

THE SPECTRE OF WINTERFOLD

by Charles Bowen

ON the night of November 12/13, 1967, two young people of Woking, Surrey, had the fright of their lives. I first heard a whisper of the incident on the morning of Sunday, November 26, through a friend—who in turn knows the mother of the young man involved in the affair.

"It is a very strange story," said my friend, "but as it is not connected with UFOs I didn't hasten to tell you."

Which is a pity, because it so happened that when I heard the gist of the account I became very interested, with my thoughts ranging from Saltwood¹ to Flatwoods² and Casa Blanca.³ I arranged immediately to interview the witnesses, and first met them on the afternoon of November 26. I am grateful to them for their cooperation.

The witnesses

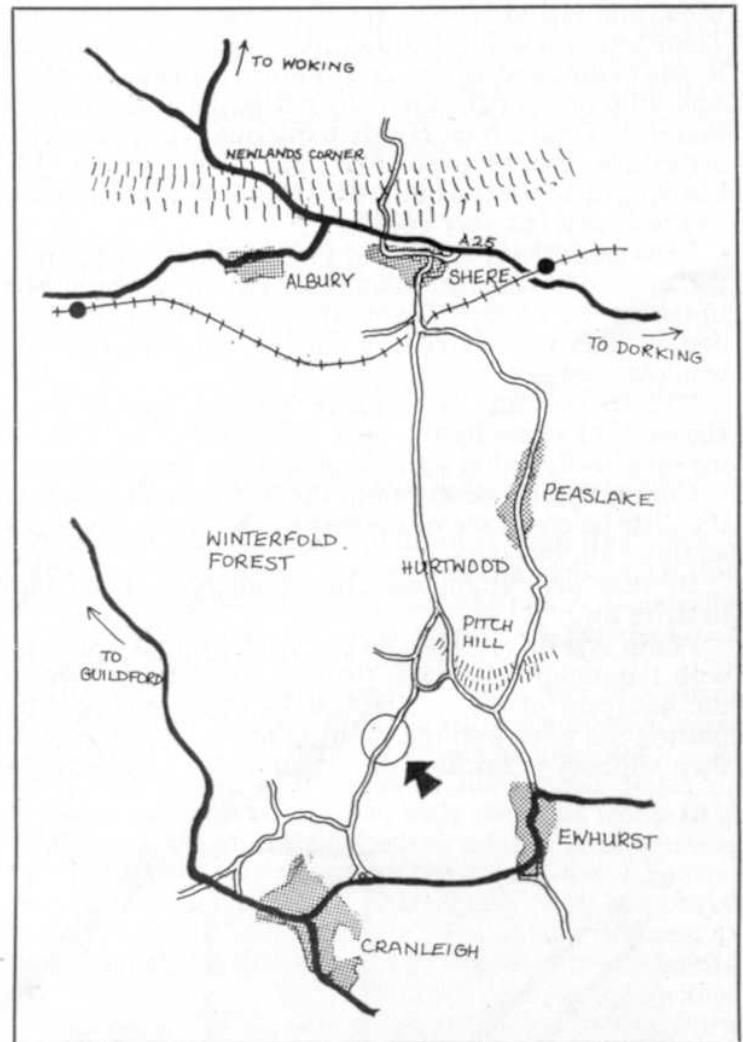
At about 12.30 a.m. on November 13, on a damp, cloudy night—there had earlier been some drizzle following a very pleasant autumn Sunday—Philip Freeman and his friend Angela Carter left the house of Philip's married brother Leslie Freeman, who lives in Cranleigh. They were not sure of the precise time, but just before leaving they had been watching the Eamonn Andrews show on ATV (London). Philip was driving his red Triumph *Vitesse* convertible. The hood was up.

Aged 22, Philip is one of two partners in a small subcontracting carpentry business. He lives with his parents in a comfortable flat in Loder Close, Sheerwater, Woking. He says he has no knowledge of, or interest in, flying saucer literature: his time for reading is limited, but he has read some Science Fiction (*The War of the Worlds*, the Woking-based novel by H. G. Wells, was quoted as an example). He was surprised when I showed him a copy of *FLYING SAUCER REVIEW*; surprised to see such a well-turned-out magazine on the subject. Miss Angela Carter, 20, of Devonshire Avenue, Sheerwater, works locally.

The location

The route which the couple took from Cranleigh was up over hilly, forested country, to Shere. The narrow, twisting lanes make their way through rocky cuttings and the woodlands of Hurtwood Common, between Winterfold and Pitch Hill, which is the third highest point in the County of Surrey. From Shere, they were to take the A25 road to Newlands Corner on Albury Down, where they would join the road down to West Clandon and Send, and then on to Woking. This is a much shorter route than that by the main roads through Shamley Green and Guildford to Woking: it is also a wilder, and much more lonely route—to which I personally can testify, for I know the district very well.

