

Few and Far Between

Landing and occupant reports a rarity in the British Isles

BY CHARLES BOWEN

A survey of the global landings and contact records invariably forces one to wonder why so few of these cases are reported in the British Isles.

The reason, I suggest, is not that Britons go around with their heads in the clouds, not that they are too engrossed in mere earthly matters, but that the British Isles are for the most part densely populated. It has been noticeable throughout the twenty years of interest in this subject that UFO visitations generally have been scant over the world's built-up areas: it is only in recent months, for example, that observations of the alien aerofoms have been recorded in any numbers over the cities and townships of the United States. Maps of the locations of landings in France during the 1954 wave underline this shyness of areas of dense population.

When one considers the hundreds of landings so far known to us, one cannot help but remark that in only a small percentage of cases have the grounded craft or their occupants shown any desire to stay in the vicinity of humans. So, in view of the general reluctance on the part of the "operators" to have any truck with men or women, and in view of an apparent desire, when alarmed on or near the ground by humans, that their activities remain unobserved, it is not surprising that incidents are rarely reported in or near thickly populated areas.

Again, one should remember that UFOs come mostly like thieves in the night, or in the small hours around dawn when relatively few people are abroad to observe them. Accordingly the few good British cases in both the "airborne" and in the "landing" categories, have been reported from rural areas, from wild hilly regions like the Lake District, from the Pennine Moors, and from the Scottish Highlands.

Coniston

Although we are primarily engaged in a study of landed objects, and the creature or human-like occupants of these objects, mention must be made of an incident which took place on February 15, 1954, and which was only a *probable* landing. Two boys, Stephen Darbishire and his cousin Adrian Myer saw a circular domed object hovering very close to the slopes of Coniston Old Man in the Lake District of Lancashire.¹ The object was described as being metallic and manufactured in appearance, and possessing an upper turret with what were alleged to be "portholes". Two snapshots were taken with a simple camera, one of the hovering object, and the other of the device as it sped away past the witnesses. The somewhat diffuse images on the film seem to confirm that something was present

which was strikingly similar to the object in the first Adamski photographs. In fact, one researcher has demonstrated by means of orthographic projections that the Darbishire and Adamski photographs could be of identical objects.²

Lossiemouth

Three days after the Coniston incident, writer, amateur astronomer and ornithologist Cedric Allingham claims that he saw a flying saucer land near Lossiemouth on the north-eastern coast of Scotland. A "man" some six feet tall emerged from the craft and approached Allingham. This being was said to be human-like in most respects, and appeared to differ only in that he had a very high forehead. He wore a one-piece garb with footwear incorporated, but no helmet. He also had tiny tubes running up into his nostrils, and the witness considered these to be part of a breathing aid. According to the witness in his published account,³ he and the "man" contrived to converse by signs, and it is claimed that the visitor indicated that he came from Mars. Photographs of both the saucer and the "Martian" were taken and published in support of this claim.

Bruton

The next British landing case in our list did not involve operators or creatures. The witness was Nigel Frapple, who, according to the *Sunday Dispatch* of June 13, 1954, was cycling home from a dance at Wincanton in Somerset. The time was 2 a.m.; the date, May 20, 1954. Three miles from Bruton, at Redlynch crossroads, Frapple saw a terrific light in a field, and he dismounted and watched from the cover of a hedge. He saw a huge object about 80 or 100 feet away from him, hovering not more than 20 feet from the ground. After about a minute the object, which despite its brightness seemed to be metallic, moved off towards the north-west, accelerating and climbing at a great speed.

On the same night Miss Doreen Heffer, of Shobley, near Ringwood, in Hampshire, had seen a bright object overhead. Her description tallied with that given by Nigel Frapple. Both stated that they saw a circular thing some 50 feet across, emitting a brilliant flame-coloured light from a central cockpit. Apart from a slight "swishing", each hovered silently for more than a minute. Each had a lesser light associated with it, some little distance from the main body of the object.

