

tions.” We should not overlook the fact, therefore, that the pilot of the F-94 and his companion were bound hand and foot by the official constraints that followed the sitting, and deliberations, of the Robertson Commission of January 1953. So it is conceivable that even if they had had the images of the UFOs on their radar scope, they would in no way have made that information public.

The official constraint is a very real thing as far as both civil and military pilots are concerned. Your Editor has given talks to womens’ clubs where the mem-

bers’ husbands have come along as guests — very knowledgeable husbands who have taken the speaker aside after the talk and have confided over a beer that they were airline pilots, that they were with him 100% but would go in fear of their jobs if they spoke about their experiences.

To conclude, the New England-Labrador BOAC incident should, we feel, still go on record — in view of the “hold” instruction from Boston Traffic Control — as a multi-witness/probable radar case.

THE B.O.A.C. LABRADOR SIGHTING OF 1954

The pilot recalls the remarkable events of 28 years ago!

James Howard

I was in command of BOAC Stratocruiser G-ALSC, operating flight No. 510-196 from New York to London, on June 29, 1954. I had elected to make a refuelling stop at Goose Bay, Labrador — a routine procedure.

We departed New York at 2103 GMT (5.03p.m. Eastern Daylight Time). About 30 mins later, when nearing the boundary between New York Air Traffic Centre and Boston Air Traffic Centre, Boston told me to hold at a position somewhere near the coast of Rhode Island (I’ve forgotten the exact place). No reason given, but I assumed that there was conflicting traffic ahead. I might say that it was, and is, very unusual to be “held” when outbound from a busy area.

After perhaps 10-12 minutes I pointed out to Boston that my fuel reserves were not limitless, and requested onward clearance. Control then said that I could proceed if I would accept a detour via Cape Cod, rejoining the original track well north of Boston. I accepted this and we proceeded on our way.

About 3 hours later we were crossing the St Lawrence estuary near Seven Islands, Quebec. We were flying at 19,000ft., above broken cloud at possibly 14,000ft., with the coastline clearly visible through gaps in the cloud.

I then saw these objects for the first time. They were moving at about the same speed as we were (230 knots approx) on a parallel course, maybe 3 or 4 miles to the north west of us (we were heading N.E.). They were below the cloud at this time, at a guess at 8,000ft. Soon after crossing the coast into Labrador, the cloud layer was left behind and the objects were now clearly in view, seeming to have climbed more nearly to our altitude. At this time the sun was low to the north-

Our reader H. S. Taylor (see “Mail Bag”) draws our attention to discrepancies between the details of the famous 1954 incident, given in our editorial leader in Volume 27, No. 3, and a version published in *Fate* magazine “a few months after the incident.” We have been fortunate enough to locate Captain Howard — now retired — and he, having read Mr. Taylor’s letter has recorded for us the details, as he recalls them, of the event of more than a quarter of a century ago. Readers should also refer to our editorial leader on page 1 of this issue. EDITOR

west, sky clear, visibility unlimited. There was a small amount of low cloud, near the ground

The crew and I had ample time to study and sketch these “things” as they flew with us for some 20 minutes in all. The passengers, I found out later, had also seen them and were staring out of the windows on the port side.

There was one large object and six small globular things. The small ones were strung out in a line, sometimes 3 ahead and 3 behind the large one, sometimes 2 ahead and 4 behind, and so on, but always at the same level. The large object was continually, slowly, changing shape, in the way that a swarm of bees might alter its appearance. They appeared to be opaque and hard-edged, grey in colour, no lights or flames visible.

After watching these things for 10 minutes or so I judged that we were now within VHF radio range of Goose Bay, and could talk to them. I asked Lee Boyd,

