

claimant and finding independent verification of the report, if such exists.

A great deal of research remains to be done, obviously, as we gingerly wend our way through the complex problems suggested by the CEIII phenomenon. These reports continue to provoke disbelief, confusion, and controversy—but they do continue, in what seem to be ever-increasing numbers—and they force us to confront an almost impenetrable mystery.

*There is probably no more well-known UFO recipient than Betty Hill, whose UFO abduction experience was the subject of a best-selling book and a popular television movie. It was also the first of what by the late 1970s would be several hundred cases in which under hypnosis persons would "recall" being taken into a UFO and given a physical examination. These accounts remain controversial—as Alvin Lawson's paper will demonstrate—because of the unconscious mind's demonstrated ability to fantasize freely while in a hypnotic state. Here Mrs. Hill tells how she came to believe in the reality of her abduction.*

## **The Mystery of the Missing Minutes by Betty Hill**

On the night of September 19, 1961, my husband Barney and I were returning from Montreal, Quebec, which we had left late that afternoon. At about ten o'clock we stopped in the town of Colebrook, New Hampshire, where we had lunch and put gas in the car. We were heading down Route 3, through the White Mountain National Park, on our way home to Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

It was a beautiful Tuesday night. The moon was bright, almost full, and there were few clouds in the sky. We were enjoying the drive when suddenly I saw what appeared to be a new star in the sky. As I watched it, it began to move, so we assumed it was a satellite. We were interested enough in it to stop briefly a few times and step out, binoculars in hand, to view it better.

We kept our eye on it as we continued on our way.

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While Barney drove I kept studying it through the binoculars. It had begun to zigzag and act much like a yo-yo, going up and down, spinning. It kept up these erratic movements for about thirty miles until we came to an area called Indian Head. At this point the object came down from the top of the mountain, flew over the highway directly in front of the car, and stopped.

We could see a double row of windows, a red light on each side. Hoping to identify the object, Barney got out of the car with the binoculars. When he did, the object shifted out over the field. Barney walked toward it and observed humanlike figures standing in the window. They were looking down at him and he had the impression that one said to him, as he looked through the binoculars, "Keep looking. Just keep looking. Don't be afraid. You're going to be all right. No harm is going to come to you. Just keep looking." And at that moment the craft began to descend.

Barney panicked, sure that its occupants intended to capture him. He dashed back to the car and shouted that we had to get out of there. He put the car into gear and we sped down the highway.

I looked out the window but I couldn't see the sky. All I could see was something black—Barney swore it was from the object, which he thought was just above the car—and we heard a series of beeping sounds and felt the car vibrating.

We stopped talking. We drove along in silence. I didn't even say anything when Barney left Route 3. I was puzzled, of course, but somehow I wasn't too concerned. He turned onto Route 175 and was still speeding along when suddenly he slammed on the brakes, the car screeched to a halt, and he turned sharply to the left.

The next thing I knew, we were passing down Route 3 again. I said to Barney, "Do you believe in flying saucers?" Barney snapped, "Don't be ridiculous." And then we heard another series of beeping sounds.

When we arrived home, we had several mysteries to ponder. For one thing, both our watches had stopped functioning. For another, the tops of Barney's shoes were scuffed. Also, there were highly polished spots on the

trunk of the car. But the strangest part of all was that it had taken us seven hours, some of it on a turnpike doing sixty-five to seventy miles an hour, to drive 190 miles late at night. Barney was a fast driver and we'd encountered very little traffic.

Perplexed as we were, we decided at first to keep the story to ourselves and not tell anyone about it. But then we related it to various members of my family. Finally a policeman told us that anyone who had seen a strange craft should report it to Pease Air Force Base in Portsmouth. So we called Pease and reported our experience.

Barney and I started on a search to find out what we could about UFOs. Because neither of us knew anything about the subject, we took some books out of the library.

One in particular, *The Flying Saucer Conspiracy*, impressed me and I wrote the author, Donald Keyhoe. At the time I didn't realize that Major Keyhoe directed the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena or that a NICAP investigator lived in our general area. But not long after I had written my letter, Walter Webb came out to interview us.

Later two other investigators, science writer Robert Hohman and engineer C. D. Jackson, called on us. We talked with them for hours, going over every aspect of the experience. One question they asked was why the trip had taken so long. A friend of ours, a retired Air Force major named James MacDonald, suggested the possibility of regressive hypnosis with a good psychiatrist.

That sounded like an interesting idea, but we didn't act on it because we had learned to live with the experience and had resumed a normal life. But then right after Thanksgiving I came down with pneumonia, and over the next three years I suffered recurrent attacks of the disease.