There was no other traffic about, and, as the windscreen and windows of the car were misting over—the heater had not at that time warmed up sufficiently to



The area in which the encounter took place is arrowed

keep them clear—Philip stopped the car at a place which he thinks was about two miles from Cranleigh.

A nauseating smell

Dousing the headlights, but leaving the side lights on, with the engine running, Philip got out to leather the windscreen. As he did so, he became aware of a very unpleasant odour. When I asked him to describe the smell, he said it was something like food being cooked, and burning badly. Then, as an afterthought, he suggested it could even have been like a "stink bomb".

I questioned Miss Carter separately, and she confirmed the details of their movements. She also said that she became aware of the smell as soon as Philip got out of the car, and that it was not in any way like the smell from an overheated car engine (I had not mentioned that possibility). Philip agreed with this when I spoke to him again, and pointed out that the car had not run long enough for it to overheat.

The night was pitch black, and there were no lights in sight other than the car's side and rear lights.

The apparition

As Philip returned to the driver's seat he looked round to Miss Carter, on his left, and was alarmed to see a "face" through the near-side passenger window. He estimated it to be about 10 inches long and 8 inches wide, and stated that it was close up to the window. There were no visible features like eyes, nose or mouth; it was blank, and white, and sharply defined. As there was little or no light for it to reflect, he suggests now that it may have been faintly luminous. There was also something that looked like an "arm" which was reaching up to the top of the car's hood. He was suddenly terrified, and felt very cold.

Miss Carter was looking at Philip as he got back into the car, and was mentioning the revolting smell. She observed the look of fright which came over his face, and instinctively dared not look around to the side window.

"There was an 'atmosphere' which alarmed me," she said. "I knew by the look on Philip's face, and by my own 'feeling' that something horrible was out there."

Continuing his description, Philip Freeman said that the little he could see of the rest of the "body" was not white at all, but dark.

By now very frightened, his companion urged him to drive away.

Philip is a driver who always starts in first gear. As, with the majority of cars, there is no synchromesh on the first gear of his car, he usually eases into gear by putting the lever into the position for second gear, and then slipping it up into the position for first gear. In

the time—perhaps a second or two—taken to perform this operation, the apparition apparently moved to the back of the vehicle, for Philip glanced around as he switched on the headlights preparatory to moving off, and saw the same white "face" close to the perspex rear window. As he drove away, he caught a glimpse of the rest of the "body" in the light from his rear lamps, and he has a distinct impression of a dark bell shape surmounted by the two white, or luminous, parts. He cannot recall seeing any "legs".

The "creature" appeared to be approximately level in height with the top of the *Vitesse* (4½ ft.).

The whole experience, from the stopping of the car to the hurried departure, was estimated to have occupied less than two minutes.

As soon as the vehicle moved away from the site of the encounter, the smell—which had been stronger inside the car than it was outside—disappeared.

A few hundred yards up the road, Philip asked Miss Carter if she was agreeable to turning round and going back with their twin headlights full on. She would not hear of it, and urged him to drive home as quickly as possible.

Reactions

Philip's parents were abed when he arrived home. He roused them and blurted out his story. Their reaction was one of surprise, which changed to mild amusement.

"Maybe it was a traffic warden," suggested Mr. Freeman, senior.

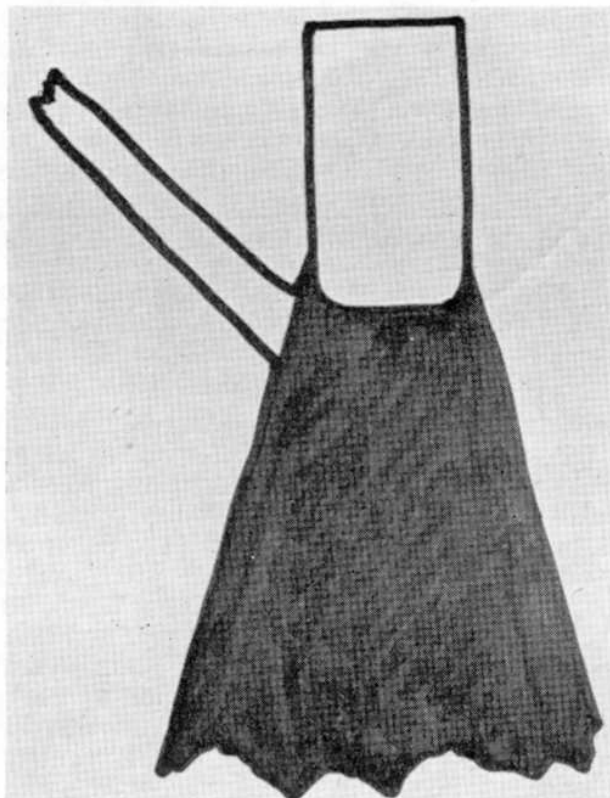
However, they quickly saw that their son was adamant, and in no mood for joking, and when I spoke to them they assured me that his agitation was such that he must have seen something real and very alarming. This does not surprise me, for I found both Philip Freeman and Angela Carter to be down-to-earth, matter-of-fact and likeable young people.

