

ROUND-UP OF BRITAIN'S AUTUMN FLAP

Part 1

by Dan Lloyd

From time to time we receive reports from individuals or from groups. These come at sporadic intervals, and it would seem that most other reports of investigations disappear into a limbo of filing cabinets. As we feel that there should be some form of permanent record of a "wave", and as our staff is so small that it can only investigate the more important cases, the bulk of Mr. Lloyd's cases have been culled from newspaper accounts of incidents. Such accounts are often vague where important detail is concerned, but if researchers wish to investigate in greater detail, then the names of the newspapers, and dates, will provide a lead.

SO MANY reports came flooding into the REVIEW concerning the "flap" in the Autumn of 1967 over Britain that we seriously considered getting a new filing cabinet. However, before the deluge came there was a trickle of reports worth putting on record.

October 2

The first item in front of me is from the *Wembley News* of November 3, and it concerns a sighting made on October 2, or thereabouts, by Mrs. Anne Edward. Just before 10.00 p.m., in company with a friend, she saw a globe-shaped object with four arms jutting out of the main part and a bright light which seemed like a spotlight. After about 30 seconds or so, the object began to move, very slowly at first. It circled round the nearby station, and then suddenly gathered speed and disappeared. The object was completely noiseless.

October 5: Herald of the wave ?

On October 7 a report appeared in the *Exeter Evening Echo* and other papers to the effect that a large, stationary silver disc had been seen in the skies above Okehampton in Devon. It was first spotted between 9.00 and 9.30 a.m. on Thursday, October 5. One witness had stopped to watch two aircraft and, as he was looking towards Dartmoor, he saw the disc "flashing like an aeroplane's wing when caught by the sun—but it was not a plane." The object was later obscured by cloud, but in a clear sky next day, it was still in position.

In the *Western Evening Herald* of October 10, and morning papers of the 11th, we learned that the mystery persisted, that many witnesses had seen the thing which some now described as pencil-shaped. Estimates of its altitude ranged from 12 to 15 miles. It was revealed that a photographer from R.A.F. Chivenor was standing by to take photographs of the object from the ground. The saga had been taken up by many national newspapers by October 16.

By October 17, it was revealed that the weather had been too bad for photographs of the object to be taken. It was also reported that pilots of aircraft in the vicinity had been asked to watch out for the object. The Ministry of Defence announced that their only interest was in the defence aspect.

On October 20 the *Western Morning News* of Plymouth announced that experts were fairly certain that the object was the planet Venus. One wonders if this particular heavenly body could be seen to the South from Okehampton (i.e., looking towards Dartmoor) at, say, 9.15 a.m. on October 5, 1967. Whether or not it could, a handy explanation for UAOs was ready for use when the main flap broke a few days later—at Okehampton!

October 7

On October 7, a Stevenage boy rang the police to say that he and his father had seen an unidentified flying object. A sceptical policeman listened to their story. For some two minutes, father and son had watched a bright light in the sky. The light appeared to go out and they could see a stationary, sausage-shaped object. There were lights flashing on and off and the object moved at great speed to join a second, similar object, and the pair of them then made off at speed. Comment by the father: "I must admit that I don't believe in flying saucers, but this craft could not have been man made—it moved far too quickly." (*Stevenage Gazette*, October 12.)

October 13

We return to the London area for a report of a sighting on October 13 at 6 o'clock in the morning. A West London housewife spotted the object from her *Shepherds Bush* home. The object was shaped like a rugby football. She watched it for a full five minutes. It was completely still and glowed silver. Then it turned to red, then silver, then red. The object moved to the right for about three minutes,

then returned to its original position. The object did not make any noise until it began to move. Then it sounded "like hundreds of bees humming together." The interesting thing is that on the Sunday following this sighting the housewife read that 50 people in Okehampton, Devon, had seen a similar-shaped object of the same colour on the same day. (*West London Observer*, October 19.)

October 14

London was still apparently under observation, for, on the day after the sighting at Shepherds Bush, a man in *Barking* spotted a strange light in the dawn sky as he left his home to go to work. Over to the west he noticed something extremely bright—like a star but brighter. Then the star began to move eastwards. It travelled across the sky for about a minute—then stopped. The object went dull, elongated itself and then turned bright again. It looked as though it had turned round and as though the observer was looking at it from the other side. It hung there for a few minutes and then moved off the way it had come. Finally, it went dull again and shot straight up and out of sight. At the time of the sighting the sky was extremely clear and it is likely that it would have been observed by anyone else who was abroad in the area at that time. (*Barking and Dagenham Advertiser*, October 21.)

