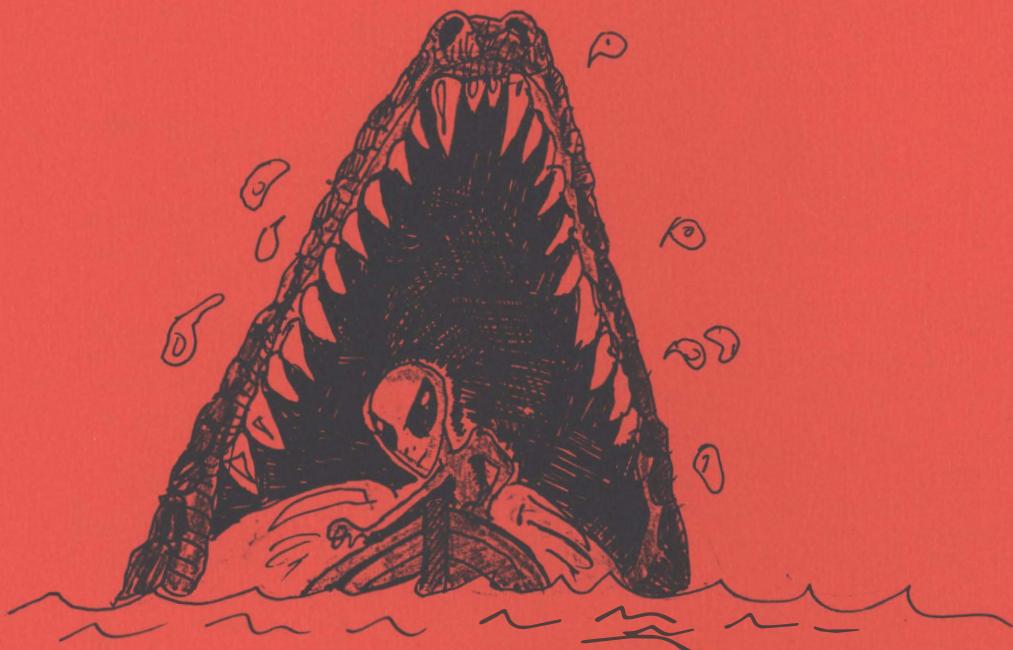


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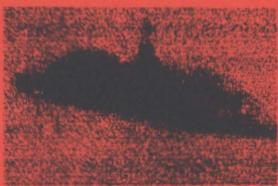
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THE CANNOCK CROC
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"I'm gonna need a hacksaw..."

UFOS AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT: AN EARLY INVESTIGATION

BY NICK REDFERN

When, between 1988 and 1999, I was actively investigating UFOs and the British Government, there was one question that I was often asked: for how long have British authorities been investigating UFO-like phenomena? While it is generally accepted that the so-called modern era of UFO sightings began on 24 June 1947 (following the now-historic encounter of pilot Kenneth Arnold) documentation has surfaced - thanks to the hard work of Dave Clarke and Andy Roberts - showing that the British Air Ministry conducted investigations of both the "Foo Fighter" sightings of the Second World War and the Scandinavian "Ghost Rocket" phenomenon of 1946.

However, official investigations within the British Isles of unusual aerial phenomena started earlier than that - much earlier, in fact. One of the most notable "pre-Arnold" reports can be found within the archives of the British Admiralty and dates from 1915. Prepared by a Lieutenant Colonel W.P. Drury, Garrison Intelligence Officer at Plymouth Garrison, Devonport, England, the four-page paper is titled REPORT ON THE DARTMOOR FLOATING (OR BALLOON) LIGHT and concerns a series of strange events that occurred on the wilds of Dartmoor (the setting for Conan Doyle's classic novel, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*). Lt. Col. Drury advised his superiors at the Admiralty that on 28 June 1915 he and a colleague, one Lieutenant C. Brownlow of Naval Intelligence, had interviewed a Miss Cecilia Peel Yates at Dolbeare Cottage, Ashburton, about an unusual experience:

"She informed us that a few mornings previously, just before dawn, having been awakened by the barking of dogs, she saw from her bedroom window a bright light in the sky, bearing N., and apparently suspended a short distance above the earth. It was too large and bright for a planet, and, as she watched, it swung to the N.E., and disappeared. Haytor is due North of Ashburton and 4 miles distant as the crow flies."

