

# IOWA'S BASHFUL HUMANOID

*Jerome Clark*

ON AUGUST 1, 1965, a major UFO wave erupted all through the central United States. On the first night of the month alone sightings were logged in Texas, Arkansas, Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Colorado, the Dakotas, Nebraska, Wyoming and Washington state. During the flap, which took several weeks to run its course, several persons claimed to have seen UFO occupants.

The two known ufonaut reports came from Grand Forks, North Dakota, on August 8 and from Renton, Washington, three days later. In the former, three young women saw a transparent, circular UFO resting on a golf course lawn; inside it they could see the silhouettes of "little figures." The object and its occupants abruptly disappeared when the UFO "just blew up." In the second case two teenaged girls observed three weird five-and-a-half foot humanoid beings who approached them, causing the frightened girls to take to their heels. When they looked back, the strangers were gone.<sup>2</sup>

Now a third ufonaut case has come to light, thanks to the efforts of Ralph C. DeGraw, a private UFO investigator living in Hazelton, Iowa. DeGraw first heard of the incident in January 1974 through a relative of his who worked with the witness, by now 24 years old. On January 13 DeGraw interviewed the man at his home in Denver, his current residence. This is the story that emerged:

Between 3.00 and 4.00 one hot afternoon during the second week of August 1965, David Gibson was sitting in the front yard of his Waverly, Iowa, house with his father and sister.

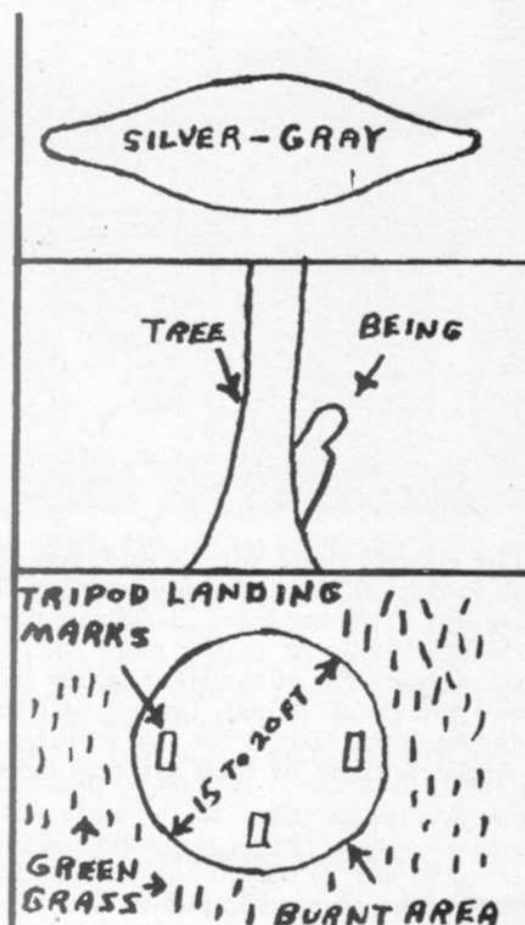
Suddenly, he recalled, "...We heard a high-pitched whining sound. We looked for a few minutes but didn't see anything. Then I looked towards the south and saw the craft descending slowly from the sky."

The UFO, which looked like "...two saucers glued together, about 15 to 20 feet in diameter and silver-gray in colour," had a shiny surface "...like polished aluminium" but it did not reflect the bright sunlight. It was windowless and there were no other visible markings.

The object slowly descended until it settled behind a tree-lined hill out of view. Once it was out of sight, the "whining sound" associated with it faded away.

South of the hill, on which sits an abandoned farm house, is an old quarry. Noting that the UFO had disappeared in that direction, Gibson set out in hopes of getting a better look. To negotiate the distance — between a quarter- and a half-mile — Gibson was forced to cross a ploughed field.

"About 160 yards from the scene," he said, "I spotted a being or some object standing behind a tree at the top of the hill, but only for a few seconds. After I saw this thing I speeded up my



DeGraw's sketches based upon Gibson's testimony

stride, almost tripping. To keep my balance, I had to look down for an instant. When I looked up again, the thing was gone. I missed my chance for a good look at the being.

"A few minutes later, I saw a blur and a sound like air rushing around a speeding object."

Gibson continued on his way to the spot where the being had been standing. Once there, he searched the surrounding area for evidence of its presence but found nothing, not even footprints or pressed-down grass.

The being appeared to have been three- to three-and-a-half feet tall. It had been watching him from behind the tree, which had covered all but his head and left shoulder. He was too far away to discern facial features, if there were any, but he said it seemed to be "bald." He was able to determine its height by noting how high it had stood relative to the tree.

He then walked over the hill to see if the UFO itself had left any physical evidence behind. He discovered quickly enough that it had: about 40 feet south of the tree near the northern bluff of the

quarry pit lay a perfectly round burned area about 15–20 feet in diameter. Outside the circle the grass was perfectly green. Inside it, it was charred black.

