

Sindbad the Sailor

HERE are four short, but interesting reports, collected from fishermen at the port of Le Brusq, on the Mediterranean. The account is taken from *Lumières dans la Nuit* (Contact Lecteurs), Series 3, No. 5 of January 1971.

A lady correspondent of *Lumières Dans La Nuit* recently found out about these happenings when she had the opportunity to spend some time at the Mediterranean French fishing-port of Le Brusq, in the Dept. of Var (south-eastern France, between Marseilles and Nice). She was able to interview some of the men involved, having won their confidence, but only on condition that their names be not revealed. We fully share the view of the Editor of *Lumières Dans La Nuit* that much caution is necessary in such cases where the fullest possible confirmation of authenticity has not yet been secured, and for this reason we retain his original title, *Sindbad le Marin*—in its English version—for the account of these curious episodes.

On the other hand, all who have followed the UFO Problem for any length of time will be struck by the total resemblance between these four French reports and the numerous other "water-happenings" which we have recorded over the years, as, for example, Gordon Creighton's *Water-Happenings In Indonesia* (FSR Case Histories No. 4, April 1971), and I think it must be conceded that these French accounts seem to have the right "inner flavour."

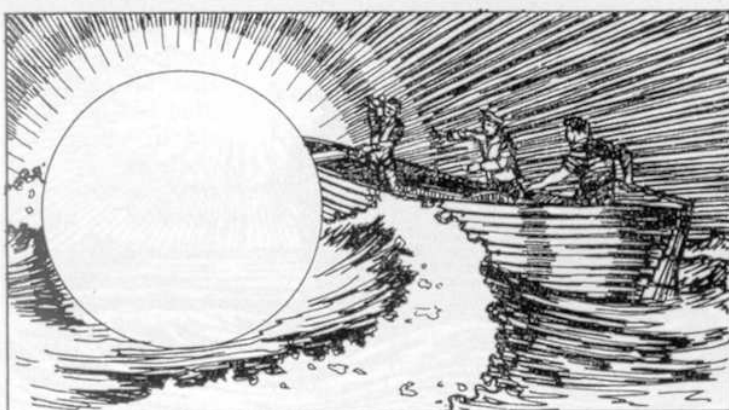
We understand that the Editor of *Lumières Dans La Nuit* feels that the requisite further confidential details as to the identity (not of course to be revealed) and the *bona fides* of the fishermen may be secured in due course.—EDITOR.

Report No. 1

The account of the informant, a fisherman, is as follows:

"Two years ago, in April 1968, three of us were fairly far out at sea, in heavy weather, with cloud and strong wind. Night had not yet quite fallen when suddenly, in a break in the clouds, a sort of "thing" appeared—ovalish in shape—which was just hanging there in the sky. It looked like a mirror and it was shining, and it did not move. Then a cloud passed in front of it, hiding it for a few minutes, but when the cloud had gone the queer thing was still there. It seemed however to have changed colour a bit and to be giving off pinkish flashes. Then, after about fifteen minutes or so, it seemed to move very slowly from east to west, dropping gradually as it did so. And as the thing came down it seemed to change shape so that, instead of being vertical as it had been before, the oval was now horizontal (see Fig. 1) and from pinkish the colour had now turned to bluish.

"The thing remained stationary over the sea for two or three minutes and then vanished before our eyes as



though swallowed up by the waves, and we did not see it again.

"The sighting had lasted a total of 25 minutes. We heard no sound, the thing was absolutely silent despite the fact that it was not far from our boat. It gave out no trail, no flame, no sparks, and was absolutely bare of all marks or trappings, etc. We have no idea what it could have been."

Report No. 2

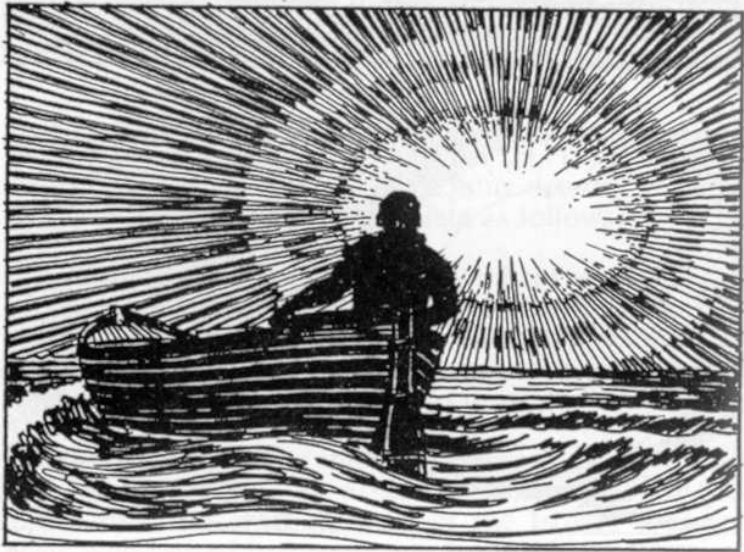
The informant, also a fisherman, stated:

"Three of us, myself and two companions, had gone out to sea to drop our nets. It was 12 years ago, June 12, 1958. It was a very clear night, with a starry sky and the sea was calm. We saw a big shining dot of light in the sky, orange-coloured, with a touch of red to it. It grew bigger, and then it began to descend very fast towards the sea and soon it was a great big globe which was lying on the surface of the water. (Fig. 2.)