Barney was having serious health problems, too. His blood pressure was fluctuating and he developed a severe ulcer. He was sick all the time. When he failed to respond to treatment, his doctor suggested that maybe his problem had an emotional basis and he should talk with a psychiatrist. So Barney started going to Dr. Duncan Stephens of Exeter, New Hampshire, on a regular basis.

One day he happened to mention our UFO experi-

The examiner went into the next room to look at Barney. Under hypnosis Barney told very much the same story I had, describing a very similar examination. But in his case, instead of checking his nervous system, they were most interested in his bone structure, particularly the end of his spine and his feet; also, they placed a cup-like instrument on his abdomen.

Interestingly enough, a few days later Barney, who of course had no conscious memory of the examination at that point, felt a sort of irritation in the abdomen area—and warts grew in a circle where the cuplike instrument had been placed. These warts became so badly infected that Barney had to go to a skin specialist and have them removed. Until he'd undergone hypnosis and listened to the tapes, he had no idea what possibly could have caused the problem.

At any rate, as Barney's examination was taking place, I remained in the room with the leader. By now I had begun to overcome some of my fear and my curiosity was coming to the fore. I wasn't as angry as I'd been earlier because the leader was assuring me that now that my examination had been completed and Barney's was almost completed, we'd be permitted to leave the craft soon and resume our interrupted journey home.

So as we stood there, I remarked, "You know, when I go home and tell my friends about this, no one's going to believe me. I need something to take home as proof."

"What do you want?" he asked.

I said, "What have you got?"

He showed me a book and I said, "Great, I'll take it."

"You're not going to be able to read it," he said.

But that didn't matter to me—it was proof.

I asked him where he was from and he showed me a star map. He explained that the heavy lines on the map showed the routes they took all the time; the lighter lines represented the places they went occasionally and the broken lines were for expeditions. "Do you know where you are on this map?" he asked me.

Of course I said I didn't. He replied that if I didn't know that, then he would be unable to explain it to me.

Suddenly the examiner rushed through the door,

opened my mouth, and pulled at my teeth. I asked the leader, "What's going on? Why is he doing this?"

"We're very puzzled," he said. "Barney's teeth are removable and yours are not. Why?"

I tried to explain how sometimes people have to have their teeth replaced; as they get older, their teeth may rot from poor diet or other causes.

"What's older?" he wanted to know.

"Age," I said.

"What's age?"

He asked me all kinds of questions but did not understand the words I was using. He wanted to know what a "poor diet" is. I said that people sometimes neglect to eat foods that are good for them, foods such as vegetables. His response: "Describe vegetables."

"I will tell you about squash," I replied. "It's yellow—"

"What's yellow?"

So we gave up on that.

Finally Barney emerged from the examining room. They were still helping him along. He was still acting passive, as if he were sleepwalking.

I was delighted. Knowing that Barney and I were going to get out of this place, I picked up the book and started out behind Barney down the corridor. The leader was walking beside me.

All of a sudden we came upon a crew member—or anyway that's how I thought of him—and he and the leader got into a discussion. I couldn't understand a thing they were saying but I sensed they were disagreeing about something. Soon the leader came over to me and took the book. "You cannot have it," he said.

"But you gave it to me," I protested. "This is my proof."

"I know," he said, "but they have decided that you're going to forget the whole thing so you won't need the book."

That made me mad. "Somehow, in some way, I'm going to remember this," I said to him. And he said, "Well, maybe you will, but Barney will not."

So he started walking back to the car with me. In my

mind I was hoping he wouldn't judge everybody by me because I wasn't able to answer his questions. I said to him, "If you will come back, I'll introduce you to people who can answer your questions."

"It's not my decision to make," he said.

"I must know if you're going to come back so I'll know where and when to meet you."

"If we decide to come back," he said, "we will find you."

I pointed out that there are billions of people on this earth. How could he ever find me?

"I'll find you," he said.

When we got down to the car, he remarked, "Why don't you watch us leave? You'll be safe by the car."

So he turned around and went back to the craft and I went back to the car.

I picked up my dog Delsey, who was shivering and shaking on the seat, and I said, "Come on, Barney. Get out. We're gonna watch them leave."

Barney was just then beginning to come out of the dazed condition he'd been in. So as we stood there leaning against the car, we saw a swirling orange mass surround the craft in the woods. It looked like a twirling luminous ball. The craft went up, dipped down, went up again, and was gone.

Barney and I got into the car and drove back on Route 175 to Route 3. I said to Barney, "Well, now do you believe in flying saucers?" And Barney snapped, "Don't be ridiculous."

I realized that Barney didn't remember. Then I thought, *I don't know who you are or where you're from but I wish you luck.* And then I started to forget, too.

After we heard the tapes, Barney and I did not conclude immediately, "Oh, goodie, we've been captured by a flying saucer."

