
CLOSE ENCOUNTER IN UFO ALLEY

BY JENNY RANGLES

In some locations around the world, UFO activity is so intense that it fairly merits the term “window area.” In Britain today, media attention often focuses on the small town of Bonnybridge in Falkirk, Scotland (which currently is seeking a publicity coup by twinning itself with Roswell). A sighting wave occurred here in the mid 1990s. Otherwise, attention focuses on the past glories of Warminster in Wiltshire, where sightings of “the Thing” grabbed headlines 40 years ago. In fact, neither of these deserves the title of Britain’s most active UFO hot spot. That honor unquestionably should go to the Pennine Hills, which straddle the borders of the ancient counties of Lancashire and Yorkshire and have played host to supernatural phenomena for centuries.

The story of the witches of Pendle Forest in the Pennines in 1612 is as well known in the United Kingdom as that of the Salem witches in Massachusetts in 1692. These hills (which run like a spine down central Britain) are home to many supernatural legends, including hobgoblin-like creatures called boggarts that plague numerous places steeped in paranormal folklore, such as Hob Tor and Boggart Hole Clough. There have also been poltergeists, apparitions, showers of stones from the sky, mysterious skyquakes, and an assortment of time-slip cases whereby past events appear to be rerun like real-life VCR tapes on a grand scale. And since ufology became popular, these moorland hill communities forged from local millstone grit have rapidly established themselves as home to hundreds of sightings.

The heart of the Pennine window is easy to trace. From Pendle Hill in the west to the Calder Valley in the east is a small, largely rural region, about 20 miles long, dominated by the Rossendale Valley (in Lancashire) and Calderdale (across the border into West Yorkshire). The principal towns (none is very big, as this is mostly open hilly terrain) are Bacup and Todmorden—separated from one another by five miles of mist-covered moor and with a combined population of just a few thousand.

They have had a degree of fame in the past. The stunning film *Whistle Down the Wind* (1961), in which a

young Hayley Mills meets a criminal on the run hiding out in a barn and mistakes him for Jesus, was filmed here. And the hit BBC-TV series *Juliet Bravo* that ran between the late 1970s and early 1980s was set and filmed in and around Bacup and Todmorden. In fact, the Bacup police station (scene of a suspected hoax in October 1967 when a spaceship was widely reported to be hovering overhead) was used as the police house in the series. More recently, the long-running TV drama set in a rural Yorkshire police station of the 1960s, *Heartbeat*, has based two different episodes around real-life close encounters reported in my books from the modern-day annals of Rossendale and the Calder Valley.

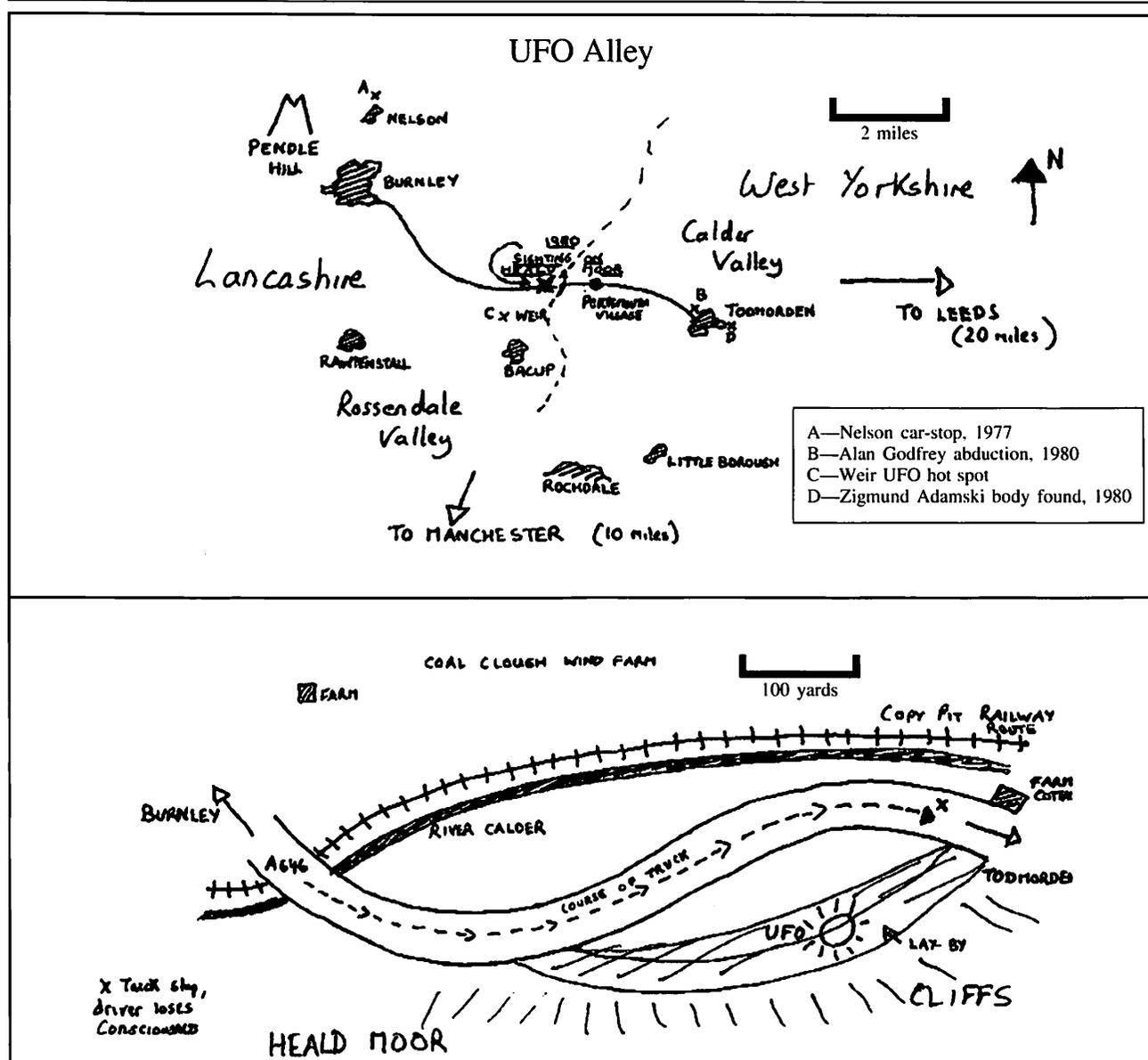
In terms of ufology, this history is impossible to miss. The locals have even dubbed these two valleys “UFO Alley” owing to the quantity of reported activity. The strange cases range from lights in the sky to major close encounters, including such famous cases as the November 1980 abduction of police officer Alan Godfrey from his patrol car on the outskirts of Todmorden.

