

# NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE FLAP WITH HUMANOID REPORT

*Jenny Randles*

DURING the month of December 1976 the Midlands, and North Staffordshire in particular, were the source of a series of reports which can only be the product of a flap of fairly major proportions. It is most interesting to note that these reports, which contain examples of possible landings and entity cases, come at a time when Britain has been experiencing something which has all the early indications of being a new wave of important cases. There have been several close encounters, such as the Bowles/Pratt incidents from Winchester (see *Flying Saucer Review* Vol.22, No.5) and a similar event from County Durham (see *FSR* Vol.22, No.6). Such a build up in sightings was anticipated by some researchers, bearing in mind the important events of 1967, and there appears to be every possibility that 1977 will be a significant year for the manifestation of the phenomenon in Britain.

## Wetley Rocks, Stoke-on-Trent

The events appear to have begun on December 9th when two young women were driving through Wetley Rocks, near Stoke, at 7.45 p.m. The night was frosty and clear. Ahead of them they saw a series of lights which appeared to be hovering low down over fields by the roadside. At first it was assumed that they were lights on a helicopter, but as the place was approached it became clear that this object was, in fact, much too large. The lights were in a tiered formation and measured the apparent size of a tennis ball at arms length horizontally, and a golf ball at arms length vertically. They were flashing orange, white and blue, but were completely stationary.

The women slowed down and drove close by the field. The car window was wound down but no sound was heard. It was apparent to them now that this was something peculiar because they knew the road well and there are overhead electricity cables crossing the field. Whatever was present was hovering over these. Suddenly the lights just went out, and there was no further trace of the object.

There are an enormous number of similarities between this observation, and some more interesting ones which occurred on the nights of December 13th and 14th, and it is worth bearing in mind that there was no publicity for the fact that a large number of sightings were occurring in the area until December 16th. The eyewitnesses involved in these events were all unknown to one another.

## North Staffs Dunkirk

On the evening of December 13th the area was blanketed in fog. A woman art teacher in the tiny

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EDITOR

village of Dunkirk, on the edge of the Cheshire plains, had just come out of her neighbour's house at 5.20 p.m. when in the sky to the NNW, at an elevation of about 45° she saw a bright object glowing fiercely against a dark sky, and surrounded by swirling mist. It was orange-coloured, shaped like an oval with a flat bottom, and had two tiers of bright lights inside it. In size it was larger than an apple held at arm's length. It appeared to be hovering over an electricity pylon.

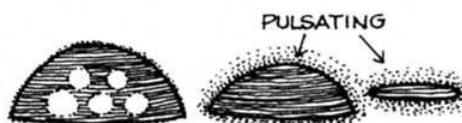
After two to three minutes it appeared to recede, pulsating and fading until only a glow was left. This then crystallised into an elliptical bar of orange light until this too faded and disappeared within seconds.

The woman went indoors after the incident and immediately drew some marvellous colour pictures of the object in its various stages. Fortunately investigators were able to get to her within two hours of the incident and take down her story, so that the details would appear to be very accurate.

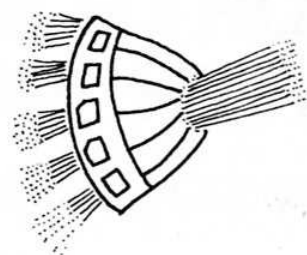
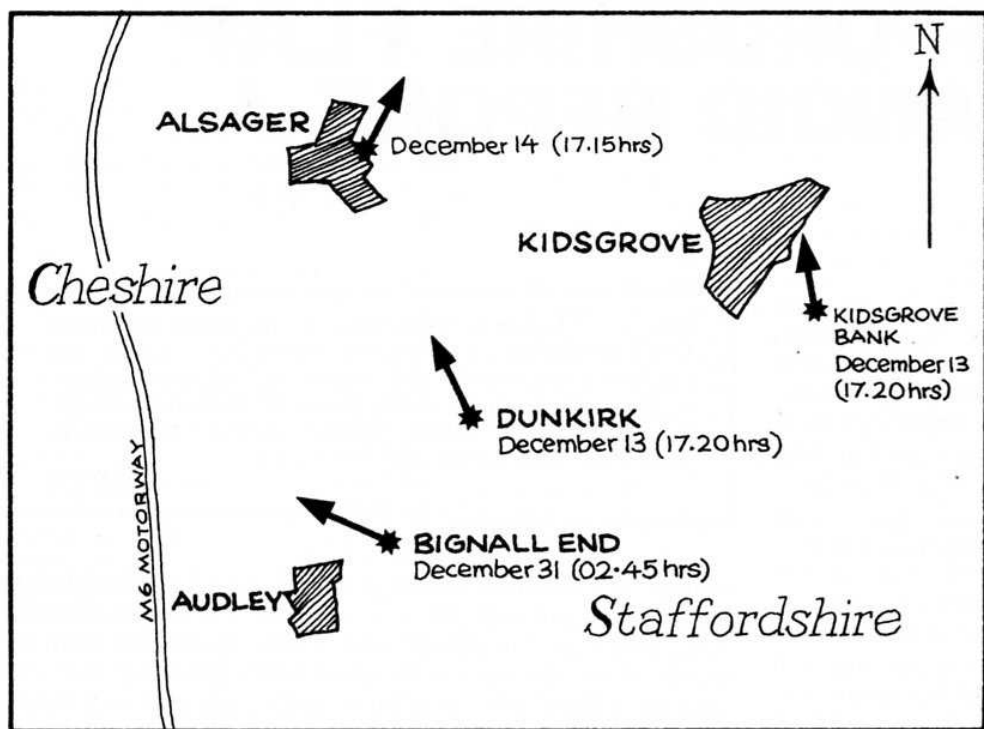
After the object had gone the woman's neighbour came riding up on his bicycle. He asked "What was



