Wednesday, November 16, 1966, Mrs. Bennett drove out to the TNT Area, together with Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Wamsley, to visit Mrs. Ralph Thomas whose family is one of the few living directly in the area amongst the "igloos". Mr. and Mrs. Thomas were not at home but three of their children, Rickie, Connie and Vickie, were. Not knowing this, and having heard of the "monster" sighting of the night before, the Wamsley's decided to pull a prank and rap on the windows. They got out of their car quietly and started towards the house. Mrs. Bennett was carrying her 2-year old girl, Tina. As she got out of the car with her sleepy burden she suddenly gasped. A giant grey figure with blazing red eyes seemed to rise up from the ground behind the car, staring directly at Mrs. Bennett.<sup>17</sup> Horror swept over the trio and they all started to run for the house but Mrs. Bennett stumbled, dropped her child to the gravel, and stood transfixed.

"It was as if she went into some kind of trance," Raymond Wamsley observed later.

After a prolonged and agonising moment, Mrs. Bennett managed to scoop up the now screaming Tina and staggered to the house. Hysteria overcame the entire group as the creature moved on to the porch. They frantically called the police. The "thing" was gone when the police arrived.

Mrs. Bennett, an attractive blonde in her late twenties, came close to suffering a nervous breakdown after the incident. She could not discuss the experience at all for several weeks afterwards. She refused to see me for months, but finally mutual friends talked her into meeting with me. During that first interview she was laconic and quite reluctant. She hinted that the "monster" had returned and that she had seen it in the immediate vicinity of her house. But it was not until November 1967, that she really granted a fruitful interview.

She had been cautious during our earlier talk, she said, because "something kept telling me to be careful . . . that you were from the government." (This anti-government paranoia is one of my biggest obstacles in my research. We can thank the organised UFO groups for this unfortunate public attitude which undoubtedly cuts the Air Force and government off from much important information.<sup>18</sup>

Mrs. Bennett recalled that she and the Wamsleys had been watching a strange large red light dancing around the sky as they drove through the TNT Area to the Thomas's place. At that time, no-one in Point Pleasant was UFO-conscious.

In the months following the incident, the Bennett home was tense. Mrs. Bennett suffered from bad dreams and heard strange noises ranging from footsteps on the roof to the sound of things being dropped in empty rooms. On one occasion she heard what sounded like a woman's piercing scream directly outside the house.<sup>19</sup>

Early in December 1966, she and Tina were driving along a deserted back road, she said, when she became aware of a red Ford Galaxy following her. It was driven by a large man who appeared to be wearing a very bushy "fright" wig. She slowed, hoping the vehicle would pass. Instead it tried to force her off the road. She stepped on the gas and the other car accelerated and shot down the road ahead of her, disappearing around a bend. When she circled the bend she was alarmed to find that the Ford was now parked cross-ways of the narrow dirt road, blocking it. Badly frightened, she warned her daughter to hold on and jammed the gas pedal to the floor. The other driver, seeing that she didn't mean to stop, pulled over hastily and let her pass. She has never seen him before . . . or since.

### UFOs in Point Pleasant

On my first visit to Point Pleasant, West Virginia, in December 1966, I was baffled to find that the newspapers and the police had not received a single "flying saucer" report. But in a matter of hours I discovered that many people had been seeing mysterious objects throughout the summer and fall of 1966. Accompanied by Mrs. Mary Hyre, the local AP stringer and reporter for the Athens, Ohio, *Messenger*, a daily with a large circulation in the Point Pleasant area, I tracked down and interviewed several UFO witnesses and she wrote newspaper pieces about their stories. As soon as the stories appeared the dam burst. Scores of people ranging from hill farmers to prominent local officials came forward with UFO stories of their own.<sup>20</sup>

I prowled up and down both sides of the Ohio river, visiting other towns and uncovering many other good UFO sightings.<sup>21</sup> It was apparent that a major "flap" was taking place there and that it was unnoticed by the press largely because most of the witnesses were reluctant to come forward. But once the door was opened, UFO-mania soon gripped the whole region. Since then Mrs. Hyre has received as many as *twenty* new sighting reports a day.

I saw so many strange lights and objects myself that I actually lost count. Sightings ran the full gamut, from "flying bird cages" (one of those passed low over Point Pleasant proper early in March 1967 and was seen by hundreds) to giant reddish cigars and great spheres which displayed a penchant for hovering over nearby dams and factories.<sup>22</sup> There were dozens of auto pursuits and innumerable brief landings were reported, including one in a schoolyard.<sup>23</sup>

It would be impossible to recount the situation here. People living on high ground told me of being awakened in the middle of the night by loud thumps against their houses. There was a widespread outbreak of poltergeist cases, TV sets went haywire. New sets "burned out" immediately after they were installed.