The first of the "flying crosses" ?

And now we come to one of the first sightings of the mysterious cross-like objects which swept the country. On Saturday, October 14, a *Northampton* woman was standing at her back door at about half-past nine when she saw what at first she took to be a star. It appeared to be coming towards the ground and then she realised it was not a star but something else. According to the observer, it was gold in colour and was just like a church cross. She said that she had never seen any thing quite so beautiful in her life. The object seemed to float around until it

faded away. A mystical note creeps in here, for she said that she could see a shadow around the cross, like the shadow of a human being. (*Northampton Chronicle*, October 25.)

October 19

The more conventional cigar-shaped object made its appearance over Yorkshire on the night of October 19. It was seen by a local Siddel youth hovering above trees at **Sowerby**. At first the object was stationary over the trees, then it began to move horizontally very slowly, then climbed vertically and suddenly disappeared. The object grew brighter as it moved away. Throughout the sighting, no noise was made by the strange craft. (*Halifax Courier*, October 23.)

October 21

Two days later, on October 21, residents in a block of flats at Tyne Dock, **South Shields**, spent the weekend puzzling over a mysterious formation of flying saucers seen hovering over their homes. The police were telephoned and a policeman joined the family and watched three glowing objects manoeuvring in the sky. Here was no sceptical constable, for he was dumbfounded by what he saw.

The objects, which flew in formation, hovered and then finally disappeared towards Newcastle, were triangular in shape and glowed so brightly that they dazzled the eyes. In all, the objects were watched performing their aerial acrobatics for some 30 minutes.

Apparently, even the evidence of their constable was not taken seriously, for a police spokesman said: "We are not making any inquiries." It appears that it is not permissible to make a report about something that does not officially exist! (*The Newcastle Journal*, October 23.)

An "ice-cream cone" shape

Barking, London, was back in the news in the early hours of Saturday morning, October 21. The time was about 4.30 a.m., when the witness looked out of her window and saw a shape "like a light bulb" in the sky. She told her mother, who saw it too. "It was shaped like a dome at the top and came down to a point at the bottom," she said. "It was hovering in the sky—I can't say how far away—but it looked as though it was just over Ilford. After a while it was joined by another and the two just hung there together."

This sighting was some two hours before another witness saw a UFO in the same direction. The object he saw was like a star which changed shape.

Within ten minutes of that sighting, another Barking resident saw a bright

light in the sky. It resembled a thin pencil of light. Then it returned to its original shape (the original shape is not given) and moved off towards the west, where it disappeared from sight. In all these sightings, the objects seen were soundless. (*Barking and Dagenham Advertiser*, October 28.)

October 22

At about 6.20 p.m., five orange-coloured rings in close "V" formation were seen for about 30 seconds over **Taunton**, Somerset. The sky was dark and clear, and the speed of the soundless objects was described as terrific. (Credit: Mr. J. V. Webber, Taunton.)

October 24: the pace quickens

On October 24 things really began to get under way. In the November/December issue of the REVIEW, Charles Bowen surveyed the commencement of the flap. It began with the celebrated **Okehampton** incident when Police Constables Willey and Waycott chased a bright, star-shaped object along the lanes of Devon in their patrol car. A full report on this incident was given in the same issue by Bernard Wignall.

This strange cross-shaped object was also seen at Sidmouth. The witness described it as being shaped like a crucifix with flashes of light coming from it. She watched it for about 15 minutes and during this time the light slowly went out and appeared again—about ten times altogether. Although the brilliance fluctuated, the cross did not move. (*Pulman's Weekly News*, Yeovil, October 31.)

At about the same time as the police Z-car crew chased the flying cross in Devon, two mysterious objects were seen in the early-morning sky by the wife of the rector of **Sheepy Magna**, Leicestershire. The witness woke up at about 6.00 a.m. and saw a very bright light shining through the curtain. She looked out and saw what looked like a big orange just over the nearby church tower. Another object was a little higher. Apparently her curiosity was not too pronounced, for she went back to bed! (*Leicester Mercury*, October 25.)

