

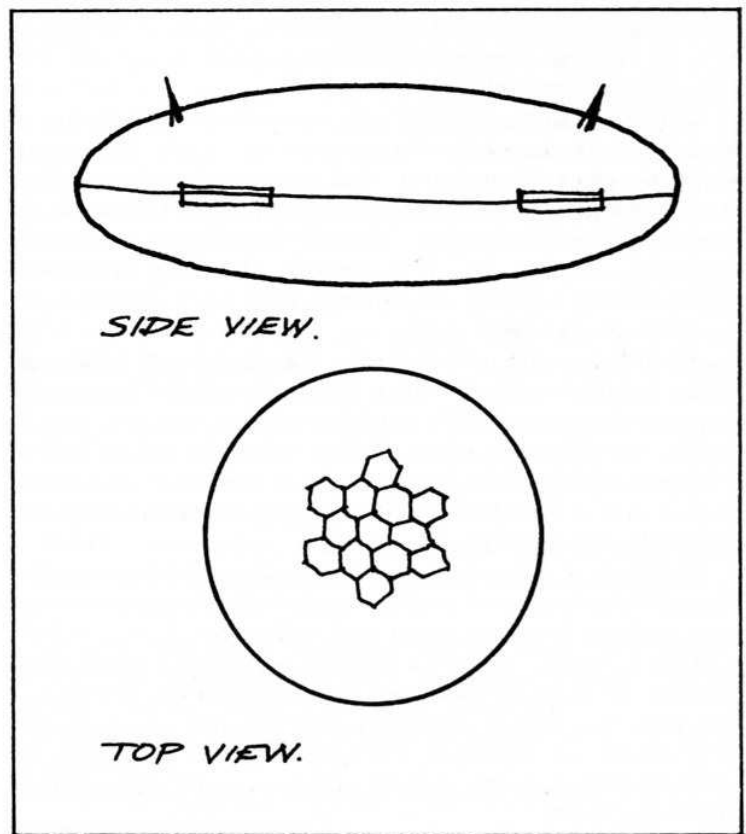
Now it wasn't spinning . . . it was turning. It wasn't gyroscopic. It appeared to be turning at one revolution every four seconds . . . it was turning slowly, but moving quickly.

"It didn't change colour and, obviously, I didn't hear anything in view of the noise of our engine . . . it tended to glint a bit in the sunshine. What was interesting was that it was turning but there were no stabilisers, no fins, no control surfaces, nothing. It looked just like a doughnut except that it was slightly higher and sort of flat on top . . ." [Not an American-style ring 'donut' — ED.]

It seems there was no outward sign of propulsion or lift in the form of propeller, jet thrust or wings. However, the disc undoubtedly had motive power, as at one time it climbed to 3,000 ft. with the *Cessna* circling up after it. It was shortly after this that the pilots decided to break away for a moment as they had been circling the object for some five minutes. Finally the mini-disc was lost from sight behind the aeroplane, and when last seen was heading for London. Both Laurie Adlington (an ex-RAF pilot) and Lieut. Plastow consider the object to have been "man-made."

* * * * *

The following day the object — or a similar one — was spotted over the airfield by a fellow pilot from the Three Counties Aero Club, Mr. Simon Spence. He estimated the altitude to be between 800 and 1,000 feet, and was only able to view the object from a distance of 200 yards, before it flew off towards Farnborough at an estimated speed of 150 mph. This sighting lasted only about a



Based on Laurie Adlington's sketches of the object.

minute, but as he was flying with a trainee pilot, he did not pursue the object.

AIRCRAFT IN ENCOUNTERS OVER BOLTON

Ron Sargeant & Jenny Randles

December 11 1979 11.45 GMT Bolton, Gtr Manchester MED Level B

THE principal witness in this case is 21-year-old Leslie Groves, who is a flying and gliding instructor now based at Barton, but who had moved into the area only a few months before the sighting. He has been quite meticulous about recording the details of his observation and despite his age, and by virtue of his occupation, is well used to flying and the various optical tricks that can take place. He was found to be friendly and willing to discuss any point that was raised, but showed no desire for publicity. The story has in fact not been covered by any media channel (unlike the previous aircraft sighting in Surrey which did make the national press).

At the time of the encounter Leslie was training a pupil pilot, but this person has preferred to remain anonymous. In fact it seems he only caught one fleeting glimpse of the object/objects (as the details of the story will indicate) and

was therefore of no real value to the investigation, save to corroborate that the incident actually did take place.

