

# OPERATION KLEIN-REIFLING

Gordon Creighton

AMONG the vast accumulation of UFO reports in many languages which I have in my files and which still await translation into English, there are a few issues of *Informationen der Gesellschaft für Interplanetarik Österreich* (*Bulletins of the Austrian Interplanetary Society*), a small, mimeographed privately issued Austrian research journal which petered out of existence in the mid-1960s. The moving spirit in the AIS was a Herr Maschek.

The AIS issue for September/October 1963 contains a report which has always struck me as of considerable interest and possessing the ring of truth. In recent correspondence with FSR's contributor, Ernst Berger, of Austria, I have had the opportunity to raise the matter of this report, which bore the title given above. In reply Herr Berger informs me that, while he personally was never associated with the AIS because he regarded the group's general approach to be "overorganized," too rigid, and insufficiently scientific, he has no reason to doubt that the "Operation Klein-Reifling" report is quite genuine. I am sure the case will be of interest to many readers, and so give a condensed translation herewith:

On July 28, 1963, Herr Alexander Santner, an Alpine herdsman at the Saileralm hut near Klein-Reifling (about 30 kms. south-east of Steyr, Upper Austria) observed at midnight, in a clear sky, a globe-shaped object of varying brilliance which zigzagged and hovered for one hour and 45 minutes over the region of Almkogel and Bodenwies, above Wieser and Langlocker Mauer. His wife was with him and she also observed it.

Recalling an AIS article which he had seen in the illustrated weekly *Neue Illustrierte Wochenschau*, Herr Santner reported his sighting to officials of the Klein-Reifling rural police.

The matter having aroused his interest and curiosity, he and his family remained on the watch for further phenomena, and on the night of August 11, 1963, they were able to observe something that was quite unique.

It was midnight, and the witnesses numbered three, namely himself, his wife, and their 15-year-old son.

The family were aroused from their sleep by a commotion among the cattle. Herr Santner stepped outside and, looking around, beheld no less than 40-50 luminous globes, of different dimensions, which appeared to be flying in and out of the Arzmäuer caves.

He called his wife and son, and at 3.28 a.m. all three of them observed a very large flying object with big torpedo-shaped openings of varying sizes. The object was descending and was at a height of about 1400 metres when they saw it. They watched

it as it sailed to and fro between Almkogel to Bodenwies several times, giving off intermittent luminous flashes. In the meantime the small flying objects continued to pass in and out of the caves.

Then the large object began to gather up the small ones by turning so that one particular opening was in line with the small object. Then it approached it and drew the small object in through the opening.

By 4.32 a.m. the Santner family had observed six such operations consisting of a series of flashing signals followed by the recovery of a smaller object. The larger object then was lost to sight in a bank of clouds.

Further sightings followed during the next few days. Up to August 24 there were eight, and Herr Santner made a written record of them all.

On August 24, the party of people on watch at Saileralm comprised the Santner family as well as a number of members of the Linz section of the AIS, named as Herr Weisser, Herr Koehler and wife, and Fraulein Wiesmayer. At 9.40 p.m. they all observed a globular, yellowish-white, pulsating light which flew about in a zig-zag fashion over the area for about fifty minutes, as though making an investigation. The bulletin describes its size as no more than four times the size of a star of the first magnitude, but adds that they were able to see it very clearly and to note that at its outer edges it had "flickering peaks of light." The magnetic needle in a stationary compass which the observers had with them was seen to oscillate wildly several times. Two photographs were taken, one of which has turned out very well and looks quite good.

Two summer visitors to the district also confirmed the sighting.

Accompanied by Dr. Siegel, a cave expert from Linz, the members of the AIS made a search of the caves on September 7, 1963, but found nothing that appeared significant.

The following item from the close of the AIS report is interesting: "At 11.46 p.m. on August 24, 1963, as Herr and Frau Koehler were riding back on his motorcycle from Saileralm to Klein-Reifling, a light appeared overhead, and the engine of the motorcycle failed three times."

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The article in the AIS bulletin carried no sketches, and it is a pity that no information is given about the photograph which "looked quite good."

Nevertheless it seems that we have here some fascinating details of a local "flap" that was occurring over Upper Austria in the summer of 1963, and that offers interesting parallels with the more recent cases reported from that same country by our correspondent Herr Ernst Berger.