Whitstable, Kent, was also visited on the evening of Tuesday, October 24. At around 11.00 p.m., five bright lights, in the position seen on a dice, were seen in a close formation with the centre light brighter than the outer lights. The sky was clear and starless, except for the object. (*Whitstable Times*, October 27.)

A UFO was also sighted over **Aldridge**, Staffordshire, on the night of October 24. The time was about 5.45 p.m. and the object was seen in a break in the clouds. It was high in the sky and was illuminated by a sort of

yellow light. It circled for five minutes and then disappeared. No sound came from the object. (*The Walsall Observer*, October 27.)

Lancashire lampshade

Earlier in the morning of October 24, a strange object like an upturned lampshade with a fierce glow was seen over **Huyton**, Lancashire. It was seen at 2.30 a.m.—only a short time before the flying cross was chased by police officers in Devon. A Huyton housewife and her children were wakened by a penetrating whining noise. When they first awoke, the glow from the object lit up the whole room. Looking out, they saw a glow above the rooftops in the distance. By this time the noise had stopped and the glow was stationary. They watched it for a second or two before it vanished. After seeing the object, the housewife and her children were unable to sleep a wink—in contrast to the rector's wife mentioned above who could hardly wait to resume her beauty sleep. (*Prescot & Huyton Reporter*, October 27.)

October 25

Strange things continued to be seen in the skies up and down the country. This was the morning, for example, when police officers on patrol in several parts of **Sussex** reported a UFO (see *Britain's busiest UFO days* in the November/December 1967 issue of FSR), reports that were instantly rejected by the Chief Constable who decided his men had misinterpreted Venus.

In **Aberdeen**, four flickering lights high in the sky were watched for four minutes. There was one light in front and three others behind in a sort of semi-circle, said one observer. The one in front kept its course, but the others moved round it. The lights were yellowish-white and were absolutely soundless. (*Aberdeen Press & Journal*, October 26.)

In **Belfast**, Northern Ireland, three people saw mystery flying objects with lights flashing overhead at 500ft. They first noticed a very bright golden light in the sky at about 8.20 p.m. Then the light changed to two lights—one pale green and the other pale orange. This gave the impression of two rear lights, and the object looked triangular shaped. It appeared to be travelling at about 1,000 m.p.h. Before it disappeared, they saw a second set of lights at about 300ft. coming on a flight path from north to south directly crossing underneath the first object. (*Belfast Telegraph*, October 26.)

A brilliant white object made its appearance in the **York** area. No shape could be discerned because of its extreme brightness. After a few minutes it faded away. (*Yorkshire*

Evening Post, October 26.)

On the same evening, in the **Spalding** area, a strange glow was noticed in the sky moving in a crazy way—shooting backwards and forwards. It stayed for about four minutes and then disappeared, or faded away—“rather like the dot when you switch the television off.” The observer found it difficult to describe, but said that it was a rounded shape without being a complete circle and, when it turned round, it was long and slightly rounded in the middle. (*Peterborough Evening Telegraph*, October 28.)

A fiery cross made another brief appearance over **Okehampton** at about 5.00 p.m. It was seen by the occupants of a police patrol car, one of whom was a photographer, but they had such a brief glimpse of the object that there was no time to take a picture. (*Hereford Evening News*, October 26.)

October 26: In full swing

This was a field day for sightings and the number of clippings I have before me is so large that I shall only give the essential details of the relevant sightings.

Perhaps the most intriguing sighting was that made by Angus Brooks, a former Flight Adminstrating Officer of B.O.A.C.'s Comet Flight. Mr. Brooks' own report on the cross-shaped object that hovered near him at **Moinge Downs**, Dorset, and R. H. B. Winder's comments on the case were included in the January/February issue of the REVIEW.

Just before midnight, a pear-shaped object, white-green in colour and soundless, rocketed past a car which was travelling between Edgmond and Crudginton, near **Wellington**. The occupants of the car got out to watch it for about 15 seconds until it suddenly disappeared into the night sky. (*Shropshire Star*, October 28.)

Near Colchester United football ground, **Colchester**, an illuminated saucer-shaped object was seen to chase an aeroplane. The saucer had star-shaped beams of light coming from it, the beams receding and then streaming out at intervals. When it reached the plane, it stopped, then moved off at a great rate and disappeared. (*Bournemouth Evening Echo*, October 27.)

