

Was There a Landing Near Warminster?

by Eileen Buckle

ON a cold, wet, mid-November afternoon three members of the FSR team, namely Charles Bowen, Bryan Winder and myself, went to Warminster to investigate a report of a landed UFO said to have been seen not far from the town. Arthur Shuttlewood, the well-known Warminster journalist and author of two books* first alerted us to this case and on our request he kindly arranged for us to meet the witness, twenty-eight-years-old army truck driver Barry Canner. The conclusion we reached by the end of the afternoon was that this was a "light-weight" case but one, nevertheless, which had some interesting aspects, and we felt the visit very worthwhile.

A pleasant and informal conversation with Barry took place over the dining table of a High Street restaurant. A Yorkshireman, whose home-town was Saltburn-by-the-Sea, Barry was sparing in his words, of rather quiet disposition but not without a sense of humour. What I noticed about him particularly was his inward-looking, almost dreamy-looking eyes. He seemed clearly of the introvert type and on his own admission was a "lone-wolf", often going out alone. Cross-country running is one of his main spare-time activities, and we had already learned he had trained for a time under Mary Rand, the Olympic Gold Medallist. It was whilst on a training run on a lonely trackway that he spotted an unusual-looking object in a field.

The first question put to the witness was whether or not he had read anything about UFOs, either before or since making his sighting. It turned out that he had been given a few magazines, some two months before we met him, by Bob Strong, an enthusiastic UFO investigator well known for having teamed up with Arthur Shuttlewood in his night-time skywatching vigils, and one who has also claimed innumerable sightings. These magazines were in his car and he afterwards showed them to Charles Bowen. They were: *The Merseyside UFO Bulletin*, *Cos-Mos* magazine and *BUFORA Journal*; he had not seen *FSR*.

Barry Canner knew Bob Strong well, because they both worked in the same kind of job as civilian truck drivers for the Army. Bob talked a lot about his sightings and Barry, who had kept quiet about his experience for three days, said the reason for his silence was that he had waited until he found Bob. He wanted to tell Bob about it, as he was knowledgeable on these matters. He did not inform the police, he said, for fear of them laughing at him. Bob Strong subsequently introduced Barry to Arthur Shuttlewood, whom he had never met before, and thus we came to hear of the case.

* *The Warminster Mystery*, published by Neville Spearman Ltd., 112 Whitfield St., London WC1; also *Warnings from Flying Friends*, Portway Press, 17 Portway, Warminster, Wiltshire. Mr. Shuttlewood says he is working on a third book, which, he states, will include Barry Canner's story.



Barry Canner on the path down which he returned from his practice run

Description of the sighting

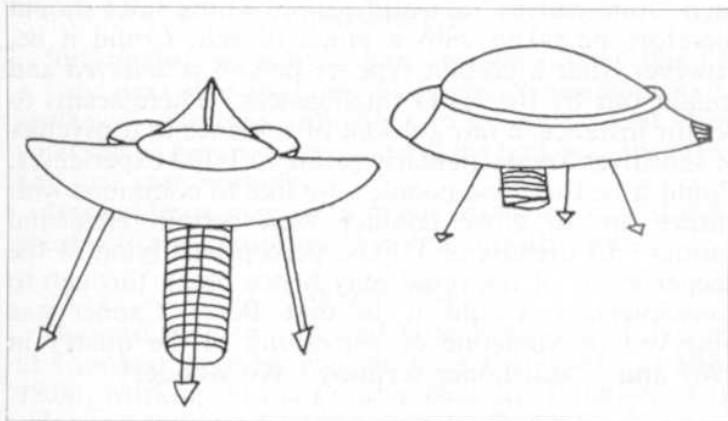
Barry Canner described the incident carefully, perhaps a little hesitantly, as follows. It occurred on September 28. That evening he left his car at the side of a trackway at Lord's Hill. He knows this path well and often uses it for running practice as it is quiet and he is bothered by no-one. He began his run at about 8.00 p.m. and returned to his car at about 9.30 p.m. By this time it was quite dark. A few stars were out, but there was no moon visible.