It seems furthermore that Philip's friends and employees also found the story to be a "bit of a giggle", but it quickly flitted through the bush telegraph to reach the ears of a reporter who works for the monthly *Woking Review*. Late one evening the route was retraced by Philip and the reporter, but nothing was seen. At the time of writing (November 27), I understand the story is due to appear in the December edition of *Woking Review*.

When I met the witnesses, Philip was understandably fed up with the reaction of other people to his factual account of something he had seen.

Comment

There have been a number of somewhat vague flying saucer reports from the Ewhurst-Hurtwood-Cranleigh district during the past three years or so. My daughter Pauline is endeavouring to trace a former fellow student at Guildford who mentioned seeing two luminous objects rise from a field at the edge of the forest area one evening in 1965. Again, elsewhere in this issue will be found Sqdn/Ldr. Shipwright's account of his sighting (from the Downs close to Newlands Corner) of an unusual object near the village of Albury. This is no great distance from the place where the Winterfold spectre was seen.



The apparition as sketched by Mr. Freeman

Nor should we forget that the Ewhurst-Hurtwood Common district has been the scene of many sightings of the mystery "Puma", reports of which so interested Waveney Girvan and myself during 1963 and 1964. Accounts of the "Puma" have often contained references to the strong ammoniacal smell present at a sighting.⁴ In fact my main reason for bringing this latest Winterfold account to the attention of REVIEW readers is the report of the strong smell. Philip Freeman mentioned "stink bombs": could the odour have been akin to the "bad egg" smell of hydrogen sulphide (H₂S)? Just such an odour was reported at the site of the Flatwoods landing and monster case of September 12, 1952, where marks on the ground were later found by investigators.

Again, our contributor Jerome Clark reminded us of the incident—mentioned by Donald Keyhoe—of the aircraft which, with a dead and mutilated crew, was miraculously brought back to base by the dying second pilot. The smell of hydrogen sulphide was found to be strong inside the cabin when the aircraft was examined after landing.⁵

An obnoxious smell was also mentioned by the claimant in the Ohio contact case reported by John A. Keel elsewhere in this issue.

When I discussed this new Winterfold case with Gordon Creighton, he reminded me that in mediaeval times, tales which told of manifestations of the devil often told also of the smell of brimstone. Had such a thing as the spectre—as seen by Philip Freeman and Angela Carter—been reported 600 years ago, I feel sure it would have been interpreted as a manifestation of the devil: certainly the Flatwoods monster would have fallen into the same category, and, as we know, a UFO was also reported on that occasion.

NOTES

- ¹ *The Saltwood Monster*, FLYING SAUCER REVIEW March/April 1964.
- ² For FSR record of this case see Lorenzen, Mrs. C., *UFO Occupants in United States Reports*, THE HUMANOIDS, special issue for October/November 1966 (reprinted July 1967).
- ³ Creighton, G., *The Extraordinary Happenings at Casa Blanca*, FSR September/October 1967.
- ⁴ Bowen, C., *Mystery Animals*, FSR November/December 1964.
- Clark, J., *Why UFOs are Hostile*, FSR November/December 1967.

PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEILLANCE

(continued from page 14)

practical reasons, however, we must be content with less than perfect coverage, and rely on statistics to assure that *occasionally* there will be a film record relevant to some particular report.

If we assume a square grid with cameras at the intersections of five-mile lines, this means that to cover the state of Illinois (for example), a grid of around 300 × 200 miles would have to be set up, requiring 60 × 40, or 2,400 cameras. If each camera could be purchased, equipped with a convex mirror for all-sky coverage, and installed at a cost of \$100 each, the network would cost \$240,000 just to install. If we assume that one person could load, collect the film, process the film and examine the film (on a full-time basis) from 25 cameras, then about 100 people would be required to man the network; at a cost of \$6,000 per year per person, this would come to \$600,000 per year for basic

personnel (plus a small additional sum for central administration). Film and processing equipment for the cameras, whether purchased and handled centrally or not, would not cost less than \$500 per year per camera, or another \$1,200,000 per year.

The yearly operating cost for this network, then, would seem to be of the order of 1.6 to 2 million dollars. I emphasise that this network covers an area 300 × 200 miles; this is 1% of the area of the United States. If cameras were placed to cover only the most likely 10% of the country, as ascertained by computer processing of available information, then the yearly operating cost would be something like \$20,000,000, with the initial acquisition and installation of equipment running to perhaps 10% of that figure. Considerably more careful system design should, of course, precede any actual proposals for such a network, but these numbers give a rough picture of what is involved.

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