Eleven years later, in a reply to a letter from my friend Gordon Creighton, Mr. Frapple said he was attracted not only by the orange glow, but also by

an eerie throbbing sound. He also told how, next day, examination of the field with a Radio news reporter revealed grass pushed flat in an area 100 feet in diameter, with scorching in places.

Southend

On October 15, 1954, a girl reported how she had seen a strange object alongside a park at Southend in Essex. On her way home at night, she encountered the thing in the road near Chalkwell Park. Frightened, she ran to her house, looking back as she turned the corner. It had gone, silently. This sighting forms one of the points on an orthotonic line discovered by Aimé Michel.⁴

Rampton

It was on October 21, 1954, at a time when the great European wave of that year was beginning to show signs of tailing-off, that case number five came to light.⁵ At Rampton, near Shrewsbury, Mrs. Jennie Roestenberg, English wife of a young Dutchman settled in the United Kingdom, claimed that at 4.45 p.m. on that day she and her two children watched a disc-shaped object of aluminium colour as it hovered over their house. Through two transparent panels she claimed she could see two "men" with white skins, long hair to their shoulders, and very high foreheads so that all their features seemed to be in the lower half of their faces. They were wearing transparent helmets and turquoise blue clothing like ski suits.

The object hovered at a tilted angle, while the two occupants surveyed the scene "sternly, not in an unkindly fashion, but almost sadly, compassionately".

If true, this story is something of a boost for Adamski's original claim.

Aston

We will now take a look at a case, or series of cases, which occurred in a heavily populated area—it is the only one in this list.

On November 18, 1957, Mrs. Cynthia Appleton, a 27-year-old mother of two children, and wife of a sheet-metal worker, who lived at Aston in the busy complex of Birmingham, had a most unusual experience.⁶ This case was excellently reported by the Hon. Brinsley le Poer Trench, who was editor of *FLYING SAUCER REVIEW* at that time.

At 3 p.m. Mrs. Appleton went into an upstairs sitting room at the back of the house to check that all was well with her baby daughter. Suddenly she sensed an oppressiveness, like that preceding a thunderstorm, and then saw the figure of a "man" by the fireplace to her left. The "image" appeared after the fashion of a TV picture, first blurred, and then clear. This "materialisation" was accompanied by a whistling noise. She was very frightened, but suddenly realised she was being calmed by the "man's" influence on her mind.

The "man" was tall and fair, with a tight-fitting garment made of a substance like a plastic raincoat. The collar rose up behind the head like an "Elizabethan" collar. His lips moved as if in speech, but Mrs. Appleton heard nothing. Then she realised

that questions which were racing through her mind were being answered mentally. She claims that she learned that he was from another world, and that he was looking for a substance which she thought sounded like "titanium", but which her metal-worker husband later suggested might be *titanium*: she agreed with him that that was the name. This search was usually conducted in the oceans.

The visitor also conveyed to her by some mysterious process involving his hand, a picture of a saucer-type craft with a transparent dome, and also a larger "Master" craft. He indicated that he came from a world of peace and harmony.

At the end of the contact, the "man" left in such a way that "suddenly he wasn't there any more". Some newspaper pages had been on the floor where he stood, and these were found to be scorched. They were removed by a reporter of the *Birmingham Evening Gazette*, and were never returned.

On January 7, 1958, Mrs. Appleton had a second contact, this time with two figures who appeared in the same way. On this occasion they *spoke* to her in a foreign-sounding style of English, with careful articulation. The first figure (her November 18 contact) had long hair to the shoulders. The second, and seemingly senior partner, had shorter hair curled over the ears. Mrs. Appleton was informed that they only appeared to her because her brain was suitably *fitted* for such contacts. She was told she was witnessing a projection of the entities, and that she should not touch them.