Barry at the gate looks at the spot where he claims the strange object was standing

As he was nearing the car he noticed a weird-looking object some ten yards away to his left in a field alongside the lane, and which had not been there when he set out. He claimed that despite the darkness he had been able to make out the details of the object quite clearly. This was due, he said, to a faint pinkish glow it emitted, rather like that given out by a luminous watch dial at night. The shape was like a biconvex oval, rising up to a projection at the rear which looked rather like an exhaust pipe. At what could have been the forward end was a dome-shaped window, and at one side were three triangular markings which might have been portholes; these, evidently, gave out more light than the rest of the object and the light was more of a whitish hue. The length of the object was about 14 feet, and its diameter 12 feet (Barry drew diagrams in our presence, saying that he thought himself a good judge of size and distance); three legs supported the structure from underneath, the ground clearance being 6 feet and the total height above the ground being 11 feet. There was also a cylindrical hatch projecting from the undersurface and reaching to within 2 feet of the ground.

Bryan Winder, a design engineer, was particularly interested in the structure of the legs which were said to taper from a diameter of about 2 feet at the top to about 3 inches at the extremity. He asked if the legs would be in the same relation—were the structure an



The object which puzzled and alarmed Barry Canner, reproduced from his own sketches. The inconsistencies between front and side views are obvious

aircraft—as that between the nosewheel and the two wheels behind it. The reply was in the affirmative, but Barry added that there were *no* wheels; instead, each leg terminated in a foot or pad in the shape of an equilateral triangle of side $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet. These, he said, had made 2 inch-deep impressions in the dry, chalky soil. Did he go back afterwards to look for these impressions? The reply to this was that he returned to the spot with Bob Strong who brought along his camera; whether any pictures came out in the poor light at the time of this visit was not known.

We asked if there was any movement of the object, or any sign of life seen. Barry said there was none whatsoever, and because of this he had become growingly uneasy. He was sure that it was a machine from outer space, and he felt he was being watched.



Barry in his car

He theorised that “they” had been attracted to his “streamlined” car, a Singer *Chamois Coupé*. After eyeing the strange contraption for what he estimated to have been five to ten minutes, he jumped into the car and fled homewards, covering the distance from Lord’s Hill to Warminster in “record time”.

Later, we went to the site at Lord’s Hill to see the place for ourselves. We followed Barry Canner up the trackway, and parked by a gate which marked the spot where he claimed he had stood at closest proximity to the object. This had apparently been resting in a slight hollow in the field adjacent to the lane, which was lined by a wire fence. The field, which sloped downwards into a valley, was now freshly ploughed. It was a very open kind of terrain with rolling downs, and the few scrubby bushes alongside the lane would have afforded little cover for any person. We did not stay long. The cold wind and the rain forced us to beat a hasty retreat to our cars.

On the way back to the town, Barry collected a friend of his, Mr. Andrew Pritchard, who joined us over tea. Andrew is quite interested in UFO reports, but told us he had reservations about the copious reports of incidents allegedly taking place in the Warminster district.* However, he said he had noticed Barry was quiet and looked unwell during the few days following his experience.

The personality of the witness

Barry Canner told us he had been to Millfield School (a public school† in Yorkshire) and naturally we

* We told him we were convinced that there had been some UFO events near Warminster, and showed him the July/August 1970 issue of FSR which includes the photographs taken from Cradle Hill.

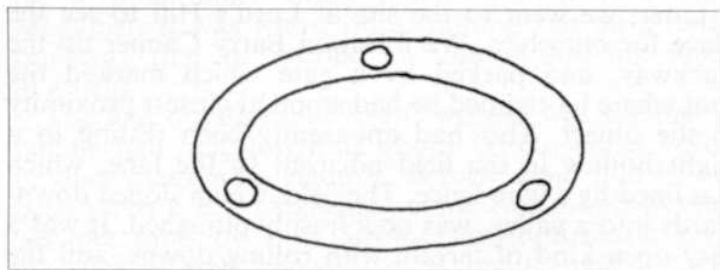
† Equivalent, for example, to an exclusive “private” school in the U.S.A.

wondered why he was now working as a truck driver. Had he had any illness? He declared he had had no serious illness or nervous trouble. At school he was always more keen on sport than on academic subjects. On leaving school he had joined his father's business, but when this closed down he came to Warminster and he worked with the lions at Longleat. His love of outdoor life made him choose this job, and for similar reasons he chose his present occupation, which he said he enjoyed.

