

TELE-MYSTERY

August C. Roberts

ON Sunday, December 15, 1974, NCB Television presented a special programme entitled "UFOs — Do You Believe?" Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine that what happened to the photographs I took of this television special documentary would happen in my camera.

To recap for a few moments for those people who did not see the programme, or were unaware that it was being shown, this documentary examined various accounts of eyewitnesses and photographic evidence, searching for the possibility that we here on planet Earth may be receiving visits from beings from somewhere out in space. Among the eyewitness accounts was that of Astronaut James McDivitt, who claimed to have seen a UFO while in a space capsule on a mission in space, and the dramatic stories of two men from Mississippi, who claimed they were taken aboard a so-called "unidentified flying object" and were both examined by occupants of the spacecraft. Also on the programme were such prominent researchers as Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Northwestern University; Stan Friedman, scientist; Coral Lorenzen, APRO; Walt Andrus, Mutual UFO Network; and John Acuff, NICAP. The one-hour programme was as serious as serious could be in trying to get across to the general public the pros and cons of the subject of Unidentified Flying Objects.

When I first heard that this special presentation was scheduled, I cancelled everything else that evening and planned to stay at home to record this event both on tape and on film. I also received advance notice that my own photograph of the July 28, 1952, Skywatch Tower case, was to be shown.

I spent the day of December 15 checking all my photographic equipment to make certain that it was in perfect working order. It all checked out, and a half hour before air time, I fastened by Nikon-F camera on a solid professional tripod. I checked and rechecked the exposure time that I would be using for the coloured slide film, and as soon as the programme went on the air, I started to release the shutter of my camera. As the events unfolded, weaving their storyline to, I believe, millions of viewers, I took exposure after exposure, until I had taken a total of twenty-six frames, leaving a balance of ten frames on a thirty-six-frame roll of coloured slide film.

While watching the programme, I did see my own 1952 Skywatch Tower case photo, but I was so busy with my camera that I did not think fast enough to take a picture of it. Right after the show was off the air, I received phone calls from friends, asking me if I had seen my own photo and if I had been able to obtain a picture of it. I explained that while I had seen the photo, I was unable to photograph it because I was too busy *seeing* it.

As is my custom, I did not rush out and develop the film but waited until I shot the whole roll, and

then had it developed. Since on December 29, 1974, my two grand nephews were going to be christened, I planned to use the rest of the coloured film then. On the 29th we were all in church, I had my pocket tape recorder and my camera working, and everything went as smooth as silk. After the christening all the relatives went to my niece Judy's home for dinner, and there I exposed the rest of the film; I then prepared it for mailing to Rochester, New York; to be developed, took it personally to the post office, obtained stamps for it, and dropped it in the mail slot.

Slightly less than two weeks later, the postman delivered the small package of coloured slides to my mailbox. After putting the first slide into the viewer and seeing it was backward, I took it out and reversed it. Again I thought that I had put it in wrong; but no matter how I tried, there was no way I could turn the slide so that it appeared correct in the viewer. As I looked at each slide, the same thing happened. The slides with captions on them, like the names of persons in the pictures, etc., all appeared "mirror imaged."

As the impact of what appeared to have happened struck me, I was dumbfounded. My mind then started to race at full speed, searching for every tiny bit of information that my training as a professional news photographer could provide. Every time I thought I might have part of the puzzle solved, a correcting thought would come forward and cancel the thought. From that moment until this, I can only emphasize that there is no normal way that I, or anyone else can take pictures of a television programme and have those photographs come out in what I call double reverse. As you study the photographs printed with this text, you will see what appears to be photographs printed incorrectly. The way you are viewing them is just the way they appear on my coloured slides. All I did was to make black and white negatives, so that I would be able to make fairly





Copy of coloured slide of N.B.C. television special, 15.12.1974, "UFOs, Do You Believe?"

normal black and white prints for this magazine. Please also understand that in making copies in the manner I did, some detail is lost in the finished product. Not having the type of copy-slide equipment used in a large photo lab, I had to use the equipment I had available. The slides, of course, show everything in finer detail, plus the fact that they are in colour.

As you try to figure out some sort of an answer to this mystery, keep in mind that almost every television set has dials on the left side (that is, on the right side as the viewer faces the set). What appears to have happened is that something cut the television set where the dials are, then reversed both pieces, and joined them together again. This is the only way one can explain what happened to these photographs. But anyone knows that this seems impossible. I know that I did not "cut" the coloured slide film and reverse it. But who, what, when, where, and how did it happen?