Gordon Creighton interviewed this lady and her husband some four years later. She claimed to have experienced other visitations since the two described above, including one when an entity came through the front door and asked her to treat a wounded hand (*untouchability overcome?—C.B.*). Mr. Creighton discovered that there were no books in the house—only newspapers. Mr. Appleton was puzzled, but not over-interested.

One of the things that this young lady with no background of reading disclosed to Mr. Creighton was that she had been informed that. . . "The Deity itself dwells at the heart and core of the atom."

It seems that this person, described by all who interviewed her as a pleasant and sincere young woman, had a series of parapsychological experiences. Is it possible that a solution to the UFO mystery could be found in the idea of visitations from "other levels"?

Braemar

Next in order on my list is a case from the annals of the *FLYING SAUCER REVIEW*,⁷ and it concerns two young "part-time" soldiers of the Territorial Army. A unit of the T.A. from the region of Aberdeen, Scotland, was on a week-end exercise in beautiful Deeside, not far from Balmoral, in the vicinity of Braemar and Ballater. The exact day was not quoted, but the month was November 1958.

In the course of the manoeuvres the two witnesses (names withheld) were left to guard a small hilltop: fully equipped, they had dug themselves a slit trench for cover. In the small hours of the morning,

just as the first cold light was showing in the East, the lads heard a strange "gurgling" noise from behind trees a few hundred yards from their position. Then, as they went out to investigate, two huge figures emerged from the shadows and came towards them. The youngsters stopped in their tracks, horrified, for the creatures were more than seven feet tall: the gurgling noise was, they presumed, the sound of the creatures' conversing one with the other in an unrecognisable tongue.

As far as the young Territorials could see, the creatures were dressed in a peculiar garb which seemed seriously to impede their gait. Overcome with terror, the two lads turned and fled. As they ran, they heard a swishing noise, and glancing over their shoulders they saw a huge, brightly shining disc-shaped object coming "down the road" behind them, only a foot or so above the surface of the track. It swooped over their heads and away, pulsating as it went, and trailing a shower of sparks.

The two young men were in a state of shock when they were given shelter soon afterwards by Post Office engineers in a hut on a lonely site near the scene of the incident.

Saltwood

It is a jump of five years to November 16, 1963, for the next case. Once again young people were involved, four of them, walking along a country road near Sandling Park, Hythe, Kent.⁸

John Flaxton, aged 17, a painter and decorator from nearby Saltwood, first drew attention to a bright "star" which appeared to be moving above the woods at Slaybrook Corner. Their feelings changed from mild interest to alarm when they suddenly realised that the "star" was descending towards them. Then it was seen to hover, and disappear behind nearby trees. Flaxton admitted that he felt "cold all over": the four suddenly broke and ran for safety. As they ran they became aware that an oval-shaped golden light was floating along some ten feet above the adjoining field and about eighty yards from them: they stopped, and the light stopped. It seemed to them that they were being watched.

Again the glowing object disappeared behind trees, and the next thing the young people knew was that a dark figure was shambling across the field towards them. It seemed to be completely black, human-sized, but with no head. One strange feature was that it appeared to have wings of the kind associated with bats. The panic-stricken four did not await the next move.

The youngsters are convinced they saw a ghost. Mervyn Hutchinson, aged 18, a plastics moulder, said it was like a bat, with webbed feet and no head.

On November 21, 1963, Keith Croucher, aged 17, reported seeing a solid oval light in the centre of a golden mist crossing a football pitch near Sandling Estate, and on the night of November 23/24, John McGoldrick and a friend went to Sandling Woods to investigate the previously reported sightings. They found "a vast expanse of bracken that had been flattened": they also found three giant footprints, clearly defined, an inch deep, two feet long, and

nine inches across.

On December 11, McGoldrick and his friend went back to the site with two newspaper reporters, and found the woods illuminated by a pulsating light. They watched the light from a safe distance for half an hour: they were too scared to go closer.

