

SOME RECENT WELSH CASES

F. W. Holiday

THE prevalence of UFOs over Wales seems to be widespread and — according to Vincent Kane, “anchor-man” of BBC Wales — is increasing. Several sightings and what seems to have been a landing have occurred within the last year or so particularly in the Cwmbran area. Vincent Kane says: “Whatever they are — flying saucers, UFOs — they’ve been seen in all parts of Wales. A sighting was reported recently in Prestatyn, another off the west coast of Wales and another was seen in Monmouthshire. Many sightings have been near military establishments such as Aberporth. The latest in Wales was at Croespenmaen above an empty advance factory. There had been an earlier sighting at Croespenmaen by a group of local people a few months ago and then a further sighting by Mr. Glanmor Bebb.”

Kane continued: “Mr. Bebb had been working in the stables near his home, which is isolated. On this occasion it was in the evening of a very clear night. Mr. Bebb set off for home and then paused and sat on a bank to watch the sunset. It was then he saw his unidentified flying object — just above the government advance factory about 400 yards away.”

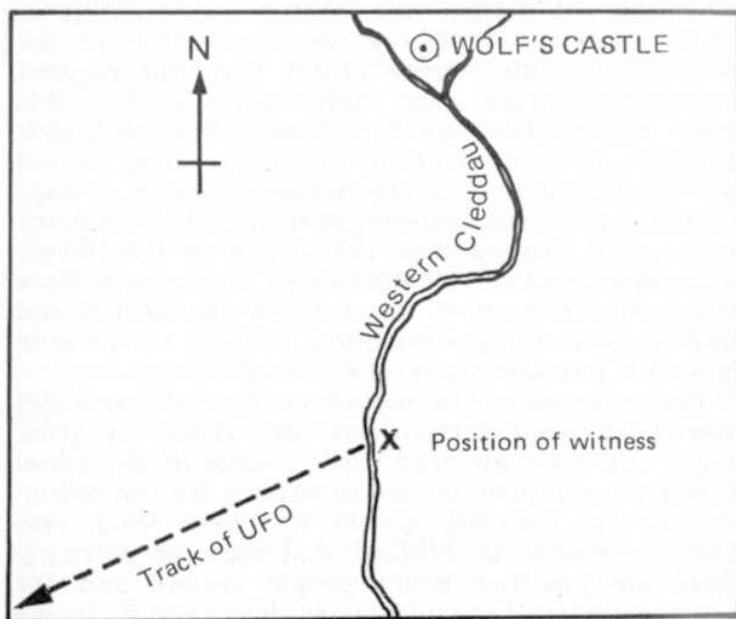
Mr. Bebb said: “What made it very funny to me was the way it was hovering quietly. It went down, rising...it seemed to be exerting pressure as it was going down and suction as it was rising up. I was watching it for ten minutes just going up and down and then, all at once, it flashed across the sky at tremendous speed and I counted...in four seconds it reached the horizon. You couldn’t define an actual object — it was more like a haze. I called the wife

and she described it as a yellow light like a saucer.”

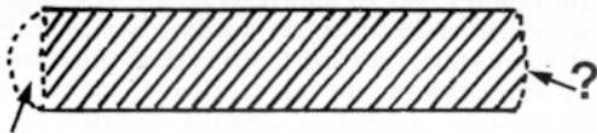
David Allen, the BBC’s representative in West Wales, told me that he found the reports interesting and impressive because of the confirmatory evidence. For instance on January 6, 1966, several fishermen, including myself, were at Saundersfoot harbour when we saw a strange illuminated object skimming a few feet above the waves heading towards Ireland. A woman lying in bed looked out of her window and also saw this object. An aircraft coming over from Shannon observed an unidentified light over the southern Irish Sea a little later in the night, as did the crew of a London plane heading for Shannon. When these reports were radioed back to shore, a minor alarm was raised enough to cause the Fishguard lifeboat to turn out. Mr. Allen himself was put on the alert at the prospect of a news story. The lifeboat however found nothing, and Mr. Allen expressed the belief that the entire incident was inexplicable.

Lights in the sky should obviously be regarded with some caution. There is no doubt that reflections coming off the contrails of high-flying aircraft have been mistaken for UFOs and a case of this sort occurred in South Wales recently. The researcher however has no need to waste time on reports of what may in fact have been sightings of Skylab, satellites and helicopters when there are plenty of much harder cases in the files. I found it impossible to get this point over to Dr. Phil Williams, the physicist of Aberystwyth University, who argues that all of us have our flying saucer stories and that these always turn out to be objects or phenomena that can be explained in normal terms. Two recent cases show that this can hardly be so.

