

4.1 Valensole, Alpes-de-Haute-Provence [Department] (July 1, 1965)

In-depth investigation by the Gendarmerie Nationale

At Valensole on July 1, 1965, Maurice Masse, who left his home at 5:00 a.m., headed for his lavender fields located on the plateau near the village. Before starting his tractor at around 6:00 a.m., he lit a cigarette and at that moment heard a hissing sound that attracted his attention. Emerging from behind a pile of stones, he saw an object resting in his field approximately 90 m from him. Its shape was reminiscent of that of a "Dauphine" automobile standing on six legs with a central pivot. He approached it with caution, at a distance of ten meters or so, thinking he might surprise people about to steal his lavender from him. He then saw two small beings, one of whom, who was turned in his direction, reportedly pointed a tube at him that he took from a sort of bag hanging on his left side. Maurice Masse indicated that he was totally immobilized in place, numbed and paralyzed, but completely aware of the events that were unfolding before his eyes. The two beings then got back in their craft. He watched them while they were behind a sort of dome, and he heard a heavy noise when the object lifted up off the ground. He also remarked that the tube that was under the object, touching the ground, began to turn, as well as the six legs, which retracted under the machine. The object then ascended in a vertical direction before tilting diagonally and disappearing more rapidly than a jet. Maurice Masse remained immobilized in this manner for about 15 minutes before coming to, then resuming his work and going to tell his story in the village, where the gendarmes, having learned of the incident, questioned him during the day.

The Valensole gendarmerie force, then the Digne investigations squad, investigated this case for several days. The investigations of the gendarmerie established the existence, at the spot indicated by Maurice Masse, of a depression impressed into the ground, which had been soaked in that place. In the center of it was a cylindrical hole 18 cm in diameter and 40 cm deep with smooth walls. At the bottom of the hole were three other bent holes 6 cm in diameter. Along the object's axis of flight, over some one hundred meters, the lavender beds were dried up. This phenomenon lasted for several years, during which time the witness tried in vain to replant the plants within a radius of several meters around the tracks.

Despite a few contradictory elements in Maurice Masse's account, the data collected by the two gendarme brigades confirmed the plausibility of the facts, particularly the effect on the environment and on the witness himself, who slept twelve to fifteen hours a night, followed by the paralysis of which he had been a victim, for several months. The investigation into the witness's character did not turn up any specific information that would permit one to suspect him of mythomaniac behavior or of staging a hoax.

4.2 Cussac, Cantal [Department] (August 29, 1967)

GEPAN/SEBRA investigation

The Cussac incident has occupied a special place among the UFO cases, since a second inquiry was conducted in 1978, as an example, at the request of the GEPAN scientific council. On August 29, 1967, at around 10:30 a.m., during a beautiful sunny morning on the high plateaus in the center of France, two young children were watching the family's herd. The dog that accompanied them alerted them that a cow was getting ready to jump