Scoriton

The most recent contact claim in Britain was reported to have taken place on April 24, 1965, near the Dartmoor village of Scoriton, South Devon. It is necessary to record the case here, although I confess that at first sight—and on more recent examinations too—it sounded rather too good, too "manufactured" to be true. However, I must not comment further, as I have not met the claimant: a brief outline of the claim and a description of the reported entities will suffice.⁹

Mr. E. A. Bryant was out walking in the country on April 24, and had reached Scoriton Down, a spot with beautiful views, at about 5.30 p.m. Without warning he was confronted by a large aerial object which moved pendulum-wise to the left and then to the right before coming to rest, hovering some three feet from the ground, about forty yards in front of him. The object had appeared "out of thin air", and Mr. Bryant says he was frightened. Nevertheless, he states that his curiosity overcame his fear; it should be noted that in a newspaper account of the incident,¹⁰ it was mentioned that Mr. Bryant is a retired prison officer.

While he watched, an opening appeared in the side of the "saucer" and three figures appeared. They were dressed in what was described as "diving gear". One of the figures—they were human in shape—beckoned to the witness—and he approached to within a few feet of the object. At that point, according to Mr. Bryant, the beings took off their headgear, and he saw that two of them had very high foreheads, blue eyes, and fair hair. The third, who was smaller, and looked to be about 15 years of age, had normal features with dark hair and brown eyes.

Conversation in reasonable English is alleged to have taken place, and the dark-haired "man" is stated to have told Mr. Bryant that his name was "Yamski", or something sounding similar. The story goes that this "Yamski" said that it was a pity that someone called "Des" or "Les" was not there to see the visitation as *he* would understand!

Mr. Bryant also states that he was told that the occupants of the machine came from Venus, and that they would return in a month bringing with them "proof of Mantell" (or, according to Mr. Bryant, "some such name").

It transpires that some metallic fragments were indeed left at the spot, and that they were handed to members of Exeter Astronomical Society. I can only hope that the BUFORA members who investigated this claim will make public any further findings, and at the same time throw some light on the results of any examination of the mysterious fragments of metal. Suffice it to say at this point that George Adamski, who collaborated with Desmond

Leslie in the book *Flying Saucers have landed*, died on April 23, 1965.

One from the past

There have been no more British reports of landings with entities, creatures or monsters (at least, not at time of writing, early in September 1966). We have had a case in the lonely Cotswold Hills in December 1965, when a motorist reported being overtaken by an object shaped like a Land Rover, travelling at high speed without headlights, side light on top.¹¹ When the astounded driver flashed his headlights and tried to give chase, the object just disappeared "in a cloud of mist or smoke". There were no lights, or rear lights, and only a sort of winking was also the policeman at Wilmslow who, in the small hours of a mid-winter morning, chanced on an object hovering close to the ground behind a cinema.¹² The only other entity case I recall is one which took place long ago: as it has become fashionable to delve into the past for evidence of what might have been UFO cases, I will close with the tale of Mr. Lethbridge.

A condensed version of the account which appeared in the *Daily Mail* of May 20, 1909, was related by Charles Fort.¹³ According to Waveney Girvan,¹⁴ the old newspaper files were taken out and dusted by a reporter of the *Cardiff Weekly Mail*, who discovered that Mr. C. Lethbridge (*Lithbridge* in Charles Fort's account) was a dock worker, who, in summer months travelled about with a Punch and Judy show. On May 18, at about 11 p.m., he was walking home over Caerphilly Mountain when, at the summit, he came across a tube-shaped contraption on the grass, and two men working on something nearby. They wore "big, heavy fur coats, and fur caps fitted tightly over their heads." Mr. Lethbridge went on: "I was rather frightened, but I continued to go on until I was within 20 yards of them. The noise of my little spring cart seemed to attract them, and when they saw me, they jumped up and jabbered furiously in a strange lingo."

Mr. Lethbridge became even more alarmed when the long object rose from the ground, and he was amazed when he saw the two "men" jump into a little carriage suspended from it. Tube, carriage and "men" rose slowly into the air in a zig-zag fashion. When it was clear of the telegraph wires, two great lights shone out, and the object sailed away towards Cardiff. The astonished witness said later that he could clearly see two wheels at the bottom of the carriage, and a whirling fan at the tail.