Initially, a study of the document makes clear, Lt. Col. Drury and Lt. Brownlow were more than skeptical of Miss Peel Yates's UFO-like encounter:

"Although we had entirely failed to shake the lady's evidence by cross-examination, we deemed her story so wildly improbable that we excluded it from our official report. But shortly afterwards reports of a similar phenomenon were received from the neighbourhood of Hexworthy Mine, which is 5 miles to the N.W., across Dartmoor. On July 12th, Lieutenant Brownlow and I proceeded to Sherri, near Hexworthy, and interviewed Mrs. Cave-Penny and her daughter, from whom the report emanated. Their house, an isolated farm on the moor, commands a clear view of the mine, which is two-and-a-half miles distant.

"They stated that on several occasions they had watched a bright white light rise from a point a few hundred yards to the Eastward of the mine, swing across the valley to about the same from Totnes, and a paddock some distance West of it, and disappear. The light sometimes rose above the skyline, at others it showed against the moon of Down Ridge, on which the mine is situated. On each occasion it rose from the same spot and followed the same course. Mrs. Cave-Penny is a rather excitable, irresponsible Irish lady, but we had no reason to doubt her evidence in the main, and her daughter's testimony (which fully corroborated that of her mother) was most clear and definite. This floating light against Down Ridge has been reported from the Hexworthy district on several occasions since, the last being a few nights ago."

Four weeks later, Lt. Col Drury informed his superiors at the Admiralty that encounters with the unidentified light were being reported from other locations on the moors, too:

"About the middle of August this peculiar light was reported from two other points, viz., a meadow at Dartington Manor, about two miles belonging to Barton Pines, a large country house on high land overlooking Paignton. Dartington Manor is the home of the Champernownes: Barton Pines is owned by a Mr. William Whitley, formerly of the Life Guards. On more than one occasion Mrs. Whitley had reported that she and other witnesses had seen the floating light immediately above the belt of fir trees which screen the paddock from the garden and house.

"Brownlow, the Detective Police and I have separately interviewed Mrs. Whitley on various occasions, and we have all found her perfectly consistent in her story. For some time Mr. Whitley was sceptical, but, having seen it himself, he is now

as convinced of its existence as his wife. The paddock commands an extensive view of Tor Bay in one direction and a long chain of the Dartmoor Tors in the other."

Drury continued:

"The Dartington 'floating light' was reported by Mr. Falkland Ricketts of Gatcombe Manor, who had also seen the Barton Pines occurrence. After several further reports from this witness, I obtained the sanction of the G.O.C., to watch one of the three points enumerated until I saw the light myself. I selected the Dartington Point, and, accompanied by Mr. Brownlow, began to watch from a position immediately opposite near the main Totnes-Newton Abbot road. On the third night we both saw the phenomenon precisely as it had been described at Hexworthy and Barton Pines."

But what, precisely, was it that the Intelligence Officer of Plymouth Garrison saw on Dartmoor? Drury's next statement makes for notable reading:

"About 9.30 that night (September 4th) we observed a bright white light, considerably larger in appearance than a planet, steadily ascend from the meadow to an approximate height of 50 or 60 feet. It then swung for hundred yards or so to the left, and suddenly vanished. Its course was clearly visible against the dark background of wood and hill, though, the night being dark, it was not easy to determine whether it was a little above or beneath the skyline. We were within a mile of the light and both saw its ascension and transit distinctly. The Dart flows between Dartington and our post of observation, and, unfordable [sic], it was impossible to reach the meadow from which the light arose."

Illustrating that he had carried out a number of personal night time investigations of the area in the hope of seeing the unidentified object, Lt. Col. Drury added more pertinent and illuminating information:

"I have watched Down Ridge, Dartington Manor, and Barton Pines by night on several occasions before and since September 4th, but that date is the only time I personally have seen this 'floating light' which has so often been reported by other and reliable witnesses. It is to be observed that a ruler-edge laid upon the map will pass through the three indicated points, and that the suspect Buckfast Abbey (which harbours some 40 un-naturalized Germans of Military age) lies on the centre of the line. The line runs from the direction of Princetown to the Coast of Paignton. These lights, which are presumably lifted by captive balloons, are of an

entirely different character from that of the stray fire balloon reported over Ashburton."