But this incident is far from being an isolated example. About one-tenth of the CE3/CE4 cases reported from Britain have occurred within a 10-mile radius of UFO Alley. That is clearly a figure of statistical significance. For impressive cases, see my books *The Pennine UFO Mystery* (Granada, 1983), noting the quarry landings in and around Stacksteads (by coincidence—I hope—the tiny village where I was born); *Star Children* (Sterling, 1995) which features a highly impressive CE4 that occurred on November 30, 1978, on the moors at Walsden; or *Little Giant Encyclopedia of UFOs* (Sterling, 2000) which reports another spectacular and puzzling time-lapse case from the Calder Valley in July 1995. Then there is what is widely regarded as Britain’s most impressive car-stop case, at Nelson in the shadow of Pendle Hill during a major wave in March 1977.

Together these—and numerous other strange episodes—paint a picture of oddity unsurpassed in the U.K. It explains why, for example, local businessman Roger Markham is planning to set up a UFO complex in Bacup to combine a resource center, a conference facility, and a research establishment to try to obtain better evidence from the UFOs that seem to swarm around the town.

This background sets the scene for the case I am about

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Map of the area by Jenny Randles.

to recount. It has all the hallmarks of the many other phenomena that have been reported within this small area, but it has not been well documented before.

THE ENCOUNTER

On the morning of January 14, 1980, the witness, truck driver William Barrett, was on an early-morning delivery run from the mill where he worked near Burnley. He was to drive to a factory in Hollingworth, near Oldham, Lancashire, to pick up a consignment of yarn to take back to the mill.

His normal route would have been through the Rossendale Valley and Bacup, but that day he also had to deliver a package in Todmorden. Because this involved only a slight detour, he drove on the Burnley-to-Todmorden road instead. This course took him through the Calder Valley and across the Copy Pit railway line and passing near

to the village of Cliviger. From here he would drive through Deerplay and Heald Moor (close to the village of Weir which is out of sight over steep hills to the south)—both locations rich in UFO activity—before passing through the tiny settlement of Portsmouth and two miles later entering Todmorden itself.

Because of the detour and the chilly weather, Barrett left himself plenty of time. This was something that he did by preference even on fine days. But he is certain that he left Barrowford, on the edge of Burnley, at 5:45 a.m. Driving cautiously on the fairly narrow twisting road, he expected to take 30 minutes to reach Todmorden. Peter Hough and I reconstructed the journey during our investigation. In summer and daylight it took us 15 to 20 minutes to drive the 13 miles, so this estimate seems reasonable.

Just after crossing over the railway at what would be around 6:05 a.m., Barrett approached a stopping area on the

right-hand side. As we discovered on site, this "lay-by," as such areas are known in the U.K., is actually the old course of the road, which has been straightened out by new construction, leaving the old tarmac to curve in a semicircle forming a large parking area for vehicles.

As Barrett put it, "I turned the corner after the bridge and said to myself, what's going on? I could hear this noise—a deep humming sound like a generator. Even though the truck engine was running and my window was closed, I could hear it easily."

Looking forward into the darkness, he saw a "machine" with "what I thought were flames underneath." It was off the roadside either on the ground or hovering just above the parking area. There were no other vehicles anywhere nearby. In fact, the road was as typically quiet as it tends to be at that time on a winter morning in this valley.

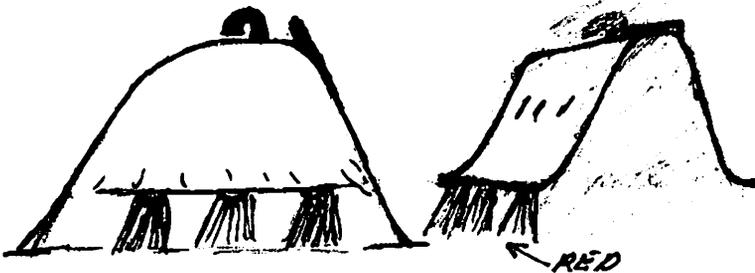
Barrett did not assume that he was seeing a UFO, or even a flying object. He initially guessed that it was a road-workers machine, perhaps making an early start gritting the highway before the morning "rush" (such as it is in this largely rural area).

From this distance (about 150 feet) the object was seen end-on and resembled a "toast rack" with curved sides and three red glows emerging from the edge to create a misty fuzziness obscuring the base. This was what had initially seemed like flames. Never having seen anything like it

before, he slowed the truck to a near crawl, which meant that he inched his way past the object to his right. We measured the closest proximity this would take him to the object. It turned out to be 25 feet. From this new edge-on vantage point he had a clear view of the object. He could see that it was not any kind of road vehicle. It had a bell or tortoiseshell shape with a metallic sheen and what looked like a tube from the top. Barrett momentarily theorized that it was sucking fuel from the atmosphere.

The red glows were now much more visible and highly strange. They emerged from under a rim which ran around the lower part of the object. They were "fuzzy" and hard to look at without hurting the eyes. The redness had diminished now to glow more like a pinkish/reddish color. There are similarities here with other witness descriptions of ultraviolet and infrared emissions from landed objects. The "watering" effect on the eyes said to result was similar.

