

# HUMANOID ENCOUNTER AT RAINFORD

*Jenny Randles*

This UFOIN report has been prepared following considerable work by Stephen Balon, an investigator for the long-standing Lancashire group DIGAP. The assistance of Bill Skellon, also of DIGAP, and Tony Pace, of BUFORA, is gratefully acknowledged in parts of the investigation. Stephen Balon has now joined the UFOIN team.

THIS incident involves the encounter of four young men with a strange humanoid figure on an isolated road near Rainford, Merseyside. Although there was no actual UFO sighting at the time, the case is of special interest for several reasons.

First, the entity described corresponds closely with several seen in direct association with the UFO phenomenon. Secondly, reports were received of UFO activity in the immediate area just 46 hours previous to the encounter and, thirdly, the Merseyside/South Lancashire/North Cheshire region became the focus for an important "flap" immediately following this incident.

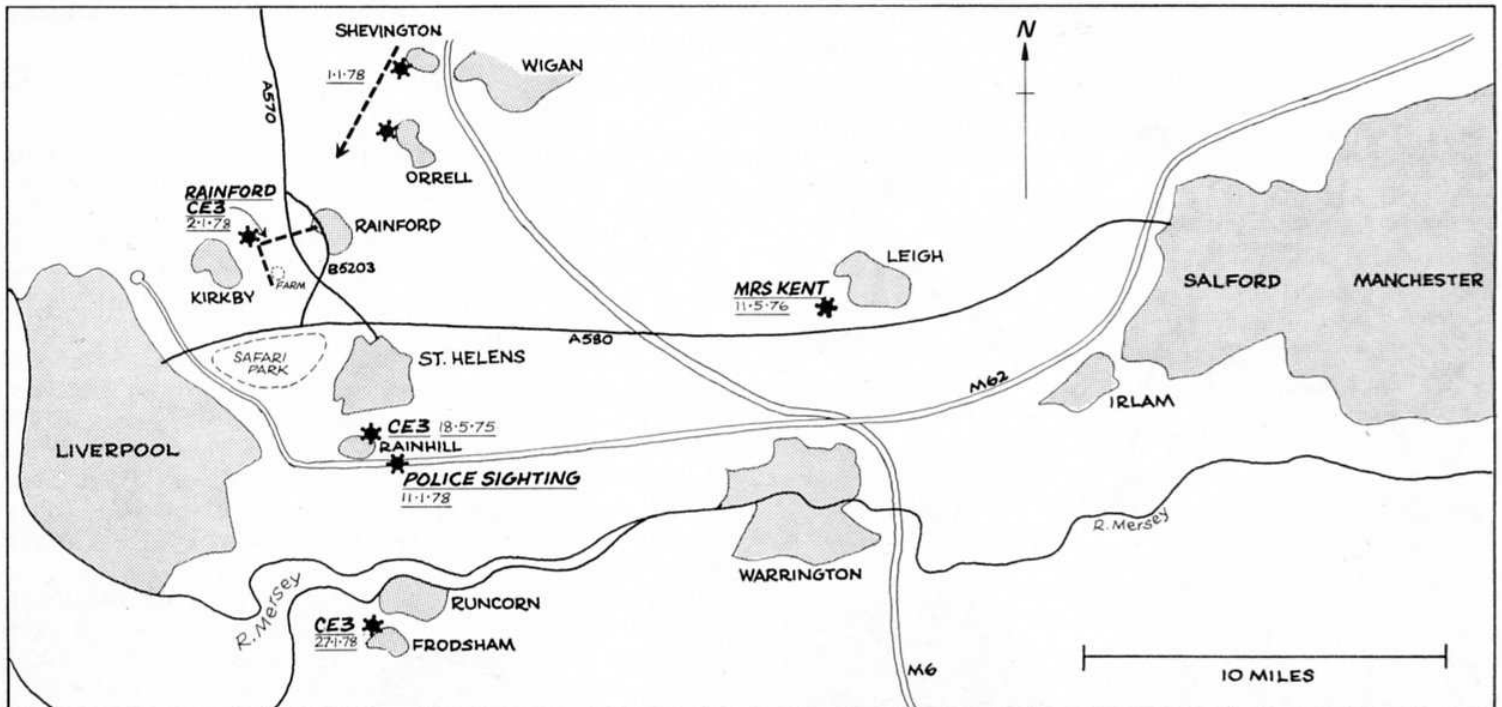
## The locality

The events took place on an old coach road in Merseyside, midway between the villages of Rain-

ford and Kirkby (just a few miles north east of the city of Liverpool). In fact the exact location is precisely on the borders of the three counties: Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Lancashire.