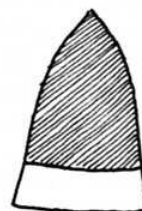
Wetley Rocks, Staffs. December 9, 1976,  
7.45 p.m.



Dunkirk, Staffs. December 13, 1976. 5.20 p.m.  
Stages of departure, as drawn by the eyewitness



Kidsgrove Bank, Staffs. 5.20 p.m.  
December 13, 1976. Mrs. Dean's  
sighting.



Cheadle, Staffs. Darryl Smith  
sighting. December 28, 1976,  
7.30 p.m.

it?" and proceeded to explain that he had just seen a huge orange object hovering in the sky. His description agreed very well.

#### Kidsgrove Bank

At almost exactly the same time, but a mile or so to the east at Kidsgrove Bank, a Mrs. Dean was also witness to something strange looming out of the fog. This object was in the North-North-East and again appeared to come very close to the witness. She described it as appearing something like an oyster shell, with a ribbed structure. The shell was grey, but a white beam was projecting from the top into the sky, and at the base were several rectangular window-like structures from which appeared to come fluorescent white light, described as similar to light shining from a kitchen with this type of lighting.

The visibility was between 100 and 300 feet, but the object stood out clearly. It moved from behind an electricity sub-station and then just hovered for about two minutes. Mrs. Dean became very frightened and started to walk quickly down the road. As she did so she stumbled over something in the road. When she picked herself up and looked back the object had disappeared.

In neither instance was any sound reported.

#### Coincidences?

It is not known whether there is in fact any connection between these two events, or indeed the one from December 9th — but it is of significance perhaps to note the coincidence in description and the fact that all three incidents were connected in some way with an electricity pylon or sub-station. Indeed the series of coincidences stretch much further because on December 12 and 13, 1975 at 5.10 p.m. there were several observations of an object which appears to be remarkably similar to the

one observed almost a year *to the minute* later. These events chiefly occurred at Swinton in Greater Manchester (some forty miles to the north), and there was again a large number of independent witnesses. There was, however, one incident on those dates which agreed in description and time and came from Congleton, which is within the narrow area of the 1976 events.

#### Flap laps over into Cheshire

However, we are not finished with the coincidences just yet. On December 14, 1976, *again* at 5.15 p.m., a Mrs. Bebbington was driving through the town of Alsager, a few miles north of Dunkirk and just into the county of Cheshire. To the north east she saw a golden brown semicircular object hovering over some rooftops. It had a tiered series of lights inside it. The fog of the previous day had disappeared, but surrounding the base of the object was a greyish swirling vapour.

Very surprised by her observation Mrs. Bebbington swerved the car almost onto the pavement. She drove on past the object leaving it still hovering. She is a teacher, very similar in physical appearance to the lady from Dunkirk.

This seems to have marked the end of the initial phase of the flap. A good deal of radio and television publicity developed now as the local investigators began to realise what was happening and sought witnesses. Some of the subsequent reports, therefore, may have been generated by this publicity, and some were quite certainly identifiable as aircraft, etc. However, two incidents do stand out from the remainder, and deserve consideration.

#### Landing near Cheadle?

On December 28, 1976, 26-year-old Darryl Smith was driving his van towards his brother-in-law's house

at Cheadle. It was 7.30 p.m. on a cold, clear night. In the northern sky, he noticed a peculiar red light hovering over some woods. After driving on a little, wondering what it was, he stopped his van and wound down the window. He watched the object for several minutes as it moved north westwards. The object now split into two parts and these then re-joined. He now continued driving with the van window still wound down, keeping the UFO in sight. Altogether he was observing it for about eight minutes.

