

ANTHROPOID AND UFO IN INDIANA

Jerome Clark

JUST as the bizarre "Momo" scare was ending in Louisiana, Missouri, towards the end of July 1972¹, an equally strange, if considerably less well publicized series of events erupted in the tiny (pop. 900) town of Roachdale in west-central Indiana located 40 miles west of Indianapolis.²

The first witnesses were Mrs. Lou Rogers and her infant son Keith. One night during the first week of August Mrs. Rogers had stepped outside the family's rural trailer house to roll up the windows of the car, since the sky had clouded up and rain had begun to sprinkle. As she did so, she thought she heard a sort of growl in the darkness, a "boo" or "oo" sound. Momentarily puzzled, she proceeded to ignore the sound (explaining to me later that "...you hear all kinds of strange noises in the country") and went about her work.

Then she heard it again and this time Keith became terrified. The growl, a "real deep" one, sounded as if it had emanated from a human rather than an animal voice, and whatever had made it seemed now to be breathing down her neck. She turned around slowly but could see nothing. Thoroughly shaken, she and Keith fled into the house.

She did not know it then, but an hour and a half earlier one of her younger brothers, looking out of a Ladoga, Indiana, farmhouse window, had seen what he thought was the explosion of a plane. He had observed a luminous object sailing through the sky, alighting over a cornfield separating Randy and Lou Rogers' house from a neighbour's; the object hovered briefly and then "just sort of blew up" – silently. This cornfield would house the creature which for the next few weeks would terrify the people of Roachdale and cause some of them to fear the Second Coming was at hand.

Over the next couple of nights the Rogerses heard odd noises around the yard. "It sounded as if something was going around the place pounding the siding and windows," Randy Rogers said. "Whatever it was, it must have gotten braver each night because the noise got louder and louder with each night." Rogers borrowed his father's shotgun to protect himself and his family. Whenever the marauder came around, he would rush outside into the night to glimpse an enormously broad-shouldered, shadowy biped escaping into the cornfield. The thing stood about six feet tall.

"At a certain hour," Lou Rogers said, "it would always come around – between 10.00 and 11.30 at night. You could feel it coming somehow. It's hard to explain. The feeling would just keep getting stronger and stronger, and then when it got strongest

so you knew something had to happen, the knocking would start. This happened every night for two or three weeks.

"Another thing about it – it smelled *rotten*. Like dead animals or garbage."

Because it appeared only under cover of darkness the Rogerses never saw it completely clearly, but they were able to observe that it was hairy and black. Once, as Mrs. Rogers washed dishes, the creature ducked up and down on the other side of the window above the sink.

"We sort of thought it might be a gorilla," she said. "It would stand like a man but it would run on all fours. Even on all fours it was as tall as my husband, who's 5 feet 9 inches. It was real broad.

"I was never exactly afraid of it. If it was going to hurt me, it would have that first night. I had no awareness of it in the daytime, no fear of it. I'd even leave the doors open. Sometimes I'd put out garbage and later it would be gone. My husband thought I was crazy, trying to make friends like that. My little boy would never go out alone to play. But I was pretty curious about it.

"What was weird was that we could never find tracks, even when it ran over mud. It would run and jump but it was like somehow it wasn't touching anything. When it ran through weeds, you couldn't hear anything. And sometimes when you looked at it, it looked like you could see *through* it."

Once, however, she and her younger brother came upon a pair of tracks made by something that stood on two feet – or rather, a foot and a stub – but these were only three inches in diameter, much smaller, she was sure, than the creature she had observed would have left. She had no idea what had made them.

Nor did she know how a plastic "flying saucer" toy showed up at the house one day. It did not belong to her son, who displayed no interest in it and placed it out among the garbage. The next day it was gone.

Over the next three weeks other Roachdale area residents reportedly viewed the creature. They did not accept its presence as calmly as the Rogerses had. An estimated three dozen persons claimed encounters with the beast, described as huge and gorilla-like, with shining eyes. Conservation Officer William Woodall of Crawfordsville interviewed a number of witnesses as the panic spread. He admitted he had no answers.

A taste for children and salad

The most spectacular report came from the Carter

Burdine farm, which lost all but 30 of its 200 chickens to the mysterious intruder. The first attack occurred on the evening of August 22, when Carter and his uncle, Bill ("Junior") Burdine, drove into the farmyard to discover the remains of over 60 chickens scattered along a path leading 200 feet from the coop to the front yard of the house. There was no evidence that the killer had eaten the chickens; it had merely ripped them apart.