"Just lightly touching the waves it remained there stationary for several minutes, but we had the impression that it was revolving, like a wheel turning round and round on the same place. It caused a strong air displacement, for we could see the water being whipped up all around it. After that, the ball came rolling towards us, just gently brushing the water. We weren't a bit happy at the sight of this 'globular wheel' bearing down on our boat. Terrified, one of our party shouted 'It's going over us!'



3



4

"The fantastic wheel didn't in fact go over us but it passed very close by, making such big waves that we nearly capsized. When it was close to us we now felt a very powerful heat from the thing and a strong blast of air. As it went by we heard a faint humming from it, like the hum of a swarm of cockchafers. Comparing it with our boat, its diameter seemed to have possibly been about 4 metres. Stupefied, we just watched it vanish at great speed. It moved along by leaps, now half disappearing among the waves, now skimming along on top of them. Then it did a right-hand turn and disappeared on the horizon.

"It did not give out any flash or beam of light; it was simply a revolving ball or wheel, with no change of colour.

"We lost no time in getting back to land, returning sooner than we had meant to. One of my mates said: 'Perhaps it's a flying saucer that has dropped down from the sky.'

"We didn't dare to tell anybody what we had seen. They would simply have laughed at us. It was some time before we took our nets out again, so afraid were we of seeing that fantastic ball again, but we never did see it again. We have no idea what it could have been."

Report No. 3

"There were three of us, out in two boats. I was alone in my boat and my two companions were in theirs. It was eight years ago, on the night of August 1, 1962, and between 11.00 and 11.30 p.m. It was a very fine night,

with a starry sky, a slight wind, and the sea quite calm. Suddenly, at about 300 metres from me, I saw a large metallic body, elongated in shape, and with a sort of chimney or turret in the middle. It seemed to be moving along slowly on the surface of the sea. Then finally it stopped. I said to my companions in the other boat: 'A submarine has surfaced over there quite close to us. It doesn't seem to worry them!'

"One of the others replied: 'It must be a foreign sub. It's a model that I don't know.' Then there was some disturbance and waves around the submarine, and I was able to make out some frogmen coming out of the sea and climbing up onto the craft. We shouted to them. But at first they didn't even turn round to look at us. My two companions, who had also seen them, and had heard me hailing them, also called to them with their loud-speaker: 'Hi there, Mates! Snooty today, eh? Are you from here? Foreigners, eh maybe? But anyway, give us an answer!'

"The result was nil. There was no reply from their side. I had a good view of them. I counted about a dozen of them getting up onto the submarine. Then three or four of them did look round, and hesitated for a few instants, before vanishing into the ship.

"Finally, before rejoining the rest, the last man turned towards us and raised his right arm above his head and waved it for a few instants in greeting, to say he had seen us, and then he disappeared into the craft like the rest.

"Then we saw the machine rise right up out of the water and hang there just above the waves. Then we saw lights go on, red and green, and a beam of white light shot out and reached as far as our boats. This beam was from a searchlight, and gave off no heat or anything unpleasant.

"Then the beam of light went out. Then the craft was lit up with an orange-sort of glow, and the red and green lights went out. The machine started to rotate very slowly, from left to right, and rose to about 20 metres above the sea.

"Its appearance was, as we now saw, like an oval or almost round dish, and of the dimensions of a medium-sized submarine. It hung there stationary for a few minutes. Then it began to rotate faster, its light grew brighter, and suddenly it shot off horizontally at high speed over the sea, amid a vast silence. Its light now took on the colour of red flame and it flattened out and came back right round over us in a beautiful curve while climbing all the while and increasing speed, and then it vanished as a tiny red dot among the stars. Within just a few moments while we watched it, it had become totally invisible to sight.

"We remained there quite a while, flabbergasted, straining our eyes at the spot in the sky where that fantastic machine had disappeared.

"Apart from the noise of the waves, we had heard no sound from it, and you can well imagine that we asked ourselves what it could possibly have been. It was not a submarine, nor a helicopter nor a seaplane, we would have certainly seen if it was any one of those.

"Very much aware and sensitive as we were about ridicule and mockery we have never talked to anybody about that fantastic and mysterious encounter out at sea and we have kept silent about it right up until now, with

the intention of telling you, and only you, about it."

