

UFO Observed over Tynemouth

B. M. W. von Metz

OBSERVATION of the object was made by myself and Mr. Geoffrey O'Brady-Jones on August 15-16, 1971. Mr. O'Brady-Jones is an engineer who lives up the street from me in Percy Gardens, Tynemouth, Northumberland. He came along the street while I was watching the object, and that was our very first meeting. His subsequent statement, which I quote here, sums up the circumstances of the sighting and the manner the object was observed:

"At 11.20 p.m., on the evening of August 15, I was walking eastwards along Percy Street, Tynemouth. Percy Street forms a T-junction with the top of Percy Gardens, and my flat at the top of Percy Gardens directly faces east with a view over King Edward's Bay. Tynemouth Castle lies at about 250 yards to the south-east.

"My thoughts that evening were certainly not centred on unusual things happening in the sky. In fact, certain personal things were occupying my mind. It was then that a gentleman approached me, whom I now know to be Mr. von Metz. Without preamble, he said he had noticed this strange light in the sky to the south as he was walking back through Tynemouth village to his flat in Percy Gardens. Further to this, and much to his astonishment,

the thing had moved rapidly eastwards until it was directly over the north-west tower of Tynemouth Castle. He asked me if I would observe this object with him. I was immediately intrigued. I looked to where he indicated, and sure enough there was the rather prominent object with a definite orange glow. To the naked eye it did not appear like anything I had seen before. At that time, 11.20 p.m., it was directly above the castle.

"We then proceeded northwards, past my flat and down to von Metz's flat and there we decided that it would be interesting to observe the object in a more scientific and analytical way. Von Metz then went in and brought out his binoculars and telescope; also paper and pen. We went into an ornamental garden opposite his flat and took up a stationary position there to commence observation.

"The enclosed narrative describes our mutual observations and the results of these can be seen from the graphs and sketches. We have carefully checked every detail, and both agree that our account is as accurate as we could possibly make it.

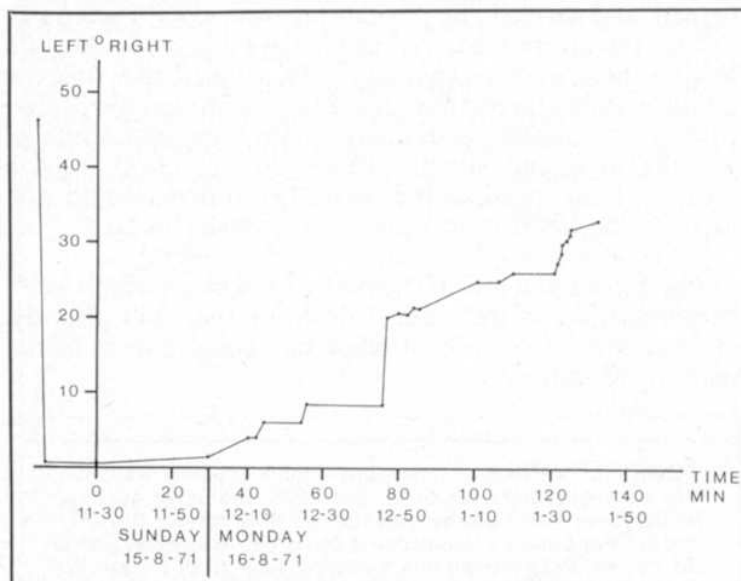
—G. R. O'Brady-Jones."