Lt. Col. Drury concluded his report on the curious encounters for the Admiralty thus:

"It is suggested that the former may be employed to lift an aerial for wireless purposes. In any case it is difficult to find a normal cause for the credibility attested and oft recurring phenomenon, unless it be some form of illicit signalling. The proposed methods of detecting it I have dealt with in my former report 'Suspects and alleged Illicit Signalling on N.E. Dartmoor'. W.P. Drury. Lieut. Colonel, R.M.L.I. Intelligence Officer."

For twelve weeks after the events chronicled officially with the Admiralty, sightings of the unknown light continued on a regular basis and prompted Lt. Col. Drury to submit a Confidential message to his superiors. Titled ABNORMAL LIGHTS ON DARTMOOR, it states:

"With a view to detecting the origin of the above (and especially of the "floating light") I have recently submitted a scheme, which has been approved by the C.O.C., for rounding up one of the most active areas of the Moor at night. This scheme can only be carried into effect under certain conditions, for which I am writing. Meanwhile, and as an essential preliminary measure, I am awaiting the sanction of the War Office to my application to have certain correspondence in that area secretly examined. The application which was made a month ago, has been recently renewed, but no reply has so far been received." (1)

Currently accessible documentation relating to these events shows that, whatever the true nature of the strange aerial lights of Dartmoor, the matter was never fully resolved to everyone's satisfaction. Were they the result of the actions of the "40 un-naturalized Germans of Military age" at Buckfast Abbey or was something far stranger occurring?

No evidence has surfaced in the Public Record Office's archives to suggest that this was the work of the Germans. The investigators David Clarke and Granville Oldroyd, however, have suggested the possibility that the curious Dartmoor light phenomena may have been some form of "earthlight" or "spooklight." As Clarke and Oldroyd note, at least some of these objects "are plasma-like blobs of energy created by frictional discharges from rocks in zones of geological faulting. In this way spooklights are 'created' by electromagnetic leakage from the strain generated in faultlines

during the period leading up to an earth tremor." (2)

This theory does have its merits. There are, indeed, numerous accounts on record where unknown aerial objects have been seen time and again in areas with a reputation for being geologically unstable. It is also the case that a number of minor earth tremors have occurred in the West Country over the course of the last one hundred years - as have other sightings of unknown aerial lights. In 1932, for example, an incident with very similar overtones to those of 1915 occurred near the River Torridge, North Devon. From the archives of the *Western Morning News*, comes the following account titled "Will O' the Wisp?" It reads:

"Sir. A few nights ago, another man I were, one dark November night, at about eleven o'clock, on a hillside near the River Torridge far from any road, footpath or house. We were long-netting rabbits. Between us and the river lay a stretch of marshy ground, perhaps one hundred yards wide. On the other side of the river the ground rose abruptly covered in timber. Suddenly, we saw quite near us apparently about fifty feet above the marsh, an oblong object floating in the air. I cannot describe it better than saying that it looked like a conglomeration of very dim stars. It appeared to be about three feet by two feet in size and was clearly outlined against the dark background of the opposite hillside. It sailed about with a sort of circular motion, something like a swallow hawking over a pond. For five minutes or so, we watched it as it swept around in ever-widening circles; finally, it sailed off up the river and we saw it no more. I have sent this letter, before forwarding it to you, to the man who was with me at the time, and he corroborates all that I have said. (3)

As the acclaimed British author Jonathan Downes notes, Will O' The Wisp (or Jack O' Lantern, as it is also referred to) is "an incandescent form of methane that rises above rotting vegetation" - marsh gas, in other words. However, in response to the account that appeared in the *Western Morning News*, one E.E. Rudd of Torrington asserted that,

"Sir, 'Jack' does not dance fifty feet above the ground. You will not see him on a dark November night, neither does he move with a circular motion. As a youth, I was lucky to see a superb display over some bogland on our common. This land has since been reclaimed and cultivated. What [the writer] and his companion saw was a white owl." (4)

The idea that this witness had been fooled by something so mundane as an owl is absurd. But, it is important to note that a local man who had lived in the area for his entire life was also dismissing the marsh gas explanation.

"Earthlights" and "spooklights" do seem to be an entirely real phenomenon; however, there is one major problem that surfaces time and time again when one tries to apply this explanation to the 1915 events: a study of the Admiralty's official reports, leaves the reader with little doubt that the lights were under some form of intelligent control.