Much of the UFO activity seemed to be concentrated in the TNT area itself. Police officer Harold Harmon

told me of seeing a large, dark metallic object hovering over a pond in the wildlife preserve one night in early March. He said that he watched it for several minutes as it rocked "like a boat on the waves" and glided silently past just above the tree-tops. Harmon was with me on the night of March 31, 1967, when all hell broke loose. Police radios all up and down the Ohio valley were useless that night, jammed by inexplicable static. The Mason County Sheriff's radio transmitter was destroyed by fire at 7.30 p.m. and the auxiliary transmitters wouldn't work. In front of Harmon and several other witnesses I flashed a powerful light at some strange looking stars overhead and astonished everyone when the "stars" suddenly skittered around the sky, changed colours and flew on up the Ohio.<sup>24</sup>

People in the vicinity of the TNT Area began to have the usual trouble with their telephones<sup>25</sup>. By the middle of March the objects were following a regular schedule, appearing in the TNT Area every night at 8.30 p.m. and at treetop level. They were seen by thousands, were photographed by newspaper photographers<sup>26</sup> and a TV crew, and yet none of this was mentioned in the national press . . . except for a seven-part newspaper series which I wrote for NANA in June 1967.

As usual, a rash of mysterious fires broke out. An old abandoned building in the TNT Area burned to the ground one night in March *in a pouring rain*. Firemen could not figure how it started.

Another mystery took place in a large cemetery on the outskirts of Point Pleasant. Huge tombstones were found knocked down in neat rows. Together with the police I examined the damage. Many of the stones had been securely bolted and cemented in place. Some of them were cleanly *broken off*. A number of the larger stones must have weighed many hundreds of pounds. At first the police suspected teenaged vandals but it would have taken tractors and heavy equipment, plus a lot of very hard work, to inflict such damage. Similar "pranks" have occurred in other cemeteries throughout the country . . . always in heavy "flap" areas.<sup>27</sup>

The enormity of this situation—and there are now hundreds of Point Pleasants in America—has been ignored by the newspapers and neglected by the UFO-philosophers who devote themselves to collecting random descriptions of flying objects. It is time for us to stop misleading ourselves and buckle down to the job of investigating fully and in-depth the "flap" areas and the strange things that happen to the people caught in them. There is a definite correlation between poltergeist activity and other seemingly "occult" manifestations, and the UFO phenomenon itself. There is also the disturbing possibility that terrestrials or terrestrial-type beings are directly involved with the phenomenon itself.<sup>28</sup>

### What is "Mothman"?

By using the standard journalistic procedure of in-depth interviewing and steady follow-up of all important cases, I assured myself of the reliability of the witnesses and the reliability of their reports. None of these people had ever heard of the "Men In Black", and few had any knowledge of poltergeists. Most of them tried to fit their experiences into a religious framework.

During my visits to "Mothman" country a number of prominent local businessmen, teachers, and others, came to me to tell me—in strictest confidence—of their own experiences with the "Bird" and UFOs. All of them described essentially the same thing. But there were a couple of notable exceptions. The witnesses in cases No. 7, No. 11, No. 15 may have actually seen some kind of huge and unclassified bird. It may sound preposterous but there is reason to believe that unusual birds may somehow have been imported into the area to spread confusion and to reduce the effect of Mothman's presence. In late December 1966, a rare Arctic Snow Owl was shot by a farmer in Gallipolis Ferry, West Virginia.<sup>29</sup> This creature was two feet tall and had a five foot wingspan. "Mothman" witnesses converged on the farmer for a look at the owl and all of them declared that it in no way resembled what they had seen.

In July 1967, another rare bird turned up. This one was a Turkey Vulture and stood a foot tall. It was found by a group of boys near New Haven, West Virginia.<sup>30</sup> Again, the "Mothman" witnesses looked and shook their heads. But the big question is: how did an Arctic Snow Owl and a rare Turkey Vulture make their way to West Virginia? We might also ask how deflated weather balloons manage to turn up conspicuously in other "flap" areas, often landing on the front lawn of a prominent citizen? This kind of coincidence is becoming too common. Either the UFO sceptics are right, or else we are all being made the victims of a gigantic plot to deceive and confuse us.