By this point Barrett had reassessed his opinion of the object. Now he assumed that it was a secret device, presumably of military origin. He had revised his thinking because he now saw two figures standing in front of the hovering object (it was now clearly just off the ground). They were visible mostly in silhouette because they stood between the lights and the truck. One was standing erect and wearing some sort of uniform. Barrett could see the peaked cap. The other was crouched forward, oddly bent, wearing a silvery-gray jump suit.



THIS IS WHAT I SAW FROM FIFTY FEET. IT IS NOT TO SCALE. I WOULD SAY IT WAS OBLONG. ABOUT THIRTY FEET LONG. TWENTY FEET HIGH. THE WIDTH I DONT KNOW. THE RAYS CAME FROM UNDER A CANOPY. AT THE TOP OF THE RAYS WAS ARKS. THERE MUST BE HOLES IN THE BODY ABOVE THE ARKS. AS THE MACHINE WAS SILHOUETTED IN ITS OWN LIGHT. THERE WERE NO WINDOWS

THIS IS MY FIRST SIGHTING DOWN THE ROAD. JUST AN OUT LINE. RED AT THE BOTTOM. AND JUST A LITTLE RED ON THE BODY.

W. B. BARRETT

MISSING TIME

As he passed the side of the object and took in the presence of these two "people," Barrett's mind started to fill with bizarre images and to slow. He recalls flashing visions almost in picture form, disjointed themes saying, "No lights.

Breaking. A dead man." And he thought he was in serious trouble, losing control of both his sanity and his heavy truck on this twisting road. Fortunately, he

was traveling at no more than about 10 mph, having become entranced by the object.

Barrett tied these curious effects on his state of consciousness with the presence of the three arc lights. As he passed right next to them, they were flickering like a disco, and the figures of the two men broke up as a result. The whole thing was akin to a hologram and laser display, and the scintillation that emerged seems to have created a near hypnotic interference. His mind went hazier and hazier, and at some point he lost consciousness altogether. He does not remember anything after passing at closest proximity to the

object and these lights. Reality literally blinked out and then back in again.

When we pieced together the sequence of events with the driver, we concluded that this is what occurred: The truck headlights went out as Barrett approached the object. It happened suddenly, plunging the unlit roadway into darkness. The engine continued to run at his last recall (it was diesel-powered), but within seconds of losing the lights he felt funny. His sense of the passage of time and his awareness of his surroundings faded rapidly until finally, "I went black too," he said. He became unaware of everything, with no memory of the events that followed.

His very next recall (apparently to him just a moment later) is of feeling his body "jumping." With a jolt like a muscle spasm he jerked upright and alert. He was still in his truck. The engine was still running, but the lights were back on. He was confused, however, because he was nowhere near the stopping area where he had just seen the UFO. In truth he was on the outskirts of Todmorden further down the road and through Portsmouth. The engine was idling, and he was not moving. Barrett says that the first thoughts in his head were sheer relief and the words, "I've escaped." Throwing the truck in gear, he drove forward without glancing back. His head was still fuzzy "like it was full of sand." He remained in an altered state over the next few minutes. He had only a vague awareness of where he was. There seemed to be no people or traffic about (a bit odd now that he was entering the town itself) and the light-headedness and disorientation took some time to subside. "It was like I was emerging from a sleep," he said, "but I had not been asleep."

The first sign of activity was when passing Mons Mill before the center of Todmorden. When a van drove past, the spell seemed to lift suddenly, and reality returned. While he was aware that it was now semi-light—as it ought not to have been until well after 7:30 a.m.—the anomaly did not strike him. He drove past the fire station (which has a clock) without even looking. ("It is never right, so I never bother looking when driving through Todmorden.") Barrett was not wearing a watch.

Although his mind was still "queer," he dropped off his parcel without saying anything (it was deposited at an office and did not have to be handed over to anybody, just left at a collection spot). He continued the drive to Oldham, noting that it was now fully light but barely registering the oddness of this fact. His thought was only on the day ahead. When he reached the factory at Hollingworth, he was surprised to find that it was open for business.

Expecting it to be around 7:00 a.m. (75 minutes would be a generous estimate for the journey length even allowing for the package drop off in Todmorden), he was puzzled by this evidently early opening—and also by the presence of another truck that ought to have arrived after he had set off back to Burnley.

Only then did he discover from the factory worker who booked him in that it was 9:10 a.m., at least two hours later

than by all expectations it ought to have been. He was mystified, but, of course, quickly connected this two-hour time jump with the event on Heald Moor.

AFTERMATH

William Barrett decided not to report what had happened. He reasoned, "Who would believe me? And anyway, all I could think of was relief that I got away. That whatever it was had left me alone."

He was not left without a legacy of the experience, or so he learned as he drove back from Oldham towards Burnley. "I noticed that my left leg was aching," he recalled. "It was like a muscle pain. I ignored it and tried to concentrate on driving, but it still hurt when I clocked off work that afternoon. By now I was extremely tired. So much so that I had to go to bed."

When he undressed, Barrett noticed a strange bruise-like mark just behind and above the knee on the rear of his leg. As large as a medium-sized coin, it stood out starkly from the skin with a "star" effect surrounding it. By the time he got up next morning, both the pain and the mark had disappeared, so he did not consult a doctor.

We attempted to establish if he might have knocked himself out when coming to a halt in his cab. Though Barrett was not wearing a seat belt, he insists that he was traveling so slowly that he could not even have bruised himself this way, which in any case he does not remember ever doing.