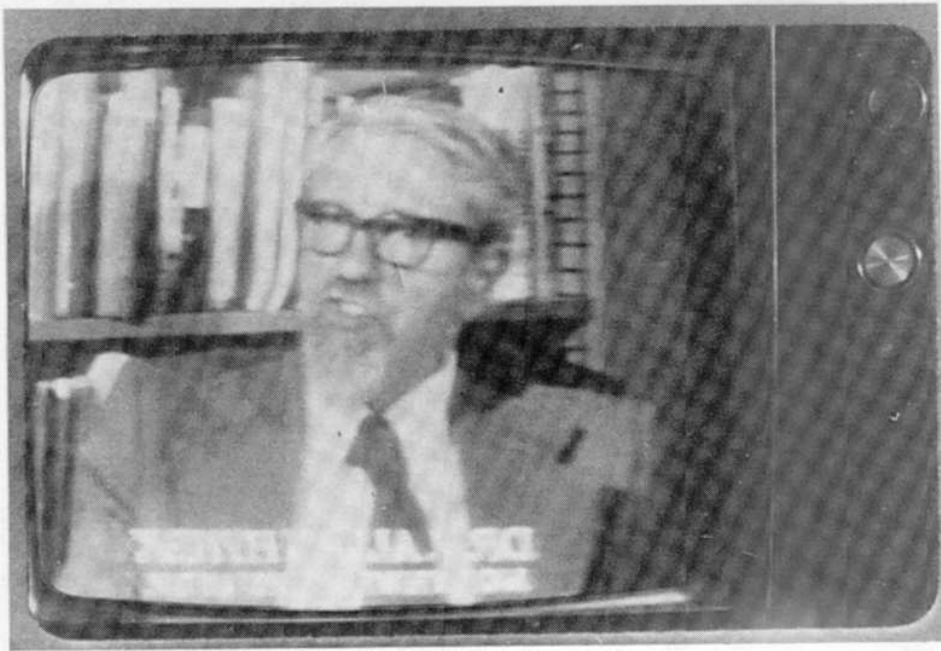
The photograph of President Gerald Ford was taken at a later date, after I discovered the double reverse. I put in another roll of coloured film in my Nikon-F camera and used a complete roll of film on a number of television programmes, searching for the type that had writing on the screen in my attempt to try to obtain the same effect as on

the first roll of film. This time, however, I placed the camera further back, so as to include the complete *Motorola* "Quick Set" television set, which I had purchased during the summer of 1974.

Now when you look at the other pictures with the effect on them, you will notice, as I have, that there is a line running down the side of the set where the dials are. Where this line comes from, or how it got there, is still a mystery to me. It appears



