

THE CUMBERLAND, RHODE ISLAND, INCIDENT

August C. Roberts

ON the evening of July 3, 1967, Joseph L. Ferriere of Woonsocket, Rhode Island, was in the vicinity of a neighbouring town, Cumberland. He was not there by chance, but rather in search of evidence that would substantiate recent UFO sightings in that area.

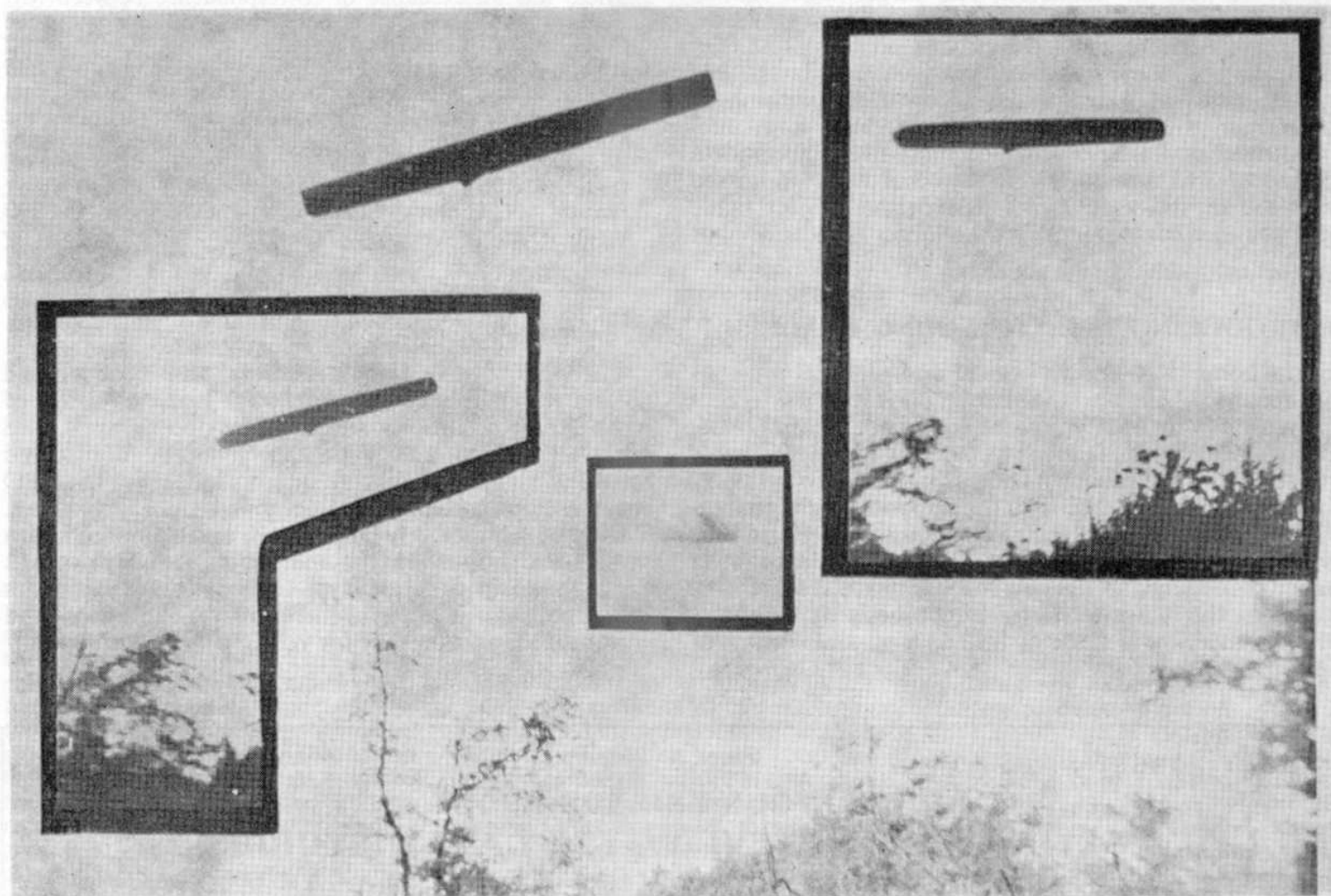
Ferriere was at that time editor of a UFO magazine in the New England area. Therefore whenever there were sightings he would receive numerous reports of them. Many times he would go out and try to investigate these reports himself, with or without the company of others. The three days prior to July 3 he had received dozens of calls reporting sightings in the Cumberland area. People claimed to have seen "a great shining silver bar."

Ferriere claims that that evening he went by himself with his camera in search of some physical proof. He reasoned that since an object was seen in one area

for three days he might be able to find some debris or, possibly, a place where it might have landed. He knew the area fairly well, and remembered the power lines and reservoir nearby. Recalling the connections between UFOs and these two types of landmarks, he started his search along the power line.

