

THREE LANDINGS IN ITALY

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE SECOND KIND NEAR ALESSANDRIA, PIEDMONT.

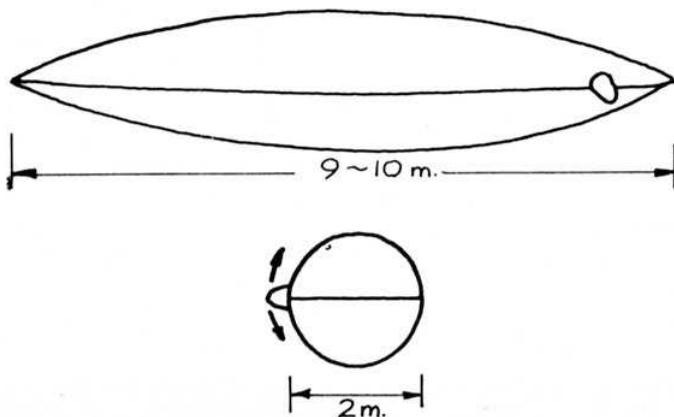
Paolo Toselli & Edoardo Russo

THE day was Saturday, September 2, 1978; the place, San Michele, a suburb to the west of Alessandria. Between 8.00 and 8.15 a.m., schoolboy Roberto Pozzi, aged 14, opened an upper floor window at his home and was immediately attracted by a sound which he described as being "like ducks quarrelling." The noise was also accompanied by a hissing sound.

Roberto turned to the right, in the direction of the corn-field in front of the house, and saw a cigar-shaped object of metallic appearance rise from among the maize cobs and stop opposite the tops of the mulberry trees at the side of the field. The sound stopped and the object began to swing laterally. It then departed with such velocity that it soon changed to a small sparkling dot in the sky. It seemed then to stop its ascent and swerved horizontally southwards.

The cigar-shaped object had a protuberance, somewhere between cylindrical and conical in shape, which extended from the side. During the object's swinging motion this protuberance made rising and lowering movements (see figure 1). The object (Roberto called it: "The Thing") was metallized "just like the new Ford cars" and reflected the rays of the sun on its upper side; the lower side was much darker. It has also been verified that the object was at right angles to the road, and this agrees with the disposition of the traces found afterwards on the field.

The duration of the whole observation, according to the young witness, was about 5 seconds, but we have good reason to believe that the phenomenon was viewed for a little longer than that. The length of the UFO was stated by Roberto to be of the order of 9 to 10 metres, and this is larger than the overall



The object seen from the side and from the front based on drawings by Roberto Pozzi

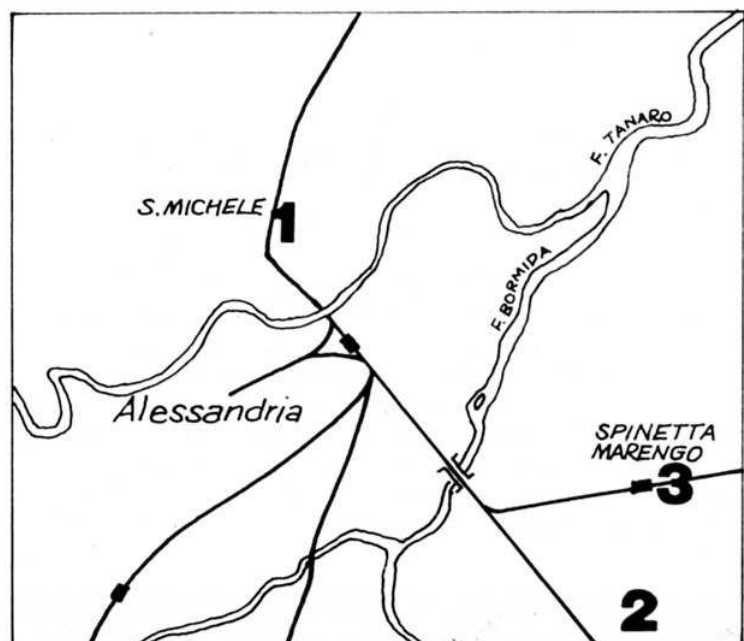
size of the trace marks, which were 6.50 metres in length.