While making deliveries in the Hog's Back area near **Godalming**, Surrey, a paper boy saw a UFO descend behind a group of nearby trees. He described it as a dim, green glowing circular object. Shortly afterwards a brilliant white orb became visible. He described the second object as about the size of the sun. This second object hovered and appeared to circle as though looking for some-

thing on the ground. There was absolutely no noise.

In the evening other strange lights were seen in the Hog's Back area. The lights were described as looking like a sort of squashed triangle. They appeared to be moving very slowly and were watched for 10 to 15 seconds. The intensity of the objects was described as “a hundred times brighter than the brightest star and a sort of orange colour.” (*Surrey Advertiser*, October 28.)

At 8.30 p.m. two lights were seen travelling at great speed over **Letchworth**, North Hertfordshire. They were slightly apart and maintaining an even distance between them. A third object was ejected from one of the UFOs and it travelled in the opposite direction. Flames like a jet or rocket were coming from the rear of the object. (*Hertfordshire Express*, Hitchin, November 2.)

Second sighting by Okehampton policeman

Police Constable Willey, a member of the police patrol car crew which chased the famous flying cross at **Okehampton** two days earlier, witnessed the same or a similar object at about 2.05 a.m. The object was seen to be in the same area as it had been on the occasion of the first sighting. The object dipped down as if planning a landing and finally disappeared in the same place as it had been seen to vanish before. This time the actual sighting lasted only a matter of seconds. (*Exeter Express*, October 26.)

Liverpool police sent out special search parties after objects were reported to have been seen falling from the sky. The investigation, which failed to unearth any clue as to the source of the mystery, began shortly after 11.30 p.m. when a motorist, Mr. Peter Murphy, told police that while driving along Croxeth Hall Lane he had seen a black, shining object flash across his windscreen at 11.25 p.m. The object had disappeared into a nearby field. The field was searched without result.

While the search was being made, an object was seen in the sky nearby. It was described as being the size of a very large plate, shaped like a star with a very bright, bluish-white light. It was estimated that the object hovered at an altitude of about 400ft. It then fell and vanished. A search was made of the area, but nothing was found. A short time later, what appeared to be the same object was seen over the East Lancashire road. It travelled very fast away from the observers, then vanished. (*Liverpool Echo*, October 27.)

Another flying cross was seen over **Ipswich** in the early hours. At 4.30 a.m.,

Mrs. Margaret Ward woke and saw a bright, star-like object in the sky. It was very low and she could see, between the points of light, things which looked like antennae. The object kept bobbing up and down and it gradually moved out of sight. (*Ipswich Evening Star*, October 27.)

Guernsey, in the Channel Islands, was visited by two bright, triangle-shaped objects at 4.00 a.m. (*Jersey Evening Post*, October 26.)

A large, saucer-shaped object was seen at around 7.00 p.m. near **Goldthorpe**, South Yorkshire. It was lit up at the sides and was the colour of an orange. (*South Yorkshire Times*, October 28.)

Another cross-shaped object was seen in the **Cirencester** area at 10.30 p.m. (*Wiltshire & Gloucestershire Standard*, November 3.)

At dawn, a housewife in **Enfield**, Middlesex, saw a bright light which appeared in the west and gradually grew bigger. Then it began to diminish in size and changed into a small black object with two lights and two projections. After a while it veered across to the south and disappeared. (*London Evening News*, October 26.)

The reports for the rest of October 26, and for the remaining days of the “flap” will be continued in the next edition of the REVIEW.

(continued from page 25)

that the first symbol, like an S, is similar to the first symbol of the A.V.B. symbols, the next A.V.B. symbol, like a 7, is similar to the 4th on the Adamski Plate. I do not find the A.V.B. L with elongated horizontal limb, but the last of the A.V.B. symbols, like an incomplete 9, is precisely like the 7th symbol top line on the Adamski Plate, and this is repeated just above the large dot in the left end of the Flying Saucer Sketch.

If I may here be permitted a little stretching of the imagination, it would be to wonder what sort of message one would expect to find over a door: I suggest a warning of danger such as one sees over the doors in power houses, and Adamski's Venusian friend's message may well have started with a word of warning recalling that Adamski had previously suffered some hurt to his arm by approaching too close to the Flying Saucer.

No doubt the Adamski Plate had been turned in all directions by those interested in trying to decipher it—perhaps the similarities in the symbols above-mentioned may help to provide a clue to which is the correct way up, assuming of course there may still be doubt on the point.

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