Michael Browning, an industrial chemist aged 44 was fly-fishing on the Western Cleddau river in Pembrokeshire one evening in early August, 1972. He was having trouble with his casting and in consequence was glancing at the tip of his rod as it went up above his head. Suddenly he became aware of an object in the sky overhead. At first he paid little attention, being absorbed in the fishing, until he glanced a second time and saw it was still there. It appeared to be cylindrical, and was a dark grey or dark brown in colour. At one end it seemed to have an orange spot and, while he watched it, it suddenly started to move. It accelerated and moved away rapidly in a south-westerly direction. Mr. Browning stressed the fact that the object was stationary and that the acceleration began slowly and increased rapidly. He described the object as “something not normal” and says he had never seen anything like it before. He heard no sound of any sort from the object. He says he finds it hard to estimate the length of the cylinder because its altitude was unknown and there was no point of reference. Even so, he feels it was not very high and he was able to



Map showing the location of Michael Browning's sighting



Orange spot (was in trailing position before departure)

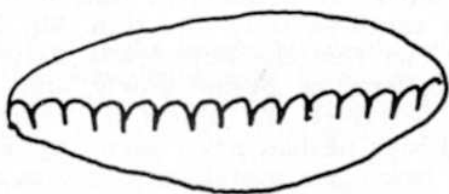
Wolf's Castle UFO after sketch by Michael Browning. He was not sure whether the leading edge was pointed or not.

follow the first part of its departure over the landscape before it flashed out of view. He had no subjective sensation of being watched or observed.

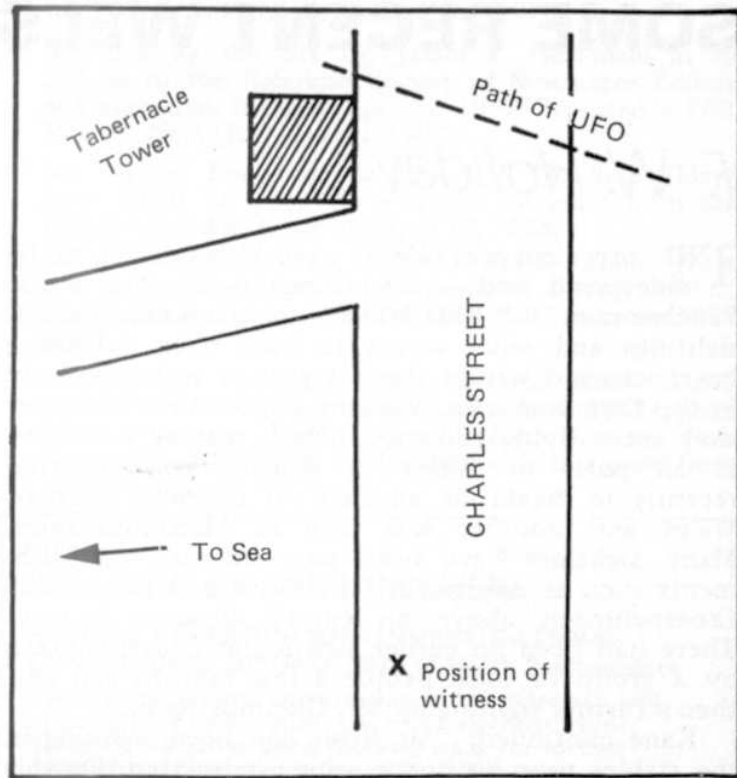
The witness in this case is a personal friend and I know the location of the sighting, near Wolf's Castle, very well indeed. The experimental rocket station at Aberporth is about 25 miles away to the NE. If this station has been able to develop a soundless missile able to hover over the earth and is prepared to fire such a projectile over populated areas, contrary to all regulations, then the Wolf's Castle object may have been one of these. This seems to me most unlikely. It seems even more unlikely in view of the fact that I used to know the Lt. Colonel in charge of the Aberporth rocket-pads socially some years ago, and he told me of various puzzling objects that had been detected by his radar scanners at various times. Details of course were hidden under the Official Secrets Act and it is under cover of this sort of censorship that sceptics such as the U.S. Air Force, Dr. Phil Williams and the Nuffield Radio Astronomy Laboratories at Jodrell Bank are able to do their negative sniping.

However the problem may be more complex than we suppose as another Welsh case shows. Upholders of the "nuts and bolts" theory are urged to study it with great care.

On a mid-summer morning in 1959, Mr. D. J. Harris, an area insurance agent, was walking down Charles Street in Milford Haven at about 11.00 a.m. About a hundred yards ahead of him, on his side of the street, was the 70 foot high tower of the Tabernacle chapel. Suddenly he heard the sort of whispering sound one would associate with a low-flying glider. Simultaneously an object appeared above



Milford UFO after sketch by D.J. Harris



Location of D.J. Harris at the time of his sighting at Milford Haven

the buildings on the right hand side of the street, roughly opposite the chapel, and he had a very clear view of it. It was following a downward path and was about 50 feet from the ground. He describes it as enormous, and says it must have been 150 feet in diameter. It was a metallic grey in colour rather like weathered aluminium. This object was travelling quite slowly and was spinning equally slowly, so much so that Mr. Harris thinks he saw only a part of one revolution while it was in view. The object was in the form of a flattened ellipse and around the widest part of the diameter appeared deep scallops or fluting. Although the object was rotating it didn't alter the profile it was presenting to the observer, and Mr. Harris agrees that this suggests that the plan-view must have been circular. This object was in plain view for at least 10 seconds as it sailed low over the street before disappearing behind the Tabernacle tower. The amazed witness at once ran down the street believing that the thing, whatever it was, had crashed into the waters of the Haven, since this is where its downward track must have ended. However when he reached the chapel and could look at the sea there was nothing whatever in sight. Nor was anything ever reported.