The Encounter

On this Tuesday morning Leslie had prepared for work, driven to the airfield and made preparations for what was to be his first flight of the day. The aircraft he was to use was a *Cessna F. 150* which was registered G-AXWE. After normal preliminaries he took off at 11.15 GMT. He made a few minor course changes and generally meandered about the area north of the M62 motorway, climbing in the process to a height of 4500 feet. He was flying North Westerly on a course of 330 degrees magnetic, placing him just south of Bolton, Greater Manchester (a very active location for UFO experiences

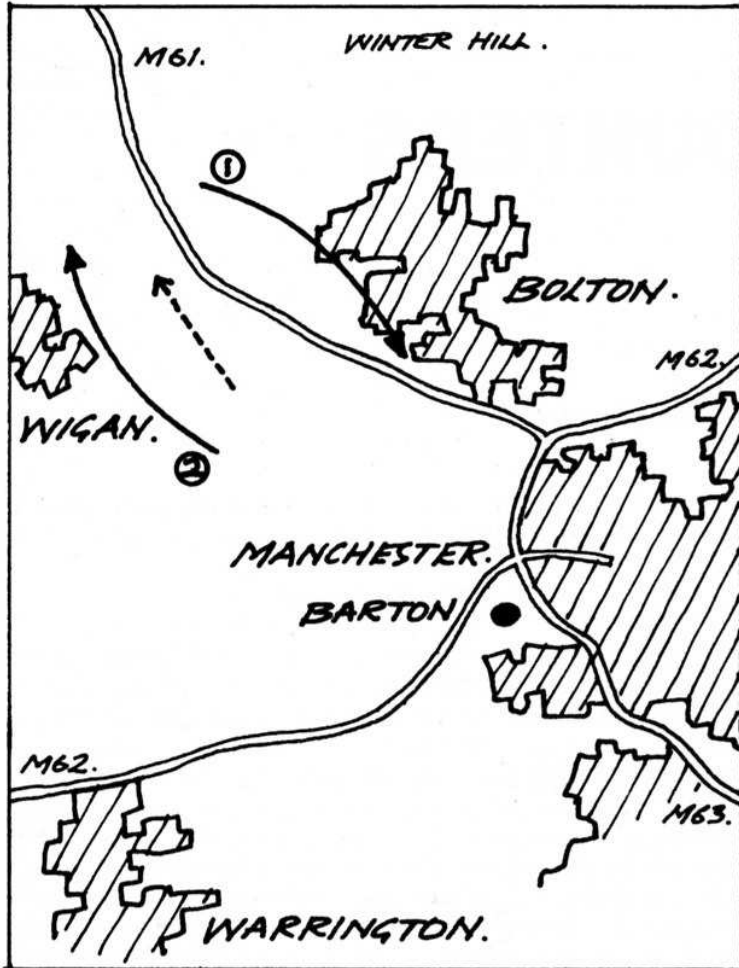
we might add) close to Hindley Green. Ahead of them was the prominent sweep of Winter Hill with its TV transmitter mast on top.

Leslie was in the aircraft's right-hand seat and his pupil was then in control of the aircraft. They had been airborne some 30 minutes. Glancing out of the window and through a gap in the cloud ahead and below them, Leslie spotted a "target." It was moving on a roughly opposite course, i.e. NW to SE, heading from the approximate vicinity of Winter Hill over Bolton and towards Manchester itself.

At first Les thought that this was just a sun reflection from another aircraft (since there was every reason to suppose that other traffic would be about), but as it passed under or through cloud below him, he observed it reappear closer to the *Cessna* and was now able to confirm that it was a clearly-defined object in its own right, and certainly not an aircraft.

In colour it was white, with a sharp outline giving the distinct impression of a table tennis ball. Its apparent size was midway between a pea and halfpenny [1 inch —ED] at arm's length,* and on a brightness scale of 1 (dull) to 10 (bright) he gave an estimate of 6 for the UFO. The sun at the time was hazily obscured and was not giving bright reflections, for example, off other aircraft (although he only saw these in the vicinity of Barton, and none during the flight itself).

* [The old *halfpenny* was 1 inch in diameter, but the new *half-pence* is only 17mm. — ED.]



