

LANDINGS IN SPAIN IN 1958

A report on two factual Type-1 UFO incidents from first-hand sources

Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos

Our contributor, who is President of CEONI,* is one of the leading figures in the field of UFO research in Spain, and he also works in close collaboration with Dr. Jacques Vallée. The translation of this article is by Gordon Creighton.

DURING the last eighteen months I have focussed the whole of my attention on the problem of Type-I sightings in Spain and Portugal. As most of you are probably aware, this, in terms of Dr. Vallée's classification, means landing cases. In a two-part investigation project, covering the data-gathering and analysis, I have compiled over 150 reports, out of which about 30 have been identified. In a recent study,¹ one hundred Iberian cases of this kind have been presented, and the data analysed. Although we have published summaries for all the cases, complete details of most of them remain unknown outside Spain—and, indeed, even to many Spanish UFO researchers. From time to time, I shall endeavour to remedy this, as requested by the Editor of *Flying Saucer Review*. Here are two incidents which happened in 1958.

(1) Rocket-shaped UFO takes off from the ground

The first of these two reports was sent to the Madrid branch of the CEI† by a witness whose name is known, but cannot be published, on April 7, 1970.

In August 1958, at about 7.00 or 8.00 p.m. (local time) three friends were on the summit of "Mojón Alto", a 3,000 metres peak right in the midst of the Sierra Nevada Range ("Snowy Mountains") in the Province of Granada. The sky was totally clear, the visibility absolute. The weather was dry, and the surrounding temperature was about 10 or 15 degrees. It was dusk, as the Sun was just going down behind the peak known as "La Veleta". Looking over towards the valley of the Rio Genil they observed, at a distance of about 4 kilometres from them, an object shaped like a conic trunk, standing on the ground. For a moment they took it for a pluviometer (apparatus for measuring rainfall). It was standing, vertical, on three supporting