# UFO WITH A TASTE FOR FISH

Spectacular low-level sighting in the French Jura

*J. Tyrode*

Our contributor is an energetic field investigator for the *Lumières dans la Nuit* network in France. This article first appeared in LDLN No. 124, April 1973.

Translation by Gordon Creighton

THIS sighting took place between 4.20 and 4.25 p.m. on November 2, 1972, at Doucier, near Ménétrux-en-Joux (Jura),\* when the witness, Monsieur Vuillien, observed a saucer at very close quarters right above his fish-breeding pools beside highway D 326, at a point some seven kms. to the east of Doucier, Commune of Ménétrux-en-Joux.

The fish-farm draws its water from an arm of the nearby river, le Hérisson. Monsieur Vuillien was at work on a new building, and pushing his barrow to and fro along the narrow strip of ground separating his fish-pools from the road.

Coming back, with empty barrow, from east to west, he looked up and saw, very high in the sky, a series of white forms which he describes as resembling curls of smoke from a failing aircraft engine. Then he saw, lower down, and then again lower still, a continuation of this series of smoke curls right down to ground level. They seemed to be about 50 metres apart, in a dead straight line, and getting bigger towards the ground. As he stood there trying to see where the series ended he found to his astonishment that it ended in a magnificent saucer stationary just a few metres from him.

In panic, he dropped the shafts of the barrow. He was all alone out there, dusk was coming on, for his fish-farm lies in a deep valley bordered by hills 200 m. high. The whole valley was already in shade and it was getting dark. Up above, the sky was very clear and bright, especially so.

That he was looking straight at a flying saucer, in this lonely spot, he could not doubt, though he had hitherto never believed the reports of such things. He had heard talk of them but had never taken any interest in a matter, which for him, seemed so remote and mythical and abstract. Now, the moment of truth had come for him.

His sketch shows the classic type of "saucer", and our photograph, taken by me, shows the spot, with the sketched saucer superimposed upon it in the position in which the witness saw it.

M. Vuillien thought it was about 40 metres from him, but on checking the site I find that it was exactly 56 metres from him. He had reckoned the height of the background trees at 25 m., but in fact they are 35 m., so his figures require to be multiplied by a factor of 1.4 (approximately).

The saucer had a circular lower part which I estimate to have been 28 m. in diameter and 1.70 m. thick. This lower portion was markedly rounded or curved over towards the edge, and the underneath showed a slight bulge. In the centre of the top of the

upper disc was the cupola, some 17 m. wide at its base and some 3.5 m. high.

The underside looked metallic and had the colour of polished aluminium. On the other hand the cupola on top could have been, he felt, of plexiglass. He was struck by the strangeness of its hue, and compares it with the material used in the manufacture of certain types of fancy spectacles which permit the wearer to see through them while acting like a mirror for anyone looking at them. He says it is impossible for him to give an exact word to describe the precise shade of this cupola.

He had the feeling that he was being watched from inside the cupola by someone he was unable to see.

He was able to see that the saucer had no sharp edges or angles, and nothing of an engine was visible, and not a bolt, nor a rivet. All was completely sealed, smooth, polished. ("Unless it was spinning at a vast speed," he said, "though it would surprise me greatly if this were the case.")

Making our measurements of the site against the background of trees shown in the shadows, we have concluded that the height of the UFO above the ground was around 7 metres, and certainly not more than 8 metres. A part of it was higher, from where the witness stood, than the hut visible in the rear (a little low wooden building of one storey, standing at ground-level), and thus it was not more than about 4 m. higher than the roof of the hut. The saucer's great size, its complete immobility, its utter lack of sound — all this in the profound silence of that lonely place, made a deep impression upon him. It was right above one of his tanks. Whatever would the effect on his trout be! And would it do any damage to the hut?

And so for five long minutes it hung there — "and that's a long, long time, you know!" as he said to me. It is quite certain that in such moments one lives eternities. When you are all alone, in a place like that, with no possible hope of help from any quarter, indeed it must have seemed a long five minutes to Monsieur Vuillien! He was frightened, perplexed, envisaging all the possibilities, including the possibility that the UFO's occupants might carry him off. And so he stood there, rooted to the spot, awaiting what would happen next.

When curious questioners asked him later why he did not venture closer to the craft, he replied simply that, not knowing how the machine functioned (might it, for example, have rockets which were fired when it took off?) he was afraid he might get a thorough roasting, or that it might set the wooden hut alight as it took off.

\* East — Central France.