There are no bears in Mason County but in November 1966, Mr. Cecil Lucas saw three bear-like creatures sniffing around an oil pump<sup>31</sup> in his field. His farm is located a few hundred yards from the McDaniel home and is on the banks of the Ohio. When he came out of his house to investigate, the dark, hairy forms ran off erect towards the river, disappearing into a thicket. No "bears" have been seen before or since by anyone else. In talking with Mr. Lucas I was impressed with his forthright honesty. Besides, why should anyone make up a story about little bears?

All of this is a rather inadequate summary of the situation in Point Pleasant, West Virginia. The story is not yet over. Mrs. Hyre and the police continue to receive at least one new UFO report daily. Mothman's appearances have been less frequent but the M.I.B. activity seems to be continuing throughout the Ohio valley.

In March 1967, I called both the Pentagon and Wright-Patterson AFB and made a direct appeal to the Air Force, asking that they at least perform a token investigation in West Virginia. Nothing was done.

Dog disappearances<sup>32</sup> and the mutilation of cows and horses is now common in West Virginia and Ohio.<sup>33</sup> The police are baffled. In the past three years over twenty people, all teenaged boys, have vanished suddenly without a trace in Braxton county, home of the "Flatwoods Monster".<sup>34</sup>

### Is "Mothman" a Ufonaut?

One final "Bird" sighting is of special interest. At 10.30 p.m. on the night of Friday, May 19, 1967, Mrs. Brenda Smith (name changed at her request) and

another woman were driving along Route 62, heading north from Point Pleasant.<sup>35</sup> As they passed the C. C. Lewis farm near the TNT Area, they say they observed a dark form with two brilliant red lights on it. Apparently it was circling a tree. From the general shape they believed that it was a winged object slightly larger than a man. Suddenly a larger red light appeared at low level and approached the dark figure. The two seemed to merge and then the large red light flew off to the north.

The two women returned immediately to Point Pleasant and excitedly reported what they had seen. Both were convinced that they had watched a "Mothman" rendezvous with a UFO. At 3 a.m. that morning several residents reported seeing a brightly glowing UFO land in a field near the Ohio River junior high school in Point Pleasant. Some of the witnesses reported watching it for twenty minutes before it rose slowly into the night sky and disappeared.

If this report is accurate, then it would appear that the UFOs and the "Bird" could indeed be related.

#### UFOs and the Bridge Disaster

In November 1967, I visited Point Pleasant again. Even though sightings had subsided somewhat, I saw another UFO hovering over the TNT Area, as did several other people. In talking with the residents I learned of a peculiar new epidemic. Mrs. Ralph Thomas, Mrs. Mary Hyre and a number of others claimed they had been having disturbing dreams. Mrs. Hyre said she had dreamed of people crying for help in the icy waters of the Ohio. Mrs. Thomas said her dreams were also of a terrible disaster on the river. A mood of ominous foreboding seemed to have gripped Point Pleasant.

On December 15, 1967, the suspension bridge which joined Point Pleasant with the Ohio side of the river suddenly collapsed, taking with it 17 trucks and 40 passenger vehicles. Among the scores of people who died in the tragedy were several UFO witnesses including Marvin Wamsley, teenaged nephew of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Wamsley.<sup>36</sup>

Within an hour of the bridge collapse (5.05 p.m.), twelve UFOs appeared in the TNT Area according to the testimony of the James Lilly family, old experienced UFO-watchers. No UFOs were seen in the vicinity of the bridge, however.

#### The significance of the Point Pleasant Events

Point Pleasant, West Virginia., is a microcosm. All of the complex ground level factors inherent in the UFO phenomenon can be found there. We might even consider the possibility that some UFOs are actually based somewhere in the almost inaccessible back hills of West Virginia. Aside from national guard units, there are no major Air Force or military installations in West Virginia and no radar nets to locate the interlopers. Police Forces in the Ohio valley are small and overworked. There are only two F.B.I. agents assigned to cover the entire sector. After 9 p.m. at night the major portion of the population is sound asleep. Point Pleasant's Main Street is completely deserted after 7.00 p.m. In short, West Virginia is most vulnerable to any kind of invasion.

Perhaps an invasion has already begun.

#### DESCRIPTION: W. VA.'s "MOTHPMAN"

(Based upon a composite of descriptions from over 100 witnesses.)