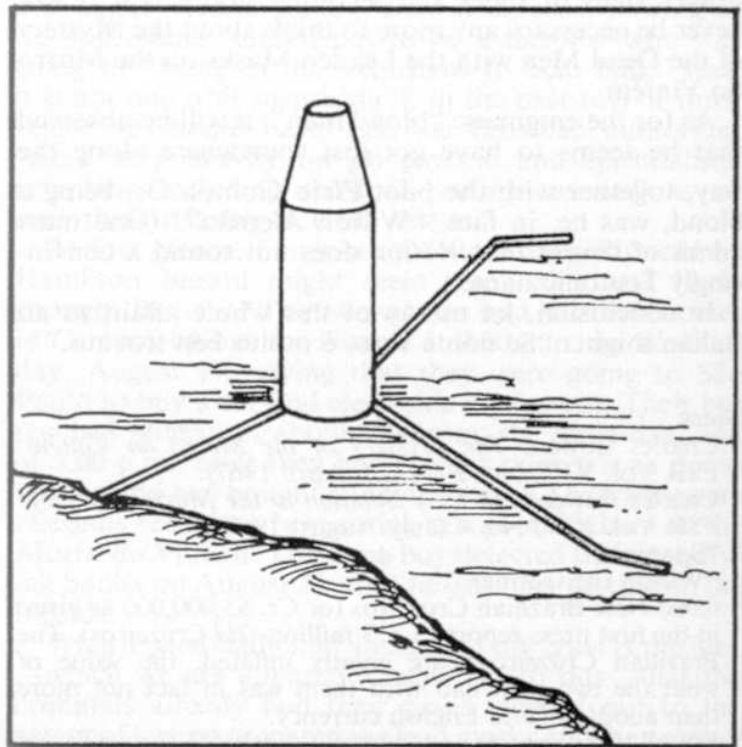


Fig. 1. Object seen Aug., 1958, Granada, Southern Spain

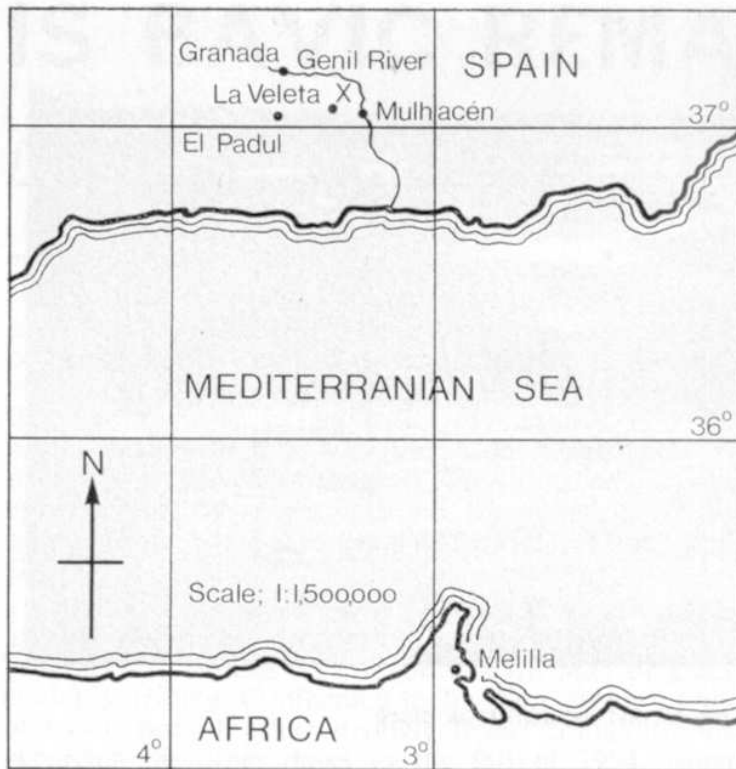
legs, on an area where the ground was sloping. Its height seemed to be between 6 and 10 metres, and its appearance was of burnished metal (like stainless steel). When they looked at it again, it was no longer in the same place, but *was rising from the ground*, producing no sound. Its ascent was slow to begin with, until it entered the zone of sunlight, and then it developed great speed and, moving away over the "Mulhacen" Peak, it vanished in the direction of Africa. The total duration of the sighting was around 15 minutes.

Before proceeding, I would like to record another case, a poorly documented one, which fits the Type-I category. It is dated April 30, 1958, and the location is the village of El Padul, also in the Province of Granada.

Our source is a National Spanish Radio broadcast of May 1, 1958:

* Círculo de Estudios sobre Objetos No Identificados, Colegio Mayor A. Salazar 23, Valencia—10, Spain. Please address all letters to CEONI.

† Centro de Estudios Interplanetarios, Apartado 282, Barcelona, Spain. CEI publishes the professionally-produced magazine *Stendek*.



The El Padul and Mulhacén sightings April and August 1958 (?), Granada

In the vicinity of the mountain village of El Padul (also in the Sierra Nevada Range) yesterday evening just at nightfall, Ignacio Jimenez Leyva and the shepherd Torcuato Sánchez saw a very brilliant object, some 10 metres in diameter, which settled on a hill near where they were standing talking. A few moments later the strange object began to rise and it vanished at a staggering speed in the direction of the town of Baza, flying at a considerable height and leaving behind it an orange-coloured trail.

(2) Two more strange "shells"

The second of the main reports of this article is dated December 31, 1958, just a few minutes before the end of the year. My source is that excellent field investigator, my good friend Señor Manuel Osuna, national teacher in the pretty little village of Umbrete in Sevilla. Osuna has done a painstaking job endeavouring to root out all possible information, and all subsequent data has come from him.

The time was a few minutes before midnight on December 31. Señor Rafael Salas, a businessman, an honest and reliable person, had hired a truck in Huelva for the purpose of transporting marine salt to Sevilla. The loaded lorry was approaching Sanlucar la Mayor (Province of Sevilla), but had not yet begun the climb up to the long and dangerous slope of Las Doblas. They were at a point about 1 kilometre before coming to the bridge over the Rio Guadiamar, from which the slope in question begins.

