

THE VILVORDE HUMANOID

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THIS Belgian case, which has been very thoroughly investigated, occurred at Vilvorde, an industrial town in Flanders, some 12 km. to the N.N.E. of Brussels.

The eyewitness made the sighting from the ground floor of his home, a modest house facing on to the street and surrounded by dividing walls. Behind the house lies a small garden measuring about 75 sq. metres and with three high whitewashed walls. Beyond the back wall there is a large property owned by a convent of the Ursuline Sisters. The witness has asked that his identity be kept confidential.

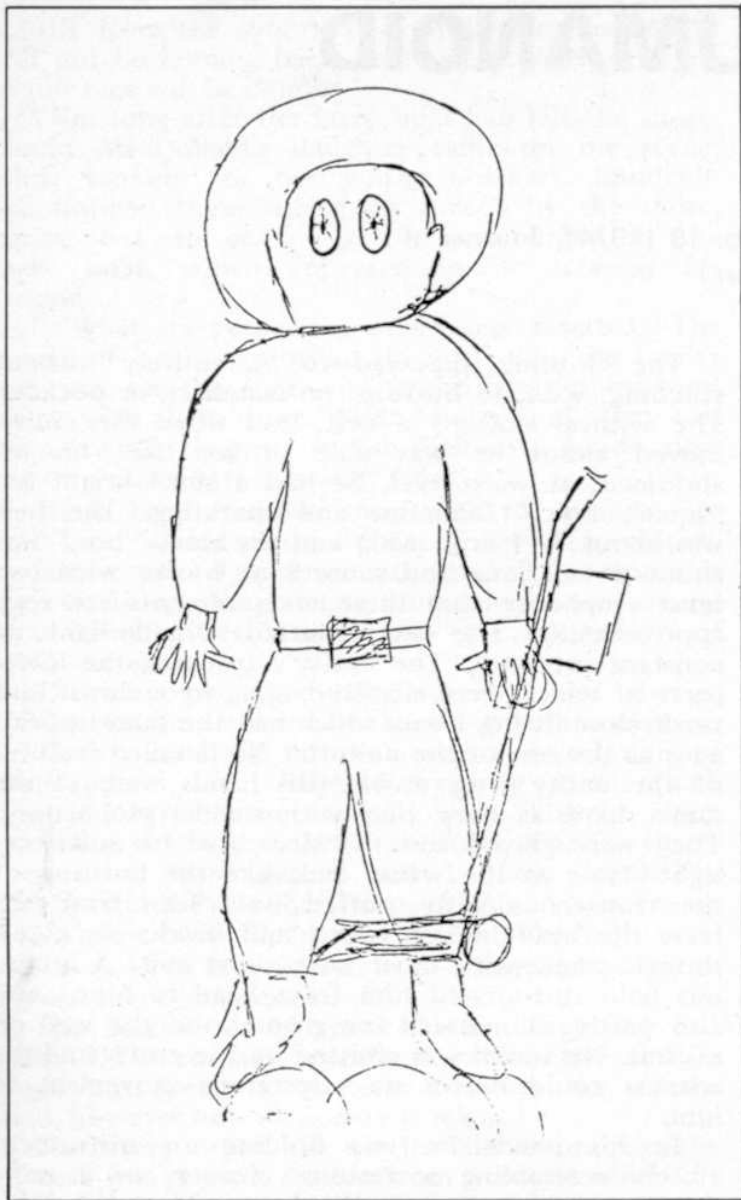
The sighting was in mid-December of 1973 and has been under thorough investigation by SOBEPS since that date. The happening came only a few days after an interesting near-landing case at Boondael already reported in *Inforespace* No. 14 (pp. 43-46).¹ The weather was very cold at the time, though there was no longer any snow, and a strong wind was blowing over the region.