The truck itself was a 1977 Ford Custom 10-tonner. It was owned by the Burnley mill. When the company went into liquidation soon afterwards, it was still owned and working perfectly. Indeed it suffered no ill effects at all from the experience. This is puzzling, because if there was a two-hour time lapse with the engine idling, it ought to have used a noticeable amount of fuel. But apparently it did not. Even on this quiet road, it is inconceivable that such a vehicle could have stopped in the middle of a fairly narrow road for two hours between 6:00 and 8:00 a.m. without causing some traffic problems, perhaps sufficient to alert the police.

Even so, Barrett still has no memory of how he got from the point near the lay-by where he lost consciousness to the position further down the road where he found himself stopped, engine idling, two hours later. So we have no idea where the truck was during this period.

THE WITNESS

At the time of the incident, Barrett was aged 55, but when he reported it some years later, he had retired. He lived just north of Burnley and had an interesting history that partly explains his certainty over recalling the date of these events.

At 18 he entered the Royal Marines at the height of World War II. He saw action in the North Sea when he was one of the lucky few to escape a landing carrier sunk by a Nazi torpedo. He rescued one colleague from the vortex

that sucked most of his friends to their deaths below the freezing waters. The horrific images of that day have never left him.

Although he underwent extensive medical therapy to handle the trauma, he was soon back on duty and remained in the navy until 1946. After the war, Barrett returned to the mill where he had worked before his time in service. He now put in 34 years of further employment with that company as both a mechanic and a truck driver. He left—five months after his close encounter—only when the economic recession sent the mill into liquidation.

Barrett freely admits that the aftermath of his UFO encounter left him in a shocked state which persisted for months. “Things had gone wrong with my mind,” he candidly acknowledged to Peter Hough and me. He has no doubt that the cause of this trauma was the UFO experience. These events included recurrent dreams that relive the encounter and what may well be mini-blackouts not unlike the one experienced during these events.

One of these led to an accident in which he lost awareness and came to after having rammed the rear of another vehicle. The accident happened on a notorious section of the M-62 motorway known as “Death Valley,” where there is a sheer moorland drop and high winds roaring through the Pennines have been known to blow trucks off the freeway as if they were toys.

He has no idea how the accident occurred, but thankful that it led to no injury to either driver. Happily, he recovered from the posttraumatic stress and was soon in employment again, driving a delivery truck for a farm-equipment company. He worked here until retirement.

Barrett’s open delivery of the account behind his encounter impressed us. The incident’s sequel—the major psychological abreaction—is also interesting and significant. The event seemed quite real to him, and it fundamentally affected his life.

Barrett proved quite a storyteller, often deviating from the point and introducing his own asides whose relevance was not clear to us. We judged these asides to be evidence that he was trying to make his story correspond to the Alan Godfrey encounter at Todmorden in late November 1980, even though this celebrated case did not occur until 10 months later. Barrett was adamant about the dating of his event (January 14, 1980) for two salient reasons. It was the anniversary of his induction into the marines, and he also recorded the delivery run on which he was involved at the time into his log book.

Peter Hough and I found it difficult at times to disentangle his desire to link small parts of his story to the famous abduction. There are clear parallels which I will return to later. But in essence these are quite separate events. Nevertheless, we had no doubt at all that, despite this tendency, the witness was basically reporting a genuine close encounter. He displayed neither signs of deception nor the least interest in publicity or money, and he had numerous opportunities for both. We found no evidence (after making the

customary surreptitious checks) that he possessed or had read UFO books or knew who we were despite our having appeared often on TV and radio in his region. A typical baffled witness, he sought merely to win back his life.

Indeed, the case was long in the reporting after its occurrence in 1980. Barrett told nobody (not even his wife) until two years later. This was after a newspaper story had reported the Godfrey story in a major splash (although that case itself was now over a year old and had by then been extensively investigated by the local group to which Peter and I belonged). Not being certain of the date of the Godfrey encounter, Barrett developed the bizarre idea that he may have seen the police officer literally being abducted (he being the “person” seen in uniform). This is impossible. But the temporary surety that he could back up the policeman (who the paper reported was suffering pressure in his job because of his encounter) caused him to write to the reporter. When he did so, he informed his wife at last.

The journalist did not respond, nor did he forward the letter to PC Godfrey as requested. In fact, this man had promised to pass on any letters to us as a price for our group’s cooperation with his story on the Godfrey abduction. He did not do as he had promised, and so we did not learn of Barrett’s story for some years.

In 1984, a local newspaper reported a light-in-the-sky sighting, and a skeptic hastily explained it away. Barrett, annoyed by the skeptic’s condescending tone, wrote sympathetically to the witness (her address was in the paper). She also never replied. After further discussion with his wife, Barrett wrote to a consumer-advice program on local TV. From it he received the address of BUFORA in London. But he rejected the notion of reporting it to “southerners” who “would not know the area.”

Ironically, since I was then BUFORA’s director of investigations, had he written to BUFORA his letter would have quickly reached me, a native of the area. Nearly a decade later, in Burnley, Godfrey appeared at a lecture alongside a ufologist. Barrett persuaded his wife that they should go and tell their story to the now-ex-policeman (he had been forced out by his sighting). But the ufologist seemed keen on regression hypnosis, and his wife, who did not want anybody to “mess with your head,” convinced her husband to say nothing.

Finally, after many years of frustration, Barrett decided to write to the London address given to him earlier by the local TV show. Fortunately, the address was still valid. His letter reached me soon afterwards. At last Peter Hough and I were able to drive to Burnley to start work on this long-neglected case. We conducted an on-site investigation.

INVESTIGATIONS

In the immediate vicinity of the lay-by, the A 646 roadway parallels both the River Calder and the Copy Pit railway route through the steep valley. On the far (northern) side, a line of electricity pylons run, and there is a spectacular wind

farm known as Coal Clough. Other than that, habitation is restricted to two farms, one at least half a mile away over the far side of the valley, another 100 yards or so past the location where the sighting occurred. To the south of the road and immediately adjacent to the lay-by where the UFO hovered is a steep cliff wall which climbs up to the Heald and Deerplay Moor tops. Across these, one or two miles south of the encounter site, there are disused quarries, a reservoir, and the small settlements of Weir and Sharneyford—both of which have hosted interesting UFO sightings.