This case seems to me to be one of particular interest. I have interviewed Mr. Harris at great length and am convinced he saw what he describes. However I am quite unable to believe that an object of this size, moving almost at street level, was generally visible at Milford that summer morning. There are just too many people around and too many pairs of binoculars on ships for it to be possible. Mr. Harris agrees about this. We are really forced to the conclusion that no-one saw this UFO except the witness and that, in fact, it was visible

only to him. If so, this invests flying discs with a curious new quality. Like the ghost which may be visible to some witnesses but not to others, the Milford UFO may be offering us a gratis clue as to its real nature.

In the course of conversation I found that Mr. Harris had certain psychical qualities such as the ability to dowse. He was also keenly interested in the possible implications of what he had seen. However he had never seen a UFO before, nor has he seen one since; nor has the sighting affected his way of life. One wonders therefore how the observer comes to be selected as an observer, and what laws are involved. Is it what T. C. Lethbridge called resonance — a question of being on the right mental waveband at the right time? Are saucers in fact devices for lowering the frequency of beings normally existing on a much higher frequency-band in the scale of cosmic existence? Do the hard landing cases followed

by the eventual flying away and disappearance simply show the process going through a full cycle?

The investigator in Wales is impressed by the fact that so many people have had UFO experiences of one sort or another; yet these are reported outside the family only rarely. One wonders how many thousands of such encounters occur with no-one being any the wiser. The unknown flying object is still with us and probably has always been with us. My latest report is from a dentist who told me that he was standing with friends overlooking St. Brides bay when they saw a UFO in the form of a saucer above the sea. He was sufficiently impressed to amass a large collection of UFO books in an effort to make sense of the phenomenon. I can only suggest that Dr. Williams and other sceptics forget what they know and concentrate on what they don't know. Because, quite clearly, they are missing something.

BOOK REVIEW

WHERE ARE THE NEW THEORIES?

I. Grattan-Guinness

ONE of the more striking features of current research into ufology and its history is that interconnections are being established between previously separate areas of extra-scientific phenomena and human activity, which can then be regarded as branches of a more unified range of accomplishments. Man who sees flying saucer may also be man who can read minds or dematerialise bodies or have visions, or whatever; and, moreover, this may always have been the case. Those ordinary members of our modern democratic (or better, our non-hereditarily monarchic) societies who possess such gifts may be the descendants of ancient kings, angels, or higher beings, who ruled by virtue of their greater powers over the ancestors of the rest of us.

Mr. John A. Keel's latest book, *Our Haunted Planet*, 1971, London: Neville Spearman 208 pp. £2.10, is one of the recent attempts to survey these separate areas of supranatural phenomena and seek a unifying explanation for them. Thus, we have chapters on ancient maps, civilisations and artefacts; unusual materials and planetary motions; Velikovskiy; men in black; Mormonism and other "religions"; UFO contacts; magic and possession; unexplained radio signals; teleportations; and predictions.

Readers of Mr. Keel's previous book, *Operation Trojan Horse*, will already know that Keel favours the postulation of the "ultraterrestrials", species (one or many) from elsewhere who seeded our planet long ago and have kept us under regular surveillance ever since. However, this thesis seems to carry certain distinctions which Keel did not fully examine. Are the ultraterrestrials supposed to come

here from far distant regions of the universe? If so, then we require quite new theories of energy conversion and the transportation of masses. Or do the ultraterrestrials share our space but move in and out of it? If so, then we need a theory of different interacting physics; geometry itself is not enough, for I can easily postulate a million different universes in the space of my drawing-room if none of them interacts physically with ours.

In his new book Mr. Keel has not made progress with his thesis, for he has submerged it in the range of phenomena which he has described rather than used it to select those phenomena which form its most striking tests. For this reason, I found the book less penetrating than its predecessor and more like general books on the problem written by others. In many ways it is better than other books, for Keel works harder at his subject than most people and knows more about it than they do. But much of this knowledge is compromised by his frequent failure to refer the reader to other literature on a topic receiving discussion or mention. Indeed, he makes a bad start with a display of enthusiasm for the Piri-Reis map which the map does not seem to deserve.*

On the whole I was disappointed that Keel did not aim toward heights of which he is surely capable. But his book does contain passages of great interest which must make the reader ponder afresh on the possible hauntings of this planet and the control that they might be exercising over us.

* See P.C.W. Davies, "The Piri-Reis map; fact and fiction", *Flying Saucer Review*, 18 (1972), No.2, pp.21-23.