

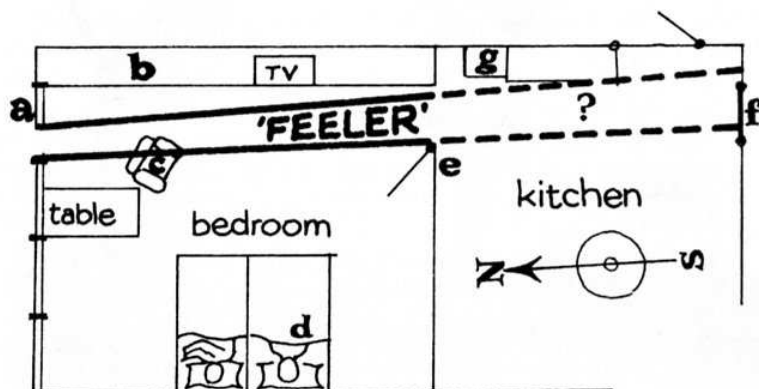
"SNAIL FEELER" ENTERS A ROOM

Ernst Berger

OF several unusual reports from the Vienna Basin area (a suspected "window") we at MUFON-CES received one which was a real puzzler. The occurrence was in September, 1975, and if it is UFO-related it may well be the Austrian counterpart of the Logrono, Spain, "light feeler" and room inspection case of June 22, 1972.¹ Whatever it was, it provided the witness with a short, but excellent chance to observe physically "impossible" light characteristics which fall into the "solid" light" category². Thanks to the witness, an old, sober-minded woman, and a truly excellent observer, as we will see, a wealth of data was retrieved.

September 25, 1975 was a busy evening. At about 9.48 p.m. CET a brilliant meteor rushed through the night skies of Vienna and was seen by many citizens. Press reports followed and in their wake a series of other observations that had happened "around" the astronomical ones. The "meteor deception" (an old Austrian trick John A Keel should take down as a European Trojan Horse) was on once again. Some observers of non-meteoritic events over Vienna that same night presented their experiences like: "Listen to what that meteor looked like to us..." to be ridiculed quickly. However, there was an easy way to separate them from the rest of the data – the time. Three events took place between 5.45 and 9.00 p.m., before the meteor. One concerned an oblong body seen over southern Vienna that hovered and suddenly sped away at a terrific rate with three coloured tails, one happened near Salzburg and dealt with a hovering white blob and the last one appeared like a green kite that was seen to fly suddenly at right angles on its west-east trajectory. There was but one event forthcoming after the time of the meteor. At first it was considered linked with astronomy by the witness and was finally reported out of curiosity.

Frau Elsa W., then aged 75 years, lives with her grown-up daughter Lotte in a third storey flat with large windows overlooking the tops of old lime trees



0 1 2 metres

A word of explanation

Our contributor used the "snail" description for certain UFOs in his article "Luminous 'snails' near Traunstein, Austria" which was published in FSR Vol. 20, No. 2 of 1974. The objects on that occasion were said to look like "...luminous globes with fuzzy edges ...giving a so-called 'signal' consisting of two curved beams of light...which were projected slowly upwards like a pair of *snail feelers*...whose tips turned green when they stopped moving, when a green mist formed and then fell sideways, and the rays, or feelers, were gone."