As soon as the thing had disappeared Roberto called out to his mother, Anselma Garbero Pozzi, who was busy in the kitchen. She did not respond at first, but at last, giving way to his insistence, went out on the balcony and made him tell her all about it. After that, having seen from his balcony a "yellow area" in the field Roberto ran down with his sister, Daniela, aged 8, to see what had happened. Their mother followed them down, and they found an oblong area where the maize plants were folded, without being broken, in such a way that the leaves were also laid flat. The maize cobs seemed dry on the outside, while inside they were still fresh. Signora Pozzi verified that the bends were recent and that the stalks were still green. The "squashed" area covered part of three of the rows of plants, two of which were folded towards the east and one towards the west. The measurements of this affected site were 6.50 x 2.90 metres, and the plants, of an average height of 2.40 metres, were folded at a level of 1.10-1.20 metres from the ground.

The landing site is about 25 metres from the road (with the road lying between the house and the site); it is also 40 metres from the railway (see figure 2).

Roberto Pozzi also saw a hole approximately in the middle of the site, a hole which appeared to have been made by a strong stream of air.

Having observed all these things the Pozzis then

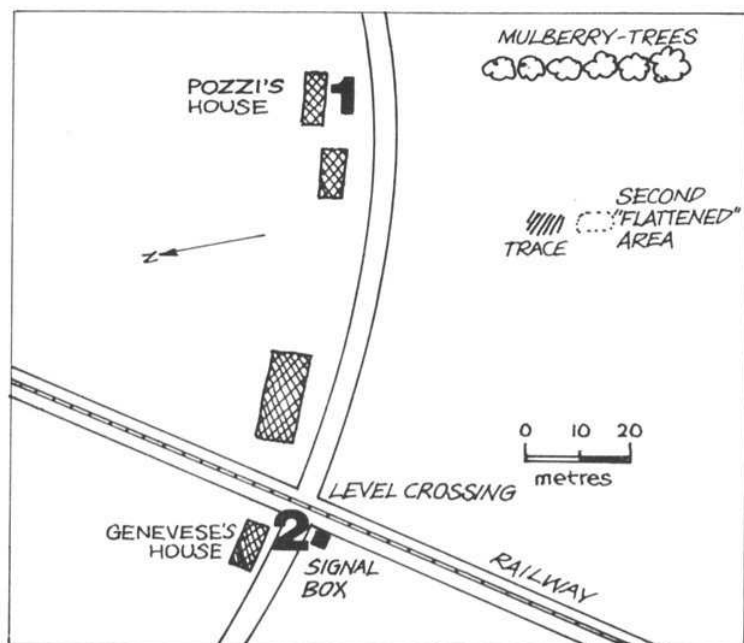


Sighting locations in relation to Alessandria

Right: Photograph of the flattened area in the field of maize. Looking South, the photograph was taken one hour-and-a-half after the sighting.



Below: The area of the landing at San Michele. Roberto Pozzi was at point 1. The witnesses of the Sunday evening sighting were located at point 2.



Second phenomenon at San Michele

There was a second incident reported at San Michele, this time on the Sunday evening, September 3rd. The railway level-crossing keeper on duty, Edilia Cresta Gallo, was talking with Virginia and Teresa Cenevise (mother and daughter, 62 and 33 respectively) at about 10.00 p.m. They were by the level-crossing barriers some 50 metres from the house of the Pozzis. On the upper floor of the Cenevise house, a few metres from the signal box by the crossing, there was a Signora Tersilia Ruffinengo, aged 68. Suddenly the women saw, in the direction of Pozzi's house "...a strip of whitest light" descending from the sky. It came down between the maize field and the road, and when close to the ground the strip changed into a very bright fire-ball. This ball, about 1.5 m in diameter seemed to revolve around a vertical axis. After a moment or two this "ball" disappeared into the darkness. Some seconds later this strange phenomenon repeated itself, and immediately after that, a third time, only on this occasion the sphere was bigger, perhaps two metres in diameter, and it appeared to be approaching the women along the road. It was this last stage that was witnessed by Signora Ruffinengo. By now the women were terrified, particularly Teresa Cenevise who was experiencing an unusual burning sensation in her eyes.

The husbands now arrived on the scene, and witnessed a strange odour not unlike that associated with "burning electrical wires." Again the police were called out and they too verified the persistent odour.

On the Monday morning a first investigation was made on the spot, and during this and others, long conversations were held with the witnesses of the two

called out to their neighbours who ran to the site where they also saw the traces. On the advice of some acquaintances Signora Pozzi phoned the police at about 9.00 a.m. and reported the event, and a patrol car was soon on the scene. After noting the flattening of the plants at the site they put through a radio call to the scientific police. At about 9.40 a.m. a crew arrived from the scientific branch at Police H Q. These men took a series of photographs, made drawings of the plants that were not needed for analysis, and then questioned the boy.