Background to the sighting data

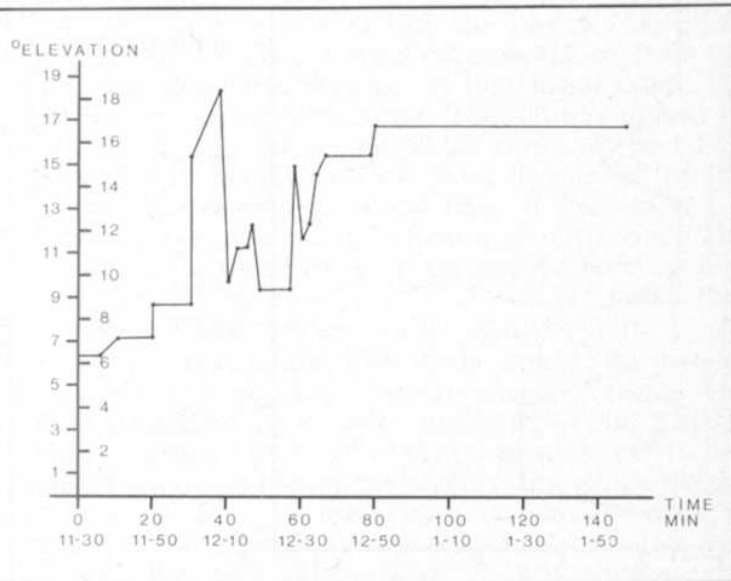
To measure the elevation of the

object, a line was drawn from the top of the west tower of Tynemouth Castle and taken across the sky; the object was then measured by the number of fingers up from that line with my arms at full stretch and hands turned in at 90° to the arms. Thus, "four fingers up" means that the UFO climbed to a height represented by the thickness of four fingers, my hands being in line with my eyes, and the middle three fingers of my left hand being used to count up. I later converted these measurements to degrees of elevation and graphed the change in elevation against time to see if the object moved with uniform motion. The fact that the motion was not uniform for most of the time suggests that the object was not a natural heavenly body.

Motion across the sky was measured by noting points on the ground directly under the object and I later converted these to degrees of motion in the horizontal plane by direct measurement using a theodolite. We also noted the amount of movement in the binoculars. The binoculars are 10 × 50 night glasses and have a field of view of 5. Thus, "¼ binoc. right" means that the object moved from a point in the centre of the binoculars to mid-way between this and the right-hand side edge of the



Lateral Movement/Time



Elevation/Time

field of view. A telescope was used to obtain drawings of the object and this was mounted on a tripod to eliminate shake. A compass was used to see if there was any variation in the direction the needle pointed, to check on any magnetic fields. None were recorded.

The sky was clear with no clouds of any description visible in the sky in any direction. The stars were

Sighting Report (11.15 p.m. Sunday to 1.52 a.m. Monday)

11.15 I saw object above chimney of largest building near the east end of Front Street. Large and yellow. Hovering. Suddenly it moved with great speed to the left (east) and hovered over Tynemouth Castle (44°). I looked around for a witness.

11.20 Stopped a man in the street, whom I now know to be O'Brady - Jones. Explained movement to him and aroused his interest. We decided to go down the street to my house to get measuring instruments and to make a proper set of notes of movement.

11.30 Got out binoculars, telescope on tripod, paper, pen and compass.

11.35 Object over west corner of north face of west tower of castle, 4 fingers up.

11.40 4½ fingers up; slight move to right.

11.43 Slight move right in binocs. *Object spinning and pulsing.*

11.50 Up vertical to 5½ fingers.

11.55 Right ½ binoc.

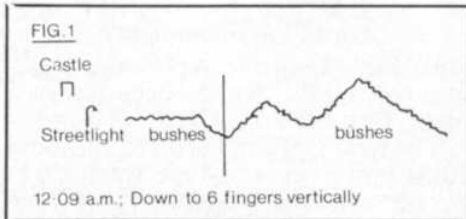
12.00 No movement since 11.55, then up vertical to 10 fingers.

12.05 Right ¼ binoc.

12.07 Brightness and size increased. Coming towards us. Up to 12 fingers.

12.09 See diagram. At this point we plotted movement right from objects on the ground.

12.09 Down to 6 fingers vertically.



12.11 Up to 7 fingers. No movement right.

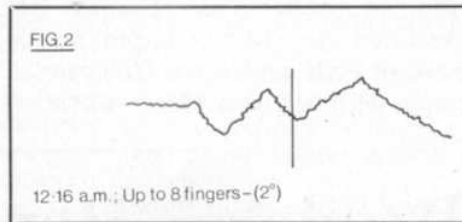
12.14 No change.

very bright and the Milky Way was very clear to the naked eye. The planet Mars was very clear and followed its normal course. No sound was heard from the object, and in fact there were very few sounds from anywhere, this being late on Sunday night.

This report is an exact copy of the notes I took at the time. The

12.15 Moved ½ binoc. right.

12.16 Up to 8 fingers (2°).



12.18 Down to 6 fingers.

12.22 Same position.

12.26 Moved right ½ binoc. (2°).

12.27 Sudden movement up to 10 fingers.

12.29 Down to 7 fingers. No movement right.

12.31 Up to 8 fingers.

12.33 Very much bigger in binoculars. Brighter. *Spinning clearly.* Moved up to 9½ fingers.

12.35 Up to 10 fingers. Red glow noticed at 7 o'clock by both of us. O'Brady-Jones noticed a blue tinge at 2 o'clock.

12.38 Definite red glow. Same position.

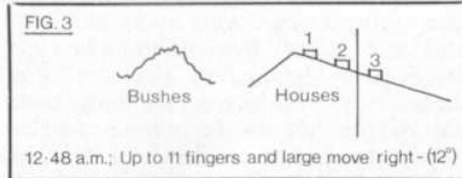
12.39 Both confirm blue tinge at 2 o'clock.