EDITOR

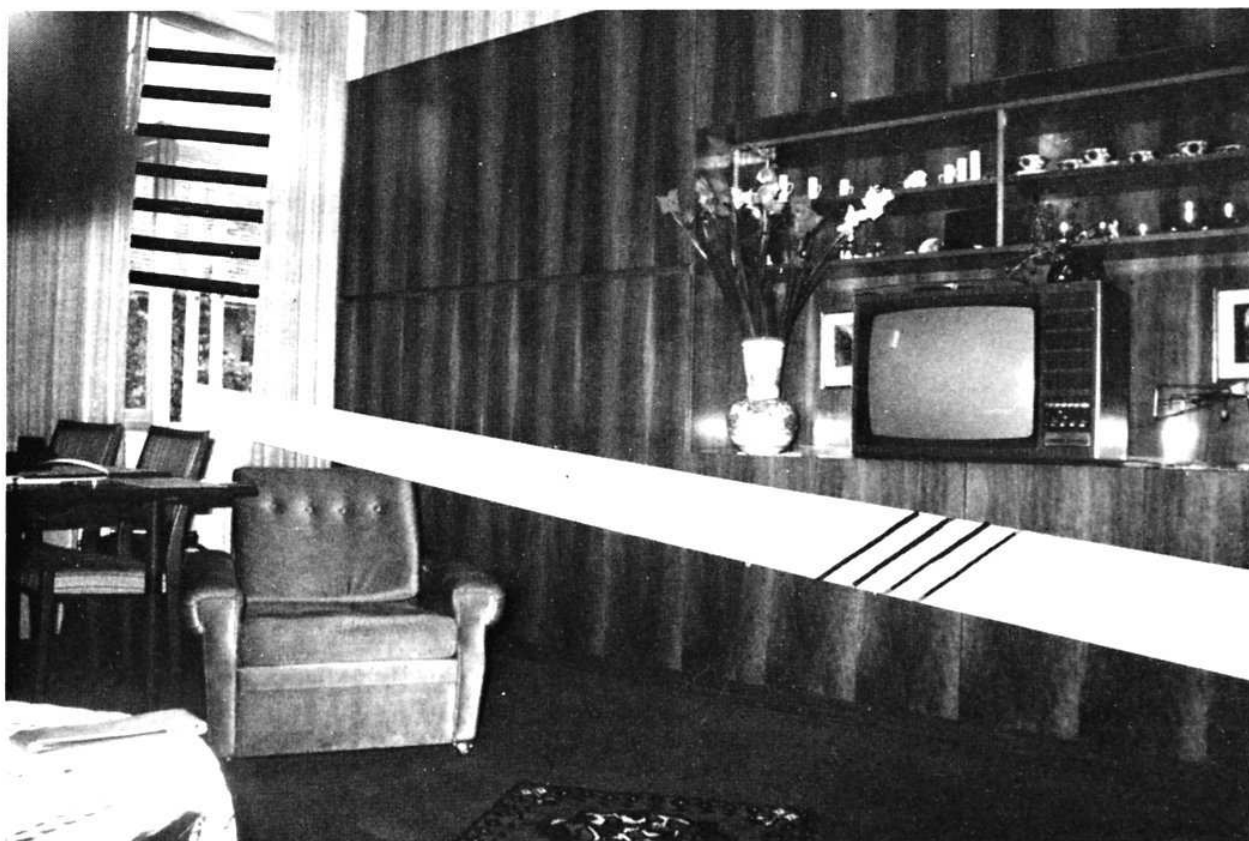
in an alley leading to the world-famous Schoenbrunn Imperial Palace of Vienna. The building is in the 12th district and looks terribly run-down but it contains some well-furnished flats with high, spacious rooms. Especially the W. bedroom (at day the living room) is neat and clean. From a wooden set of built-in furniture (see photograph and sketch of room) near the right double casement window a colour TV set faces the double bed which is converted to a couch in the daytime.

"We used to leave the left side of that window (both inner and outer) open all the time. It was a very warm day then," began Frau W. at our field investigation on October 7, 1975, 13 days after the event. She had switched off the TV at 10.00 p.m. on September 25 and had unplugged it. "I have a sleeping problem and could not find sleep that night, even after some reading. So it happened that I, unlike my daughter, was wide awake twenty minutes to midnight. You must not think I'm crazy, but it was the time 'it' came through the window." We have to add that the left side of the window was standing open but the shade (indicated by hatching in the photograph) had been down as far as the middle section of the inner window reducing the normal window opening by 50% (38.5 to 57.0 cm.).

"There it came in, fast as lightning, but it was no lightning. It was a ray, bright as burning magnesium, crossing my room like a line. When it left I was stunned, waiting for a thunderclap, but there was none. It was eerie – a sharply outlined *stripe, flat*. If I had gone crackers due to old age or the like, you know, I would have told you of a parapsychological visitation. But I won't do this... There was no sound, not even a crackle...It shot in and went as far as the kitchen, perhaps the door of our flat – and back, out." The connecting door to the kitchen was open. The flat door (see sketch) is part of a wall that runs parallel to the window wall at nine metres 15 cm. distance.

