

DOWN ON A STAFFORDSHIRE FARM

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Our contributor is a member of the UFORA team in Staffordshire and is therefore a colleague of UFOIN investigator Derek James. This is his first full investigation for the network.

TITTENSOR is a small village a few miles south of Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire. Surrounding it are many farms, breeding cattle and pigs, and one of the farmers is Arthur Johnson (who is in his mid sixties).

Mrs. Johnson works at a nearby hospital and every night her husband regularly departs from the farmhouse at 9.55 p.m. for the short drive to collect her when she has finished. The incident took place one cold, winter's night in December 1977. The exact date is unknown but the weather was fine, the sky was clear and there was a vast panorama of stars.

Mr. Johnson had been driving down the lane for less than a minute, and was about 300 yards from his door, when he caught sight of two very large bright lights placed one above the other. These were in the ESE at about 50 degrees elevation and were very unusual. Pulling up into a small turning area, muddy due to earlier rain, he considered the prospect that this might be a helicopter. The car window was open so he stretched his head out, but there was no sound.

Feeling more puzzled than ever he switched off the car engine. Getting out of the car he clambered up a small embankment in the hope of obtaining a better view. As he did so the object turned and he could now quite clearly see its shape. It was travelling very low (estimated altitude about 100 feet) and came within 50 yards of him, crossing the road ahead from right to left. In fact Mr. Johnson is sure that it was so close that he could have hit it with a stone had he thrown one. Yet it remained totally silent.

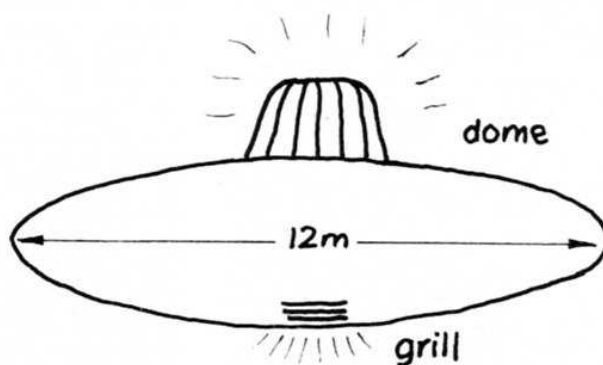
Passing over the road it banked sharply so that it passed over a hedgerow beside the lane and above some telephone lines. It then came to a point above a tree where it banked to the right, and moved off silently in the direction of the village. The witness got back into his car and continued his journey as the object moved away into the distance.

Obviously Mr. Johnson had an excellent opportunity to study the craft in great detail as it passed by so close. Its speed was slow enough to allow it to be in clear view for about half a minute.

In shape somewhat – and certainly in its motion – it reminded him of a submarine passing through water. It was roughly cigar-shaped, tapering at both ends, and had a “pill box” type of dome on top. Its size was fairly carefully assessed as 40 feet long and 10 feet across at its widest point. It seemed to be metallic in composition and was glowing white from a bright illumination elsewhere on its body. It was not self-luminous all over.

The “dome” seemed to be made of a transparent material and was apparently symmetrical (again about 10 x 10 feet). It contained about five or six vertical struts which were dark, and of unknown composition because of an intensely bright white light radiating from the inside.

The only other observed feature of the object was a grill on the central underside. This again looked to be metallic but had no definite shape. It consisted of several uni-directional bars and seemed to be about 4 feet long. Again there was a very intense white light coming from this.



The UFO, based on Mr. Johnson's sketch

The grill and the dome were the only two sources of light, but this was so strong that it lit up the ground beneath where the object passed. The light was diffuse and seemed to be exactly the same as from any normal light source.

Naturally enough the witness was somewhat perturbed by this, but was interested to know if anything had been seen from the village. He reported it to the press, which carried a brief local mention. He then wished that he hadn't bothered! Within a few weeks he had been inundated with phone calls, letters and UFO group report forms – all of which he ignored because the last thing he wanted was a fuss surrounding his observation. His wife had become very disillusioned with the whole affair and was rather annoyed by my investigations (thinking they would precipitate more publicity). After promises that this would not be so, and that we simply wanted an account for those interested, she relented and this report became possible.