The Church where Kevin and Brian Gamarello were christened



Allen Hynek
in retreat

The President:
true reproduction



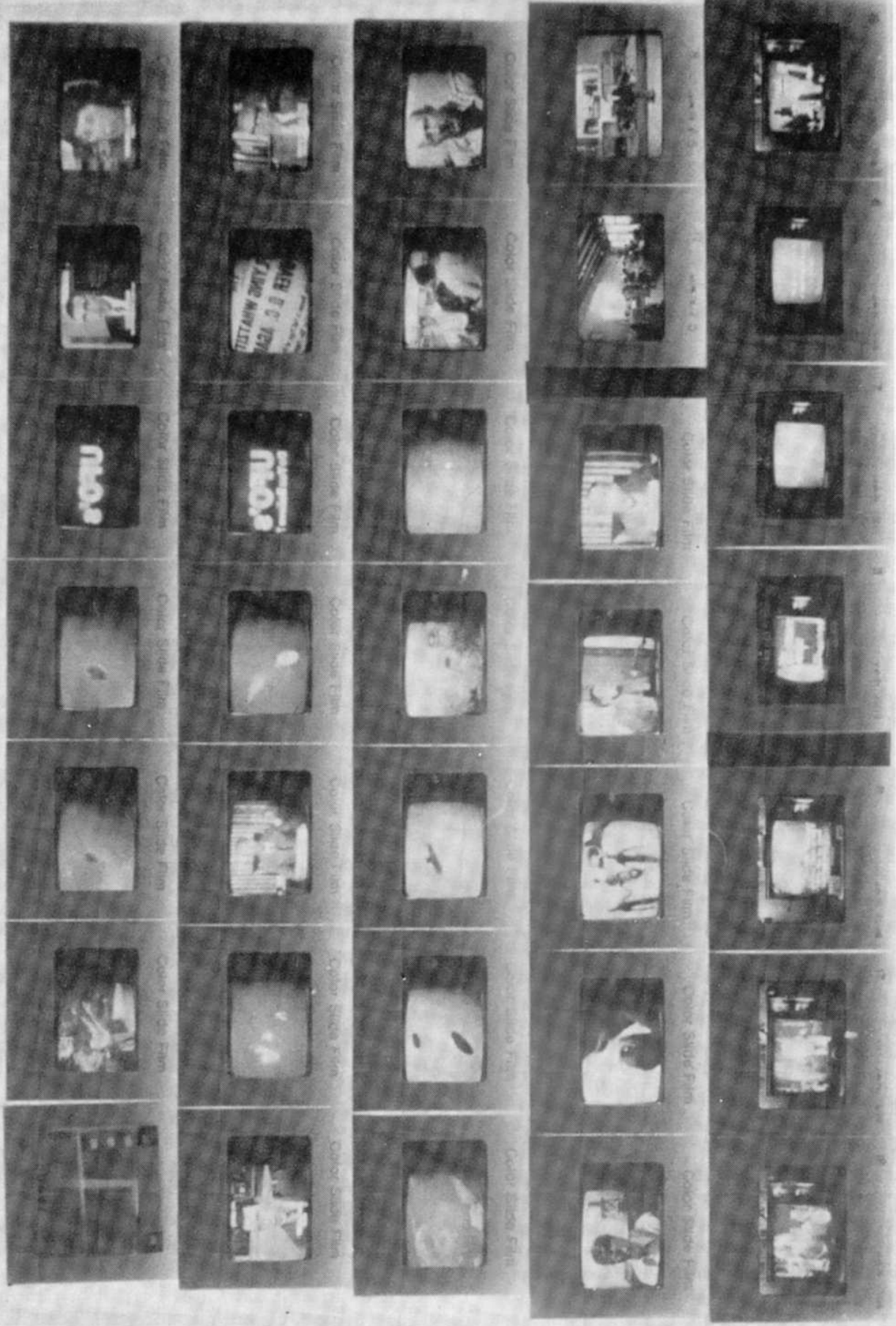
Coral Lorenzen
of APRO, in reverse



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Coloured slides positioned in the order in which they were taken. The slides of the N.B.C. television special make up the first four rows (excluding the two slides on the far right of the fourth row). The bottom row is of other television programmes, in an attempt to obtain mirror image results (these pictures are all normal)

that one side of the set, in some strange manner, was moved over out of position from where it should be. I'm certain that many people who will see this will believe that I am not telling the truth, that in some manner I used trick photography or mirrors to make these photos appear the way they do, in order to write a story trying to pull a fast one on a gullible public. That is not true: I did nothing but put the film in my camera, snap the shutter, and send the film to a commercial lab for processing. My hope is that Dr. J. Allen Hynek and Stanton Friedman may be able to come up with a few answers or clues to help give me peace of mind.

I would like to stress a vital point. The film of the christening at the church and the dinner and get-together afterward, even though this film was on the same roll, came out as normal as any film. The second roll, the one with President Ford on it, is a complete roll and came out also as normal as any roll. As far as my exposures were concerned, in all the photos I took with both rolls of film the exposures were as normal as I had expected. The first roll, of course, was exposed only for the television tube, and the second roll included the television tube and the television set as well. My knowledge of film speed and lens and shutter settings, after years of living and learning with cameras, is second nature. I merely have to point a camera at a

subject, press the shutter button, and I have a picture, be it day or night, indoors or outdoors. As long as I am able to "see" the subject with my eyes, my camera will be able to photograph it.

For years many publications around the world have called on me either to be their photo consultant or to evaluate photographs of concern to them, and to give my opinion as to the possible ways of "creating" these photographs and for my advice as to authenticity. In this particular case, I am the one who took the photos: I have to say honestly I am completely stumped, I have no logical answer.

A picture is worth ten thousand words, but in my opinion in this case, it may take more than ten thousand words to explain what caused the effect of a double photographic reverse and mirror image. Perhaps our two renowned scientists, and the scores of others interested in these matters, can dig into their memory banks to come up with a logical explanation that can satisfy the many who will, like myself, remain bewitched, bothered, and bewildered, to borrow a phrase, by this truly incredible effect.

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COMMENTARY ON THE AUGUST ROBERTS MYSTERY

With further notes on Mrs. Lansing

Berthold Eric Schwarz, M.D.