The area is desolate, with few signs of human habitation save one or two farms. It is mostly open mossland, known by several names including Kirkby Moss. It is situated two and a half miles north west of the town of St. Helens, and the road itself runs almost due north to south into the estates of the Knowsley Safari Park, which is famous for its reservation of wild animals.

The coach road is little used and is quite narrow, being lined by trees along its perfectly straight route. There are muddy ditches to the sides, and then grass and scrubland, and there are no lights of any type along its course.



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Details from: NIGEL WATSON, 1 Angerstein Road, Scunthorpe, South Humberside, DN17 2LZ

### The incident

Four young men in their early twenties had been out for the evening of January 2, 1978, and were returning from the direction of Rainford to the Liverpool area where they live. The men were Geoff Hales (who was driving), Stephen Simpson, Glynn Mathews and Keith Thomas. They had stopped on the way home for a drink, but this was by no means enough to have impaired their judgement, and in fact the police were able to confirm that the men were not in any way intoxicated.

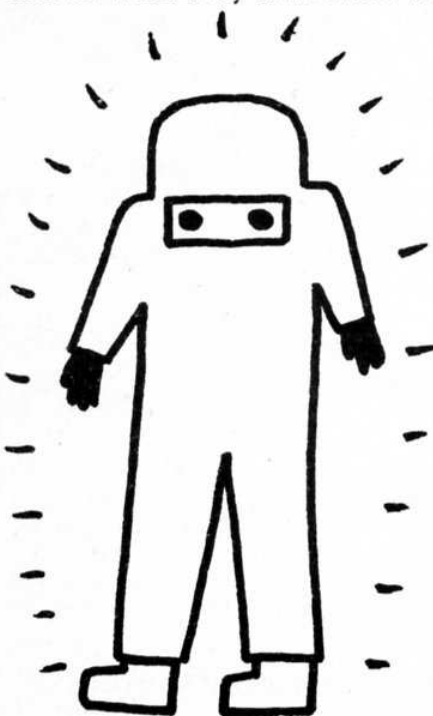
The time was about 11.15 p.m. as they drove out of Rainford on the B 5203 road. They turned left on to the old coach road, crossing the A 570 and proceeding for about a mile through open countryside, heading West South West.

At a spot that we have been able to locate as OS Reference SJ 456007 they came to a crossroads. To follow their scheduled route towards the A 580 they should have turned left at this point. In fact they turned right, which in the conditions prevailing was a very easy mistake to make, since the surroundings are featureless and are somewhat similar in all directions. Geoff, the driver, quickly realised his error and braked sharply. The car was only travelling at about 30 m.p.h., but the road surface was slightly greasy and the back wheels skidded. The car moved over on to the verge, and then into the muddy ditch where it was stopped (apparently by normal means).

Geoff was the first to see the figure, illuminated in the beams of the headlights. It was standing in the middle of the road at an estimated distance of 25 feet from them.

### The entity

All the witnesses were consistent in their descriptions of what they saw. There were slight discrepancies



THE RAINFORD  
HUMANOID



Object seen at  
Rainhill 11 Jan. '78  
by PCs Lowe  
and Roberts



Red object seen at  
Shevington  
1 Jan. '78

over minor details, such as height (although all agreed that this was at least 6' 6" and possibly as much as 7'), but in general nothing more than one might expect.

It seems the entity was basically humanoid, and was clad in a one piece suit of a fluorescent white colour. In fact the suit was said to glow. There were white boots, which were quite short, and a rounded helmet which had no visible protrusions or openings. There was no indication of facial features, and no sign of a joint between the head and body parts of the suit.