According to Frau Elsa W.'s description the "band of light" stretched out from the window in a nine to ten metre-long sloping path right into the kitchen,

The "snail-feeler" superimposed on a photograph of Frau Elsa W.'s bed-sitting room. "Solid light, floating in the air, and not creeping along the carpet... it did not touch the furniture or illuminate anything."



at a minimum distance of four metres from her head "...like floating in the air, not creeping along the carpet or the like. A terribly good hit. It did not touch the furniture or illuminate anything." I asked her to repeat this. "No, *it did not illuminate the room* like summer lightning does, or when a thunderstorm rages outside. It was bright, even dazzling, but was no lightning and had no spreading luminosity." Having asked no leading questions, we were suddenly confronted with a typical "solid light" pattern, the "canal effect" as I once dubbed it. Typical examples are found in the Aveyron globe case³ and the Sauvagny Type-I case⁴. Light that does not illuminate and is apparently a direct influence from the stimulus object on to the retina elements without light really present in the surrounding area.

Mrs. W. continued: "And it kind of shot in and was pulled back, or so it seemed. When it got out... I waited for thunder, and when there was none, after two or three minutes I rushed out of bed and thrust my head through the open space – into a cool night with flickering stars, no thunderstorm, all quiet. That's when I got my shock, really. I was unable to fall asleep until 4.00 a.m. In fact my original thoughts when the thing appeared were: 'Heavens! A thunderstorm – lightning? No, that isn't lightning! What luck I turned off the TV!' Then it was out and gone." We timed two to three seconds for the whole episode. Frau W. noticed no sound, odour, heat or rush of air.

After the "feeler's" departure, no light effect or sound was observed out on the street. It seems highly probable that the flat "feeler" came from something over the treetops and not out of the clear sky, but we have no witness for the something. Maybe it was

good for the witness's blood pressure not to look out immediately after the receding "feeler".

Lotte W. commented: "I think our street window is the only one usually open in the autumn." I noticed later that the third story is the only one easily accessible from the air, because it is above the tree-tops and electric cables.

Now our "grilling session" began and within another hour additional details came to light. Mrs. W.'s account was presented so vividly and with such wit, with many interesting reactions, that it sounded genuine. She had not woken her daughter after the event because Lotte was fast asleep then. Her thoughts, again stimulated by our questioning, which was a one-way data retracting, switched from explanations like a flashlight used by pranksters (sitting invisible on treetops?) to St. Elmo's fire and short circuits (none was reported), but never to UFOs. She had no interest in the subject and never brought it up herself.

The sloping path, as can be seen in the photograph, touched the upper part of an easy chair which was standing there in the way at the time of the event. Neither chair nor protection blanket showed any marks. The TV set was not affected, as the W.s discovered the next day when they had a brilliant reception. No marks were on the carpet (I crawled along it from the window sill to the kitchen). An electric boiler in the bathroom was turned off at the time of the phenomenon and there was nothing that could have attracted it from outside in a logical way. The vertical width of the "band" was about 15 cm. at the spot where it crossed the air near the TV set. Diameter would be the wrong word as "it was not round, no tube...it was rather flat, like a thick band. It had no definite corners either." A vertical or

somewhat inclined "plank of light" thus seemed to be the best approximation.

If one looks at the cover illustration of FSR Vol. 19 No.2, one will notice that for Logrono, a similar "band-shaped snail-feeler" was drawn by the artist. Whether it was really flat and whether the room was illuminated by the "egg" as in the drawing is not mentioned in the *Stendek* report. If the "feeler" was flat and the dazzling object only unpleasant to Senor Bosque's eyes, not illuminating the room, the two cases would match. If, as in the FSR illustration, the Logrono "feeler" was widening with increasing distance from the object it should be noted that the Vienna "feeler" was widening too. Frau W. Observed that it seemed to have the right width to penetrate the window and connecting door without touching it, thus fanning from about 38 cm. to 72 cm. Had it been a rigid mass it would have had no chance to get out again (and of course never of getting in at all!).