Town Marshal Leroy Cloncs arrived to investigate a few minutes later. As the three stood talking, they heard a noise between the chicken coop and the road. Cloncs got into his car and drove slowly up the road while Junior Burdine walked behind. Suddenly something shot out of the ditch and dashed across the road six feet in front of Burdine, moving so fast that he could neither see it very well nor get a chance to shoot at it.

Junior and Carter found the spot where it had crossed the fence. "That fence was just mashed to the ground," Junior told me. "That thing was heavy." Unlike the manifestation the Rogerses had experienced, this one had left a trail of trampled weeds and grass. Carter, who heard it, said it was running on two feet.

The Burdines discovered that the marauder had helped itself to tomatoes and cucumbers which had been left in a pail for hog feed. They also checked the family dogs to see if they had any blood and feathers on them, but they did not. In fact, the two men noticed that the meanest dog was acting with uncharacteristic timidity — it was cowering up against the porch. "The other dog was so frightened it wouldn't come out of its pen," Carter recalled later.

The thing returned a few hours later. Carter and Junior had just returned to the farm after having left Carter's wife in Roachdale with some relatives. In the headlights they saw the creature standing in the chicken-house door.

"This thing completely blocked out the lights inside the chickenhouse," Junior said. "The door is 6' x 8'. Its shoulders came up to the top of the door, up to where the neck should have been. But this thing didn't have a neck. To me it looked like an orang-utan or a gorilla. It had long hair, with kind of a brownish cast to it. Sort of a rust-lookin' colour. I never saw its eyes or its face. It was making a groaning racket."

The creature ran to the barn and leaped into the hay mow, followed by Carter and his father, Herman Burdine, guns ready. Meanwhile Junior circled around the building, suddenly shouting: "Bring me a light!"

Herman said: "By the time Carter and I got out of the barn and around the corner, my brother was firing at something across the field. I didn't see a thing but I pulled up and started firing in the same direction."

"I shot four times with a pump shotgun," Junior said. "The thing was only about a hundred feet away when I started shooting. I must have hit it. I've killed a lot of rabbits at that distance."

It was not only that Junior's shooting did not stop or slow the creature's flight, however. What troubled him most was that the thing gave no indication that it had even been touched. Its hair did

not fly up and it spilled no blood. It made no sound as it ran and it left no tracks.

Back at the chickenhouse the Burdines counted 110 dead birds, all ripped open and drained of blood. Later, when Officer Woodall investigated, he carefully examined the strewn remains for traces of hair or any other physical clues to the killer's identity. He found nothing.

"I never could find any concrete physical evidence," Woodall informed me some time afterwards. "All I ever had to go on were a lot of people's stories of what they saw. I think I couldn't find any tracks because the ground was hard and the vegetation was high."

Dogs and a pig killed

By the end of the week the scare had run its course and the creature had vanished. In mid-September, however, several persons in a sparsely-settled, heavily-wooded region along the Parke-Fountain County line north of Roachdale reported seeing a "10-foot-tall monster...covered with fur... [with] feet 21 inches long." It supposedly had killed two coon dogs and a pig by slashing them across the stomach.

"Apparently," the *Crawfordsville Journal and Review* concluded, "this monster, just as the creature from Roachdale, will be listed as another of west-central Indiana's UFOs (unidentified furry objects)."

During the summer of 1972 sightings of hairy "monsters" took place in Louisiana, Missouri; Roachdale, Indiana; Springdale, Arkansas; Peoria, Pekin and Cairo, Illinois; and Cleveland, Ohio. There is increasing reason to believe, as this and our earlier *Flying Saucer Review* article have shown,¹ that these "para-anthropoids" are related in some way to UFOs. Perhaps not in the way little men and golden-haired "Venusians" are; that is, we do not know that the para-anthropoids are actual UFO occupants. All we are certain of is that they and unconventional aerial objects have a disconcerting habit of appearing in the same places together. They also share a certain puzzling reluctance to provide us with the kind of direct physical evidence we would expect of unknown yet ultimately basically conventional phenomena (such as nuts-and-bolts spacecraft and flesh-and-blood animals): again, the frustrating problem of trying to measure things that seem both to exist and not to exist.

It is all compounded, finally, by the intrusion of unwelcome and unwanted psychic elements. In the end we are forced to wonder what apparitions out of our animal past have to do with ghosts from a Space Age future.—Moorhead, April 1974

Notes

1. Jerome Clark and Loren Coleman, "Anthropoids, Monsters and UFOs," *Flying Saucer Review*, January/February 1973.
2. Jerome Clark, "On the Trail of Unidentified Furry Objects," *Fate* (American edition), August 1973. A more detailed account of this and other para-anthropoid sightings will appear in Clark and Coleman's *Procession of the Damned*, to be published by Warner Paperback Library.