The news of the landing (or quasi-landing) reached our ears on the Sunday evening. But in the meantime there were new developments.

sightings. It was also observed that a second "flattened area" existed immediately behind that found by Roberto Pozzi, but it is suspected that this was the work of other local boys.

An enormous crowd of the curious hurried to the place; many took maize cobs, or pulled up plants as souvenirs, to the despair of the owner of the field. On the Tuesday the story first appeared in a newspaper, with considerable inaccuracies, but already on the Monday evening, about 100 people met to await the re-appearance of the UFO in the neighbourhood of the maize field – naturally without any result! By Tuesday afternoon investigators of the "Ufology Section" of the Clypeus Group had arrived from Turin, and among them were Roberto D'Amico and Edoardo Russo. With us they made a careful inspection of the landing place. An interesting part of this investigation was a flight over the area with Roberto D'Amico in a plane hired for the purpose. It was confirmed that the area of dried plants was surrounded by others still green, but it was impossible to determine whether or not the drying of plants could be attributed to the presence of the cigar-shaped object.

Apart from the officers from the police headquarters, it should be noted that the Carabinieri of Alessandria also took some interest in the case and compiled a short report thereon. (The Carabinieri, an Italian military corps, is officially charged with the investigation of UFO sightings with which they become acquainted.)

Landing at Frugarolo?

In the days that immediately followed our investigation there were new sightings over the province of Alessandria in which other investigators were involved. However, on Tuesday, September 12th we learned of an alleged landing by a UFO some days before in Frugarolo, in the district of Cabannoni some 2.5 km south-east of Alessandria. Being aware that the Carabinieri had gone to the place, we contacted the police at Bosco Marengo, a nearby village. It was confirmed that a marshal of the Carabinieri had made an investigation on the spot because they had been advised by a hunter of the presence of an unusual circular trace in a field of corn stubble.

Armed with information we went to the place and verified the presence of a circular area 4.5 metres in diameter, the interior of which was completely devoid of stubble, with the soil turned and the stones all on the surface. In the centre there was a second darker circular area, almost black, caused possibly by combustion. Near the perimeter of the larger circle we found three small spots where the soil had been covered by a dusty, almost black substance not unlike graphite, or coal dust (at a time of writing the substance is still undergoing analysis).

All around, the stubble had been trampled on in a radius of about 15 metres, by the feet of the curious.

It is difficult to decide if the traces are due to a UFO landing, or to other reasons. No witness of such a landing has come forward. But there are a number

of people who, on September 8th watched, in the evening, the low flight over the area of strange lights. The date ties in with the discovery of the traces by the hunter.

Multi-witness landing at Spinetta Marengo

The next thing we learned was the news of a supposed UFO landing, with a lot of witnesses, in Spinetta Marengo, an eastern suburb of Alessandria. So we instituted a search for eye-witnesses of the event which took place on the evening of Wednesday, September 13th. We found many, but the main one is Angelo Ciompi, who lives in via del Ferraio, in Spinetta.

It was about 9.30 p.m. when Ciompi saw, from the court of his home, a reddish disc moving in the starry sky towards the east. Suddenly the object halted in its flight, and then dropped vertically, to disappear behind some houses. Immediately afterwards a reddish "tube" rose from the place, something like flames. Boys who were out on the street observed the same phenomenon, so Ciompi took out his bicycle, and in a few minutes came to the place where the object and descended, and discovered a fire in a semicircular piece of brushwood-covered waste land. At the same time the night watchman informed the fire brigade.

While this was going on a number of onlookers had assembled to see the fire, which remained in a semicircular area. These people testified to the presence of a very pungent odour which "caught the throat." A dense, reddish smoke had risen from the fire, too thick to see through. Some of the onlookers, however, say they saw a red object rise from the "smoke" and disappear vertically. A few minutes later firemen from Alessandria arrived and put out the fire, and the onlookers began to disperse.

That, however, was not the end of it, for throughout the evening the locality was overflowed by many bright objects which, for the most part, were said to have swooped to the place of the fire and then disappeared vertically into the night. There were numerous witnesses of this.

There was an interesting discovery which we made on the site: a number of objects which littered the place, revealed no sign of burning or being subjected to smoke, even in places where the grass or brush were totally carbonized. Examples were a car's plastic carpet; a glass bottle; a little electric motor. We found that under these – and other – objects the grass was untouched, and in no way burned. The mystery remains.

