

psychiatric examination for consideration. It would require a group family mental disorder. The possibility of a deliberate, conscious hoax seems negated by the family's good character. However, Mr. Gould, a self-employed carpenter, has found little work opportunity in the area lately. Times are bad enough for them to have put their house up for sale with intentions of moving to Maine in order to find better job prospects. Is it possible that this closely-knit family were desperate enough to concoct the strange events in order to sell a story? So far this does not seem to be the case.\* The hallucination theory is weakened because all members of the immediate family and relatives have allegedly seen these incredible things. Mass hallucination would be highly improbable under the circumstances. This leaves the real possibil-

ity that all or some of the experiences were real, subjectively or objectively. Further examinations are necessary in order for me to properly evaluate this possibility. Hypnotic regression also might prove to be helpful. Therefore, for the moment, I am not able to come to any conclusion concerning the validity and importance of this potentially interesting case.

Raymond E. Fowler  
July 20, 1978

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\*[I suspect that had this been the intention the story would have been more precise and spectacular, and concentrated at a certain time, instead of being concocted over a relatively long period, and in such a haphazard, rambling way — EDITOR]

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## GETTING TO GRIPS WITH THE PHENOMENON

Jenny Randles' new book reviewed

*Janet & Colin Bord*

TO date there have been very few books on practical ufology (as opposed to books of case histories) produced by British researchers, and it is good to see that Jenny Randles has followed up her and Peter Warrington's *UFOs: A British Viewpoint* with another worthwhile volume, **UFO Study: A Handbook for Enthusiasts** (published by Robert Hale Ltd, price £7.95). The book's serious nature is emphasised, perhaps over-emphasised, by the downbeat title and the uninteresting grey jacket, and it is to be hoped that these do not deter potential readers because, inside, the book is packed with sound common sense and essential information on the thorny subject of UFO research and investigation.

Ms Randles has divided her material into five parts. Part 1, "Basic Ufology," sets the scene with a very brief history of UFOs including the official research projects. Part 2, "Investigating UFOs," gives sensible information to the UFO investigator, be he/she old-hand or newcomer, based on the author's years of practical experience, and concentrates particularly on how to isolate the 90% of UFO accounts which turn out to be IFOs. Part 3, "Special Case Studies," has chapters on photographic cases, physical trace cases, and contact cases, with discussion on the special skills needed to cope successfully with such cases. Part 4, "Researching UFOs," tells us how to use the data we have collected, with ideas for research projects and how to tackle them, and examples of what other researchers have done. Part 5, "Towards Tomorrow in Ufology," begins with a checklist of 15 UFO discover-

ies (e.g. that true UFOs are partly non-physical (subjective), and are seen most frequently at night, and that UFO reports fall into clearly defined cycles) and four hypotheses based on these discoveries are outlined. The content of these hypotheses is most intriguing, and many readers may find the conclusions controversial, but, based as they are on facts and logical deduction, they merit most serious consideration. Also in Part 5, special attention is paid to three important aspects of ufology in the 1980s — cultists and cover-ups, the new ufology, and paranormal overlap phenomena; and finally a chapter of addresses for those who wish to begin a closer involvement in ufology. Appendix A details ten cases which Ms Randles considers significant as presenting good evidence for certain facets of the UFO enigma; Appendix B is a Glossary of terms; Appendixes C, D and E are checklists for investigators; and Appendix F is a short UFO quiz. Each of the book's nineteen chapters is followed by a list of references, and two or three "things to do" — useful if you can shake off the feeling that you are back in the schoolroom. There is also an index, and the 272-page book is illustrated with photographs and line drawings.

Despite the controversy that sometimes attends her words and actions, Jenny Randles has done more than most to try to dispel the lethargy that has overlain ufology in Britain for so long, and her enthusiasm for and dedication to her chosen field of study shine out from this comprehensive book whose production

obviously entailed long hours of hard work. Having gathered together the fruits of her own experience in this way, she gives everyone else the opportunity to benefit from it, and it is to be hoped that all aspiring UFO researchers and investigators will read it with the attention it deserves. And not only read it, but learn how to practise what Ms Randles proposes, and thereby help to improve the standard of UFO investi-

gation. If the present low standards are maintained, then we do not have the slightest chance of ever getting anywhere near to understanding the multifaceted UFO enigma. Fortunately, in recent years a number of books that really get to grips with the UFO problem have been published, of which Jenny Randles' is one of the most readable and entertaining, while not losing sight of its instructive role.