AN "ARMY OF HUMANOIDS" STATED TO HAVE LANDED IN SPAIN

Ignacio Darnaude

Translated from the Spanish by Gordon Creighton

THE scene of this extraordinary case is a farm known as *Los Lunarejos* and owned by Lt. General Gabriel Tassara Buiza. It lies about two kilometres from the town of Aznacóllar, and about 40 km. from Sevilla, Capital of the State of the same name in Southern Spain. A region of high-quality soil, it produces cereals and spring crops. There are many artesian wells upon it, and it is also watered by the small river known as el arroyo del Pilar Viejo. Not far distant, at Aznacóllar, are the world's largest deposits of iron pyrites, now being exploited by the firm of Andaluza de Piritas S.A., but there is a certain lack of minerals in the land of the *Los Lunarejos* farm.

At the time of the episode the field in question was planted with a crop of melons, owned jointly by the proprietor and two brothers named Pérez Miranda, nicknamed "Los Chicharos."¹

As regards the precise date of the episode, we have not yet managed to establish this. It was in September 1971, so much is certain, and most probably on the 11th, 12th or 13th day of that month, as it seems that the local population were engaged in festive celebrations at the time, and the regular dates for the local saint's day festivities (*romería*) are those three days.

The eyewitness, Juan Rodríguez Domínguez, better known in Aznacóllar by the nickname of "Juan el de la Palmareña," is 82 years old, and lives with his only son, who is married, in the calle Martín Ruiz. He is a former miner and stone-quarry worker, but for some years past he has been employed as an agricultural day-labourer. We ourselves know him well, as it so happens that, about fifteen years ago, he worked for us as a shepherd. He is an excellent worker, reliable and thorough, who likes everything to be straight-forward and properly ordered. He likes to hum the *flamenco* airs, and he is extraordinarily fond of hunting and of his beloved shotgun. He is illiterate, with only the most rudimentary of intellectual capacities, and the neighbours will assure you, with a touch of malice, that he is "as dumb as a heap of wheat on the threshing-floor."

He is a shy, solitary type of old fellow, who has few social dealings with anyone, and known to be quite bad-tempered. We will wager our own right hand that he is totally incapable of inventing a story so sophisticated as the one he told us, a story so completely alien to the narrow sphere of his daily life.

In September 1971, old Juan was giving a helping hand with the melon crop of the Chicharo brothers, and he was staying there in a hut on the farm at nights, in order to act as nightwatchman.

On the night in question, the two brothers, Antonio and Felipe ("*los Chicharos*") were sitting enjoying the evening air at the entrance to the bar known as *El Letra*, on the outskirts of Aznacóllar and beside the road which leads into town from the *Los Lunarejos* farm. Suddenly they were amazed to see old Juan, who appeared before them, "all shaken up and a-sweating like a duck," as the Spanish peasants say, with a handkerchief round his neck, a slice of bread in his hand, and in a lather of great excitement. The conversation between the Chicharo brothers and old Juan ran more or less as follows:—

Q: "What's the matter, Juan? Has someone been pinching the melons?"

A: "No. It's just that I'm looking for you! A huge great thing landed out there, as big as a *Pegasus* bus.³ And people started coming down out of it, and they shone a light on me, and I just came here stumbling across the fields..."

Q: "What's that you say? Why, you just took scared. You've been sleeping, and then woken up sudden, and you saw the lights of the tractor of old Don Juan,⁴ or maybe you saw the stubble being burnt off over there on the hill at Cerro el Be!"

A: "No, I tell you. It wasn't that! What I saw were like the *Viajero*.⁵ And they put down a party of 'em. And they shone the light in my eyes. I saw the men. I saw 'em, walking about on the ground!"

To all this the reaction of the Chicharo brothers was naturally one of total incredulity. They thought old Juan had been dreaming, or had been hallucinated, or maybe he was going senile, or possibly simply he was going out of his mind. Not the slightest degree of curiosity did they feel; not the slightest apprehension that perhaps somebody might be stealing their melon crop. And at that late hour they certainly had not the faintest intention of going to the field and checking up on old Juan la Palmareña's crazy talk.

Subsequently, when the story had become known around the town, nobody else paid any heed to old Juan either, and nobody took the trouble to verify his extraordinary tale.