I asked some more questions about the "band." Said Lotte: "It was dazzling and sharp, like a plane surface, although it seemed to have a more compact area, where it literally hurt my eyes. I saw the area only a split second before the draw-out, when it was in line with the TV set [see hatched section in photograph—E.B.]. "Maybe it was caused by the set." I shrugged my shoulders, then asked whether the "feeler" looked rigid, like a plank, although this was highly improbable after Frau W.'s remark on the widening width. "No," she replied, "the whole thing was alive — I just call it alive, not dead, especially after the retreat. It looked more ragged on its upper surface then, like a mixing [turbulent?—E.B.] process. Well, I only saw the upper surface, but it

DAPPLE GRAY LANE (continued from page 23).

"I can't remember if it moved. It had a glare to it as if it were wet. I was startled...no sound from it that I could hear. My mind started turning really fast. I didn't know what to do. I said something like "What the heck is that," and John said something like, "Let's get out of here," and we took off. We tried to avoid it. I don't even remember if I looked back.

"The shape wasn't perfectly round — the edges were lumpy or like deflated. It was about the size of a basketball. It had a type of top and...lines... in it. In the upper right part was where I saw the brightest red (Figure 8).

"We didn't know what it was. Maybe it blocked my memory of remembering anything else, but that was all I saw. But it startled us enough to go away. If it was an appliance or something worth salvaging... some people throw TVs and radios out... I'd go investigate it. But it was enough to get the heck out of there!"

AD: You mentioned that your memory may have been blocked about it. What do you mean?

PR: Maybe what I meant was it seemed to happen so fast, and yet it seems like I saw more of it than I can remember. It seemed so clear — now it doesn't seem that clear. It seems no longer than five seconds, but it seems I looked at it longer because it looked wet like it was something...alive. I don't know."

Rodriguez at first was amenable to the idea of

grew wavy." Lotte cut in: "I'd say it was pretty frustrated it didn't get anything in here and got angry." At least the W.s had kept their humour.

Did Frau W. actually see it withdraw or not? She replied: "It did not dissolve in place, really. The darkness grew bigger to the right, and the last inhomogenous piece rushed out." Naturally a clear-cut edge was not discernible. It all happened too quickly. The W.s were relieved nothing had been damaged. "I wonder whether the insurance company would have paid for it?" Lotte remarked with her dry humour.

Weather conditions on the night of September 25/26 were excellent. No clouds throughout the night, calm, a minimum of 14°C, 87% relative humidity near ground level. No thunderstorm activity in the area. A last 'phone conversation with the witness revealed nothing unusual. The treetops had developed normally in spring and Mrs. W.'s shock was overcome.

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Notes inserted in text by Eileen Buckle

References

1. FSR Vol. 19, No. 2, p. 10.
2. For an excellent recent survey see the catalogue of solid light cases by Bourtembourg-Ashton, SOBEPS, 1976.
3. FSR Vol. 16, Nos. 5, 6 and 7.
4. *Lumières Dans la Nuit* No. 137, p. 17, and *Ouranos* No. 11.

hypnotic regression. No details of Hodge's session were given him. However the pressure of Rodriguez's work precluded an immediate appointment. During subsequent days, further attempts were made without success. Rodriguez' vacation interfered during this period. Upon his return he withdrew from the idea of hypnotic regression, and eventually from any further contact at all.

Following the interview with Rodriguez, the sighting location was visited with Hodges, and photos and measurements were taken (Figures 9, 10).

Dapple Gray Lane is a country-like road. Some of the upper-middle class homes keep horses in their spacious yards. It dead-ends about twenty yards north of the sighting location. The sloping hillside beyond drops off for hundreds of feet into an isolated area, part of a wooded park (Figure 11). One might surmise that the entities, if indeed they were occupants from a UFO, had a suitable place to land their craft unseen.

[Mrs. Druffel's report will be concluded in our next issue — EDITOR]

Notes

1. Edited from a two-hour recording. Events concerning occupant sighting transcribed, in Druffel files.
2. Edited from a ninety-minute recording; complete transcript in MUFON and Druffel files.
3. Edited from a forty-five minute recording; complete transcript in MUFON and Druffel files.