12.40 No change.

12.42 Shooting star seen—fourth tonight so far. No change in position.

12.47 Moved ½ binoc. right.

12.48 Up to 11 fingers and large move to right (12°).



12.51 Now over 3rd chimney (½°).

12.53 Same position.

12.55 Very much bigger in binocs. Coming this way. Now over 4th chimney (½°).

At this point, as the object was very big in the binoculars, we decided to try and draw it. We each made an independent sketch with-

numbers in brackets refer to the horizontal movements of the object in degrees. The graphed results of these and the vertical movement are included at the end. All measurements were agreed by both of us unless otherwise stated. The original notes are open to inspection, provided that anyone wishing to see them comes to inspect that at my home.

out seeing the one the other had made. The definition was poor because of hand shake.

01.01 von Metz sketch.

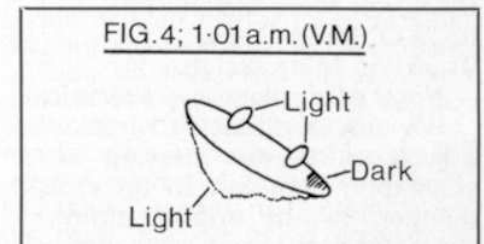


FIG. 5; 1-04 a.m. (O'Brady-Jones)

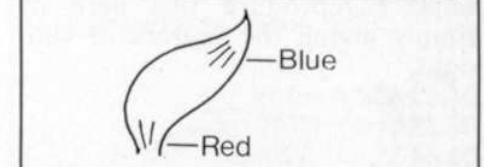
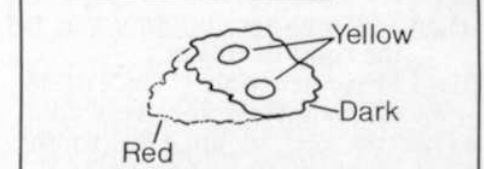


FIG. 6; 1-10 a.m. (V.M.)



01.04 O'Brady-Jones sketch.

DIAGRAMS IV, V and VI

01.10 von Metz sketch.

01.11 Moved right to chimney 7 (½°). Same height.

01.13 Same position.

01.14 Same position.

01.15 Same position.

01.20 Moved ¼ binoc. right.

We now decided to set up the telescope on a tripod to try to draw the object without the hand shake that had made the last set of drawings useless. Again, we drew the object independently of each other.

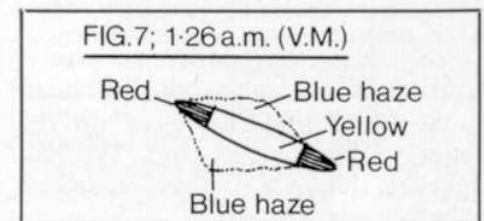


FIG. 8; 1:28 a.m. (O'Brady-Jones)

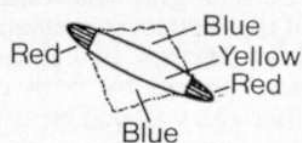
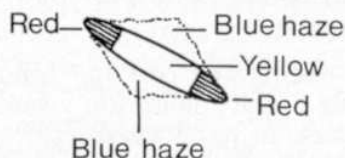


FIG. 9; 1:30 a.m. (V.M.)



- 01.26 von Metz sketch.
- 01.28 O'Brady-Jones.
- 01.30 von Metz sketch.

Note: All drawings were identical.

We now continued to track the object which was moving at a constant height but in an erratic manner. In the original notes, I drew the position at each separate movement, then marked off the time. I reproduce this here by simply giving the degrees of shift right.

- 01.32 $\frac{1}{2}^\circ$.
- 01.33 $1\frac{1}{2}^\circ$.
- 01.34 2° .
- 01.35 $1\frac{1}{2}^\circ$.
- 01.36 1° .
- 01.38 Saw another shooting star to the right of object.
- 01.45 Movement only $\frac{1}{2}^\circ$ since 01.36.