Report No. 4

The informant states: "It happened 4½ years ago, that is to say on September 10, 1965. I was out alone in my boat, it was a mild night, with a starry night, and the sea calm. It had gone midnight when I saw a great big light developing very rapidly at sea-level. It rose up very high into the sky. It was red, and when I saw it at first my thought had been that it was a ship on fire, but I saw no flames or smoke from it. It was more like an immense flare, with a little vapour around it. It changed

colour, passing first from red to orange, and then green, and then blue, and then orange again. I heard no sound of any explosion, it all happened in absolute silence. Then this light or glow split up into several parts and then gradually they faded away bit by bit till the whole sky was black again. The sighting had lasted 15 minutes. I have never found out what the glow could have been or from where it could have come. I made enquiries to find out if a boat had been on fire or had exploded in the area, but I was told that there had not been, nor had there been any flares or fireworks. I never found out what it was."

Readers' Reports

Photograph puzzles

Dear Sir,—I hope the following report will be of some use to you. I feel it is sufficiently interesting to be worth placing on record.

The witness, who was alone at the time of the sighting, is Peter Baker, of Locksley Drive, Ferndown, Dorset. The incident occurred at 9.30 p.m. on March 4, 1970, when Mr. Baker was living in Derby. He was in bed, looking out of his window, when he saw a red ball in the sky. Realising it to be too large for an aircraft navigation light, and being completely unable to identify it, he took his Instamatic camera, and exposed six frames on ordinary daylight film at 1/60th shutter speed, with the lens set at f8.

The distance of the object was impossible to judge, but it was 20° above the horizon. At first it was increasing in size as if coming nearer, then it stopped for a minute or so, and at this time was the apparent size of a tennis ball. Eventually it moved away at about the speed of an aircraft. No sound was heard during the sighting.

Mr. Baker made two of his slides available to me for study. He was surprised to discover that the red ball, which had been in the centre of his viewfinder as he released the shutter, did not appear on any of his slides, but was replaced by two dots or streaks. The two slides which I received were taken consecutively within a couple of seconds of each other. A bright star is visible on each slide, and the "UFOs" have plainly changed their position in relation to the star, so there can be little doubt that a moving object was photographed.

I had the small portions of the slides which showed the moving objects enlarged. In the first they appear as meaningless streaks, but in the second they can plainly be seen as two hemispheres. It is stressed that Mr. Baker *did not see* these objects, but thought he was photographing a red ball of considerable size.

I enclose copies of the photographs, but please note that the star used as a reference point does not appear on these prints, as it was located in a

different section of the frame.

Yours sincerely,

Leslie Harris,

SCAN, 5 Grenfell Road,
Bournemouth, Hants.
February 28, 1973.

P.S.—The group named on the heading of this letter has recently been formed by myself and three friends. SCAN is the name of the magazine I publish, in which we try to cover all aspects of the UFO problem, as well as various other unexplained phenomena. Should copies be required, they are available from my address, price 18p.

Unusual objects over the Firth of Forth

Dear Sir,—Further to my 'phone call, I enclose details of my sighting of UFOs of January 27, 1973, at 4.15 p.m.

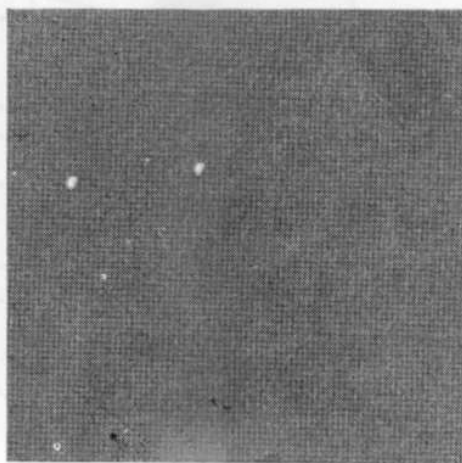
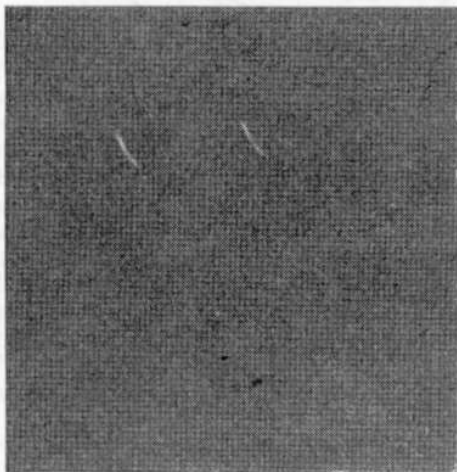
The location of the incident was the Firth of Forth, off Burnisland. We were motoring a yacht from West to East, about one mile off the harbour. The objects were first sighted stationary. They were of the same brightness as landing lights, but stayed still. No aircraft was visible, and there was no positional change, or change of brightness for several minutes—say five minutes. The objects were then in position A as shown on the sketch.

B Objects give the impression of getting closer, but angular change too small to detect.

C Right-hand light slowly fades and left-hand light brightens—thus confirming our first impression of aircraft wingtip lights, with aircraft changing direction. However we are now puzzled by the movement from right to left as this would make the far "wingtip" light the brightest, which is nonsense.

D Movement steady, and at slow aircraft speed at five miles range.

E Second light begins to catch up on first one.



The two enlargements from Mr. Baker's photographs, as submitted by Mr. Leslie Harris.