- HEIGHT:** Between 5ft. and 7ft. tall. Usually described as "taller than a good-sized man".
- BREADTH:** Broad at the top with slight taper downwards. Always described as "very broad, much broader than a man".
- ARMS:** None. No witness has ever reported seeing arms.
- LEGS:** Man-like. No witness has ever been able to describe the feet.
- EYES:** Approximately two to three inches in diameter, set wide apart, self-luminous, bright red.
- HEAD:** Seen from the back it appears to have no head. Witnesses say eyes are set in near top of shoulders. Few witnesses have reported seeing a face at all, describe it as "science-fiction like".
- WINGS:** Fold against the back when not in use. Wingspread, everyone agrees, is about 10ft. (This is not sufficient to support a creature of this size. A man would require wings of at least 35ft. width in order to glide.) Wings do not flap in flight.
- SOUND:** Loud squeaks, like a mouse. One witness described it as sounding like "a squeaky fan belt". Two witnesses claim to have heard a mechanical humming sound as the creature flew overhead.
- COVERING:** Witnesses have been unable to determine if it is clothed or covered with skin. Generally described as being grey, though some have said it was brown. One witness thought it was covered with grey fur. Daylight sightings of others do not substantiate this.
- SPEED:** It is said to be able to exceed 100 m.p.h. in flight. Few birds can achieve this in level flight. Pilot witnesses have estimated that it was travelling at least 70 m.p.h. in level flight.

TABLE OF "MOTHMAN" SIGHTINGS—1966-67

(Names of witnesses, taped interviews, clippings and other documentation are on file—J.A.K.)

Date	Witnesses	Locale	Description
1. September 1, 1966	Several adults	Scott, Miss	Man-shaped object flying low
2. November 1, 1966	A national guardsman	Armory, near Camp Conley Rd., Pt. Pleasant, W. Va.	A large man-shaped figure, brownish. On limb of tree
3. November 12, 1966	Five male adults	Cemetery near Clendenin, W. Va.	A flying brown human-shaped object
4. November 15, 1966	Two married couples. (Young adults)	TNT AREA, NEAR OLD POWER PLANT	Large grey man-shaped creature with blazing red eyes, 10ft. wing span. Pursued witnesses' auto.
5. November 16, 1966	Three adults, three children	TNT AREA, NEAR "IGLOOS"	Tall, greyish creature with glowing red eyes
6. November 17, 1966	Teenaged boy	Route 7, near Cheshire, Ohio	Grey man-shaped creature with red eyes and 10ft. wing-spread pursued boy's auto.
7. November 18, 1966	Two male adults (Firemen)	TNT area	Giant winged creature with red eyes
8. November 20, 1966	Six teenagers	Campbells Creek, W. Va.	Grey man-sized creature with red eyes
9. November 24, 1966	Family, 2 adults, 2 children	Pt. Pleasant, W. Va.	Giant flying creature with red eyes
10. November 25, 1966	Male adult	Highway passing TNT AREA	Grey man-like being with red eyes and 10ft. wingspread pursued auto.
11. November 26, 1966	Two male adults, 2 children	Lowell, Ohio	Four giant brown and grey "birds" with reddish heads, 5ft. tall, 10ft. wing-spans
12. November 26, 1966	Housewife	St. Albans, W. Va.	Grey creature with red eyes, taller than a man, standing on lawn
13. November 27, 1966	Girl, 18	Mason, W. Va.	Tall grey man-shaped being with 10ft. wingspan and red eyes. Pursued auto.
14. November 27, 1966	Two teenaged girls	St. Albans, W. Va.	Grey, 7ft. tall creature with red eyes pursued witnesses
15. December 4, 1966	Five pilots	Gallipolis, O. Airport	Giant "bird", appeared to be plane at first. Estimated speed: 70 m.p.h.
16. December 6, 1966	Mailman	Maysville, Ky.	Giant birdlike creature
17. December 6, 1966	Two adults (high school teacher)	TNT AREA	Giant grey man-like figure with glowing red eyes
18. December 7, 1966	Four adult women	Route 33, Ohio	Brownish-silver man-shaped flying creature with glowing red eyes
19. December 8, 1966	Two adult women	Route 35, W. Va.	Two glowing red eyes, shadowy figure on hilltop
20. December 11, 1966	One adult male, 1 boy	TNT AREA	Man-shaped figure, grey, flying overhead at great speed
21. December 11, 1966	One adult woman	Route 35, W. Va.	Huge grey creature with glowing red eyes, flew past car
22. January 11, 1967	Housewife	Pt. Pleasant, W. Va.	Creature as big as a small plane flew low over route 62