Next day investigators discovered trampled grass at the site of the encounter, torn newspapers, and a quantity of a substance like papier mache. Also, there was a red label in French, attached to a chain and a small pin, which was described by an engineer as being like the instrument used to regulate the valve of a pump used for injecting air from the atmosphere into an airship.

Many conventionalisations were produced to explain away this incident, but as Waveney Girvan pointed out, they tended to strengthen the Leth-

bridge account, not debunk it. To this day nobody really knows what the itinerant Punch and Judy man saw on a Welsh hillside.

Afterthoughts

The British cases are certainly few and far between, but their mere assembly in one whole has enabled me to see what I suggest *may* be an important clue, one more piece in the UFO jigsaw.

This particular lead points the way to what could be an area for profitable study. For want of a better name I will call it the *ingress/egress time factor*.

The case of Mrs. Cynthia Appleton, if it is to be believed—and I see no good reason why her testimony should not be accepted—presents the idea of UFO entities projected into the presence, or into the mind of the witness. The Saltwood/Sandling case points to a possible development of this idea. The four young people ran off in great alarm when the shining ovalloid object descended swiftly towards them. Then, as they ran, they saw the object coasting along on a parallel course as though tracking them. And when it sailed behind a clump of trees, the story reads as if in a matter of seconds they saw the monster shambling towards them. Now I doubt if this case was very efficiently investigated, but it does strike me that the four frightened humans must still have been running, endeavouring to put as much ground between themselves and the object as possible. Nevertheless, one gets the impression that no sooner had the object hidden itself, than the creature was out and about (the implication is that object and creature were connected in some way). In terms of physical *egress* from the object, if it was a machine, this must have been a remarkable and swift performance. One can imagine it: object touches down (remember the flattened area of bracken), hatches open, occupant alights, all in a few split seconds.

Contemplation of the Braemar incident reveals what could be the reverse of the process. Again, and perhaps for imagined security reasons or for fear of exposing the unit of the Territorial Army to more ridicule, there appears to have been little examination of the witnesses by experienced investigators. Nevertheless, the case cries out for further study. After all, what proud young volunteer soldier would confess to running away from his post unless he was really terror-stricken by something he couldn't understand? Surely he would not knowingly invite ridicule or the displeasure of his Commanding Officer by concocting such a tale?

So let us imagine ourselves on that lonely hilltop: from their vantage point the young soldiers are instantly alert to the strange, gurgling noise, but they have not observed the approach of an alien aeriform of any kind, or a luminous glow. They flee in horror when confronted by the awesome giants. Then, as they bolt down the track to the road, the UFO, which had been nowhere to be seen from a commanding position, swished after them, buzzed them, and streaked away. Once again we have the implication of connection between the entities and

the aerial object, and the impression is strong that the gurgling monsters returned very quickly to their "craft". It appears that their *ingress* time could have been only a few split seconds.

Flimsy evidence on which to build a theory? Certainly, but re-examination of the whole panorama of landing cases (and there must be much *observation* and many *experiments* to go with this hypothesis) will reveal many incidents where there has been this unusually short *ingress/egress time factor*. I confess it is a feature which has often puzzled me, and taking some at random, there comes to mind the case of Prémanon, France,¹⁵ of September 27, 1954, where there seemed to be a lost moment of time during which the "sugar-lump ghost" was no longer seen; the moment when, due to its ungainly gait it should have been observed approaching the wobbling globe in the meadow. More recently there was a case reported from Caracas, Venezuela,¹⁶ when a farmer witnessed a landing in his field of corn and saw three creatures emerge from the object. Then, as he hastened forward, he gaped as he saw them "whipped back in". Finally, may I commend to your attention the case of the Argentinian Martinez (see page 40).