We were, of course, hampered by the reality that we had not been able to follow up on this case soon after it took place. But both of the local farmhouses produced interesting responses.

The owner of New Hay farm (across the river and railway) had seen a light in the sky heading up the valley, but the exact date could not be recalled, only that it was some years before. The farmhouse cottage just past the lay-by had changed hands between the encounter and the investigation, but the current occupants described the many problems they had from their electricity supply. The lights were frequently going out, then returning after a few seconds. The power company had been called in but had found no obvious faults. The occupants told us that these brief “power outages” were not weather-related. They usually happened at night.

We uncovered no evidence of anything strange in the lay-by itself, except that the stone retaining wall was more severely crumbled at the point where Barrett said the UFO had been positioned. But this could have occurred during the intervening years, and rock falls must happen here from time to time.

OTHER ENCOUNTERS

It is impossible even to start to cover the wealth of cases that have been reported in the immediate vicinity of Heald Moor, but here a few incidents of some interest:

The Nelson car-stop case (3:10 a.m., March 9, 1977) occurred five miles northwest of the location and has many similarities. The UFO emitted a reddish glow “like fire.” Two factory workers in their car felt strange sensations inside their heads. Three glows emerged from the side of the cigar-shaped object much as Barrett described. Their car suffered both loss of lights and engine power until the object moved away. They were also left with physiological after-effects, including intense exhaustion. A noise akin to a humming was heard, as was a sound like the tide coming in and out (probably caused by air pressure waves as felt by the witnesses).

Among the sightings in Weir, one was of a glowing ball seen over power lines. It caused the local house lights to fail. Many similar local reports are in my files.

Weir also happens to be where I experienced one of my few UFO sightings. I was taking part in a skywatch during

August 1980 and was parked by the reservoir on the moors above Weir. Four of us observed a yellow ball of light above the surface of the water. It rose slowly into the air and disappeared. We debated for a long time what we might have seen and settled on the possibility that a mirage had affected a star, its light distorted by the mist and temperature differences between the chill air and warmer water.

Yet, while this seems a reasonable theory, it is no more than that. I had no idea at the time that we were in the midst of a major wave centering on Rossendale. We figured this out only when we had enough data to see what was going on. In fact, a week after the above incident, on August 14–15, 1980, there was another reservoir encounter at Helmshore (five miles southwest). This certainly did arise from a mirage. Two night fishermen saw a circle of red lights reflected on Ogden Reservoir. Looking up to see what was causing the effect, they were shocked to find nothing was there. But looking back at the water, they could see that something was beneath the water and rising to the surface.

They fled in terror, leaving their expensive fishing gear to the mercy of any passing thief and refusing to return until daylight. An independent witness in nearby Haslingden saw a rotating ring of red lights crossing the sky and flooding her bedroom with light that same night.

At Stacksteads, Mike Sacks, a Waterfoot tailor who had twice seen a classic, domed, circular UFO hovering over the disused quarries during February and May 1979, had become determined to get proof and stalked the moors for months. He succeeded only once—in filming a dim orange ball of light in January 1980—the week of William Barrett’s encounter.

The closest match in terms of date to Barrett’s sighting occurred 24 hours later, on January 15, 1980, at Bradley (12 miles north across the Calder Valley) when two women reported a dome shape with two slits on the side giving off red glows much like those Barrett had described.

The year 1980 proved to be a remarkable one in UFO Alley. It began with Barrett’s close encounter and ended with the November 28 Godfrey abduction some four miles further down the very same road. In between—on June 11—there was the incredible and still contentious story of a man whose body was found on a coal heap at Todmorden railway station. He had disappeared five days earlier from a walk to a local shop 20 miles away. Nobody had seen him since.

No one could determine how he got onto the coal tip in full view of the rail line during a two-hour period in the middle of the day. (He had died that morning and so someone presumably carried him up there—a bizarre and risky thing to do.) The man had died from a heart attack, a look of fear on his face. An unidentified substance was found on a burn mark on his head, but it was not a cause of death. The coroner said during the three inquest sessions held that summer that this was his most baffling case; after his retirement he refused to rule out the UFO stories that had

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Steven Schiff and the General Accounting Office investigation of the Roswell paper trail. Pflock's wife was a senior member of Schiff's staff, a powerful connection that led to Schiff's interest and ultimately to the GAO study.

All ufologists should read this chapter with care. Especially today, when there is another resurgence of talk about Congressional investigation of the UFO issue, it is instructive to understand how very difficult it is for a congressman to put his reputation on the line and to open himself to ridicule from the press and colleagues by even the most marginally positive stance regarding UFOs.

The GAO investigators were initially given *carte blanche*, but soon found themselves badgered by supervisors claiming they were running over budget and pressuring them to wrap up the inquiry. Pflock: "Highly reliable confidential sources have advised me that one day investigators Weeter and Kriethe were told they were out of funding for the investigative phase of their work, and it was time to write their report. Neither man was happy with this. Kriethe in particular believed a good deal more needed to be done, but the bureaucratic-political handwriting was on the wall: Give the congressman his damn' report, make it good enough to cover his and our butts, and move on."

It is not clear if this pressure was caused by fear that something ominous would be found. It is just as likely that the topic alone was found so embarrassing by the top levels of the bureaucracy that they wanted to dispose of it quickly. By this time, public interest in Roswell was huge. That is nearly always sufficient to generate investigations, some of them quite elaborate. But the public demand for answers about Roswell was more than balanced by the fear of ridicule that pervades the subject of UFOs.

GAO investigators were unable to find the critically important collection of outgoing messages from Roswell Army Air Field. Further inquiry revealed the messages had been destroyed, apparently in violation of federal record-keeping regulations. Pflock manages to gloss this as "a bureaucratic oversight."

