

A TRIANGULAR UFO CAPTURED ON CCTV (1998).

© BY CHRIS ROLFE, Director of UFOMEK (UFO MONITORS, EAST KENT).

THE FILM.

On July 20, 1998, I received a 'phone call from a Mr. Fred Pike, who asked whether I would be interested in seeing some film footage showing a Flying Triangle UFO, I said yes, I would like to see it.

He explained to me that he was employed as a security officer using CCTV (closed circuit television) in his local town in the northern part of the County of Kent, and that he had managed to capture this UFO flying very low over the area. I felt that the story "sounded too good to be true" and must admit I was very sceptical, and would need to see the proof of it. Mr. Pike said he would send me some still photographs from the footage and would also try to send me a copy of the video film itself.

True to his word, on August 8, 1998, I received from him three photographs that looked very authentic and official and that showed the date time, and the camera number, (and even the name of the town!) My immediate feeling was that this was either a remarkably good hoax employing computer technology or it was something truly serious - "*the real thing*". So I called him and confirmed receipt, and he began to give me the details of the event.

It had been on July 17, 1998, at around 22.20 hours. He was watching the CCTV monitors, which were connected to the various cameras placed at strategic locations around the local industrial estate. Suddenly a call came in from one of the other Security Officers, about a fight which was taking place between some young men in a drunken state outside one of the factory units. This Security Officer asked Mr. Pike if he could get the incident on camera and also call the Police, as the situation was getting pretty violent. As Fred panned the camera around to the location of the fight, he saw something on the monitor that made him do a double-take and turn the camera back around. He could not believe his eyes, for there, in the western sky, was an object that looked like "a classic flying saucer". He watched the black-coloured object as it moved slowly over the town, and as it did so, it did something for which he was totally unprepared - *it started to change shape! It took on the form of a so-called "Flying Triangle"*.

Its movement across the sky was, as stated, slow, and no lights were visible on it. On the CCTV footage it just appears as a black triangle. He managed to secure about 2 minutes and 36 seconds of footage, in which you can see clearly that the object is very low as it flies over the town. It appears to be following along above the River Thames, (and the only adjacent features which could have been of any strategic importance would have been the Tilbury Power Station and



an Army firing-range on the nearby Eastcourt Marshes.)

To say that the object was "big" is an understatement - the thing was either closer to the camera than it appeared to be, or it was at least some distance away - possibly a quarter of a mile away. Its height is a little more difficult to estimate, *But it could possibly be at less than 1,000ft.*

The film footage received its first public showing at our UFO KENT '98 Conference on October 3, when the audience were stunned into silence. So far as we knew, nothing like this had ever before been filmed with CCTV equipment - something which we of UFOMEK feel would be very difficult to hoax!

ENQUIRIES BEGIN.

Somewhere between October 3 - the date of our Conference - and October 11, 1998, UFOMEK were contacted by UNION PICTURES, who were planning to make a three-part documentary on UFOs and had heard about this footage and were interested in seeing a copy of it with a view to using it in their programme. We contacted Fred Pike, and he agreed, and, as he had the only master-copy and would under no circumstances let it out of his sight, he personally took it to the Union Pictures studios in London. This was on October 16.

AIR TRAFFIC CONFIRM - "NO TRAFFIC".

In the meantime, in July, only a few days after the sighting, Fred had decided to contact LONDON AIR TRAFFIC to learn if anyone else had also sighted this UFO. They told him that they had received no reports for that night over the County of Kent, but advised him to telephone to A.I.S. (the Aeronautical Information Section.) This is a branch of LONDON AIR TRAFFIC which is run by the Military, and

all reports from the public to the Police end up there before going to the M.O.D. (Ministry of Defence). Even military pilots who have a near-miss, be it with another aircraft or with a UFO, must report the incident (I believe by telephone) to A.I.S. within 24 hours.

Fred Pike duly telephoned to A.I.S., and spoke with a woman who asked him if he wanted to report a UFO sighting. He replied: **"No, I would like you to confirm one on that date and time."** She replied: **"Not at that particular time... NO, Not at all!"**. **By this time the woman was becoming very flustered, and she put the 'phone down on him. She had obviously been "caught out" by him in some way, and it seems that possibly A.I.S. knew more about the matter than they were willing to say!**

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AGREE.