There have also been a number of claims by people that they have witnessed the actual projection of the entities through the sides of the UFO. The lady at Whidby Island¹⁷ saw a "man" appear through the side of an object outside her house, and later, he returned in the same manner. There is also the account of the "one-eyed man" at Belo Horizonte which Gordon Creighton records (see page 37).

Bearing in mind Mrs. Appleton's experiences, could it be that the Saltwood youngsters, the Scottish Territorials, and a host of other folk all over the world witnessed, and continue to witness, projections of a psychical nature of creatures from certain categories of UFOs? I do not suggest that the alien aeroforms are such projections, though some might well be. The evidence in many cases leaves no doubt that they are very solid, but they could employ a projection device for their own ends, such as experimenting with humans, or "putting on a show" in order to scare humans who would otherwise be able to observe what they are up to.

The philosopher Ouspensky has postulated the existence of other levels of matter: Dr. F. R. Stannard, a London University physicist, has offered the serious speculation in *Nature*¹⁸ that there is another invisible universe, running on a parallel course to ours, but where time runs in the reverse direction to ours. American astronomer Dr. J. Allen Hynek "thought aloud" at the recent Hearing on UFOs before the House of Representatives Armed Services Committee that a certain case (observation by Wisconsin University students) could have been of a psychic nature. Dr. Hynek, who is U.S. Air Force consultant on UFOs, believes that psychologists should be included in any team of official investigators.

All in all, we have not progressed very far with

our probing into the UFO problem, principally because it has been scorned by experts, while governments have only been concerned with the defence aspects. Science is now vaguely aware that there is something to be examined: it may prove of value if they consider the lead I have suggested, and I am sure they will find that all cases must be re-examined, including the contactee claims, shorn of the ballyhoo and cultism attendant upon them.

NOTES

- 1 *Lancashire Daily Post*, February 19, 1954. See also Waveney Girvan: *Flying Saucers and Common Sense* (Frederick Muller, London).
- 2 Leonard G. Cramp, MSIA: *Space, Gravity, and the Flying Saucer* (T. Werner Laurie, London). The well-known orthographic projections were also published in *FLYING SAUCER REVIEW*, September/October 1963 and July/August 1964.
- 3 Cedric Allingham: *Flying Saucer from Mars* (Frederick Muller, London).
- 4 Aimé Michel: *Mystérieux Objets Célestes* (Editions Planète, Paris). The English language version of this work, translated from the original Arthaud edition, is *Flying Saucers and the Straight Line Mystery* (Criterion Books, New York). See p. 181 for description of the Southend-Rovigo line.
- 5 Gavin Gibbons: *The Coming of the Space Ships* (Neville Spearman, London) is the only source for this account.
- 6 See *Birmingham Woman meets Spacemen* in *FLYING SAUCER REVIEW* for March/April 1958.
- 7 See *Amazing Story of Scottish Landing* in *FLYING SAUCER REVIEW* for May/June 1959.
- 8 Account compiled by Waveney Girvan, the then editor, and presented in *FLYING SAUCER REVIEW* for March/April 1964.
- 9 Address given by N. Oliver and Miss E. Buckle at British UFO Research Association (BUFORA) public meeting on February 26, 1966.
- 10 *The Plymouth (Devon) Independent*, August 8, 1965.
- 11 *FLYING SAUCER REVIEW* for March/April 1966, p. 35.
- 12 *FLYING SAUCER REVIEW* for March/April 1966, p. 3.
- 13 *The Books of Charles Fort* (The Fortean Society), p. 632.
- 14 See *The first contact of the century?* in *FLYING SAUCER REVIEW* for March/April 1960. Waveney Girvan has some fun at the expense of the somewhat sceptical reporter of the *Cardiff Weekly Mail*.
- 15 Aimé Michel: *Flying Saucers and the Straight Line Mystery*, p. 90.
- 16 *Evening News*, London, August 6, 1965.
- 17 *Whidby Island Contact*, *FLYING SAUCER REVIEW*, November/December 1964.
- 18 Dr. F. R. Stannard (University College, London): *Symmetry of the Time Axis*, *NATURE*, Vol. 211, No. 5050, August 13, 1966 (p. 693).