Comments

With regard to the matter of San Michele, Roberto Pozzi experienced neither psychological nor physiological effects, either during or after the sighting.

Roberto's dog, a collie, did not display any symptoms of nervousness during the incident in the maize field, and did not react in any way during the

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'MOTHERSHIPS' OVER AUSTRALIA

Paul Norman

I N May, 1967, I was invited to Boulder, Colorado, for talks with members of the U.S. Air Force sponsored project, headed by Dr. E.U. Condon. The purpose of the meeting was to present examples of UFO reports in Australia.

The invitation came as a surprise because I suspected the Condon Committee to be a computerized selection of Menzelian scientists, appointed by necessity, under pressure, by overwhelming and rising public interest by the worldwide flap which was occurring during that time. The purpose: keeping the "explanations" on the same old official track, sounding like a cracked phonograph record.

During the discussion the Australian scene was placed before the Project Committee, together with copies of outstanding reports recorded by various UFO research groups in Australia.

Over three years later I received a letter from Dr. David Saunders, dated September 11, 1970, which stated in part: "I well remember your visit to the UFO Project here at CU primarily, I think, because it was so informative. While it is true that the tangible information you left with us is buried in the Project files - files which Condon now treats as his personal property - you also left with us the realization that the UFO problem both exists and is recognised down there." In a followup letter Dr. Saunders writes: "I do recall some of the materials you left with the Colorado Project, but of course they all remained with the Project when I left. Condon says that all the Project materials have been destroyed. Even people who lent materials with the express understanding that they were to be returned have gotten the run-around - all the way from 'I haven't got time to look' to 'I regard this as my personal property.' Obviously, you won't be getting any of this back, so anything you can do to reconstruct the record will help."

It is thus that reports - on which private researchers spent large sums of their hard-earned money when travelling long distances to secure greater detail - are swept under the carpet when they compete with officialdom which, with its grants of public money, maintains a policy of public deception.

In his report *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects* (Bantam Books, New York) Section I "Conclusions and Recommendations" (probably the only book ever published with its conclusions at the beginning) the late Dr. Condon referred to the famous sighting by Captain Howard over the Atlantic Ocean in his BOAC *Stratocruiser** as a most unusual natural phenomenon, so unusual that it hasn't been

reported before or since. In the light of this how can any researcher in the field trust officially-sponsored projects? I personally presented three Australian cases to the project, and these were not only known among most Australian researchers, but also had been investigated by both private and official investigators. In addition I gave to the committee at least 25 other similar cases from places other than Australia.

Over Zanthus, Western Australia

Before giving the details of the three Australian cases, I will open with an account of an event which occurred just before the closure of the Colorado Project. It is a personal report prepared by Captain Gordon W. Smith, a pilot of Murchison Air Services - Southern Airlines of Western Australia. This incident occurred in the late afternoon of August 22, 1968, above the Zanthus district of Western Australia:

"Captain Walter Gardin and myself were returning from Adelaide to Perth on a Charter Flight. The aircraft was an 8 place Piper *Navajo*, registration VH-RTO, returning empty from Adelaide. At first sighting I was asleep in the cabin, Walter was at the controls. We were cruising at 8,000 feet with a true airspeed of 190-195 knots and tracking 270° Magnetic.

"At 0940 .G.M.T. (1740 W.S.T.) Walter abruptly wakened me in great excitement and asked me to come into the cockpit quickly. I did so, and he asked me if I could see what he was looking at. At first I didn't, because I was still suffering from the effect of sleep. However, after about thirty seconds I could see what he was excited about.

"Some distance ahead at the same level, and about 50° to my right (I was in the right seat), I saw a formation of aircraft. In the middle was a large aircraft, and formed (*sic*) to the right and left and above were four or five smaller aircraft. We were on a track of 270° magnetic and these aircraft appeared to be maintaining station with us.

"As we had not been notified of this traffic, I radioed Kalgoorlie D.C.A. (Department of Civil Aviation) communications centre asking them what traffic they or RAAF had in our area. The answer was

* [Captain James Howard, his crew, and most of his passengers, saw a giant shape-changing object with six smaller "satellite" objects in attendance. When a USAF fighter plane approached, vectored on to the scene by Capt. Howard, the six objects seemed to enter the larger object which then diminished in size and "went out like a TV picture shutting off." That was on June 29, 1954 - EDITOR]