HUMANOIDS ENCOUNTERED IN 1901?

Jenny Randles & Philip Barnet

THE *Daily Express* UFO series in February 1978 brought to our attention a number of intriguing cases from the past, but perhaps none more interesting than this one. Occurring in 1901, it is a strong contender for Britain's oldest reported humanoid encounter and, as will be seen, it bears considerable resemblance to modern-day close encounters of the third kind. Indeed, with the great wave of airship sightings between 1895 and 1909 in mind, this case seems to offer a kind of transition between these reports (which invariably deal with mechanised Victoriana of advanced design) and those of our "super-modern 'electromagnetically powered' spaceships."

The witness to this incident is now, of course, a very elderly man, and does not wish his name to be disclosed. We shall just call him Frank. He was very helpful, but despite his still active faculties, the length of time that has elapsed since the incident must obviously make some of the details suspect. However, he believes that the basic facts as we have them tally with what occurred.

On a summer evening in 1901, when he was ten years old, Frank returned home after playing out in warm, sunny weather. His home at that time was in a terraced house in Bournbrook, near Bournville in what is now the West Midlands. His house was next to the end of the terrace and had a small back garden. He was taking a short cut along a path behind the garden when he came upon a peculiar structure just sitting there on the grass.

The object looked like a hut, being basically box-shaped, but it had a small turret on top that was centrally placed. There were no windows of any kind, and just a small door in the centre facing towards the witness. In overall colour the object was greeny/blue and it seemed to have a metallic sheen to it.

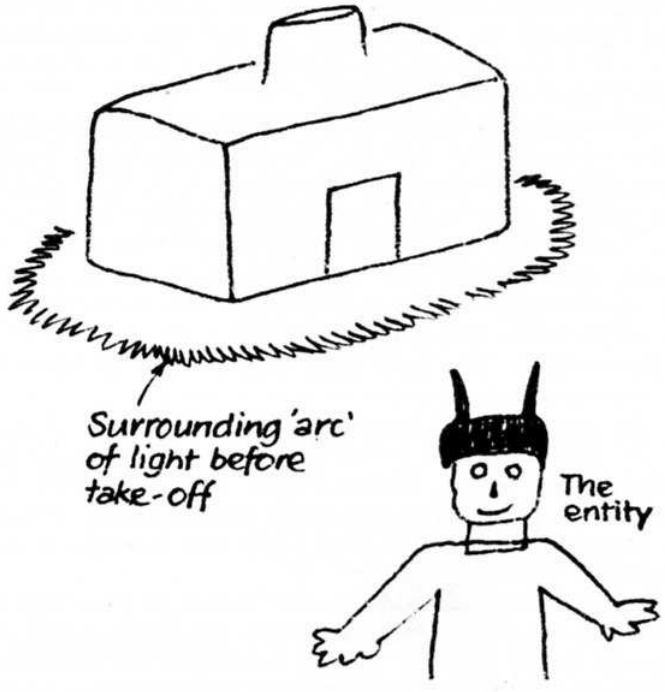
Accurate estimates of the size of this object have been difficult to pin point, but we have finally settled for something about 4 ft. high, between 5 and 6 ft. long and about 3½ ft. wide. The door was only half the height (i.e. about 2 ft). These estimates are interesting, as they conflict with Frank's first opinion that the entities that came out of it were 4 ft. 6 ins. tall. In retrospect, however, it seems that they were "about the size of the object itself," if not a little smaller, which makes them less than 4 ft. tall. Certainly they were very small.

The two entities stepped out of the door, which opened outwards exactly like a car door. One stayed by the door and the other walked cautiously towards Frank with his arms outstretched, waving at him in a distinct signal not to approach but to keep back. No words were spoken, the contact being entirely gesticulatory in character.

The entities looked human. Their skins were of a similar colouring to ours, and there were no unusual features on the face. They were clean shaven, and appeared to be between 30 and 40 years of age.

Both figures were dressed alike, in close fitting uniforms that had a military look about them, although they were nondescript and carried no insignia of any kind. Their colour was a kind of grey/green. The most curious feature of the entities wearing apparel, however, was the helmet they wore on their heads (apparently covering their ears). This was dark, and like a cap, except for two 'wires' sticking out from either side. These were about 9" long and ¼" in diameter. There was no visible chin strap or other means of attachment to the head.