The witness, Monsieur "V.M.", was aged 28 at the time. He and his wife were in bed and asleep. At 2.00 a.m. he arose to go to the toilet, which is in a small outer yard adjoining the kitchen. In order not to disturb his wife he made his way in the dark, using a hand-torch. Reaching the kitchen, he heard, coming from the outside, a sound like that of a shovel striking the ground, and, filtering in through the gap at the left-hand side of the kitchen window curtain, he perceived a greenish light. He compares it with the diffused glow of an aquarium-light. Knowing that his garden would normally be plunged in total darkness at such an hour, and puzzled by the noise, he went to the window and parted the curtain, to behold an astonishing sight. At the other end of the little garden there was a small being about 1 m. 10 cm in height and wearing a shining one-piece suit emitting a greenish luminosity. The entity's back was towards him in three-quarter profile. He was of medium build, and his head, arms and legs normal in appearance. His green uniform was very bright and sparkling and the witness compared it with the material of the upholstery of certain "buggy" types of cars (polyester tinged with metallic particles). The entity's head was protected by a transparent globular helmet, and from the rear of it a tube led down to join a sort of rectangular "haversack" on his back. The "haversack" covered his back roughly from the waist upwards to the level of the shoulderblades — should indeed a humanoid possess such things as shoulderblades. All this apparatus was of exactly the same appearance as the rest of the uniform.

The clothing appeared to be entirely without stitching, with no buttons, no fasteners, or pockets. The witness noticed a belt, and when the entity moved about he was able to see that, on his abdomen, at waist-level, he had a small bright red "square box," luminous and sparkling. The belt was about 3-4 cm. wide and the small "box" was about 8 cm. long and some 3 or 4 cm. wide (we must emphasise that these measurements are very approximate). The box emitted a red light of constant intensity. The entity's trousers, the lower parts of which were slightly baggy, were thrust into small close-fitting boots which had the same appearance as the rest of the uniform. No detailed features of the entity were visible. His hands were of the same shape as ours, but with smaller proportions. They were gloved and the sleeves of his suit were tight-fitting at the wrists and, like the bottoms of the trousers, slightly puffed out. Seen from the rear, the head looked round and black, and V.M. thought the entity must have short hair. A luminous halo surrounded him from head to foot, and also partly illuminated the ground and the wall on his left. No sound was emitted by the entity and the witness could detect no respiratory movement in him.

In his hands he was holding an instrument closely resembling a vacuum cleaner, or a mine detector, which he was slowly passing to and fro over a heap of brick-bats that the witness had gathered together at the bottom of the garden a few days previously. The instrument had a long shaft bent at one end to form a handle, with a small rectangular box below the handle. The "detector" itself consisted of a thick rectangular plate with the frontal edge levelled. The other side, to the rear, consisted of a cylinder with about the same diameter as the thickness of the plate. The shaft was connected to the instrument between these two areas. In colour the instrument was identical with the humanoid's uniform. Witness detected no sound or light emission from it.

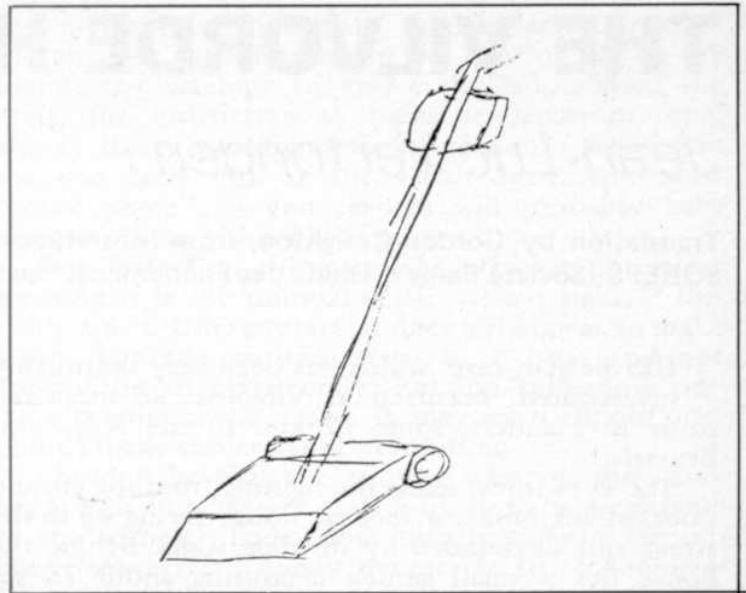
The witness noticed that the small personage seemed to have difficulty in getting about. He moved slowly, with a waddle, and bending his knees slightly. His gait seemed particularly heavy. It was at this point that V.M. made use of his torch, flashing it twice towards the end of the garden. Thereupon the humanoid turned round, and it seemed as though his neck must not be movable, for he did not simply turn his head but slewed the whole body around. Then, for the first time, the witness caught sight of the dark face of the strange visitor. Neither nose nor mouth were visible. All