Charles Bowen was interested to know whether he had had any unusual experiences in his life. Was he given to dreaming, or did he have premonitions? Barry, in answer, told us of dreams he had had previous to the Lord's Hill sighting, of a dark, Zeppelin-shaped object; subsequently he read a newspaper report of an object of similar description seen elsewhere in the West Country. Had Barry suffered any ill-effects following his sighting, such as headaches? No, he had not. I asked him whether he had been incredulous at all when, on other occasions, he had listened to all the talk about UFOs. To this he replied that he was quite ready to believe what was said. He professed to have no strong views with regard to religion, philosophy or politics. He appeared to be a strong advocate of railways preservation, however, as evidenced by the posters displayed in his car's windows.

An earlier sighting

During the course of our lunchtime conversation, it turned out that Barry had experienced a sighting before.



The view of the object which Mr. Canner says he saw from the quarry near Fylingdales

This had happened, he said, one August afternoon in 1967. He was on a hike across the north-east section of the Yorkshire moors, between Whitby and Thirsk. He had stopped for a smoke in an old quarry, about five miles west of the Fylingdales radar station, when he heard a buzzing noise overhead. A dull, dark-grey object was seen hovering directly above him. It appeared to be formed of two sections—a central section encircled by an outer section from which projected three cylindrical "landing pads". Slowly, the object began to move off in a northerly direction and then shot away at an angle and disappeared into the blue. Barry made rough diagrams of this object, adding its estimated dimensions and altitude, and stated that it had obscured the sky over half the area of the quarry.

Discussion

It was quickly agreed that the Lord's Hill sighting case had weaknesses. First, there was only a solitary

witness and so far there has been no corroboration of his story. Secondly, prior to his sighting the witness had listened to talk about UFOs by an ebullient enthusiast. He admitted to a readiness to believe, and could have been over-impressionable. We felt certain that he was not lying—he had seen *something*.

There seems a possibility that what actually happened was this. On returning from his run he noticed something in the dark that he had not seen before and did not recognise (for example, it could have been a piece of agricultural machinery). Suddenly frightened, he left in haste and it was on subsequent questioning by his work colleague that suggestions as to what *might* have been seen were unconsciously absorbed so that he thought then that he *had* seen those details. This may be quite wrong, but the story, as it stands, is inconclusive. I will just add, though, that when Barry related the account of his previous sighting in Yorkshire he spoke more easily and quickly, as if he was sure of what he had seen. When relating the sighting at Lord's Hill, however, he was a little hesitant, and needed some prodding to extract some of the details.

There are some further points I feel should be considered. Barry was, at the time of both sightings, a lone walker. It has been noted elsewhere that many reports of close encounters have emanated from "lone walkers", and one that springs to mind immediately is that of Angus Brooks at Moigne Down, Dorset, on October 26, 1967. There are some who assume that such "lone wolves" are odd people whose tales should therefore be taken with a pinch of salt. Could it be, however, that a certain type of person is *selected* and sought out by the UFO intelligences? There seems to be, for instance, a fair amount of evidence that psychics or sensitives are particularly prone to UFO experiences. Could it be that lone people who like to commune with nature are in close contact with certain elemental entities? In dreams of UFOs, perceptions lying in the deeper levels of the mind may hence break through to consciousness. Could it be that Barry Canner was observed by someone or something in the quarry in 1967 and is still under scrutiny? We wonder!

HACKNEY FLURRY OF UFOs

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passenger liner, a small private aircraft or a helicopter, and that she had no difficulty in distinguishing the sound made by each of them.

The second sighting, in Manor Park

Mrs. Knapp said to her husband: "There's that thing again; it is like a lighted platform." She said that the arrangement of lights were similar to that in her previous sighting but that the object appeared to be hovering slightly to the right of the street and in front of her. When she looked away to speak to her husband the object apparently moved sideways to come to a halt slightly above and to her rear. Her husband said: "Oh, you and your aircraft, come along," and she stopped looking (unfortunately).

The Landing at Franois—2

J. Tyrode

This contribution is the continuation of an article which was published in the April 1969 issue of *Lumières dans la Nuit*. Translated by John C. Hugill.

THE first part of this report contained the accounts of five witnesses, or groups of witnesses, in and around the village of Franois (Doubs), of an event on the evening of Tuesday, December 12, 1968. The logical sequence of events led to the evidence of the Froidevaux family which indicated that the experiences took place between 18.04 and 18.15; to deal with the remaining witnesses I must now go back a few minutes.