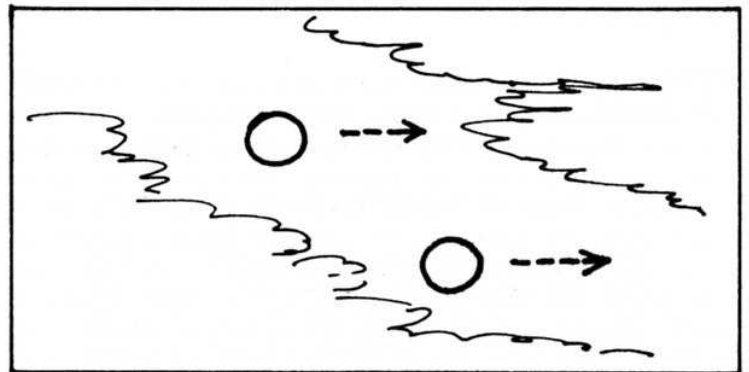
Ron Sargeant has had considerable experience as an aircraft engineer working at Barton Airport, Eccles, Greater Manchester. This was originally built, in the early 1930s, some 8 miles west of Manchester. It was to serve as the city's main airport, but was superseded fairly rapidly by Ringway — which is now a major international airport. Barton, however, has continued to flourish as a home for light aircraft, and a base for the Lancashire Aero Club (one of the first such organisations in Britain). It also has pilot training facilities and a popular summer airshow which attracts tens of thousands of visitors from throughout the region. Although Ron Sargeant left his employment at the airfield in 1978 he has maintained close ties with it through friends and colleagues. It was through one of these that the story of an airborne UFO encounter came to light, and bearing in mind the information available from UFOIN investigator Omar Fowler (who had probed a similar case from Surrey just a few weeks before) a full investigation was undertaken. The details in this account are based upon the written statements and verbal interviews obtained by Ron Sargeant, collated with background information from Jenny Randles.

The object was in a clear view for at least six seconds as it passed below cloud, but was eventually completely obscured by cloud in the distance. Leslie told his pupil that he had control and quickly banked the aircraft to enable him to see the object as well. He only saw it during the final moment before it disappeared. The course had been straight and at constant speed throughout.

Just a couple of minutes later, with the sighting dismissed and work resumed, Leslie observed more phenomena at the rear and to the left. His pupil was engaged in an instrument exercise and he could not disturb him before the two objects that he now saw had disappeared, again in a matter of seconds.

These objects were exactly like the first and moved on a more or less parallel course with the *Cessna*, passing over the Wigan area. One of the two was leading the other as if in formation.

During the whole flight they were in radio contact, but the radio was not used during the observations to alert other traffic. Shortly after the second sighting the weather



Above: The UFOs, as seen from the *Cessna*.

Left: Arrow in dashes shows route of the *Cessna*. Plain arrows (1) and (2) mark the courses of the UFOs.

deteriorated somewhat, with a frontal system passing through, and they returned to Barton.

Weather details

It was a dry day with hazy sunshine. Temperature was +10°C, which is above average for the time of year. There was plenty of cloud, mostly well developed cumulus at 1500 to 2000 feet, giving a cover of six eighths. From 4000 feet upwards there was also thinner Stratus. Wind was quite strong, gusting at 20 K from 320 degrees at a height of 2000 feet.

The terrain over which the aircraft flew is between 200 and 400 feet ASL.

Conclusions

The immediate reaction of Ron Sargeant on hearing the story was that the two men had been fooled by bright

sunlight reflections off seagulls. However, after discussing the story, and this point, with them he is convinced now that this was not so. Being an experienced flier himself, particularly over the area in question, Ron is happy to accept that there was a stranger explanation in this case.

There are also other factors to be remembered. The objects were seen to pass below cloud which was at a maximum height of 2000 feet, and consequently were at least 2500 feet from the Cessna at closest approach. Considering the size estimate given subjectively by the pilot (about 35-40 feet), this tallies well with his "arms length" estimate (which would give a size of 25-30 feet). The speed of the objects was also estimated at 250 mph. Such estimates do not relate to the sighting of seagulls, which would inevitably have to fly much closer to the aircraft to appear at such a size (and would then *not* pass below the cumulus cloud).

Whilst, inevitably, some doubt will remain, this does seem an interesting example of a potential unknown.

NEW ATTACK ON INVESTIGATION STANDARDS

Jenny Randles

UFOIN was formed in 1977 with the specific aim of improving investigation standards in Britain. A further step has been taken along this road with the launching of a new and different kind of UFO publication.

Investigation is the product of the team of UFOIN investigators, and attempts to bring home the message of this network. It has as its theme the techniques and skills of investigation and research as employed by active Ufologists. It is not intended to be a wide-circulation magazine and will not aim to provide in-depth case histories. FSR will, of course, remain UFOIN's chief medium for publishing data of this sort. Rather *Investigation* reaches out to the person who is in sympathy with UFOIN's aims; that the standards of UFO research and investigation throughout Britain (and indeed the world) are in need of some improvement.

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