With this in mind, I suggested to Fred that he should now make a complaint to the Ministry of Defence's LOW FLYING COMPLAINTS DEPARTMENT. This he did, by telephone, during the second week in August, and the following week he received a reply, dated August 18, signed by a Mr. P.A. Gould, who said: **"I can confirm that no military aircraft was authorized to operate in your area at the time stated. Furthermore, due to the dense population of London and the area around, military jets would need special permission to fly in your area and this is usually only given during flypasts. In the circumstances, we believe it is likely that the aircraft you saw was either a military one at above 2,000 ft. or, more likely, was a civil aircraft, possibly from Biggin Hill"**.

There are two points to be noted with regard to what Mr. Gould says. Firstly, if the so-called object was a military jet flying at 2,000 ft., then it will have been the biggest aircraft I have ever seen! I would love to see the hangar for it, - let alone the runway that it would have to use when landing. (Unless of course it was indeed *military*, and something of a totally new type and construction).

Secondly, in no way could it have been a civil aircraft from Biggin Hill, as we understand that that airport closes down for the night — at the very latest at 20.00 hrs. — during the summer months.

[Of course the Ministry of Defence would have known nothing yet about the CCTV footage? (BUT I'LL BET THEY DID! - EDITOR FSR)]

UNION PICTURES "ARE INTERESTED".

On October 22, 1998, UNION PICTURES telephoned to me to say that they were definitely impressed by the footage, and would like to use it in their three-part programme to be called "RIDDLE OF THE SKIES". Later that same day the producer of the programme, John Purdie, telephoned to confirm that they were definitely going to use it and offering the sum of £1,000, to which I agreed provisionally. Initially the aim of UFOMEK had been not to make money out of the footage, but when you consider that these TV companies are making thousands from selling their programmes it is not unreasonable for researchers to want a little slice of the apple pie when you consider also that none of the UFO groups or researchers in this country receive any funds whatsoever except from their members, so that all expenses come out of their own pockets.

Reporting-forms have to be printed; witnesses have to be interviewed; and there are postage, and 'phone calls, not to mention travelling-expenses. It all mounts up over the years, and in the five years that UFOMEK has been running I dread to think how much money has been spent.

UNION PICTURES "NOT INTERESTED".

Then - all of a sudden - UNION PICTURES "pulled the plug"! They no longer wanted to use the footage, coming out with all sorts of excuses. We heard: "It's not quite what they had been looking for", or "they think the object was a cloud, or was a piece of tarpaulin flapping around in the wind"!

When I told this to Aviation photographer Bill Rose, he laughed his socks off, and, whilst not being himself a "believer in UFOs", he felt that this footage was quite impressive, and he said that he did not understand quite what the UNION PICTURES producer Mr. Purdie was playing at.

FARNBOROUGH CONSULTED.

However, after speaking with other people who have had dealings with Mr. Purdie, we find that they tell a very different story regarding the way in which he had been handling the research for the programme. To say that we feel he has been "got at" is perhaps more true than at first we had realized, for in the third part of the programme UNION PICTURES use some footage that David Spoor from Norfolk had obtained and they had first taken it down to Farnborough, to the D.E.R.A. (Defence Evaluation and Research Establishment) there, "for an opinion". **So could it not be that Mr. Purdie had also taken our CCTV footage down to Farnborough, whereupon they might no doubt have taken one look at it and then told him in no uncertain terms that he was not to use it?**

UNION PICTURES REFUSE TO ANSWER.

At the close of the third part of the programme it was announced that Mr. Purdie would be on the *Internet* to answer any questions that viewers might have about the programme. Herry Anderson, at that time the Co-Ordinator for UFOMEK, therefore put a question, among others, about any D.E.R.A. response concerning our CCTV footage and wanted to know whether *that* was the real reason for UNION PICTURES not wanting to use it? MR. PURDIE TOTALLY REFUSED TO ANSWER ANY OF JERRY ANDERSON'S QUESTIONS. WHY? -HAD WE GUESSED THE TRUTH?

So far, the only television broadcasters to have had guts enough to show the footage have been LIVE TV, in their "WHY FILES" programme.

We waited to see whether perhaps "LONDON WEEKEND" might have the courage to use it in an hour-long documentary which they said was to have been broadcast at the end of 1999. So far that programme has not appeared.

NOTE BY EDITOR OF FSR:

This is a very familiar sort of story to us. ■

HOW THE BRITISH MEDIA ARE INSTRUCTED TO TREAT CROP-CIRCLES. BY GORDON CREIGHTON.