Upon arrival at the house he searched for some binoculars but could find none. He drove away again, about ten minutes after last viewing the object, and searched for it again. In the area of Shawe Park he saw it at much closer quarters, apparently descending into a field.

As a result of this closer view Mr. Smith was able to give a very precise description of the UFO. It was shaped something like a bullet standing on its end. At the top it was coloured deep red, and the bottom section, about one quarter the height, was white. The top was pointed. It came within about 100 yards of him, and seemed to be about six feet tall and four feet along the base.

The object appeared to have landed in the field, although Mr. Smith did not actually see it land. He tried two different vantage points in the area but its topography — sloping ground and tall hedges — made it impossible to see into the field. He immediately reported the incident to the police.

The police were in fact of great help to UFORA Staffordshire in their investigation of this case. They took the witness along to the scene in a car and promised the ufologists that if they found anything of note they would cordon off the area and call them in right away. Unfortunately there were no traces at the scene, but this kind of co-operation is to be commended.

#### Occupants seen at Bignall End

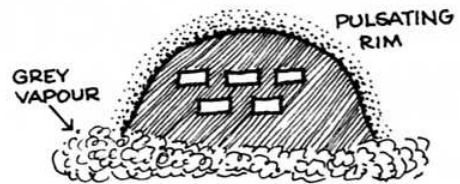
The final event saw the flap, and the year, out with a bang — quite literally!

On December 31, 1976, Mrs. Nellie Richardson, a 65-year-old lady, from Bignall End — a village which once more overlooks the Cheshire plains to the north west with about twelve miles of gentle, undulating land towards the town of Crewe, was awoken from her sleep by a loud bang. This sound was also confirmed by her neighbour, although she sleeps in a southwards-facing bedroom and did not see anything.

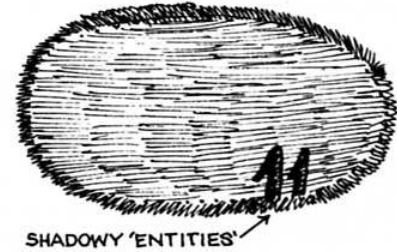
Mrs. Richardson got out of bed to see what was happening because a brilliant yellow glow was flooding into her bedroom. As she reached the window she saw that it came from a large oval object outside, hovering over the countryside.

Investigators were later to ascertain that it was on a bearing of 290° and at a low elevation of 10°. The interview was conducted some twelve hours after the sighting and it appears that there is likely to be a reasonable amount of accuracy about these figures. In size it was equivalent to a nine inch diameter dinner plate held at a distance of ten feet.

Mrs. Richardson wanted to know the time but her



Alsager, Cheshire. December 14, 1976. 5.15 p.m.



Bignall End, Staffs. December 31, 1976. 2.45 a.m.

alarm clock had stopped, so she went downstairs and confirmed that it was 02.45 a.m. She set her clock right and went back upstairs. The object had now moved slightly and was on a bearing of 320°, appearing much larger than the full moon, and filling one quarter of the window. It now seemed to be moving towards her and darkened to an orange colour.

She watched the object for well over an hour before it appeared to move away. At this point she says that two shadowy figures appeared to be silhouetted against the side of the object. They were like toy soldiers and were quite definitely moving about in front of it. They disappeared from view and the object continued to move away.

At about 4.15 a.m. her 31-year-old son John, who is an engineer, returned from a restaurant. He saw his mother very distressed, and was able to watch the object move away into the distance, glowing like a gas fire. He explained to her that he had seen it as he had driven home, looking like a glowing orange ball, and moving very slowly to the north west towards Crewe. He had been watching it for fifteen minutes.

There is one interesting footnote to this incident. The family cat was found on the downstairs window ledge staring out towards the object. The Richardsons attest that he is *never* disturbed during the night by anything.

No explanation for this report was found. Often in long-duration sightings of this type one suspects an astronomical solution, but there was nothing which could be of relevance here. The moon was not full and had in fact set *before* the incident began. On a TV programme about the sighting Dr. Ron Maddison of Keele University discussed possible explanations with Derek James, one of the investigators, and could offer none. Manchester Airport had no radar trackings, and there were no aircraft movements in the area. Cheshire police could also offer no solution.

Investigation of all these reports fell to the hands of the UFORA Staffordshire group, who did a fine job in evaluating and correlating them. Particular thanks are due to investigators Derek James, Chris Bourne and Tony Pace.