At this point we were very cold, so we decided to go back to the point at which we had first seen the object, to see how much it had moved since then.

FIG. 10

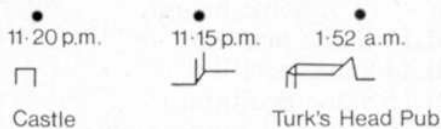
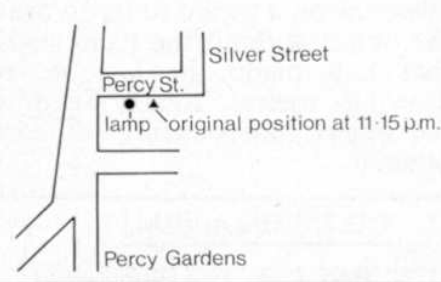


FIG. 11



At 01.52 a.m. we gave up the sighting due to the cold. We had marked the spot in Percy Gardens where we had stood.

On Monday morning I called in on the Police. They inspected the notes, equipment, and point at which we had stood and pronounced the notes to be genuine. The Superintendent in charge advised me to get in touch with the Ministry of Defence. This I did, but was told by the girl on the telephone that no department exists to deal with such things. I then rang Robert Chapman of the *Sunday Express* and gave all the information to him. [Our thanks are extended to Mr. Chapman for putting FSR and *Case Histories* in touch with Mr. von Metz—EDITOR.]

I am of the opinion that the object was solid and under some kind of control. I am not going to speculate as to what the object was, but I am convinced that the object was *not* a balloon, star, planet, meteorite, cloud reflection or refraction. It is possible, but unlikely, that it was a secret weapon belonging to this or another nation. I am a physicist, and teach mathematics at the moment to senior secondary boys. I am also well conversant with astronomy and have never seen an object of this kind before. Until now I have had an open mind on what are termed, rather stupidly, "Flying Saucers."

Readers' Reports

Flashing light in the night

Dear Sir,—Recently I have been reading much about UFOs and other aerial phenomena, like ball lightning, in my young brother's *Countdown* comics. This morning, at 0455 hours (Wednesday, November 10), I saw something which I find hard to explain.

My job involves night work on the overhead electric cables on British Rail's London-Shoeburyness electrified line, and on the morning in question I was working near Pitsea, Essex. Suddenly there was a tremendous blue flash which lit up the surrounding sky and ground, the type of flash one associates with very high electrical currents, and even though I suspected that the flash originated from a high altitude, I still thought it possible that it could have been caused by a fault in the overhead cables. I then got in touch with our electrical control operator, using a phone by the side of the track, and found out that no faults had been recorded in the overhead cables.

However, two colleagues of mine, one a quarter of a mile away at Pitsea and the other five miles away at Stanford-le-Hope, had also seen the same thing, and like myself had made use of the nearest telephone. Fortunately my friend at Stanford-le-Hope had spotted the exact location of the occurrence and, over the telephone, using the moon and stars as a guide, advised me as to the exact area of the sky in which to look. Together, at an altitude of approximately 10,000ft., we saw a cloud of smoke, clearly visible in the reflected light of the moon. Since it was a cold, frosty night, with no clouds in the sky, I can think of no normal explanation for this. In

the stillness of the night aircraft are very clearly heard, and at this particular time it was absolutely silent. Also it was definitely not a flare from a ship in distress.

I am 100% sure that it was an instantaneous electrical discharge or explosion.

In all the cases that I have read no one has ever witnessed a UFO with any kind of technical malfunction or difficulty in maintaining a correct flying altitude. Taking this a step further, is it at all possible that this was a UFO with an advanced electrical propulsion system literally blowing up because of some unknown malfunction? Surely even advanced civilisations are not exempt from having occasional aerial catastrophes?

Yours faithfully,
D. Walden, Eastbury Avenue, Rochford, Essex.

[An interesting report. I am sure that even advanced civilisations would have malfunctions: it is also possible that extraterrestrial visitors, or whoever else may be responsible for the UFO phenomena, may have wished to draw the attention of "interested" railway electrical night workers near Pitsea for reasons best known to themselves!—EDITOR.]

Great Yarmouth lights

Dear Sir,—I wish to report two sightings of UFOs which occurred last night, October 26, 1971.

The first sighting occurred at about 10.50 p.m., when my eye was caught by an extremely bright whitish red light moving across the sky from East to West at a high speed. The sky was about half covered with cloud, fairly thick, and fairly low. The light was so