

MY VISITOR FROM OUTER SPACE

by MARY M. STARR

Mrs. Starr lives at Old Saybrook which lies at the mouth of the Connecticut River, U.S.A. Nineteen miles east is the city of New London on the Thames River. At Groton, just across the Thames, is the Electric Boat Works, where atomic submarines have been built. Both the Connecticut and the Thames are a mile wide at their mouths and strangers could easily mistake one for the other. Mrs. Starr adds that the Flying Saucer which visited her seemed headed in the direction of New London when it took off.

EVER since 1946 I had been sceptical about the reports of "flying saucers." In 1953 I began to keep a few cuttings from newspapers dealing with eye-witness reports from those who had seen such phenomena. One, in particular, intrigued me, a year later, as it happened near where I was then teaching. Two men driving north along the shore of Lake Superior, between Duluth and Two Harbors, about 4 a.m., had seen a lighted cigar-shaped object flying above the lake. After watching it for several minutes, they decided to drive back to Duluth and report it to the office of the morning paper. Their account was published, but it was accompanied by ridicule.

Driving back and forth from my home in Connecticut to Los Angeles and San Francisco, I always hoped I'd be fortunate enough to see some of these unidentified flying objects. I have flown the Atlantic, the Pacific and the Mediterranean, but never saw anything unusual in the skies. I was still sceptical, but willing to be convinced.

Then it suddenly happened. It was the night of December 18, 1957. I was alone in my cottage, asleep in an upstairs bedroom on the south-east corner of the house. The shade on the east window is rarely drawn, as I like to look up at the sky. Planes to and from Boston and New York fly

above my garden; other planes on a north-east course are usually military planes from Westover Air Force Base, in Massachusetts. My cottage is on Long Island Sound, a popular place in summer, but deserted in winter. My half acre of land is surrounded by salt marsh on the north, east and south. Along the eastern side a little tidal creek flows. Long Island Sound is on the west.

I was wakened from a sound sleep by a brilliant light shining in the east window. I sat bolt-upright and saw what I thought was the lighted fuselage of a plane very slowly gliding by the window. My first thought was, "Good God, there's going to be a crash!" Then, the machine stopped and I could see men, whom I took to be stewards, passing each other in the aisle. "There's no panic," I said to myself, as I watched the two men, each of whom had his right hand raised. I thought they must be carrying trays of refreshments to the passengers. I tried to see more of the inside of the "plane," but the portholes did not permit it. The "stewards" were wearing off-white, even yellowish, jackets. The backs of their necks seemed to be quite reddish. I wanted to see their faces and thought I was to get a good look at a third man, who came from the forward end to join the other two.

As I leaned forward for a better look, the lights suddenly went off. So close was the plane to the

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cottage that I expected at any moment to hear the port wing rip through the shingled wall, but the plane was motionless and there was no sound. "Must have lost their motors," I decided. Just then, the whole outer skin began to glow like burnished brass. I could no longer see the portholes. Then, from the end nearest me, a little antenna was raised and the tip of this six- or eight-inch tube began to whirl around very rapidly. "They are signalling for directions," I thought, "and they need them for they are certainly off-course."

So I watched for seven or eight minutes, not daring to take my eyes off this "lost" plane. I have since been asked why I didn't telephone to the police, or to a neighbour. But what could the police do? There was no disaster. The nearest neighbours were a mile-and-a-half away, and I didn't know their name.

It may even have been ten minutes before the antenna was withdrawn and the lights all went out. Almost at once, the plane began to move. It had come in from the south towards the north. To my surprise, it began to back up, towards the south, reminding me of a double-ended sail boat. Then it made a sharp right-angled turn to the left and I thought, "They'll hit my blue spruce, or the tool house," and I held my breath. But the pilot went between those obstacles quite easily.

At my first glimpse of the fuselage, it looked black, except for the four portholes which I could see. Next, it had been brilliantly glowing, but now it was a dull bluish-grey as it moved towards the east. Looking down on it, its shape reminded me of the long oval mirrors which used to hang

in private homes many years ago. The rim of the plane was surrounded by a close row of small round blue lights, which I saw clearly as the plane dipped low over the tidal stream at the foot of the garden. Then it shot straight up into the air and quickly disappeared.

So fascinated had I been that I forgot all about being cold, as I sat up in bed in a room without heat. I snuggled down under the blankets and wondered what sort of plane that could have been. Then it dawned on me that those men could not have been ordinary beings. Their plane was too shallow. I, who am five feet tall, couldn't possibly have stood upright in it. At most, those men were three-and-a-half or four feet tall. What I had taken to be the steward's jacket was the complete rig and the "skirt" of the jacket formed the two very short legs. The reddish necks were small rectangular masks resting on their shoulders. On one, I had seen a decidedly red bulb in the centre, presumably of the face. The up-raised right arm of each man must have been holding on to a stabilising bar through the centre of the plane.

Had I seen a flying saucer? For many days, I told no one of my visitor, and then the response was, "Forget it!" A less sceptical young friend paced off the distance where the plane had hovered above the grass and said its length was thirty feet.

Where had it come from? Who were its crew? I've been hoping it would come to my garden again. I want to run out and ask them in for a cup of tea and I'll gladly exchange souvenirs with them. I must have "proof" to convince those who will not accept my word. But will they reject even tangible proof? I'm afraid so.

Angel hair in the South Seas?

A FEW days after leaving Pitcairn Island, the Shaw Savill liner *Corinthic*, which arrived at Wellington from London on January 4, passed through masses of light floating debris. This extended for a distance of nearly 900 miles and for an unknown width on either side of the ship until she was about 150 miles from her New Zealand landfall.

The master of the *Corinthic*, Captain A. C. Jones, said the mysterious substance, plainly visible over the ship's side, was of light honey colour and appeared to be quite soft and of a jelly-like or silky consistency. Some pieces

were several feet square and in depth, but much was broken into quite small fragments.

As the *Corinthic* was steaming at more than 18 knots in order to arrive on her scheduled time, it was not possible to collect any specimens, Captain Jones added. The captain reported a similar phenomenon in the Pacific in 1928, when he was an officer in another Shaw Savill ship. Masses of floating substance, extending for many miles were sighted not long after a severe earthquake in some of the South Sea Islands.

Naturally, "experts" were

called in to give an opinion. Usually they are anonymous, but this time we can give their names and qualifications. Dr. J. C. Yaldwin, a biologist at the Dominion Museum, and Mr. G. L. Shaw, a geologist with the Geological Society, after hearing the captain's description, thought that the substance would have been pumice from an underwater volcanic eruption. Maybe, but the description given by the captain can hardly be said to tally with that of pumice either in colour or in texture.

(Report taken from the Herald, January 9, 1960).