

this way and prompted UFOIN to ban the sending of all important data — including original case reports — by post.

The mothers also found it very odd that the girls did not report the sighting until the day following the event. The girls have no answer for this, but it seems to have been a kind of mental block released the next day after the second report of the humming sound — almost like a post-hypnotic command.\* Mrs. Morrison is in fact deaf in one ear, and says that she was most surprised to hear the high pitched humming noise which both mothers, and several neighbours heard at the time of the girls' sighting.

There have been two odd little sequels. Shortly after the case received some publicity Mrs. McLennan received a telephone call from a monotonous male voice which repeated the warning that she should tell nobody about the sighting if she valued her daughter's life. It concluded: "You will do exactly as I tell you. . .do you hear me?" The same call was made several times, but the police could not trace it. It may well be a hoax from someone

with a warped mind but it upset Mrs. McLennan considerably. She had to escort Karen to and from school for some time afterwards.

More recently she says she has seen strange things in the vicinity of the landing site at night. She can see it from her bedroom window. These are lights that move about like torches seen late at night. She does not think they are poachers with flashlights (although they may be), and has been too scared to go and look. Certainly there are no car headlights which could be the cause, and the spot where they are seen is precisely that where the object landed.

Neither of the witnesses or their mothers had an interest in UFOs before the event, and the girls still do not — although the mothers do to some extent. They were all very co-operative and I found no reason to doubt the testimony.

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\*A similar feature was found in the Gaynor Sunderland CE3 of July 1976 (see FSR Vol. 25, No. 3), although the time delay in this case was longer.

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## RESEARCH REPORT — No. 2

*Jenny Randles*

FROM time to time in FSR and other publications, articles have been carried about the great waves of Airship Sightings which took place outside of the USA. So far as Britain is concerned there were two major waves — in 1909 and in 1913. One or two of the more publicised reports within these waves are widely known, but until quite recently their full nature had not been examined.

Now a team of four researchers is working on a highly detailed analysis of the two waves, in particular the more thoroughly documented one of 1913 (which actually began with a sighting in Sheerness in October 1912, and otherwise mostly centred on February 1913). Nigel Watson is co-ordinating the research, and he has been receiving support from John Hind (Ireland), Granville Oldroyd (Northern England) and Robert Rickard (Southern England).

These people have been examining with great care the microfilm records of local newspapers searching for reports and comment (of which there appears to have been a fair amount). The trail led them to Hansard — which records all the proceedings of the Houses of Parliament — with some revealing results. At the time of writing this column there is evidence of an official government enquiry (perhaps the very first official study of UFO reports) and attempts are being made to pursue this.

The team intend to publish the results of their work, either in a booklet or in a series of articles, and from what I have seen of the early results this is going to prove of immense value to ufologists. It will amount to a detailed study of the development of a wave — which was *not* viewed as spaceships, but rather in a context totally relevant to the time (a possible German invasion of Britain from the air). Interestingly the press dubbed these "UFOs" as "scapeships."

I have no desire to steal the thunder of what could be a

very significant piece of UFO research, but I will give you a few tasters of what is to come.

The reports, which are many, appear to concentrate almost exclusively on British ports. There are relatively few sightings inland. They were virtually *all* nocturnal, and rarely were the objects definitely seen as airships. The supposition that they were airships seems to have been much the same mechanism as we see nowadays when UFOs are automatically interpreted as spaceships. So, we might ask, did this presupposition have an effect on the visual interpretation of what was reported? It seems in the main that lights were all that were visible.

The interpretation of the phenomenon as being overflights by German airships was debated fiercely in parliament, and the First Lord of the Admiralty stated in 1913 that German airships were very probably visiting Britain. The First Lord was none other than Winston Churchill. Indeed an Aerial Defence Act was rushed through parliament in double-quick time to try to alleviate what was seen as an ominous situation.

Meanwhile, over in Germany, the press and official sources were having a field day laughing at the British panic. They were adamant that German airships were quite incapable of doing what they were claimed to have done and, as I expect the final report will prove, this hypothesis for the sightings is quite untenable.

There were other important sidelights to the wave — all of which we can recognise from modern day counterparts. Hoaxes were perpetrated (for example people in Humberside were fooled by pranksters with a lighted box-kite). Even our old friend Venus was scientifically "proven" to be responsible for one sighting!

I believe that this research will prove to be of considerable importance because we will be able to compare a UFO wave that occurred *before* the spaceships era with one

that occurred afterwards (and there are enough of those to choose from!) This team is to be congratulated on their far-seeing work.

If you would like to contact them with any ideas or suggestions, or if you are in a position to offer information of your own that you might have, or if you wish to offer direct assistance in the work (which I am sure they would appreciate) then please contact:—

Nigel Watson, 1 Angerstein Rd, Scunthorpe, South Humberside DN17 2LZ.

Finally, for the information of all those who wrote following Research Report No. 1 about the Historical data catalogue series, I can advise that the first part of the Northern England catalogue should be published by the

time you read this. Cost will be approximately £5 and will include *two* publications (one with all the data, and one with the maps and indexes relevant to it). If you wish further information then write to either myself or the coordinator of the series, who is:—

Bernard Delair, 19 Cunnor Rd, Wootton, Boars Hill, near Oxford.

\* \* \* \* \*

If you have any information on Research Projects which you would like to promote via RESEARCH REPORT then write to me at:—

8 Whitethroat Walk, Birchwood, Warrington, Cheshire WA3 6PQ.

## WORLD ROUND-UP

(continued from page 29)

“Continuing over a rise in the road, Miss Costello noticed that her 1971 VW station wagon, which had been functioning correctly, failed to gain any speed as expected.

“She pressed the accelerator but the VW slowed to about 50km/hr.

“Miss Costello then pressed the accelerator to the floor but the vehicle did not alter speed and the engine failed to increase its revs.

“Next she changed down gears, from top to third, and finally to second but the revs remained unchanged.

“Miss Costello noticed the dashboard clock was on 9.20 p.m. (not correct time).

The light somehow seemed to remain the same height and distance away during the entire event.

“Next she tried the footbrake and, although the pressure felt normal, there was no slowing effect in the VW — heavier pressure also brought no result.

“About one kilometre from the Waratah turnoff the light just disappeared and the interior of the car returned to normal.

“The vehicle at once picked up speed and Miss Costello noticed the dashboard clock was still on 9.20 p.m. She later found that her wristwatch had also

stopped at 9.28 p.m.

“Initially she thought two to three minutes had passed during the sighting but on checking the distance involved (the light was visible for eight to 10km) she estimated the event took more like 10 to 15 minutes.

“Reaching her destination there was one more surprise — although the fuel tank was full on leaving Queenstown the gauge was down to empty on arrival.

“The car had never used more than half a tank of petrol on the same trip before.

“Since the event both the VW and wrist watch have worked normally.

Credit: **Liselotte Tarling** of East Grinstead.

The Editor regrets that part III of “Physical Assault by unidentified objects at Livingston” by Martin Keatman & Andrew Collins has had to be held over until our next issue.

## FLYING SAUCER TIE

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# UFO

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