The body was very broad — much broader than one would normally expect for a man, and the other unusual feature was the description of the arms. These were *very* short and in fact, some estimates were that they were only about 8 inches long. The men are not certain what the hands were like. They were darker than the rest of the body, but it is not clear whether there were gloves on them or not. They did give the impression of claws but, unlike the newspaper accounts which stated that the figure did have claws, the witnesses do not claim this with any certainty.

The only other feature of the entity was a rectangular box on its chest, in the middle portion directly underneath the head. This stood out in relief as if raised from the body, and had on it two red lights which flashed on and off in rapid alternation.

The basic description does not conform with any clothing or gear used by experimental workers, or other such persons, by some strange circumstances, who might have been in this remote spot. In any event the men are certain of the "non human" features that the figure seemed to possess.

### After effects

As one might expect the men were somewhat unnerved by this experience and their first thoughts were to "get the hell out of there." Geoff attempted to get the car into reverse gear and back out. As he was doing so the figure took three or four steps in their direction, appearing both to be hesitant, and as surprised and frightened as they were.

Now Geoff Hales is an asthmatic and the symptoms of this illness can be brought on suddenly by fright, and it was when the creature moved forward that he had an attack. There followed a frantic struggle inside the vehicle to get them away from the scene. Eventually they did manage to get away and drove off down the road which they should have taken originally.

In all the duration of the sighting of the entity was about 20 seconds, and as they drove off along the path the witnesses were terrified.

The first habitation they came to was Brown Birch Farm. Here they stopped and, despite the late hour, rushed to the farmhouse and urgently awoke the farmer. Seeing their state of extreme distress, and the unhappy physical condition of Geoff Hales he telephoned the Kirkby Police, who came round immediately.

The farmer commented to Stephen Balon when he was interviewed: "Those lads were really scared

when they called. They were not messing about.”

Three policemen arrived at the farmhouse, and went back with Stephen Simpson to the spot. One of the officers was Pc. McCluskie. He told the investigators that “There was no doubt they were scared, both visibly and physically. I think they definitely saw something. The lad who was asthmatic was sat in the back of the car when we arrived. His knees were shaking, he was white and he couldn’t speak properly. When we got to the spot I took the road to the right and I locked my car doors. I wouldn’t have gone there on my own without a car radio.”

The police searched the area for over half an hour, but this was obviously quite difficult in the dark. Nothing at all was found. Stephen Balon returned a few days later and looked at the area with the witnesses. Nothing was found and no unusual readings were recorded on a geiger counter.

#### UFO activity in the area

This region has by no means been devoid of UFO activity. Indeed two highly interesting CE-III events have happened in fairly close proximity to the spot within the past three years.

On May 18, 1975, three witnesses at Rainhill, Merseyside (about 5 miles to the south) reported the landing of a UFO in a copse of trees.<sup>1</sup> The object looked like three tennis balls in a triangular formation. On searching the scene of the incident some unusual footprints were found which led up to a duck pond. They were square shaped with no in-step, measuring 14 inches by 6 inches, and were heavily indented. The impression gained was that they were made by a large and heavy figure which



Facing west: to the left the road which should have been taken. Arrowed, the turning accidentally taken

was apparently put into the environment suddenly, and taken out just as suddenly (the steps began and ended quite clearly in the middle of a large patch of muddy ground).

Then on May 11, 1976 came the encounter of Mrs. Kent at Higher Fold, Greater Manchester,<sup>2</sup> when she observed a figure in a silvery suit beside a spherical UFO. Higher Fold is about nine miles east of Rainford.

These correlations are interesting, if not important. However, it was soon to be discovered that the police had received independently, several reports of something seen even closer to Rainford on the day before the four men encountered the humanoid.



Left: South, beyond the crossroads is the road which should have been taken. The farm is a quarter of a mile from the crossroads. Stephen Simpson looks at the skid marks.

Below: Car route arrowed, before skidding to a halt at spot indicated. Entity drawn in at point where seen from the car.