Date	Witnesses	Locale	Description
23. March 12, 1967	Two adult women	Letart Falls, O.	Large white flying being with 10ft. wingspread passed in front of car
24. May 19, 1967	Two adult women	TNT AREA	Flying creature with glowing red eyes approached hovering unidentified flying object and disappeared
25. November 2, 1967	Adult woman	TNT AREA Near "Igloos"	Giant grey man-like figure gliding swiftly at ground level across field
26. November —, 1967	Four adult males	Chief Cornstalk Park, W. Va.	Men claim to have encountered giant grey figure with red eyes while hunting. They were so frightened they never thought to raise their rifles

NOTE: There were many additional reports, plus many rumours of sightings which I did not have time to track down. These 26 are representative of the overall picture.

WITNESS BREAKDOWN: ADULT MALES: 30  
Adult females: 22  
Children & Teenagers: 17

### NOTES

- On September 18, 1877, a witness reported seeing a winged human form flying over Brooklyn, N.Y. New York Sun, September 21, 1877. See *Houston Bat Man*, FATE, October 1953. Winged being seen near Fatima, Portugal, 1915-17. See *Our Lady of Fatima* by William Thomas Walsh, 1922. Two different witnesses reported seeing circular craft land and tall winged creatures disembark. Jacques Vallée's *Anatomy of a Phenomenon*. Gray Barker's *Book of Saucers*. November 21, 1963. Four teenagers witnessed descent of luminous oval near Kent, England. A tall, headless, winged figure approached them. FSR, March/April 1964. See also *Few and Far Between* by Charles Bowen, FSR special issue THE HUMANIDS. *Do Birds Come This Big?* by Helen M. White, FATE magazine, August 1967.
- "Seagulls without heads" reported during Scandinavian flap of 1946. *Anatomy of a Phenomenon*, J. Vallée (paperback), p. 83.
- SAGA, February 1968. *Abominable Spacemen* by Brad Steiger and Joan Whritenour. *Abominable Snowmen: Legend Come to Life* by Ivan T. Sanderson. *Do Abominable Snowmen of America Really Exist?* by Roger Patterson. *Trail of the Abominable Snowman* by Gardner Soule.
- North America 1966: Development of a Great Wave* by John Keel. FSR, March/April 1967.
- Point Pleasant, W. Va., *Register*, November 16, 1966; Athens, O., *Messenger*, November 16, 1966; AP & UPI wire stories, nationally distributed, November 16, 1966.
- Point Pleasant *Register*, January 14, 1967; Athens, O., *Messenger*, January 14, 1967.
- The Silencers at Work* by John Keel, FSR, March/April 1967. *Agents of Terror* by John Keel. SAGA, October 1967. *The Flying Saucer Silencers* by Brad Steiger and Joan Whritenour. *The Sinister Men in Black* by John Keel. FATE, April 1967. *The Flying Saucer Silencers* by Brad Steiger and Joan Whritenour. SAGA, March 1967.
- A slight man in a black suit systematically visited several of the people I had interviewed. All witnesses described this man as resembling an Oriental, such as a Thai or Burmese. His speech was slow and parrot-like. He apparently could only hear the witnesses when they looked directly into his dark, glassy eyes. He identified himself as "Jack Brown". All witnesses said that he was primarily interested in what I had been doing in the area, who I had been talking to, and where I had gone. He drove a large white station wagon which made a lot of noise, as if the silencer was broken.
- Point Pleasant *Register*, November 26, 1966; Athens, O., *Messenger*, November 26, 1966.
- Athens, O., *Messenger*, November 28, 1966.
- In many cases witnesses who make close observations of the brightly illuminated UFOs suffer from this eye malady for several days afterwards. This is the only case in which a "Mothman" witness has had this problem, however.
- According to many reports, old Buicks are often favoured by the MIB. Cadillacs and Lincolns have also been frequently reported as MIB vehicles.
- A businessman in Dunbar, W. Va., Tad Jones, told me he had seen a man with a ruddy complexion twice at the exact spot where he had observed a spherical hovering object on January 19, 1967. See FSR, May/June 1967, p. 4.