Witness T.6

M. "X", at just about 18.00, was on the D.11 road, waiting at the bus stop. He is something of a simpleton, and I only mention him because, having questioned him, his evidence cross-checks with other witnesses. He says he saw, in the direction pointed out by Witness T.3, "a big three-coloured ball".

He is the only one to mention three colours. T.2 and T.5 spoke of yellow and white, and we shall see that T.8 mentions yellow and red.

Witness T.7

Still at the bus stop, a girl who got off the bus told a lady next day that she had seen "something extraordinary". She was unwilling to go into detail about what she had seen, merely saying she had been mistaken, and had seen nothing.

Her evidence may be of prime importance, and it is a great pity she continues to adopt this attitude.

Witness T.8

Bernard Perruche, 23, and Mlle. Perruche, 21, farmers at Franois, were to the south of the village at about 18.00, working in their stable near the junction of the side road linking the D.11 and the D.108.

They were both formal and categorical when they told me what they had seen, and guaranteed its authenticity.

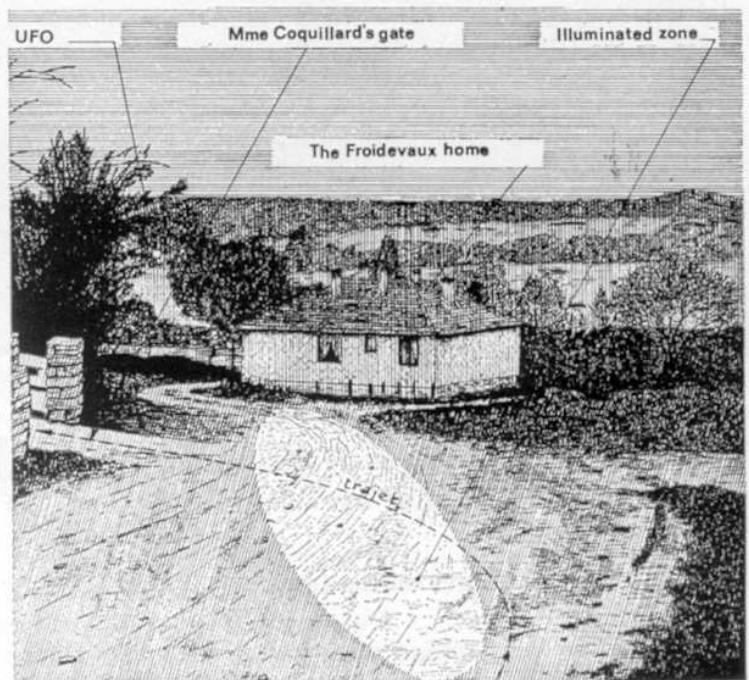
I should like to add that they are thoroughly trustworthy, sober and responsible members of the French Young Farmers Movement. These are no practical jokers or leg-pullers, and they enjoy the general respect of the whole population.

So, arrived at the road junction, they saw one pretty bright light, which they took to be from a car which might have pulled up on the side road with its headlights on.

Puzzled by this, since it was not usual at this spot, their curiosity made them pause for a few moments. They then realised that, although the light was very strong, they could only see one "headlight". To explain this, they imagined that they were seeing the "car" from the side; and thus that it was across the road. Further considering the immobility of the light, and to find a plausible reason for its being there, they thought it was

a case of a courting couple who would have sought solitude in this way, in a lonely bit of countryside.

However, they could not see why, if they wanted to be hidden, they had left the lights on. Looking at it anew, they were convinced that there was only a single light, and no trace of a car. Despite the very dark night, and their desire to find the vehicle, it seemed to them that they ought at least to be able to make out a vague



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shape . . . but nothing could be seen in the way of a structure, nothing which could satisfy their curiosity.

Perplexed, they were deep in reflection when they saw "some people moving about in front of the light, as in a magic lantern show."

How many did they see? They could not be precise about this, two or possibly more, who seemed to pass to and fro in front of each other.

They were quite definite that these were "people" but, placed as they were, facing the light, and still a good way off, they could say no more than, as they said to me, "there was a good deal of movement."

Still thinking in terms of a courting couple, they found it more and more odd that these events should be going on in the open, in the light of a headlamp, in a temperature of 5° below. Intrigued, but cautious, they left "them" to their own devices, and went on with their work.

Being in no way UFO minded, such a possibility never occurred to them, and so they missed the chance