that he could distinguish was a pair of somewhat pointed ears. The eyes, oval and yellow in colour, were particularly large, very bright, and surrounded by a green rim. Upon the iris part of the eyes the witness noticed small black and red veinlets. The pupil was black, and slightly oval. At times lids came down over the eyes and simultaneously the face became completely dark for a few moments. When the eyes were open, these two upper lids were invisible. One might liken them to a kind of black blinds or shutters, which progressively masked the eyes as they descended.

As he now stood there eyeing the witness face-to-face and holding his "detector" in his left hand, the ufonaut seemed to answer the luminous signals from the flashlight by raising his hand and giving the "V" sign with the index and second fingers, after which he turned away again and, with his characteristic gait and gently swinging his arms, walked off towards the back wall.

Arrived at the wall, the creature placed one foot flat against it and then, without any hesitation, did likewise with the second foot and walked straight up the wall with no change of gait except



Above: The "Detector"

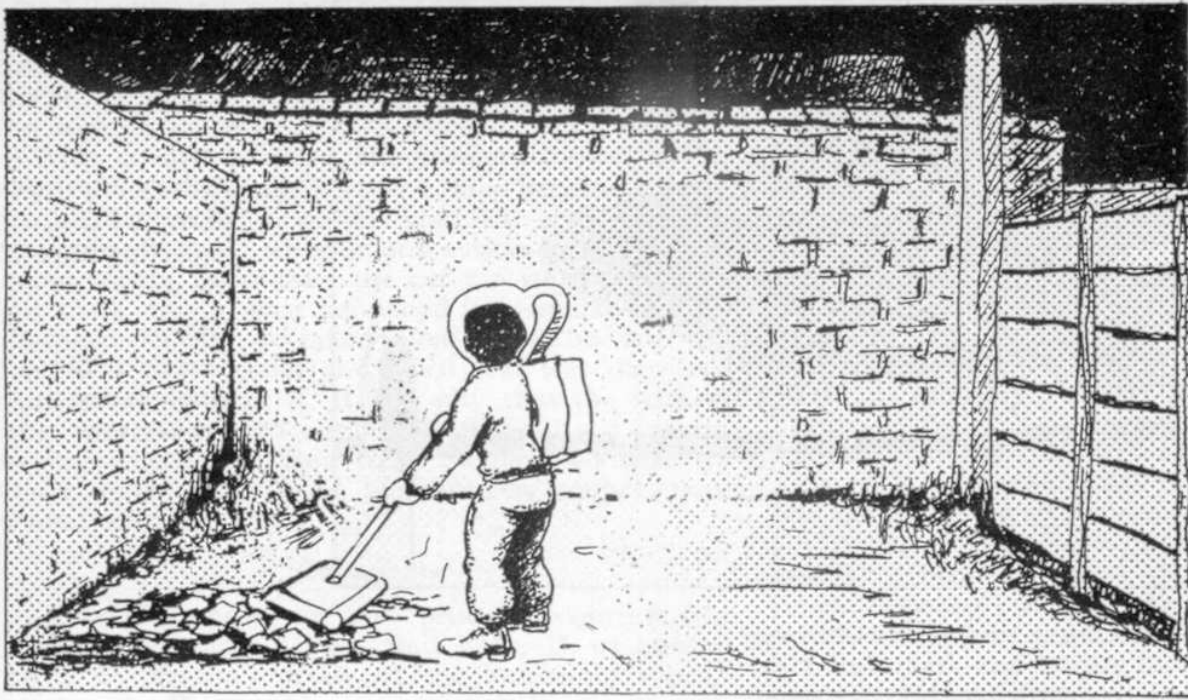
Left: Sketch of the humanoid by the witness

that now he was holding his legs stiff. During this astonishing progression the personage still continued with the same arm movements and continued to hold his instrument in the same position as when he was on the ground. Reaching the top of the wall, which was about 3 metres high, he executed a complete arc of a circle as he became erect again and then swung down and forward to descend the other face of the wall in this same surprising fashion.