After looking at his watch, Señor Salas gave the order to halt and, without getting down from the truck, to "take the twelve ritual grapes" to celebrate the close of the year. The driver parked right against the culvert

on his right-hand side, on the other side of which there is a piece of land enclosed by a wire fence to stop the fighting bulls from getting out.

Before they stopped they had seen nothing abnormal on the ground there. But no sooner had the truck stopped than, at a distance of $1\frac{1}{2}$ metres from the right side door, a cylindrical object with pointed end, shot, as though fired, straight up and absolutely vertically into the air. The witness then tried to get out, and had got the door open, when a second and similar object shot up from the ground. He got a better view of this one than the first object.

The diameter of the objects was about 30 cms. and their height about 2 metres. It was not possible to say whether they had any illumination of their own. They appeared a phosphorescent red colour, and the witness said that their illumination came from the headlights, which had not been turned off when they stopped the truck.

The noise made by the "firing" of both the objects was compared by the witness to the sound of a sudden burst from an electric saw. Even had they been luminous,



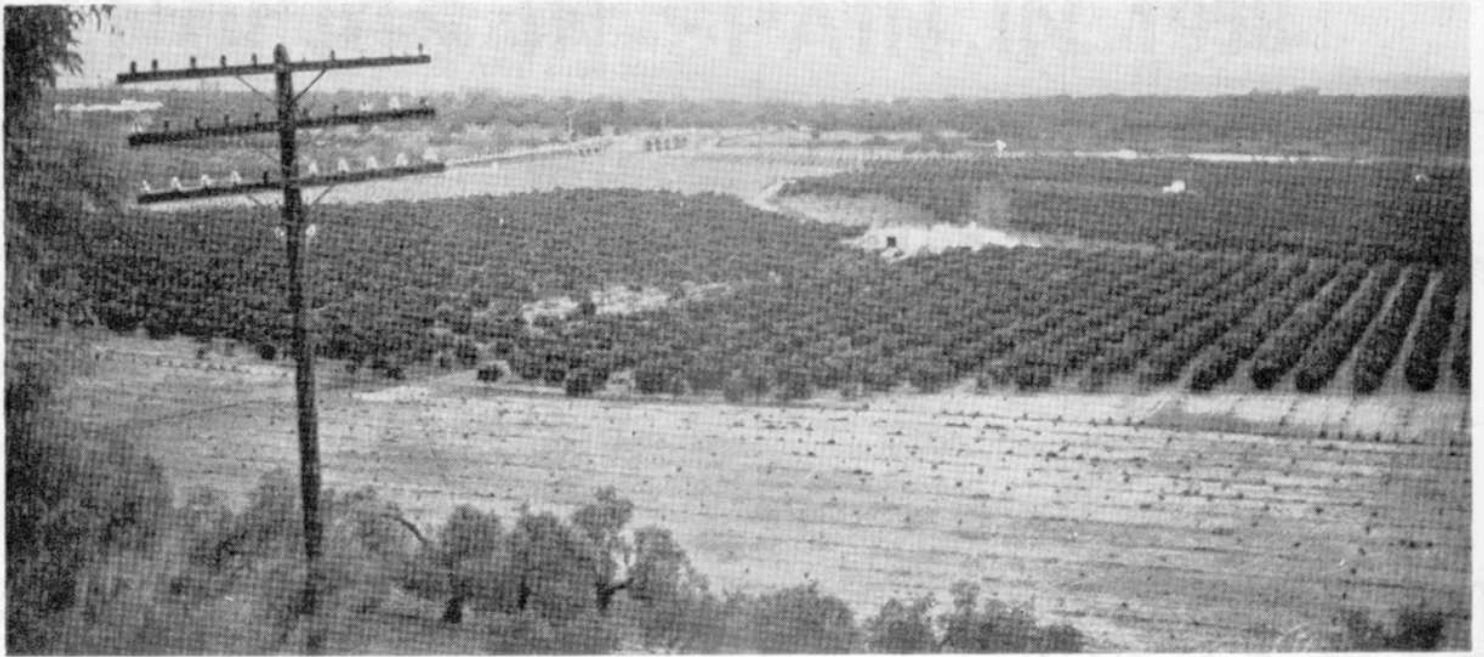
The reported sighting was at a place very near this point

it would have been impossible to follow the objects in their trajectory owing to their very high velocity. It was a clear night, with little light from the Moon, the latter not yet having reached the first quarter.