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## GUARDIANS OF THE MOTORWAY

*Alan Bell*

**Our contributor is an investigator for the group MIGAP (Merseyside Investigations into Aerial Phenomena), which is an associate member of NUFON. This is a UFOIN report. May 15, 1980. Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside. Level A. MED.**

**G**ARETH HUGHES is a young teacher residing on the Wirral. On the night in question, at about 00.40 BST, he was returning home along the northbound carriageway of the M53 motorway, which runs along the peninsula like a rigid backbone. The night was fine and calm and traffic at that time was very sparse (even during the day this is one of Britain's quieter motorways).

He drove down a slight incline approaching junction 2, which takes traffic off to the west towards Arrowe Park. To his right was Bidston Hill, which is not a particularly large or prominent hill, but which is rather noticeable as the Wirral is predominantly flat. On top of Bidston Hill there is a windmill, a meteorological station and an observatory, and some lovely countryside which provides popular walks.

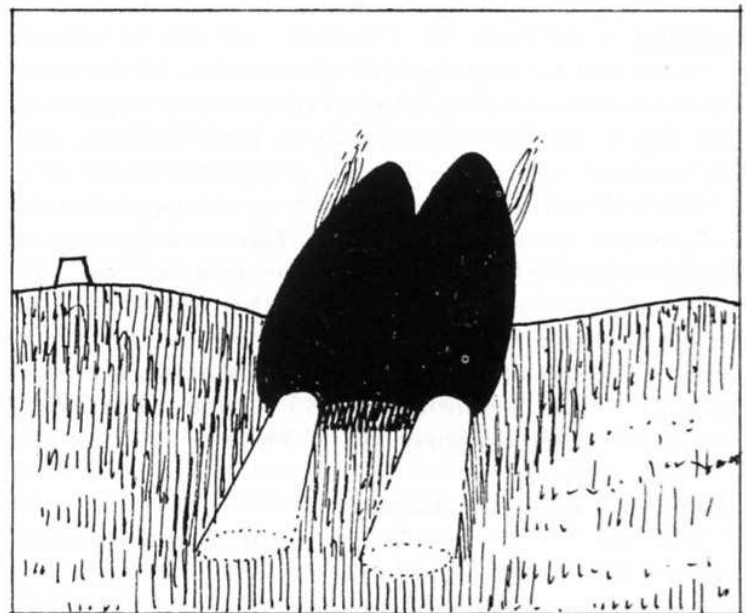
To his right the teacher suddenly noticed a very bright light. He could see that it was low down and close to the ground and his first reaction was one of puzzlement. Why had he never noticed this light before? He had driven this way very often. Presuming it to be a mast, or lighted tower, he was surprised, and stared at it simply because he had never seen anything there before. Yet as he came closer it was obvious he was mistaken. This was just a single, stationary light which lacked any substance behind it.

Gareth now drove under a cross-over bridge, travelling at only about 20 m.p.h., and wound down his side window to take a closer look. As he emerged from the bridge he found himself level with the thing. He was looking directly at it through the open window and could see that it was no further away than 300 feet, and no higher off the ground than an ordinary block of flats. At this distance and height it was immense!

In size it was the equivalent of a golf ball held at arm's length, blocking out a considerable proportion of sky. The top of it was clearly outlined against a bright sky, and resembled two curved artillery shells,

side by side, but angled at 45 degrees towards him and seemingly parts of the actual superstructure of the massive object. Two shielded beams of light were being projected from the front of these shells, but although they were strong and clearly outlined they did *not* reach the ground, but cut off after travelling just a few yards. The portion of the object between the two beams was black, and merged with the background of Bidston Hill (this portion of the object was below the hill-line as he looked at it). However, it was apparent that there was a connecting shape there.

Gareth stared in amazement at this object and while he considered stopping (even though this is forbidden on a motorway) he admits that he was rather unnerved by what he was observing and decided instead to drive on home. However, before he left he says that he saw two reddish/pink jets of flame, one behind each shell. He presumes these must have come



The object, as seen at closest approach of car