Four minutes or so after this unwonted exploit, a vivid halo of white light appeared beyond the wall and the witness heard a faintly perceptible chirring sound somewhat muffled by the wind. (Let us also bear in mind that throughout the sighting the witness was behind a closed window.) Then, rising very slowly, a round object began to appear, hardly a few metres distant beyond the wall.

After rising a short way, the "machine" halted and remained there stationary for about four minutes, still emitting the same chirring noise comparable to the noise of a cricket rubbing its wing-cases together, and with about the same degree of loudness. The diameter of the object might have been about five metres (this estimate being based on the width of the witness's garden). Its upper half was orange-coloured, phosphorescent, and surmounted in the centre by a transparent cupola emitting a greenish light. The colour of the lower half was a dark claret and on this darker area, showing up very sharply, were three lights disposed horizontally, the one on the left as seen by the witness being blue, the middle one yellow, and the right-hand-side one red. These three lights flashed on three times in sequence.

On the periphery of the machine, the witness noticed what looked like showers of sparks resembling the sparks of a cigarette-lighter. They were located at the juncture between the dark under-part and the bright upper-part of the machine, that is to say, at the part where the craft's circumference



Left:
Artist's reconstruction
of the scene
when the
humanoid was
in the garden

Below:
Artist's impression
of the entity
going over
the wall

the humanoid. It must likewise be mentioned that throughout the whole close encounter V.M. received no verbal or "telepathic" message. After the machine had vanished he does not seem to have been greatly shaken by all that he had seen, for he sat down at the kitchen table and prepared himself a light snack, after which he very normally returned to bed and peacefully went off to sleep again. In addition to his wife, a cousin of his was also living in the apartment. During the sighting he thought of calling the cousin, but in the end, we don't know why, he did not do so.

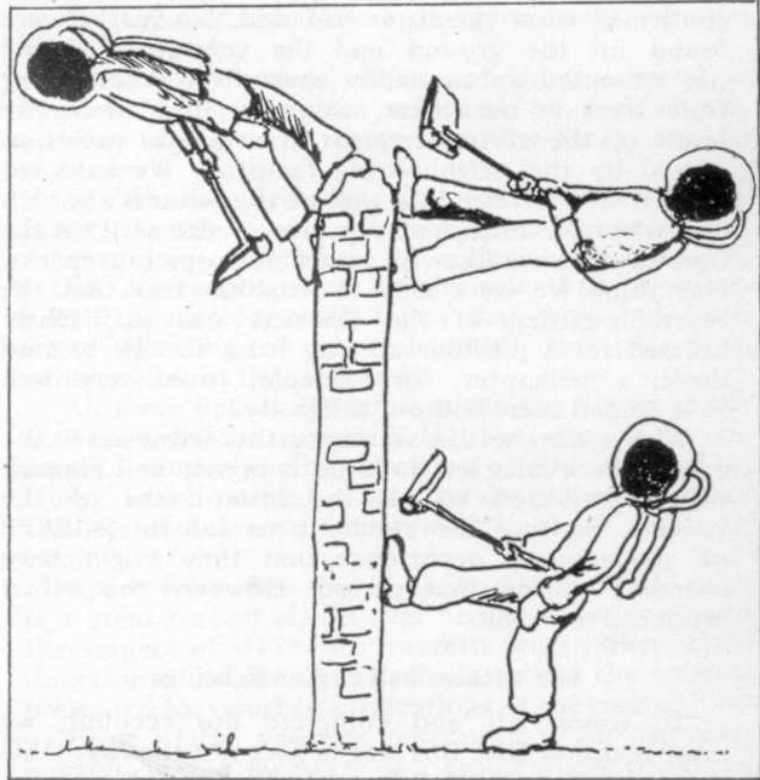
Next morning he arose, as on every other day, without any complaints about headache or any sort of malaise, and in the course of the morning he went out to inspect his garden. He found nothing particular there: seemingly nothing had vanished was greatest. The sparks seemed to be thrown outwards by a rotary movement, although the object did not seem to be rotating on its own axis.