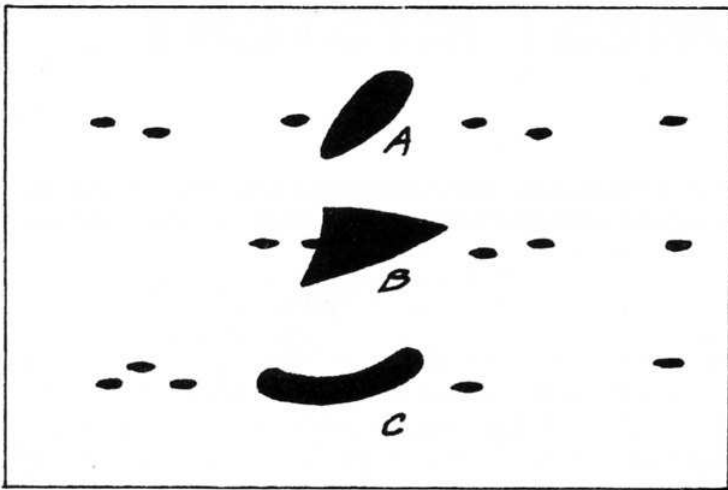


Figure 1

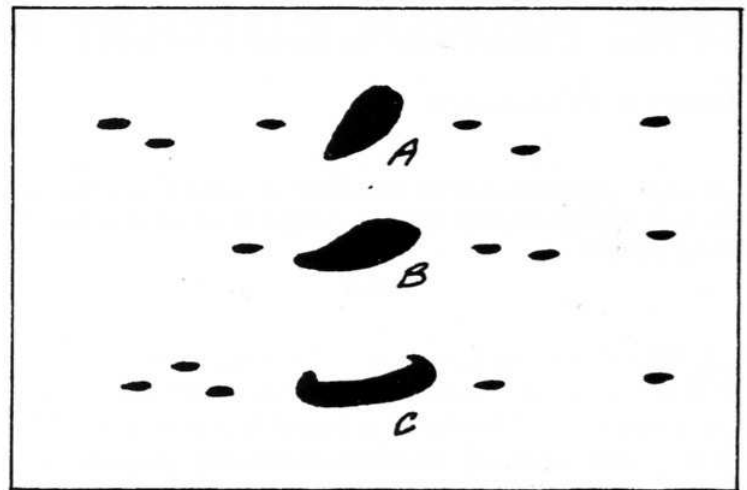


Figure 2

Some aspects of Captain Howard's sketches of the shape-changing object, and its "attendants", as drawn by Leonard Cramp for FSR Volume 1, No. 1 (Spring 1955).

my co-pilot, to ask Goose Bay for information. They asked us to describe what we were seeing, and told us that they had an F94 on patrol and would vector him towards us. (The F94 was a radar equipped two seat fighter). A little later Goose Bay asked us to change frequency and talk direct to the fighter. On doing so we learned that he had us in radar contact — no mention of anything else visible. I gave him a bearing of the objects from us, and as I did so I noticed that the small objects had disappeared. (My Navigator who was watching them closely at this time said that they appeared to converge on, and enter, the large one).

At about this time the sun set in the north-west.

As the fighter approached, the large object dwindled in size, still on the same relative bearing from us, and after a few more seconds, disappeared.

I then had to start the descent into Goose Bay where we landed at 0145 GMT.

We were questioned at length by USAF Intelligence at Goose Bay (who, incidentally, seemed totally unsurprised at the sighting — they told us there had been several others in the Labrador area recently).

We left Goose Bay at 0314 GMT for London, arriving at 1227 on the 30th.

On this leg I wrote the voyage report. At that time I did not connect the unusual "hold" in the Boston area with the sighting because of the discrepancy in time and distance. It was only after receiving many letters about the sighting — including one from a doctor and his wife who were on holiday in Massachusetts, and saw a number of objects flying overhead in a North-Easterly direction at about the time that we were being held — that a possible connection became evident.

(Incidentally — the sketches that the doctor made were very similar to those that I made.)

Referring to Mr Taylor's letter again, regarding radar. At that time Goose Bay had only short-range airfield control radar; we were too far away to be detected by that. The F94 did not report having sighted

the objects on his radar equipment. We had left Goose Bay for London before the fighter returned so I had no opportunity to question the F94 crew.

If the 'hold' was because of unidentified traffic in the Boston control area, then that would imply radar contact.