A dangerous book. This is almost certainly the last book on Roswell. After being shopped to mainstream publishers with no success, it was finally accepted by Prometheus Books, the quasi-vanity publishing arm of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. CSICOP is a large, well-funded organization devoted to attacking topics such as parapsychology and UFOs, among their very long list of targets. Some of their activities are silly, like the way they continuously beleaguer newspapers that carry astrology columns, and like their perennial attempts to force local law enforcement officials to arrest "Madame Zola" tarot-card readers.

CSICOP has a staff of full-time employees. Its membership exceeds 29,000; MUFON, by far the largest UFO organization, has a membership of about 2,900. CSICOP's main thrust is the vigorous behind-the-scenes lobbying of journalists and scientists. This is why the Pflock book will be received by the Establishment as the "final word" on

Roswell, and why even if it sells no more than a dozen copies, Pflock's *Roswell* will be very influential.

This is a dangerous book because it will overwhelm the reader who is not well-versed in the complexities of the Roswell story. Whether an alien spacecraft and its crew crashed in New Mexico in 1947 is no small matter, weighed in any scale. That it was just a Mogul array misapprehended is really out of the question. Ironically, Pflock's book serves as proof that the Mogul explanation is impossible. But what is the truth about the Roswell event? Scholarship on that question has already been relegated to a small intellectual ghetto within the larger ghetto of ufology. Thanks to this book and its sponsors, Roswell will be submerged even deeper, and the awesome secret will never be addressed by the Congress or any other relevant institution. ♦

UFO ALLEY—continued from page 8

grown around the episode.

These tales developed for three reasons. On the night before this poor man's body was found, a couple in Todmorden saw a pulsing red glow above their house. It made a noise like the tide coming in and out (remarkably like the object that caused the car stop at Nelson three years earlier). The police officer who went to the scene and investigated the report of the body was none other than Alan Godfrey, who five months later would have his own close encounter less than a mile away. And the dead man's name, Zigmund Adamski, had UFO symbolism written all over it.

Another impressive sighting occurred at Sharneyford on February 4, 1988, when a university science graduate driving across Tooter Hill between Bacup and Todmorden spotted an orange glow hovering nearby. Given her training, she made an excellent close-up observation. She noticed that the object had an internal structure resembling bubbling "liquid." Similar comments have been made about the fire-colored objects often seen in this area. Some researchers have speculated that a form of plasma may be at work.

Although Barrett did not see Godfrey being abducted, as he thought he had, there are curious links between these cases—beyond their mutual proximity and the fact that both involve time lapses and vehicle stoppages by a hovering object over the very same highway.

For example, Godfrey's story is supported by a motorist who called into Todmorden police station to say that he had seen an ice-blue glow low over the roadway as he drove from Burnley to Todmorden. He observed this phenomenon at the same time the abduction occurred, but when that case was unknown beyond Godfrey's colleagues on night shift at the station. It occurred near Cliviger—from a point above the valley very close to where Barrett experienced his unreported truck stop months before.

Another link was that—as with Barrett—Godfrey also experienced other mini-time lapses where he lost consciousness and came to his senses with no recollection of

and was keeping the press out. He told Lambertz he saw planes come in from Wright Field, Ohio, to take the thing away. He also said they claimed they were going to take it to one place, but the planes went to another."

Pflock devotes considerable space to the Sleppy story. Incredibly, he dismisses it as physically impossible. This is accomplished by first claiming that Sleppy said she was transmitting the McBoyle story when her transmission, in mid-keystroke, was interrupted by the FBI command. Then he correctly points out that the 1947 teletype machines could not simultaneously send and receive. Ergo, physically impossible, and we Mogulists can breathe a lot easier.

The trouble with all this is that Sleppy never said her transmission was interrupted by the FBI message. She says very plainly that it was interrupted by a bell: "A bell rang on the teletype, indicating an interruption." These bells were standard equipment, and alerted the operator to stop transmitting, and to manually switch to the "receive" mode. All operators used this procedure, whose main function was to allow other stations to interrupt to ask questions or make corrections to a story as it was being sent. In sum, exactly what her affidavit says, and what she has told other investigators. Incredibly, Pflock acknowledges the bell and its purpose and standard use in an earlier passage about Sleppy and teletypes. But this doesn't prevent him from concluding, "While what Sleppy alleged to have happened could quite easily be done today, it would have been impossible in July 1947." Incredible.

Another example of Pflock's tortuous treatment of testimony occurs in a footnote commenting on Loretta Proctor, a neighbor of Brazel. "It is worth noting that, while in many interviews, including one with me, Loretta Proctor has claimed that when Mack Brazel showed a 'sliver of wood looking stuff' to her and her husband Floyd, Brazel and Floyd Proctor tried and failed to cut and burn the material. Yet in the April 20, 1989, interview with Kevin Randle cited above she explicitly denied this. Randle asked, 'When he brought it up did you attempt to cut it or anything?' Proctor replied, 'No, we didn't. He did. . . .' From context, the 'He did' reference suggests that Proctor's meaning was that Brazel *told* them he had tried to burn the 'sliver.'" (Emphasis Pflock's.) I ask the reader to consider this passage with the greatest care, and then to form an opinion about the credibility and state of mind of the man who wrote it.

Pflock arithmetic. After dismissing the truthfulness or relevance of the testimony of scores of witnesses cited in the Roswell literature, and winnowing the field down to seven, Pflock exults, "Funny what a little careful arithmetic can reveal."

A "little arithmetic" seems as far as Pflock can get with technology. He exhibits a profound antipathy toward rigorous engineering analysis that has been applied to testimony about the debris.

Pflock: "The parallels between the descriptions of the markings/tape with markings on the debris found by Mack

Brazel and collected by Marcel and those on the novelty/joy tape used to reinforce the radar targets flown by the NYU balloon-project are impossible to dismiss. To my mind, they are virtually conclusive." This is a critical issue, but the reader will search in vain for elaboration, and must be content with Pflock's unsupported conclusion.