Beneath the transparent dome, V.M. could see the humanoid, bathed in a bluey-green light. No other detail in the cabin was visible to him.

Immediately below the cupola, the witness noticed moreover an emblem outlined upon the orange portion of the craft. It consisted of a black circle traversed diagonally by a yellow lightning flash of a brighter shade than the phosphorescent orange area. (See witness's sketch, Fig. 5.)

The UFO now rose again vertically about twenty metres, still retaining its horizontal position, and began to rock gently to and fro. The showers of sparks were still coming out all around it. Then the chirring sound grew louder and became a sort of hiss, and the craft gathered speed and shot straight up into the sky, leaving behind it a luminous trail. In a few seconds it was no more than a tiny point of light lost among the stars.

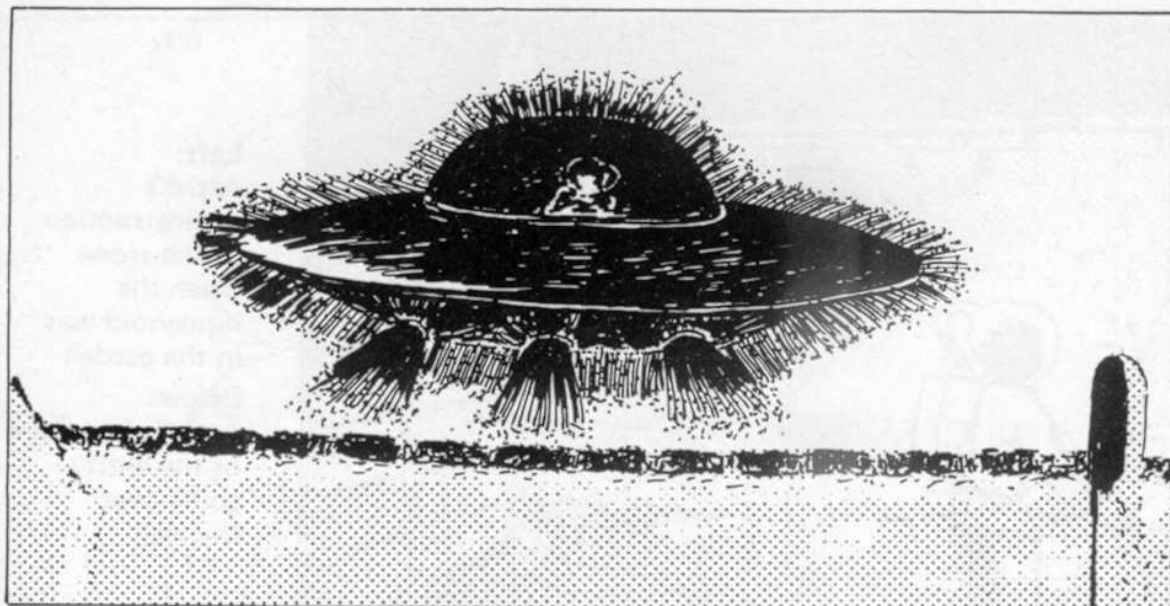
At no time during this extraordinary encounter does the witness claim to have felt any fear and he says he experienced no hostile reaction against



and he found no impressions on the ground and no marks or scratches on the wall. The humanoid had not even left his footprints...