He says he had been walking for a while, concentrating on the ground, looking for debris, or some evidence of these strange occurrences, when he turned and looked over his shoulder to the left. There it was, the bar which everyone had talked about. It was just hanging there in space, parallel with the ground. He had not seen or heard it approach, but when he turned, it was there.

The object started to move very slowly, rocking back and forth almost as if it were a boat on water. As soon



Montage of UFO photographs taken by Joseph L. Ferriere on July 3, 1967, prepared by David P. Camarello

as he realised what he was looking at, Ferriere began taking pictures with his snapshot camera. After 2 or 3 shots, he says he noticed an opening like a trap door on the bottom of the object. Suddenly something was expelled, spherical in shape, from within.

Ferriere says he was in a quandry as to which object he should follow, for the smaller one immediately started moving away. He took two more pictures of the large object before it switched into a vertical position and took off straight into the sky, disappearing in a few seconds. It should be mentioned that at no time did it make a sound, the only odd thing Ferriere could recall was that one end of the larger object seemed to pulsate very slowly in and out, almost in a piston-like fashion. (Note: see photos.)

After the cigar-shaped object was gone, Ferriere let all his attention focus on the smaller one. It was saucer-shaped and appeared to have a dome on top. Ferriere took two more pictures of it before it was gone from sight. It seemed to leave in the direction the larger one had come from. Because of the direction of the cigar-shaped object when Ferriere first saw it, he felt safe to assume that it had come from the reservoir area.

The witness states that in his first impression he estimated the size of the object—which was about a city block away—at over 200 feet in length. Later, when he had calmed down a bit, he judged the larger object to be between 100 and 150 feet long, and the smaller one about 15 feet in diameter. The larger cigar-shaped object seemed to have four lights running along the side, but these Ferriere guessed were not port-holes as they did not give the impression of glass or plastic, but rather gave off a translucent glow from within the object.

Altogether, Ferriere observed these two objects for a period of 3 or 4 minutes. He says that what impressed him the most was the fact that neither object made any sound whatsoever. Even the larger object, when it

veritably “snapped” into a vertical position and took off straight into the sky, made no audible sound.

Another coincidence was the nearness of the UFO to a reservoir, possibly tying in with the reported sightings in Wanaque, New Jersey, where many objects that appeared over the Reservoir have been widely publicised.

As in any UFO sighting, all that remains is the story of what a man says he saw, and, in this case, claims that he photographed in an attempt to verify his report. The photographs which accompany this story have never been proven false to date,† and the integrity of Mr. Ferriere is beyond question as far as I am concerned.

However, the interesting events which followed this incident, and the people involved, are too many to be included in this brief report. Details of these are being compiled for publication at a future date, and I do not doubt that they will provide readers with much food for thought, for they are “fairy tale” events that will deeply concern all who have been dedicated researchers for many years. Perhaps they will provide another piece towards the completion of the puzzle and the solution of this mystery of mysteries for the children of tomorrow.

Editor's notes:

* Mr. Joseph L. Ferriere was the Editor, and publisher, of a well-produced magazine called *Probe*, which was distributed from his address, 132 Fifth Avenue, Woonsocket, R.I. (as will be seen from an advertisement which appeared in *Flying Saucer Review* for November/December, 1966). There was an exchange of correspondence between Mr. Ferriere and myself, but both this, and the magazine *Probe*, suddenly ceased to arrive.

† It should be noted that *Flying Saucer Review* has not had access to the negatives of the photograph prints that appear in the montage. We make no claims regarding the authenticity of the pictures, and publish them merely to illustrate the claim that has been made. (It is my opinion that the editor of a UFO-study journal should think himself very unlucky if he should experience a UFO incident: nobody would believe him!—C.B.)

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of the commonly known optical and physical illusions are recorded here, and the chapter ends with the technical reasons why BMEWS radar would not record UFOs, though no mention is made of the very impressive cases on record where radar and visual sightings correlate.

The last chapter discusses the apparent flight characteristics of UFOs and the electro-magnetic effects they sometimes produce. Then the author considers life on other planets in the light of today's space research. In general, the extra-terrestrial hypothesis is adopted, though mention is made of ESP as a possible means of interplanetary travel.

The writing of this book is factual and balanced and gives a reasonably complete, though brief, coverage of what is now a complex subject. The photographs used are well known and I believe generally considered reliable. There is a useful international list of UFO societies and publications, compiled by Lionel Beer. This is by no means a large book, and compared with similar-size books on the market it is overpriced at £1.25, even in these days of high prices. Apart from this, I consider it a useful introduction to ufology and very suitable as a present for young people with enquiring minds.

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