These hypothesized "parallels" can be analyzed. For example, I published a study demonstrating that the C. B. Moore "flowered tape" could not account for the "hieroglyphics" reported by the witnesses (*IUR*, Summer 1998, pp. 7-9, 32). The analysis was based on the geometry of the tape and of the radar target structural members. This study was available to Pflock. But he can abuse the topic and his readers secure in the knowledge that very few who might read this book will ever see that analysis.

Robert Galganski is a professional engineer specializing in testing structural and other physical properties of materials. In extensive laboratory work, Galganski tested the various anomalous qualities of the "sticks" reported by witnesses (*IUR*, Winter 1997, pp. 3-7). These included the claims that the sticks could not be burned, could not be broken, and could not be cut with a knife. Balsa sticks exactly like those forming the radar target kite skeletons were used. First, the properties of bare balsa sticks were tested. Then Galganski coated them with increasingly thick layers of Elmer's glue. He even coated them with special aviation-grade casein glues. Then he tested all of these with the same professional care that any laboratory would use. Even the most heavily glued sticks broke easily, cut easily, and ignited easily. In this way Pflock's Mogul radar target hypothesis was tested—and found to fail.

Galganski has also studied related issues such as how much debris a Mogul array could deposit. Then he relates it to the various reports of the extent of the debris field (*IUR*, Summer 1998, pp. 3-6, 32). Like Galganski's other work, this is not a literary exercise. Rather, it is an engineering study. Needless to say, this rigorous analysis demolishes the plausibility of the Mogul theory.

These engineering studies were available to Pflock, but the sum of his rejoinder is to dismiss Galganski as "garbage in, garbage out." Presumably, the garbage is the offensive "anomalous" testimony of all those witnesses.

GAO. Pflock gives a thorough recounting of other Roswell claims that have not been given much attention by specialists, but that have formed a significant part of the public's perceptions. Philip Corso's *The Day after Roswell* sold very well, and Corso was featured on television "documentaries" and as a speaker at many UFO conferences. Ray Santilli's "alien autopsy" film caused a sensation, was exploited in a series of Fox Network television shows, and for a while was the bestselling home video in the United States. Tim Cooper's seemingly endless source of MJ-12 documents failed to get air time, but continue to fascinate many ufologists. All of this bunk is efficiently explained and disposed of by Pflock.

A long chapter is devoted to the story of Congressman

the gap. A police doctor wondered if he was suffering from narcolepsy—a disorder whereby a person suddenly falls asleep and then wakes up without any obvious cause, thus not being aware that he or she has been asleep. Tests on Godfrey, however, failed to confirm the theory.

CONCLUSIONS

So what did happen? Peter and I checked out the possibility that Barrett's initial suspicion was correct. Did he see a council gritting machine making an early start on the highway? After so many years, the local authority could not confirm or deny it, but said that gritters do use rotating orange side lights. This leaves a gritting machine as a candidate; still, it is hard to comprehend how such a gross misperception might occur—not to mention the other events reported locally and the extreme effects on the truck and witness which no gritter could possibly have caused.

Another theory is that the witness was prone, perhaps without his knowledge, to epileptic attacks. Maybe the rotating lights seen in close proximity triggered such a seizure, causing him to lose consciousness. A neurophysiologist whom we consulted suggested that the subsequent

mini-blackout might support that theory as might the physical description of the witness about his recovery from the period of unconsciousness on the Todmorden road. But he also felt that a man who had been a professional driver for so many years would not be a likely sufferer from this affliction; surely it would long ago have been discovered because of the inevitable danger involved.

Of course, this theory also has the massive difficulty of the two-hour time lapse. How could Barrett have stopped his truck on that road for so long without attracting the notice of drivers in other vehicles? Not to mention the fact that if he had blacked out just after passing a council gritting vehicle in the lay-by, then surely the two men who stood just feet from the distressed driver would have come to his rescue or reported his trauma.

To conclude, it appears that Barrett's is a classic example of a missing-time CE3 which may or may not have benefited from the further study it would have routinely been given in America, where regression hypnosis would likely have been attempted. In Britain, regression is outlawed by major groups such as BUFORA and UFOIN through our Code of Practice. In any event, the witness himself was not keen on the idea. ♦

DISCOVERING THE NEW EXTRASOLAR PLANETS

BY MICHAEL D. SWORDS

New planetary systems around distant stars are being discovered on a monthly basis. High-resolution spectrographs and cutting-edge computer technology, in conjunction with moderate-sized telescopes and lots of patience, has made this possible. The technique is called the "radial velocity method," and it depends on the fact that massive planets tug their stars around by gravity, a motion that shows up in tiny but measurable Doppler shifts in the stellar spectra. Picking out these minuscule movements is more difficult than detecting a visual wobble in a set of photographic plates.

Other techniques are on the verge of being useful for planetary discovery—detecting a dimming of stellar brightness as a planet transits and blocks some starlight, or picking up a heat source in a protoplanetary dust cloud that is not coincident with the location of the star. But it is the radial velocity method that has provided recent discoveries. Many others are already in the pipeline, awaiting the passage of a few years so that at least one full orbital cycle can be measured before becoming official.

As of February 2001, according to Geoffrey W. Marcy (University of California at Berkeley), there were 57 accepted planets orbiting extrasolar stars. Predictably, most of these have been at least the size of Jupiter; unpredictably, many were discovered in strange orbits close to their stars. In the early years of extrasolar planetary discovery (1996–1997), the known planets were as follows:

Name	Jupiter mass (lower limit)	Period in days (minimum)	Orbital radius (in AU)	<i>e</i>
51 Pegasi	0.45	4.23	0.050	0.00
55 ρ^1 Cancri	0.84	14.70	0.110	0.04
τ Boötis	3.80	3.30	0.045	0.00
ν Andromedae	0.61	4.60	0.057	0.15
47 Ursae Majoris	2.40	1092.00	2.100	0.10
ρ Coronae Borealis	1.10	39.60	0.230	< 0.10
70 Virginis	6.70	116.50	~0.430	0.40
HD 114762	10.00	84.00	~0.300	0.30
16 Cygni B	1.70	804.00	0.6–2.7	0.70

e = eccentricity of orbit; AU = astronomical units

Such planets were big, close-in, and with extremely short orbital periods.