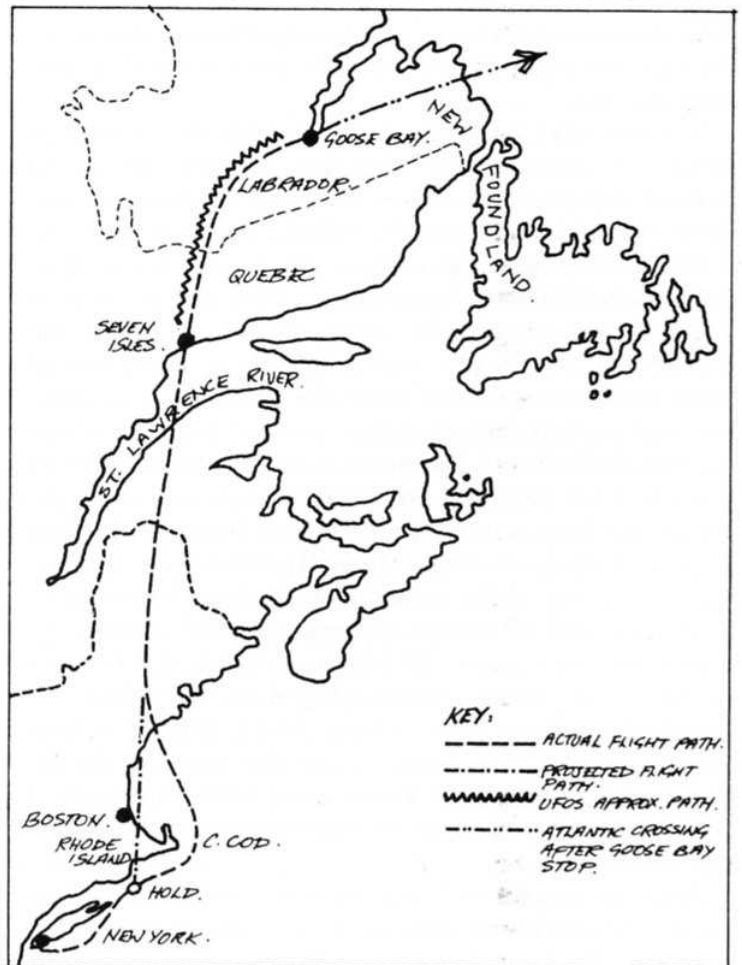


Figure 3: Captain Howard's flight path, showing projected route, holding area, diversion and the UFO's approximate route.

THE RENDLESHAM FOREST MYSTERY

Jenny Randles

The case reported herein was first alluded to by the author in a "late item" which found its way into Volume 26, No. 6 of *Flying Saucer Review* (page iii of cover) and fuller details were promised in due course. Here then are those details.

WHEN reading the works of Leonard Stringfield, for example "Retrievals of the Third Kind" in FSR Volume 25, Numbers, 4, 5 and 6, and of Charles Berlitz, *The Roswell Incident* (Granada paperback 1982), one wonders why the alleged UFO crashes always occur in America, and always in deserts. Why, indeed, have they never occurred in more recent years. One is forced to conclude that we would never get such a tale in dear old conservative Britain. Or would we?

Where there's smoke there's fire — or more smoke!

In February 1981 I received a phone-call from East Anglian author Paul Begg. Paul, best known for his *Thin Air* book (a praiseworthy sceptical examination of mysterious vanishings), looks for answers, not speculations. So what he had to tell me sounded worth checking out.

It seems that Paul and his wife had met a man in their local village pub who was slightly known to them, and presumably knew of Paul's interests. He decided to relate an episode which, he said, had occurred a few weeks previously (we *think* on Tuesday, December 30, 1980). According to him, the civil radar establishment where he worked had on that day tracked a UFO. It was night, and their base (one of many such systems that litter the strategic East Anglian region) had recorded this unusual target heading towards Suffolk and the general region to the east of Ipswich. This man had not been on duty when the incident had happened, but his friend had, and he had got the story from him. Allegedly the target was reported to other radar systems on the south east coast (both civil and military) and was checked against all known air movements. It was uncorrelated. This was the only part their station played in the affair (although they knew other places had recorded it too). But they were left in doubt about the status of the incident when the US Air Force came along a couple of days later and took away the tapes of the radar trackings of this UFO.

Being in a sensitive area viz-a-viz the Official Secrets Act readers will appreciate we cannot name this "witness." But he did agree to talk to us, and, thanks to Paul, UFOIN members Kevin McClure (a specialist in sorting out rumours) and Peter Warrington (our most experienced radar case investigator) checked with

him. The story, as verifiable as it can be, was as I have given. One rider added was that they were led to believe, by the USAF people who collected the tapes, that the "anomaly" had landed not far from Woodbridge Air Force Base (indeed it was suggested even *on* the base), and that a metallic craft, plus entities, was encountered. Electromagnetic effects on a military jeep which approached the site were also claimed.

So, we had ourselves a rumour of an extraordinary story, but little more than that. Merely anecdotal, "a friend of a friend told me" type stuff, from which one can hardly build mountains. Was there smoke behind the smoke, or a glimmering of a real fire? All we knew was that the radar man *seemed* to be telling the truth, and had no obvious reason to lie about this. Then came news which changed everything.

The wonder of Woodbridge

Norman Oliver was at that time (February 1981) still editor of *BUFORA Journal*. As such he picked up stories from all over the world. One day, about this time, he received a half-garbled account from the USA that "something big" had happened at Woodbridge around the turn of the year. The gist of the rumour was the same. The difference was that this came from a US serviceman now back in the States who, possibly, thus felt more free to talk.

This was all rather interesting, but not half as interesting as what was going on, unbeknownst to the rest of us, in rural Suffolk itself. When I called Bob Easton (the nearest UFOIN member to the Woodbridge base . . . though still many miles away in Essex) I intended to tell him of the story, but he told me of the Norman Oliver aspect, and that local BUFORA investigators were on to it as well, *and* finding things out!

These local investigators were Brenda Butler — who was closest, in Leiston, about 10 miles north of the area in question — and her friend Dot Street, based twenty miles further north in Lowestoft. The two young women covered a vast, mostly rural area, more or less on their own. Suffolk is such a low-density population region that it has never generated many investigators, although it certainly has generated some intriguing UFO sightings (underlining the well-attested rule that interesting close encounters are in inverse proportion to the population density). One recalls the classic radar/visual case of August