- <sup>13</sup> Both MIB witnesses and "silent contactees" have told me of their experiences with old cars that looked new inside and out and even had a "new car smell".
- <sup>14</sup> The note as described by Connie and Keith may have been very similar in handwriting to the note shoved under the door of Tad Jones, in Dunbar, W. Va., around that same period. (FSR, May/June 1967, p. 5.)
- <sup>15</sup> For a brief round-up of sightings in New Haven, W. Va., see NICAP's *UFO Investigator*, May/June 1967, p. 6.
- <sup>16</sup> Charleston, W. Va. *Daily Mail*, November 19, 1966; Athens, O. *Messenger* November 18, 1966.
- <sup>17</sup> On March 28, 1959, three teenaged boys near Charles Mill Lake outside of Mansfield, Ohio, reported that a giant 7ft. figure rose up off the ground and frightened them. They said it had no arms but had green eyes. Strange tracks were found at the site. *National Observer*, June 22, 1964.
- <sup>18</sup> See *The Little Man of Gaffney* by John Keel. FSR, March/April 1968.
- <sup>19</sup> Comment: Usually witnesses say it sounds as if a big metal pan has been dropped somewhere in the house. I have heard both the footsteps on the roof and the pan-dropping phenomenon during my travels and investigations. The sound of "a woman screaming" has also been frequently described to me. In some cases, the witnesses have said it "sounded like a dog being torn apart".
- <sup>20</sup> First UFO story appeared in Athens, O. *Messenger* December, 12, 1966.
- <sup>21</sup> *From My Ohio Valley Notebook* by John Keel. FSR May/June 1967, FSR July/August 1967.
- <sup>22</sup> See "Are the UFOs Using the Earth for a Garbage Dump", Dell's *Flying Saucers—UFO Reports* No. 4. Description of some of the factory sightings in the area.
- <sup>23</sup> Athens *Messenger* November 24, 1967: "At 3 a.m. a resident of the north end of Point Pleasant saw a UFO land in the area of the Ohio River junior high school. He called neighbours who witnessed the same thing. After a few minutes, the object rose slowly and went out of sight toward Henderson. Persons reported watching it for about 20 minutes." Schoolyard sightings have become commonplace in the past two years. See FSR, May/June 1967, p. 3, *The Vanishing Buildings*.
- <sup>24</sup> Officer Harmon is no longer on the Point Pleasant police force. At the time, this was given to me as "privileged information" and was not meant for publication.
- <sup>25</sup> As in note 21. Also FSR, July/August 1967, p. 32.

- <sup>26</sup> Time exposure was published in Huntington, W. Va. *Herald-Dispatch*, April 18, 1967. Many UFO reports appeared in the *Register* and *Messenger* in March/April 1967. Also many other newspapers in West Virginia and Ohio were carrying current reports in their areas.
- <sup>27</sup> In accordance with routine police procedure, reporters were asked to refrain from mentioning the cemetery damage while an investigation was being held. Police kept the cemetery under close nightly surveillance for several weeks. Strange lights were frequently seen there, rising straight up.
- <sup>28</sup> See *A New Approach to UFO Witnesses* by John Keel. FSR, May/June 1968.
- <sup>29</sup> Huntington, W. Va. *Herald-Dispatch*, December 28, 1966.
- <sup>30</sup> Athens, O. *Messenger*, July 26, 1967.
- <sup>31</sup> There have been numerous creature sightings around oil tanks and oil installations. See FSR November/December 1966, p. 8.
- <sup>32</sup> Gallipolis, O. *Tribune*, November 18, 1966. Newell Patridge of Doddridge county said his TV set started "acting like a generator" on the night of November 15, 1966, and his German shepherd dog, Bandit, "started carrying on something terrible". Patridge shined a flashlight into the field next to his house and saw something "like two red reflectors". The dog's hair stood straight up and it ran into the field. It was never seen again.
- <sup>33</sup> Gallipolis, O. *Times-Sentinel*, November 20, 1966. Wm. Watson of Georges Creek Road found his German shepherd dog crushed to death in a field. Every bone in the animal's body was crushed. The knee-high grass around the animal was flattened in a perfect circle 20ft. in diameter. There was no sign that the dog had been attacked by any ordinary animal. No blood was in evidence. During my travels I have examined a number of dogs and cows which have been mysteriously mutilated as if operated on by a sharp scalpel. In December of 1967 a cow was found outside of Gallipolis, O. and was cleanly cut in half "as if by a giant pair of scissors". The organs and blood had been removed from the lower half.
- <sup>34</sup> NANA article on animal mutilations by John Keel, November 1967.
- <sup>35</sup> "Privileged information" from local Sheriff. I did not have time to personally check into any of these cases.
- <sup>36</sup> Athens, O. *Messenger*, May 24, 1967.
- <sup>37</sup> This disaster was heavily covered by all news media, major radio and TV networks, and news magazines.

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