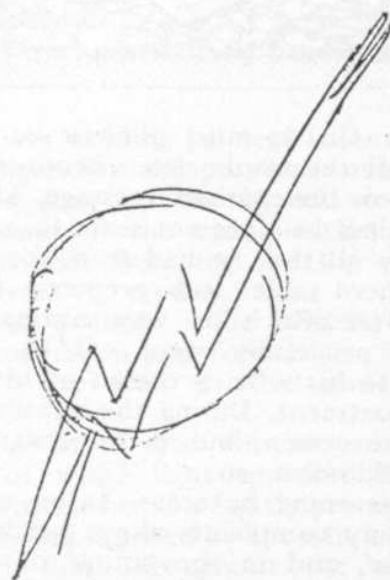
Complementary Reports

This sighting was reported to us by a SOBEPS member, but not immediately, and so our investigation did not get under way until several weeks after the episode. Only in March 1974 were we able to visit the presumed site of the landing. When we went on to the property of the Ursuline Sisters' Convent in the hope of finding evidence there in support of the statements of the witness, the sister who was serving as gate-porter to the establishment said she knew of nothing unusual and had observed



Left:
Artist's impression
of the UFO
departing beyond
the wall

Below:
Sketch of the
emblem, by
the witness



nothing out of the ordinary on the Convent premises.

When we questioned the gardener, his statement confirmed what the sister had said. No marks were found on the ground and the vegetation at the site presented no anomalies apart from a few dying fruit trees — but these, we were told, were the result of the all-too-frequent atmospheric pollution caused by the neighbouring factories. We have examined the surrounding wall of the witness's garden and when we inspected the face of the wall on the Convent side we likewise found no suspicious marks. One thing we were able to establish was that the vegetable-garden of the Convent was sufficiently isolated for a machine coming from the air to land there; a helicopter, for example, could very well have landed there without difficulty.

With a view to discovering further witnesses in the case, 500 circular letters in both French and Flemish were distributed to all the letter-boxes of the vicinity, inviting the residents to inform SOBEPS of any unusual occurrence that they might have observed during that period. However this effort produced no results.

The witness had earlier sightings

To round off and complete our account, we must mention that this was in fact not the first UFO sighting that V.M. had had. Several months previously, he and his wife were on vacation at Westende, on the coast of Belgium. While walking with their cousin and V.M.'s sister-in-law on the beach one evening in the last week of August, they saw a strange object flying over the sea. The time was around midnight, the weather was fine, and the sea calm. The party were walking along beside the water (it was high tide) when they heard a peculiar noise coming from out at sea, somewhat resembling a medium-powered ship's siren.

It was V.M.'s cousin who was the first to see, moving along above the surface of the water and very near to the beach, a very flat, red, rectangular object about five or six metres long, more or less hidden in the darkness and the faint mist. As the

object passed in front of them, they were able to make out four very faintly lit square "portholes" set horizontally beneath the object. They also heard the splashing noise caused by it as it flew over the sea. It had come from the direction of Nieuw Poort to the N.E. and was travelling very slowly, parallel with the shore, towards Ostende to the S.W.

V.M. shone his torch at it and at once the lights in the four "portholes" went out, only the "red hull" remaining visible. Ahead of it lay a breakwater against which the "craft" was bound to crash. But, quite to the contrary, when it came to the breakwater, the object rose, still maintaining its horizontal position, crossed the breakwater, and then went down to water-level again and continued on its way. One further curious detail: when the object was passing over the breakwater they still heard the water splashing below.

When we visited the witness again in July 1974 he said he had had yet another sighting between Vilvorde and Brussels. He does not recall the precise date but thinks it was an evening in April. He was driving in his car (Ford Escort), with his wife and his cousin, when, on an open plateau near Koningslo, they noticed that there was a "second

Moon" quite low in the sky. They were travelling in third gear at about 60 km/p.h., and the engine began to sputter and finally failed completely, and the lights went out. He tried to re-start the engine, but without success.

After a minute or so, the luminous object in the sky moved away and then, as is now becoming fairly frequent in incidents of this kind, the engine started up again by itself without any action by the driver. Being still in third gear, the car ran on for a while, but then, unlike what happened in a similar case, at Aische-en-Refail,² it failed once more, because the road was now up-hill and third gear was therefore insufficient to take it. It is a pity that the witness who was acquainted with SOBEPS, did not inform us immediately of this fresh incident so that we could have investigated immediately rather than several months later.