Comment

We have thus seen two pretty well detailed reports of what appear to be sightings of an unusual kind of aerial object: cylindrical-shaped, or tronco-conical-shaped. In the bizarre gallery of UFOs this is not the first time such alleged "craft" have been reported. "Shell-like" objects are to some extent known to us throughout the European UFO literature, but they are not numerous. Perhaps it may be of significance that in the year 1958 two of the three known landing reports were of this "rocket" shape. As to the nature or origin of the UFOs, we can only conjecture, and it is far too early yet to try to discuss the idea by *a posteriori* reasoning.

Let us, finally, propose a drive for specialisation in

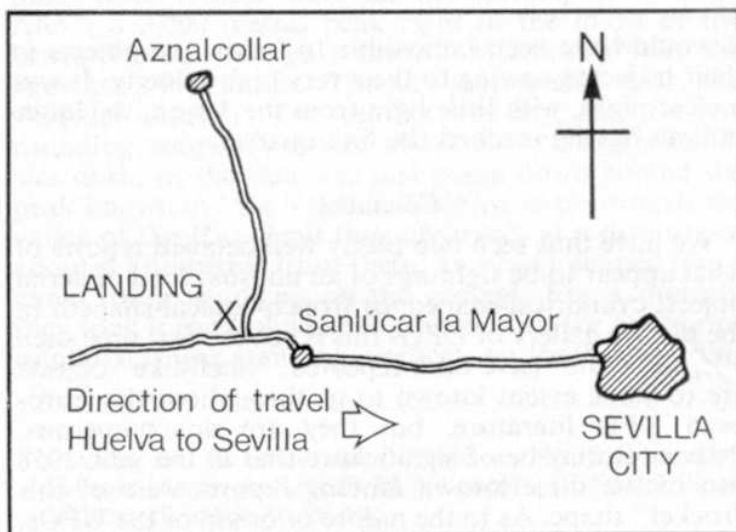


Panoramic view of the area where the second incident took place

the UFO field. For many years now a lot of people in practically all countries have been interested in this problem: they have accumulated data and cases galore, but a great mass of unorderly "evidence" does not lead us anywhere. We must introduce order into the chaos: catalogue and check all our data, exchange listings between centres and researchers, focus our attention on the UFO phenomenon as it has occurred in our own countries. If possible we must use computer time for the processing of the data and for other tasks [*that's all very well if we can afford it!*—EDITOR]. We cannot afford another 21 years of confusion. The post-Condon era must be noteworthy for the following characteristics: a

reduction in speculation and a speeding-up of data gathering and cataloguing, and for a reduction also in the noise-to-signal ratio as discussed by Hynek; above all for the promotion of specific, concrete, well-programmed analytical work on the UFO problem.

All work must be published, in a well-ordered fashion, at the earliest opportunity. The publications *Data-Net*² and *Flying Saucer Review* (and its companion journal, *FSR Case Histories*) are the obvious vehicles for this: the first for initial, brief recording; the second for complete and detailed presentation.



On the road to Sevilla, Southern Spain.
31st (?) Dec., 1958

Notes

- ¹ "Type-I phenomena in Spain and Portugal; a survey of 100 Iberian landings" by V-J. Ballester Olmos and Jacques Vallée. A study published simultaneously in Europe and America. See *FSR Special Issue No. 4, UFOs in two Worlds*.
- ² *Data-Net*: a monthly 20-page duplicated journal (of the Data-Net UFO Amateur radio network) which contains essential listings, catalogues, analyses, etc. Write to: Michel Jaffe (radio call-sign WB6RPL), 624 Farley Street, Mountain View, California 94040, U.S.A.

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