As we all can see, the British newspapers and the Radio and TV media received their instructions long ago as to how they should treat the embarrassing phenomenon of the Crop-Circles. They were told to show them as exclusively the work of hoaxers, like the two old-age pensioners "Doug 'n Dave" - "*les pappys farceurs*" as our French colleagues term them so delightfully - who, with the aid of a few fellow-workers, are now credited with the production of the entire massive world-wide phenomenon, as we have seen it, not only here in Britain, but also in the USA, Canada, Australia, Russia, Japan, Germany, Spain, and some other countries. (By the way, has anyone yet heard of crop-circle reports from New Zealand, St. Helena, Mauritius, Easter Island, and other remoter spots?).

Every year of course we get a few fine dismissive pieces of writing in our British press and a few debunking programmes via the TV and the Radio, but these seem to pass rapidly and are soon forgotten. As for the public and the rest of us, we too are expected simply to toe the line and *forget* rapidly...

Of the finest and most ludicrous examples that I have seen recently in the British press I strongly recommend a superb piece of nonsense babble from the *Daily Telegraph's* Scientific Correspondent Matt Ridley:-

Daily Telegraph, May 24, 1999.

PRANKSTERS RUN RINGS AROUND THE GULLIBLE: MATT RIDLEY'S ACID TEST.

"Laurance Rockefeller, an American billionaire who is also a UFO nut, has been persuaded to part with some of his billions to 'carry out aerial research' into crop circles in south-west England. Is there no end to the gullibility of the wealthy?

"I made my first crop circles in 1991. My motive was to prove how easy they were to make, because I was convinced that crop circles were all man-made. It was the only explanation nobody seemed interested in testing.

"Late one August night, with one accomplice - my brother-in-law from Texas - I stepped into a field of nearly ripe wheat in northern England, anchored a rope into the ground with a spike, and began walking in a circle with the rope held near the ground. It did not work very well, the rope rode up over the wheat. But with a bit of help from our feet to hold down the rope, we soon had a respectable circle of flattened wheat.

"Two days later, there was an excited call from the farmer. I had fooled my first victim. I subsequently made two more crop circles using much superior techniques. A light garden-roller, designed to be filled with water, proved helpful. Eventually, I hit on the technique used by the original circle-makers - plank-walking, or pushing down the crop with a plank suspended from two ropes. To make the depression circular is a simple matter of keeping an anchored rope taut.

"Getting into the crop without leaving traces is a lot

easier than is usually claimed. In dry weather, and stepping carefully, you can leave no footprints or tracks at all. There are other ways of getting into the crop even more stealthily. One group of circle-makers use two tall bar stools and jump from one to another. I soon found I could make a sophisticated pattern with very neat edges and no tracks in less than an hour.

....."I soon met other crop-circle makers, though I was never lucky enough to encounter the two who started it, Doug Bower and Dave Chorley. People such as Robin Allen of Southampton University and Jim Schnabel, * author of *Round In Circles*, also found it all too easy to fool the self-appointed experts, but all too hard to dent the gullibility of reporters. When Bower and Chorley confessed, they were denounced on television as frauds. My own newspaper articles were dismissed as "government disinformation" and it was hinted that I was in M15, which was flattering (and untrue)."

NOTE BY EDITOR OF FSR.

* I am delighted to see this mention of Mr. Jim Schnabel, an American citizen who has long been known for his services on behalf of the US Government's debunking programme on UFOs. There are one or two exceedingly interesting things to be related about him, and we will see to it that this is done in a future article.

In German slang the word SCHNABEL ("*beak*") is often used to indicate "*SNOUT*" and when Mr. Schnabel came to Britain and set about studying (*as instructed*) *not so much the British crop-circles as the crop-circle investigators*, the snout was used effectively for turning up plenty of "dirt on people" and his ears were busily gathering up the sort of stuff required. (Those who are familiar with the farming life will know that, used efficiently, the snout of a hog can be as good as any plough).

AND WHAT ABOUT THE COMPENSATIONS?

After all these years, and after all these "faked crop circles" in so many countries of the world, and after the frightful messes and crop-losses perpetrated in so many fields, I am most disappointed to have to record that I have yet to hear of one single case anywhere in which any farmer or any owner of the terrain was reported to have claimed, or to have received, any monetary or other compensation from any source (Government or hoaxers).

Maybe FSR's readers can help me out by indicating such cases?

HAVE ANY OF YOU EVER HEARD OF ANY SUCH CASE IN ANY COUNTRY? IF SO, PLEASE LET US KNOW!

As this age of alleged civilisation hurtles to its termination, the general miasm of greed and interest in *money, profit, gain, materiel wealth*, becomes ever more obsessive and more persuasive - so far as one can ascertain - than it has ever been in any known past period of human