The witness understood the warning quite readily, and took a few steps backwards. The entity that had come towards him returned quickly to the "ship" and joined the other who went back inside ahead of him. Within a matter of seconds there was a bright flash and something like an electric arc lit up around the object. It formed what seemed to be a complete circle around it, and glowed very brightly. Then with a



The 1901 "UFO" to the best of an old gentleman's recollection, and his sketch of one of the "pilots"

loud "whooshing" noise the object streaked into the air and disappeared over the rooftops in a curving flight. A pulsating red light was visible at the rear of the contraption.

That was the end of the sighting, although several people in the neighbourhood claimed to have heard the noise, and one or two said that they saw the object while it was in the air. The witness felt no ill effects, and does not recall seeing any unusual marks on the grass, although, as he says, he never thought to look for any.

The witness has never seen a UFO, and does not even look upon this object in his memory as a UFO. It is just a "funny vehicle." He says that sometime after his sighting he saw an article in the press about the shapes of transport to come. This showed the conception of an airship, complete with propellor, but he says that it bore no relationship to what he saw in his encounter and indeed his encounter bears no resemblance to modern day UFOs, although there are some who might disagree with this!

Frank's encounter obviously does have several correlations with current events, especially the reported small stature of the occupants. We seem here to have a classic example of the UFO phenomenon manifesting itself in an individualised way in a fashion related to the era in question. Frank says, "perhaps flying saucers are an improvement on the vehicle I saw." While this is possible, it is also feasible that the whole CE3 and CE4 experience is a human-based one, in a manner with which we are not yet familiar. This would also explain how witnesses seem to interpret UFOs in ways that would be personally acceptable to themselves.

Frank says that at the time he never considered the possibility that this might have been a craft from another world. It was only many years later that such possibilities were even talked about. He has, over the years, tried to make himself believe that what happened was no more than a boyish dream, but he has never succeeded in this. The experience remains very real and he is certain that it happened. In any event, he says: " How could I dream about something that I had no interest in, or had read nothing about but which is coming true many, many years later?" Well, there are ways we can invoke this argument, of course, if we take into account such things as the collective store of memories proposed by Carl Jung and the possibilities of precognition or telepathy. Even so the report remains a most intriguing one.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS REPORTED IN AUSTRALIA IN 1977

Keith Basterfield

A summary compiled for UFO Research (S.A.) inc. of Prospect, South Australia during April 1978

DURING the year 1977, there were reported occurrences of close encounters of types one, two and three in Australia. The year started off with an interesting event reported from near Lithgow, New South Wales, on January 4, at about 9.30 p.m. Noting an orange glow in the distance, two people travelling in a car put it down to a bushfire at first, until it approached their vehicle. When it was overhead they saw it was in fact a huge circular, diffuse glow confined within its own perimeter. At this point their car became enveloped in a fog bank which persisted until the glow had passed by.[1]

Following this, on the 20th of the same month, at 1.45 a.m., at Port Kenny, South Australia, a farmer stepped outside to relieve himself and immediately was aware that there was a bright flashing in the sky, like lightning, which lit up the ground. Looking up he saw a bright ball of light travelling along at close range. This ball then took off as speed. [2]

What was to be the first of two close encounter type three reports for the year happened on February 3, at Seven Mile Beach, Tasmania at 9.30 p.m. Some children at a youth camp heard a noise and saw a spinning "dome" with flashing lights and windows. In the centre window they said they saw a figure. The figure appeared to be thin with a large rounded head above what looked like a high collar. It had an arm visible to the right. It moved its head and changed positions in the window. After being observed for one or two minutes the object moved away.[3]

April 18 saw a driver standing by the side of his truck at Port Macquarie, New South Wales. It was at about 4.30 a.m. when he saw a bright light of an estimated 16 metres in diameter ascending over sand hills some 150 metres away from him. He stood there amazed until the light came towards him and, when it got to within 30 metres, he jumped into the truck cabin. Watching from there he saw the light back off and descend over the dunes, then speed away out to sea only a few metres above the waterline. After a while it left the sea surface and climbed into the sky.[4]

South Australia was featured four days later when at about midnight a young lady driving home had car trouble of an unusual kind. She saw an oval-shaped light heading towards her car and, as it passed overhead, the headlights died, the engine stopped and the car radio cut off by itself. Four seconds later all returned to normal. Thoroughly frightened she continued on her way home.[5]

On May 2, 1977, a man out camping on the river Murray at Cal Lal was confronted by a very unusual sight. He and his son were sitting by a camp fire when he happened to look around and was surprised to see a blue "trapeziod" *(sic)*, some 2 metres high by 75 cm wide at the top and tapering to 45 cm across the bottom. This object was stationary in front of a tree some 10 metres away. He looked away and upon looking back it had gone. No sound was heard.[6]

Eighteen days later, and only a