MR. ROBERTS assisted in the Stella Lansing project^{1,3} and was quite impressed by Mrs. Lansing and her alleged ufographs. During the time Roberts was photographing sequences of the NBC-TV UFO show in New Jersey, unknown to him, Mrs. Stella Lansing (in Massachusetts) was filming motion picture segments of the same production. Neither Mrs. Lansing nor Roberts knew what the other was doing. Review of Mrs. Lansing's motion pictures on April 17, 1975, showed them to be in proper order without any double reversal, like every one of Roberts' 26 snapshots of the TV show. Although Mrs. Lansing had previously filmed numerous UFO clock-like formations and other strange effects from live and late-night-movie television shows, this was not the case here.

However, all was not smooth, for when she inserted a new film cassette into her Canon camera for the TV Hickson-Parker-entities sequence (prior to this the exposure of the few feet remaining proceeded uneventfully), her camera failed. She then switched the batteries and put in "older" but still good batteries and the camera "zipped" for an instant and then failed again. "I replaced the original batteries," she reports, "but the camera would not run until the sequence was over. The only familiar failures

occurred when I was filming UFOs, or when I knew something odd was going to appear on the film. Another clue is that lately I've also heard a 'beeping' sound at these points. Otherwise, I've had no trouble before or since with the Canon camera."

Before proceeding further with the enigmatic Roberts material, it might be helpful to interpolate a more recent opinion on Mrs. Lansing's films. This should help dispel some of the objections to their factual basis and thereby make it easier to accept Roberts' data and to open areas for wider speculation and experimentation.

Professor Paul Sharits of The Center for Media Study at the State University of New York at Buffalo, a leading expert in cinematography, had spent some time with Mrs. Lansing and had seen some of her films. He found her "clock-work" to be the most interesting of her images. He noted: (1) "Some of these go over frame lines, which means that they are imprinted on the film even when the shutter of the camera is in its closed position. (2) Some of them even seem to transcend time; i.e. they appear over a frame line which separates two totally different shots. (3) Their scale seems independent of the rest of the 'real' images they are seen with. I have no idea how these images could

occur; they contradict all time-space and filmic logic."

I (BES) recently reviewed some of the films that Mrs. Lansing made when she was with one of Professor Sharits' students, and it also showed strange artifacts including a clock-like pattern.

While Roberts was making his photographs, he audio-taped the TV show. Later, on listening to it he heard nothing out of the ordinary. This data, like the filmic material, can also be juxtaposed to some of Mrs. Lansing's recent audio tapes (Juliet AM & FM instant loading cassette recorder AC/DC). In my office on April 15 to 19, 1975, Mrs. Lansing played some of her tapes and projected the accompanying films with UFO-like images (mostly clock-like formations and their metamorphoses). She had tapes with persistent (1) rhythmic intermittent machinery-like noise; (2) "whooshing" followed with what sounded like a high-pitched boyish (?) rapid voice (?) saying "at least I'll be left alone - (long pause) - drunk (?) last night." (3) On a tape, when she was accompanied by a friend, "Hi!" was interjected. (4) On one recording "Hello," was interpolated. (5) On another occasion, while filming, Mrs. Lansing shut off the recorder to save tape, "and when I played it back, I heard the pause, and a voice saying 'What are you up to?'"

The extraneous voices on tape were not heard at the time by Mrs. Lansing or when she had a friend with her. The effects occurred when she was out in the field; one could hear her motion picture camera zipping off and on, and also her commentary.

Although caution and critical judgment must be exercised in evaluating this material of variable quality, possibly Mrs. Lansing obtained data similar to that which Thomas A. Edison sought late in his career with an invention to record the energy or intelligences from the Great Beyond.^{4,5} Impossible and far out as his experimenting was in the late 1920s, it has since been realized - although the interpretations are disputable - via the widely discussed tape recordings of Juergenson and Raudive.^{6,7} If Mrs. Lansing herself, the unknown force, or the interaction between the two can produce molecular effects on films and videotape,³ it should not be out of place for her (and others) to exert telekinetic effects on audio tape.

II

ON March 16, 1975, Donald Selwyn, Director of The National Institute for Rehabilitation Engineering, reviewed Roberts' pictures and examined his *Motorola* television set. Selwyn, who has invented many electronic-optical devices for handicapped people, concluded that there was neither an optical nor an electronic explanation for Roberts' data. He did not know of any way that the coloured slides could have been tampered with because of their minute dimensions. His opinion was independently concurred in by Floyd Farrant, an ophthalmologist.