As the first discoveries were made, astonishment at the anomalousness of these planets gained momentum. The seeming betrayal of the standard model of the formation of planetary systems produced a shock that induced scientific madness. Suddenly, none of the old ideas about planets made sense any more. Not only did we have to regain humility and admit ignorance, but paradoxically some individuals began overstating that this showed that *our* Solar System was the oddity and Earth the rare bird. I am all for humility and the admission of ignorance, but it was very

strange to watch some members of the astronomical community (and a horde of “unique earthers”) engage in some goofy and unscientific conclusion jumping.

As a few years passed, most of the impatience eventually retreated into a more appropriate silence, and science waited for time and data to suggest a more fact-based direction. A data table on new planets now looks more like this:

Name	Jupiter mass (lower limit)	Period in days (minimum)	Orbital radius (in AU)	e
HD 38529 (Orion)	0.77	14.30	0.130	0.27
HD 6434 (Phoenix)	0.48	22.09	0.150	0.30
HD 83443 (Vela)	0.15	29.83	0.170	0.42
HD 121504 (Centaurus)	0.89	64.62	0.320	0.13
HD 12661 (Aries)	2.80	250.00	0.800	0.33
HD 92788 (Sextans)	3.70	341.00	0.980	0.44
HD 19994 (Cetus)	1.80	454.20	1.300	0.20
HD 190228 (Vulpecula)	5.00	1127.00	2.300	0.43
ϵ Eridani	0.80	2520.00	3.200	0.60

e = eccentricity of orbit; AU = astronomical units

The most recent planets tend to be subtly different from the first batch. With time and improved techniques, we are detecting planets that are further from their stars and have greater eccentricity. A slight lowering of the mass limit is also present.

This new science is in its infancy, and it is rapidly evolving. In experimenting with techniques at the raw edge of detectable signal-to-noise ratio, scientists expect to pick out exceptional signals first. Almost by definition, such a difficult procedure will first uncover unusual situations. Finding out whether or not these extraordinary detections will fit nicely into prior science is one of the joys of scientific frontiersmanship. Time and patience will tell.

Norman Murray (University of Toronto) has tried to find out how the super-Jupiters can come so close to their stars. He discovered a model that doesn't work, and another that does. Both are worth mentioning.

The model that doesn't work is an intuitive one—big planets banging around on one another, either literally or gravitationally. But the dynamics don't compute. The idea of neo-solar systems dominated by several large planetary bodies cannot explain the newly discovered systems.

However, a model that has a multitude of Earth-sized planets bombarding a super-Jupiter and forcing it sunward *does* seem to explain the observed data. The giant planet would then clear the inner solar system of smaller bodies in the life zone. This model indicates that the presence of Earth-sized planets is a likely feature in extrasolar systems.

The stars with newly discovered planetary systems show a richness of metals approximately twice our Sun's amount. Murray suspects that this is caused by the accretion of protoplanetary bodies from the original dust cloud. And this means many extrasolar Earths.

What of all the other stars that do not have planets detectable by current techniques? The vast majority of these are young stars with a high metal content, the signature of Earth-sized planetary formation. And apparently there is no super-Jupiter knocking them to pieces. One might suspect, as Murray does, that there are Earths aplenty to be discovered out there.

The new planetary discoveries are relevant to the Drake Equation, seemingly strengthening the factors of “number of Earth-like planets per system” and “fraction of stars with planets.” This might make it slightly easier for conservative types to contemplate the Extraterrestrial Hypothesis for UFOs, though it surely doesn't prove anything.

However, it might be worth remembering the words written more than 400 years ago by Giordano Bruno: “Innumerable suns exist; innumerable earths revolve around these suns in a manner similar to the way the seven planets revolve around our sun. Living beings inhabit these worlds.”

One of the best ways to follow the new discoveries is through popular-science journals like *Sky and Telescope*, which often reports them in its “News notes” section. A nice, readable discussion of detection techniques is by Laurence Doyle, et al., “Discovering Worlds in Transit,” *Astronomy*, March 2001, pp. 38–43.

For those who want their references slightly more scientific but still readable, try: James Glantz, “Worlds around Other Stars Shake Planet Birth Theory,” *Science*, May 30, 1997, pp. 1336–39; “Planetary Systems Proliferate,” *Science*, October 1, 1999, pp. 45–76; and Alan Boss, “Extrasolar Planets,” *Physics Today*, September 1996, pp. 32–38. ♦

MEMORY LANE—continued from page 11

reports a metallic, structured craft in great detail, that description can be a creation of the mind. Here a point of light in the distance was turned into a spacecraft with a crew. Three descriptions were gathered, and all three were at odds. Even the descriptions given by Erenberger changed as time passed, distorting the facts, but providing an exciting story of alien visitation.

To learn what was actually seen and to determine what had happened, it was necessary to interview everyone who had claimed some involvement. It was necessary to examine the scene, because that provided clues about the reality of the sighting. Finally, it was necessary to compare the statements made at the time of the sighting with those made just days later. By investigating all aspects of the case, it was possible to remove the sighting from the “unidentified” file, into the “solved as an aircraft” file.

Probably the most important lesson here was that none of the witnesses told a lie. All reported as accurately as possible what he or she had seen. Unfortunately, some of the statements made just days after the event turned out to be inaccurate. Without the complete notes, we all would have been fooled. ♦