Although that ended our professional meetings with Dr. Simon at his office, we continued meeting him regularly on a less formal basis in his home. We went down frequently on Sundays and had dinner with Dr. Simon and his wife Sally.

As a social worker I knew how a person's brain can pick up an awful lot of things. Maybe the UFO abduction story we'd told under hypnosis was an elaborate fantasy spun in our unconscious minds. So Dr. Simon said, "Let's look at it as a fantasy. One of you had a fantasy and in some way you transferred your experience to the other one. We'll work to see who had the fantasy. Was it Barney or was it Betty? Who gave it to whom—and how?"

We felt that if we could figure out how this fantasy was transferred it would constitute one of the greatest breakthroughs in the history of psychiatry. During our regular meetings with Dr. Simon we tried different kinds of experiments, perfectly content to believe we had imagined the "experience." But there were some things we could not explain in this way and gradually these loomed larger and larger in our thoughts.

We tried to rationalize the puzzling aspects. We told ourselves Barney could have scuffed his shoes on some curbing. It was just a coincidence that both our watches had stopped functioning. As for the highly polished spots in the trunk of the car, maybe something had dropped on the trunk and caused the effect. Or so we kept telling ourselves.

And then something very strange happened.

We came home one night and found a pile of dried leaves on the kitchen table. Had somebody broken into the house? We started looking for evidence of forced entry, but there wasn't any.

So I went to scoop up the leaves—and Barney and I had the shock of our lives.

The night of the UFO experience, I was wearing blue earrings—and now on the kitchen table were my blue earrings. How did they get there? We didn't want to think about it. We threw the leaves away and I put the earrings into my jewelry box. They're still there to this day. I haven't touched them since.

One thing the hypnosis reminded me of was the blue dress I had worn that night. When I got back I had taken the dress off, put it on a hanger, and put it in the back of

the closet, which was filled with clothes. Then I completely forgot about it.

During the period that Barney and I were undergoing the hypnosis, I took the dress out of the closet and discovered it was completely covered with a pink, powdery substance. It was the only item in the closet with this material on it. My first impulse was to dispose of the dress, so I threw it in the wastebasket. The next day I took it out and put it outdoors; after a while the pink powder blew away but the dress was stained. And it still is stained. Also, the dress had been practically new but now the lining was torn, as was the stitching along the zipper. Half the hem was hanging down. *That* at least was not fantasy.

While Barney and I were still trying to decide whether or not the UFO capture really had taken place, the story began to leak out slowly. Very few people knew about it, but eventually a Boston newspaper reporter started to collect bits and pieces.

While checking them out, he traveled up to the White Mountains and talked with people who had seen UFOs over the years. He also collected radar trackings of unidentified craft in New Hampshire. He also of course checked around about Barney and me.

Subsequently he wrote a series of articles that ran for five days on the front pages of the Boston newspaper. The story was picked up and published all over the world.

It also brought the world to our house. People descended on us in swarms. Things got pretty hectic. The third night of the newspaper publicity my mother called and said, "Why don't you and Barney get away from it all and come up here to dinner?" So we did.

We drove the thirty miles to her house and dined peacefully with her. We left for home about nine o'clock and drove out to the end of her street onto Route 125 in Kingston, New Hampshire. And then we saw, right straight ahead of us, the second UFO of our lives. Barney hit the brakes and started blinking the lights. I yelled, "Let's get out of here!"

Barney's response was firm. "No," he said. "They captured me. I'm gonna find out why."

At this point the object in the sky descended out of

sight. We knew the area so Barney insisted that he would go to the spot where the UFO appeared to be, walk up to the craft, and knock on the door. I wasn't exactly thrilled about the idea but I wasn't going to let Barney go alone.

So we drove into the woods where the object had gone down but found we couldn't get to where we wanted to go because the roads ended in the middle of a swamp.

That incident went a long way toward persuading us, at least in our own minds, that our abduction had occurred as we recalled it under hypnosis. But something else happened some months later that settled the matter for us.

Dr. Simon had told us that if our experience was real we would find the capture spot. "You won't have to look for it," he said, "but you'll find it."

About a year and three months after the hypnosis sessions had ended, we were in the White Mountains with my parents and my niece. My father wanted to see a certain campsite, so we turned off Route 3 onto 175 heading in the direction of the site. As Barney made the turn, we both immediately recognized *the* spot—the area where we had been taken. Barney drove onto the side road, jumped out of the car, and ran down the path through the woods and into the clearing.

There it was. We were stunned, hardly able to believe it. For at that moment Barney and I both realized that, regardless of what anyone thought, we *knew* without a shadow of a doubt that we had been captured—that the whole incredible story we had recounted under hypnosis had really happened.