The Pattern Behind the UFO Landings

Report on the Analysis of 200 documented observations made in 1954

BY JACQUES VALLEE

Author of the best-selling *Anatomy of a Phenomenon* (Henry Regnery, Chicago: Neville Spearman, London: Ace Books—paperback—U.S.A.), Jacques Vallée has just completed a revised version of the translation of his second book *Les Phenomenes Insolites de l'Espace* (Table Ronde, Paris). Known as *Challenge to Science*, it is published by Regnery. French born and educated Mr Vallée is at present living in the United States. He is an astronomer and an expert on computer techniques, and is a consultant to NASA on the Mars Map project.

Interest in landing reports is rapidly rising among the public and among UFO students. Several factors contribute to the development of this interest. First of all, the recent wave, with its maximum in July-August 1965, has confronted us with a remarkable number of incidents of this category, thus forcing many to accept the reality of accounts they previously denounced as hoaxes. In the second place, it has become obvious that such reports represented the UFO mystery in its most crucial form, because they confront us with a clear choice between the reality of an unprecedented phenomenon (and the strong suggestion of its intelligent origin) and the hypothesis that all witnesses are absolute liars of the most extreme psychological type. In contradistinction to the reports of the landings, accounts of objects seen in flight are always open to discussion in terms of natural effects and are thus less responsive to analysis.

In the third place, it is fast becoming obvious that no theory of the origin and nature of UFOs can afford to ignore the accounts of landings, of which several hundreds have been published, and which contain descriptions of the objects and their alleged 'operators' seen at close range.

Sources of Information

Descriptions of landings can be found in many specialised journals and in many books, including the earliest ones. Charles Fort mentions a few such incidents. An American researcher, Mr. Orvil Hartle (of 118 Oberreich Street, La Pote, Indiana 46350) has published several accounts of early twentieth century landings of a remarkable character in his book, *A Carbon Experiment*. Similar cases have been noted during the 1946 Scandinavian wave and the great 'American' period of 1947-52.

Ruppelt, who was in charge of the U.S. Air Force's investigations in 1952, considered himself to be plagued by reports of landings, as he writes in his

book *The Report on UFOs*, and his team conscientiously eliminated them. It is only when reliable civilian researchers like Leonard Stringfield (author of the excellent *Inside Saucer Post* and Coral Lorenzen of APRO (3914 E. Kleindale Rd. Tucson, Arizona) started to investigate the American landing cases that proper light was cast on the subject.

In the meantime, however, something of the greatest significance had happened in Europe. The 1954 wave reached its peak in Western Europe, producing thousands of reports, and among them a large number of accounts of landings. All reports circulated freely. Witnesses told their stories with considerable naivety, having never heard of 'flying saucers' before. Valuable details, first-hand documents and personal interviews were promptly centralised by able researchers, such as Charles Garreau, a professional newspaperman with *La Bourgogne Republicaine*, a local daily sold in the East of France, who made numerous field trips with his photographer, meeting hundreds of witnesses and publishing the whole story in concise, accurate articles (Figure 1). Not only France, but Italy, Spain and Northern Africa also produced a wealth of data.

Elsewhere in this issue, other researchers are reporting on the development of the problem of the landings in recent years. But the 1954 reports appear naturally as the nucleus of any general study. We have chosen to limit our analysis to two hundred of the most significant cases. They were selected from an extensive material: first, collections of newspapers and the files of letters from readers of several large dailies, made available by the news media. Next, the personal files of early sightings compiled by Messrs. Raymond Veillith, a well-known astronomer and the publisher of the lively periodical *Lumières dans la Nuit* (his address is: 'Les Pins', Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, Haute-Loire, France), Charles Garreau, mentioned earlier, and