But that was not all. When Gibson inspected the scene close-up, he noticed three rectangular indentations in the ground, situated in a triangle within the burned area. One inch deep, five inches wide and 12 inches long, each was located two feet in from the surrounding edge and together they formed a triangle in the northern half of the circle. The ground was "firm" and Gibson speculated that the UFO must have been quite heavy to have made such marks.

Rushing back home, Gibson told his parents what he had seen and his father urged him to contact the highway patrol in nearby Cedar Falls. This proved a mistake. The officer at Cedar Falls openly ridiculed the story and refused to accompany the Gibsons back to Waverly to examine the evidence. The Waverly police also dismissed their report and would not investigate.

Determined to speak no more of the incident, Gibson returned to the apparent landing site the

next day and checked the area for additional prints. There were none.

Curiously, about a week later Gibson saw a UFO again. Maybe even *the* UFO, since it was identical in appearance.

At 1.00 a.m. on a Saturday, while returning from a date with the girl whom he later married, he caught the object in his headlights as he approached the crest of a hill. At the time he was driving south on a gravel road four miles east and a half a mile north. The UFO was hovering about 30 feet above the ground. When the carlights hit it, it shot away to the right and could no longer be seen.

DeGraw, a capable and intelligent investigator, believes that Gibson is a "responsible person who witnessed on two occasions something which he could not explain." Gibson himself is convinced he saw a "spacecraft."

#### Notes

1. Jerome Clark, "The Greatest Flap Yet?", *Flying Saucer Review*, January/February 1966.
2. "The Greatest Flap Yet? Part 2," *FSR* March/April 1966.

## Readers' Reports

### Fusiform object over the Channel

*We thank Peter Bowles, Chairman of the East Sussex Gliding Club for the following report, and also Timothy Good who asked him to write it down for us.*

The sighting of the UFO is so long ago now that I cannot put a date to it, but my wife and I think it was August (or late July), 1971.

Our house at Bexhill overlooks the English Channel approximately opposite the Royal Sovereign Light Tower. The house stands on a cliff approximately 50 feet above the Highwater mark and has a vista of about twelve nautical miles across the bay to the south-west, to Eastbourne and Beachy Head and the South Downs. All this can be seen whilst seated in our lounge which has very large picture windows to the south and west.

The sighting occurred at 19.45 hours approximately. It was still half daylight – a beautiful clear evening. My wife, who had been watching

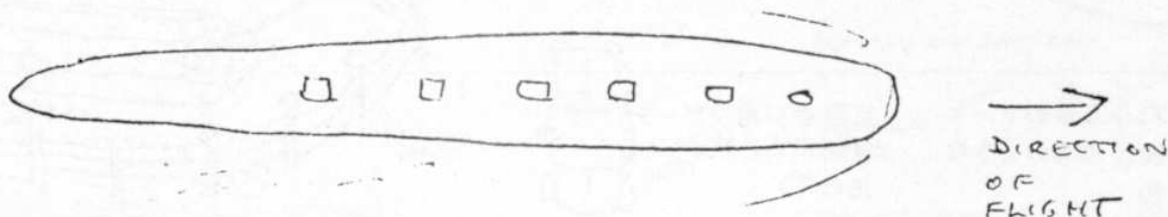
television, called me as I entered the room. To the south, about a quarter mile out to sea, was a large cigar-shaped UFO proceeding parallel to the coastline, going towards Eastbourne. It had lights in its windows which were like large portholes. It was approximately 700 feet up, proceeding at great speed in a *level flight path*, clearing the downs behind Beachy Head (the highest points on these downs are 450 feet a.m.s.l.). The object was in view for about six seconds, during which time it covered approximately 16 miles.

My first thought was that it was a supersonic airliner and that there would be one hell of a bang and noise once it had passed. I had the sliding glass door open in two to three seconds after the first sighting of it. As I saw it disappear I was standing outside the lounge on the terrace. To my utter astonishment there was no noise of any kind, except that made by the sea, which was very slight as it was a very calm evening. It was then that I realised I had seen no airliner.

It was about the size of a Jumbo Jet, only sleeker in line. In those few seconds of seeing it I was not conscious of the presence of any wings or tail-fins. We talked about it for a considerable time as both my wife and I have had a lot to do with flying and observing aircraft, both in war-time and at air shows. We have both flown a lot, observed satellites, meteorites, parachutes and balloons. We have witnessed Neville Duke flying the Hawker Hunter through the sound barrier and hearing the sonic "boom" on the ground; we have seen him fly at over 700 miles per hour at less than 200 feet above our heads at Farnborough Aeronautical Establishment. But this sighting was an entirely new experience.

The next day the newspaper contained reports of a UFO being sighted from Dover to Bognor Regis by a number of witnesses.

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15 June 1975



Peter Bowle's sketch of the UFO he sighted