It is interesting that Roberts, in his long career as a professional photographer, who has devoted much of his time and energies to UFOs, has never taken pictures like these before. Perhaps since lending

his expert assistance to the Stella Lansing project, Roberts "learned" or programmed his unconscious in such a way that he would be receptive to the forces, whatever they are, that accounted for his unusual photographs. This would be similar to ways that an awareness for telepathy and other forms of psi can be increased. Perhaps this specific TV show that featured one of his pioneer skywatch shots, had such personal interest and multiple psi tracers that it triggered off his potential for possible thoughtography.^{8,9} Perhaps many alleged UFO photographs, which were formerly dismissed as fraudulent even though there were no supporting evidence, might have been produced by similar means to the Stella Lansing effect. The complexities and technicalities of the problem are fully commensurable with the challenges. Roberts is to be commended for his excellence in his basic UFO research.

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"FORCED FEEDING" BY UFO ENTITIES

J. M. Bigorne et al

Translation by Gordon Creighton of report by investigators Bigorne, Chappat and Fourtouil published in No.139 (November 1974) of *Lumières dans la Nuit*, to whose Editorial Committee we are indebted for permission to use this material.

AT 5.35 a.m. on Thursday, February 28, 1974, the witness (whose name we are not at liberty to divulge) was riding as usual to work, on his moped, along French Departmental Highway 38 and then along RN (Route Nationale) 363. He is a very simple man, in the broadest sense of the term, aged 59, but aged prematurely by the very hard and arduous nature of his employment, which is as a forge-worker at Hirson.

He is a close, uncommunicative sort of person, speaking very little. His environment is essentially the proletarian, working-class milieu, with all the features and the mentality that are quite special to small villages. Before his sighting he had no credence whatever "in all that twaddle about 'flying saucers'," and knew nothing whatever about the UFO phenomenon. No importance is attached in his family to the subject of UFOs, and proof of this is to be seen in the fact that, even after he had experienced the extraordinary adventure which is related below, his wife and his two sons did not so much as take the trouble to go to the spot and see for themselves the marks on the ground.

Nevertheless, despite such bleak indifference, the whole family has been marked by this unwonted event and, above all, every one of them fears a repetition of it. The witness himself has been left in a state of shock by his experience. On the day on which it took place he did nothing about it; he did not even report it in official quarters (and he never will). When he arrived at his place of work his colleagues — observing his strange and abnormal behaviour — questioned him, and he, innocent that he is, revealed the facts to them. The consequences of this disclosure were very unfortunate indeed for him: he was mocked, ridiculed, the butt of the nastiest sort of scoffery. Whereupon he fell into a deeply depressed state.

Because of this, our task in conducting our investigation was very difficult, particularly at the beginning, with him refusing to speak to our investigators and even fleeing from us. It was only after an exchange of correspondence and after we had come to an arrangement with his wife and his son, that we were able to have a meeting with him. He struck us on that occasion as very disturbed, totally disorientated, not only by the experience he had undergone but also, and indeed more particularly, by the general reactions with which his disclosures had been received.

We would point out that he has little talent for observation, which explains the paucity of the details noted by him during his strange encounter.

The facts of the case

It is 5.30 in the early morning. The witness has set out from home and is driving along the Departmental Highway which will bring him to Origny-en-Thierache¹. He has just passed the last houses of the village of Les Routières and he is coming round the bend just before the bridge over the river Thon (a tributary of the Oise, which it joins at Etreaupont). So far, he has no idea of what awaits him, for he has seen nothing, observed nothing.

Suddenly, as soon as he is over the bridge, he finds himself pulled up short, face to face with two "cosmonauts" (his own term!). He is dumb-founded, unable to grasp what is happening to him, and wonders how it is that he has been able to pull up, seeing that, as he claims, he had neither slowed down nor applied his brakes. Above all, what he finds most amazing is this sudden meeting with the two beings, for he had seen nothing whatever, right up to the last moment!

And then he catches sight of a large, dark, circular mass at 35 metres on his left in the field below (one metre below the level of the road). At once he thinks that this must be "their machine". He notices nothing else; no light, nothing flashing, no sound, absolutely nothing, except for that dark, circular mass.

The witness emphasised that the night was dark, very dark. We asked him whether this degree of darkness was abnormal, but he was unable to give us an answer. Maybe this in fact is the reason why he has given us so few details...

So there he was, on the road above the level of the field, and he had put one foot down on to the ground to keep his balance. Immediately on his left was the gate leading into the field, but he was unable to see whether it was open or shut. Meanwhile the two ufonauts are there, standing facing him, one on each side, grasping his handlebars, and they seem to be peering at him. And he is very frightened.

The Machine

He estimated the height of the machine at around 1m 80 to 2m, and said it was as big as two cars. Dark, completely circular, it gave out no sound. It had no legs and seemed to be standing directly on the ground. It had no antennae or protuberances, no portholes, no luminosity so far as he could observe.

The Contact

The two "cosmonauts" before him now began to