The principal set of witnesses for this report were in Shevington, Greater Manchester, a village close to Wigan and about three miles north east of Rainford. They have requested anonymity, but consist of a husband and wife, their lodger, and a neighbour who had all been watching TV on New Year's Eve. The programme finished at about 1.45 a.m. on January 1st, and it was a cold moonlit night.

The object was described as a circular disc of light, which was bright red in colour, with a bluish tinge to it, and which gave a fuzzy purple effect overall. It was lighter on the underside and gave the appearance of being lit from within. It illuminated the surroundings and was clearly seen as a glow even when it went behind houses.

The disc was very large (about ten inch diameter at arm's length!) and was extremely low (described as roof-top height). Its speed was quite slow, somewhat reminiscent of a helicopter, but in appearance totally different, and with absolutely no sound. The witnesses kept it in view for between three or four minutes as it moved towards the South South West.

The course that the object was travelling would have taken it directly towards Rainford, which is of course very interesting. On this course it would pass close to the village of Orrell (about two miles north east of Rainford) and it was from here that several more witnesses came forward to the police and reported seeing a red cigar shape moving South West. These reports were all independent, and they have never been published in any form. Whether or not they bear any relation to the Rainford encounter the following day is, of course, open to question.

Following the publication of the Rainford encounter in the national press (where quite typically the men's stories were twisted with facetious comments about them having seen a 'Cyberman'\*) another most interesting event was brought to the notice of investigators.

This sighting involved two policemen, Pcs Lowe and Roberts, from the Prescott Division. On January 11, 1978, at 4.45 p.m. they were on traffic patrol on the M62 motorway near Rainhill (remember the 1975 sighting mentioned earlier). They saw a brilliant white light in the northern sky hovering over Bold Power Station. After some ten seconds this light began to pulsate, and then moved across the sky at a fantastic speed to hover in the south over Fiddlers Ferry Power Station. Here it began to pulsate again after about two seconds and was clearly seen as an inverted 'T'

shape which glowed very brightly. After a total observation time of about twenty seconds the UFO streaked away, vertically, reduced to a pinpoint of light which vanished within a second or so.

This report was investigated by Peter Hough of the Manchester UFO Research Association, working with Arthur Tomlinson of DIGAP. Obviously it seems unlikely that it should be just coincidence that the light should appear over *both* power stations in the area.

It would seem that something very odd took place during these weeks in this small area and indeed, as I write this, another most interesting close encounter of the third kind from the area has been reported (this time involving entities and UFO), and is the subject of a detailed investigation by UFOIN. This took place at Frodsham on January 27, 1978.

### Conclusions

There seems little doubt that the four men saw something very unusual which caused them great fright. The circumstantial evidence points to the possibility that this was indeed an encounter with a UFO occupant, although we must bear other considerations in mind.

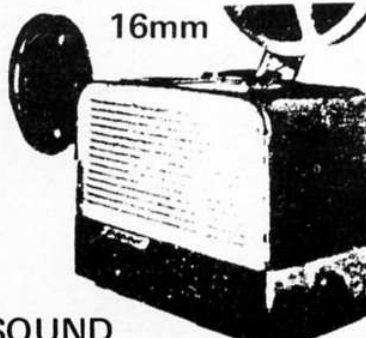

It is not totally impossible that the men were subjected to a hoax by someone who dressed up in a suit. However, bearing in mind the hour and remoteness of the location the sense of any such a hoax seems very hard to imagine. Certainly the police view this as only a remote possibility and, frankly, are very puzzled by what the witnesses saw. They only know that they saw something.

Investigations by ufologists and police have not uncovered any plausible explanation for these events, and nobody has come forward to admit that they were responsible for some bizzare experiment or hoax.

Quite clearly, the description *may* relate to a UFO occupant — but all we can do at the present moment is term the case unidentified and leave the matter open.

### References:

- \* (p.4) Cyberman were fictional creatures in a *Doctor Who* BBC television series.
- 1. 'Did a UFO land at Rainhill?' Randles, J. BUFORA Journal Sept/Oct. 1975.
- 2. FSR Vol.22, No. 3 p. 27 (1976 series)

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