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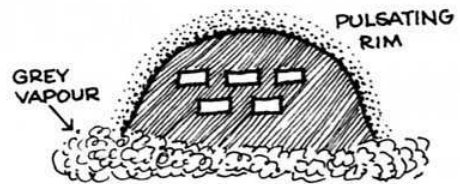
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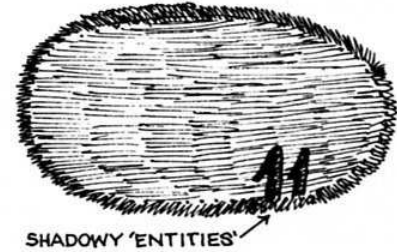
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# HUMANOID ACTIVITY IN EPPING FOREST

First report of a 10-year-old-case

*D.J. Goring*

Our contributor, journal editor of the Essex UFO Study Group, is also a member of the UFO Investigators Network (UFOIN)

THE occurrence took place some years ago, in 1967, but because of its bizarre nature the witnesses, who were then in their twenties, have requested anonymity.\* I was first put in touch with them by Malcolm Jay early in 1976, and my interview with them was in February of that year.† I shall call them Mr. and Mrs. B. (then Miss S.).

At approximately 11.30 p.m. on a weekend day in August, 1967 (exact date not recalled), the witnesses (who were courting at the time) decided to stop the car in which they were travelling to have a chat and smoke cigarettes.

Mr. B. pulled off the minor road they were on and parked in a small area which faced a bridle path. Their location was some 12 feet (3.7 m.) from the edge of Bury Road, a minor road running north to south across Chingford Plain, Chingford, North London. The bridle path cuts its way through the lower reaches of Epping Forest. All the car's lights were switched off and the area was therefore pitch black. There was no background noise at all and the weather was dry.

They had been there only two or three minutes when they noticed a red light at the end of the bridle path. At first they thought it was the reflection of a cigarette in the windscreen (they were sitting in the front of the car all the time facing the end of the path). Upon moving their cigarettes around they soon saw that it wasn't anything to do with them — Mr. B. got out of the car at one stage to ascertain whether the windscreen was possibly distorting a reflection of the cigarettes. They realised then that there were two or three red lights at the end of the path (not literally the end, but about 150 yards (137 m.) away from them, where the path curves to the left). The lights appeared to be moving in and out from behind the trees.

Following this, something they could only describe as being like a firework went off, illuminating the trees around with a red-orange glow. Small red lights shot out of this "firework" to a height of some three feet (91 cm.) above the ground. On hitting the ground, these small red lights then bounced around for perhaps a quarter of a minute.

\* The names of the witnesses are on file at FSR.

† [In December, 1975, Mr. B.'s brother, who is a friend of Malcolm Jay because of their metal-detecting interest, happened to mention to Malcolm that his brother had had an unusual sighting some years ago.]

Lit up by the red glare of the "firework" was a peculiar little man; Mr. B.'s estimate for his height was 18 inches (46 cm.).

The little man seemed to be just standing there, to the right of the "firework" and watching it. The best description Mr. B. could give was that of an extremely small figure with a little round head, two arms and dressed in a white mackintosh that came right down to the ground. No other details were visible (see sketch).

A short while after the first "firework" had died down, another, identical "firework" flared up a little distance to the left of the first, and another, identical dwarf was seen.

Up to now some seven minutes had elapsed since it all began. The "fireworks" had lasted some 30 seconds each and appeared most peculiar. They couldn't be sure if there were two dwarfs or just one who changed position. Weird though it all looked, they came to the conclusion that some *very* small children were letting off fireworks. Mr. B. then operated the headlamp flasher control of his car to see if he could illuminate them. The headlamps, however, were to no avail because the position of their car was such that the front dipped down lower than the rear due to a slight fall of the ground at the spot they had parked. This allowed the beams of light to go only about half way to their destined spot.

Suddenly, after three or four operations of this headlamp control, things took a new turn. A glowing bright white object caught their attention at the end of the bridle path. This object bobbed about and also moved from first the left side of the path to the right, and then back again but advancing towards the car at a brisk walking pace.

The object was some six to seven feet (1.83-2.13 m.) above the ground and it set the witnesses thinking that this was a man holding a lantern on a pole, approaching them with the intention of inquiring why they were there, etc. Mr. B. had the idea of letting the man (whom they couldn't see) come within 20 feet or so of the car and then to operate the flasher control and "catch him out"! They were in for a shock, however. On its final approach the light zeroed in on the car, a little to the nearside of the centre. The light, they both think, was larger in diameter than a car's headlight, very bright and white but not blinding as they could look directly at it. There was no definite edge to it, nor was there any detail to be seen.