Comments

Returning now to our primary sighting (the Vilvorde humanoid), we find that, if we consult Jader U. Pereira's study of the humanoid types,³ we can classify the Vilvorde entity under his category T8XI, i.e., "diver-type of entity varying between 90 cms. and 1 m. 20 in height, wearing a one-piece suit, opaque or transparent, carrying lamp(s) and wearing a transparent globular helmet." This description calls to mind, in particular, the humanoids seen at Quarouble⁴ on September 10, 1954.

On the other hand, the witness states that at more or less regular intervals eyelids of a sort came down simultaneously over the eyes of his ufonaut. Without wishing to establish a direct correlation here, we would nevertheless point out that this description might be considered comparable to the so-called *nictitating membranes* or eyelids of certain of the *Raptore* species of nocturnal and predatory birds. This supplementary eyelid passes at regular intervals across the eye (without the central nervous system being involved) for the purpose of eliminating the environmental impurities which adhere to the iris and for accustoming the iris to over-bright light. Cats too have a similar eyelid. Unlike the movement of the eyelids of the ufonaut however, the nictitating membranes of these few species of creatures, *Raptore*s and cats, move across horizontally from the inner part of the eye towards the outer side of it. (Indeed man himself presents this same organ, but in a degenerated form, for it is the little red blob in the inner corner of the eye.)

Finally, some readers may feel astonished that the witness should have been able to describe such tiny details as the "small veinlets" when giving his account of the eyes of the entity. During our investigation he drew the eye for us to full scale, and subsequently we made tests, holding up his drawing at a distance of about 10 metres from him (which was the distance of the humanoid from him) and we have to admit that, provided the drawing is well lit, it is in fact quite possible to make out such small details in the eye at that distance. Moreover we must not forget that the eyes of the ufonaut were *luminous*, a fact that would have made it possible to see them correspondingly more clearly.

As regards the emblem on the machine, we feel, without having made a systematic search on this point, that there is no record of such an emblem having been seen previously. Our information on this comes principally from Monsieur Franck Boitte. Monsieur Yves Vezant who also took part in this enquiry, undertook to find out for us whether the witness might have got some of the material of his story from a book lent to him by a friend whom he had told about his nocturnal encounter. And indeed, although the witness, V.M., maintains that he is not well informed on the UFO Phenomenon, it is a fact that he has read the French translation of Frank Edwards' book "Flying Saucers, Serious Business." *But he read it after his sighting, and before our enquiry had got under way.*

In this particular book by Frank Edwards we find the following references:—

p.96. (French edition.) The case of Marius Dewilde; manlike creatures wearing shiny helmets like divers. Height between 1 m. and 1 m. 20.

p.144. Small beings of around 1 m., moving about like automata and having to move their feet first, in order to change direction.

p.148. Creatures that were phosphorescent, like the dial of a watch.

p.152. Small "human" beings of about 1 metre in height; shining one-piece suits and, on their chests, a box the size of three cigarette-packs stacked together.

p.158. Shining eyes, like the yellow eyes of cats.

p.163. Entities wearing transparent helmets with tubes linking the helmet to a device on the back.

p.166. A strange insignia on the side of the machine.

p.252. A machine with lights that were red, blue, white (flashing on intermittently) and red, blue, white, again, in the same order.

All these details appeared in varying degree in the account of our witness V.M., but they alone are insufficient for the construction of the whole of his story, which indeed does contain plenty of other features that are *not* mentioned in Frank Edwards' book.

Apart from this one book on UFOs, V.M. (who is a great reader) claims that he had never gone into the subject of UFOs, his interests lying rather in the direction of works on early history, and the enigmas presented by vanished civilizations of the past.

Being of the younger generation, V.M. had participated in the meetings of a group where people of different religions debated on religious themes, and these discussions, which were at times lively, indeed impassioned, could fleetingly have exercised a powerful impression upon his still malleable personality. We would add furthermore that he has a great liking for modern music and owns a big collection of records.

Despite all our efforts, all the same, we have been quite unable to find any other Testimony from any other people who might have been able to confirm this unusual sighting which thus, alas, has only the one witness.

Consequently we must remain very cautious in our evaluation of it, and give only a relative rating

(continued on page 22)