For example, according to the paperwork currently in hand, Mrs. Cave-Penny and her daughter had seen on what was described as "several occasions," a bright white light "rise from a point a few hundred yards to the Eastward of the mine, swing across the valley to about the same distance west of it, and disappear." Whatever the true nature of this particularly unusual phenomenon, the description creates images of something undertaking very precise - rather than random - movements on repeated occasions and from the exact same location.

Similarly, the testimony of Mrs. Whitley of Boston Pines referred to repeated encounters with the strange light "immediately above" a belt of fir trees on her property. Once more, this suggests the presence of a type of aerial phenomena that was undertaking a pre-planned reconnaissance of the area by way of an already-established route. In other words, there was demonstrable evidence that intelligence lay behind the mysterious light.

Nearly ninety years later, it seems highly improbable that this strange affair will ever be truly resolved. Of one thing we can be certain, however: unusual aerial phenomena was highly active in the UK almost a century ago and Britain's military was keeping a close and concerned watch on the situation.

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1. Public Record Office file: Admiralty 131/119. Crown copyright exists.
2. UFOs 1947 - 1987, edited by Hilary Evans with John Spencer, published by Fortean Tomes, 1987.
3. Western Morning News, 16 and 19 February 1932. The Owlman and Others, Jonathan Downes, published by Domra Publications, 1997.
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Nick Redfern can be contacted at skywatcher4u@aol.com. His new book with Andy Roberts, *Strange Secrets: Real*

Government Files on the Unknown, is published by Pocket Books at \$14.00.

THE CASE OF THE CANNOCK CROC

BY MARK P MARTIN (YUFOS / CFZ)

The twilight of Wednesday 19th June, found me returning to my flat on the outskirts of Sheffield. It was the first of three days off work. I'd been relaxing in my local pub, discussing wide and varied subjects with Joe, an Irishman of advanced years. The fine conversation, bonhomie and several pints of dry cider had left me within a bubble of warm and gentle contentment. I would complete my evening of unwinding with cans of Scrumpy Jack and a Monty Python video, but first I would have a quick click into MSN, just to see who was around.

I found Jonathan Downes, who had been under the weather off late; I typed "How's the health dude?" But had no chance of tapping the enter key. Jon clicked his own message through cyber space "How you fixed for an investigation?" Now, there was only ever going to be one answer to that question. I had joined the CFZ a few months previously and had met the boys at *Fortean Times* Unconvention. Ever since, I'd been itching to get involved in fieldwork. The words "Yup" and "tomorrow" zipped from my keyboard down the phone lines to CFZ headquarters.

For the next hour or so I cyber-chatted with Jonathan, Nick Redfern, and maybe one or two other fine people. I can't recall precise details of the computerised chin-wag. A thick veil of delicious golden liquid, known as Scrumpy Jack cider obscures my memory.

The crux of the matter; JD wanted me to look into sightings of a Cryptid in Staffordshire. A local newspaper had splashed the story of a lake at Roman View, Churchbridge. According to witnesses this local beauty spot had somehow acquired a Fortean new resident: a seven-foot Crocodile.

Digital camera, trusty 10x50 binoculars, digital sound recorder and an EMF meter (more of this snazzy gadget later). The open can of cider was ceremoniously placed in the fridge; it would await my return (even though it would be utterly flat). However, the Monty Python

video was switched on. Just for a while, it was abandoned for the land of nod, as the Knights who say "Ni!" were demanding a shrubbery. They too, would keep.

I expected it to be smaller. It was a rough oblong shape, at least 250, perhaps 300 yards long and about 80 to 100 yards wide. Much of its perimeter was bordered by reeds. Traffic hurtling along the busy A5, which followed the ancient Roman Road, Watling Street was visible behind trees on the far bank. It was easy to get my self and car fairly close to the water via the quiet and attractive residential street, Roman View. A ramshackle wooden fence edged part of the lake. As I parked, a German shepherd and its owner casually breached it.

'It was 7 am, I was at a cryptid-haunted waterway, the only thing to do was to get on with it. I spent a good hour sitting on the bank scanning and scrutinising with the binos; much of the waterline was inaccessible due to the reeds. It would be difficult to circumnavigate the circumference, but I had to strike out and get my boots muddy.'

Being an open-minded bloke, the notion that the mystery beast may be Zooform Phenomena was not unacceptable. The lake was located just to the South of Cannock Chase Forrest. This Paranormal "window area" is known as the home of Yeti like Manbeasts and the site of an alleged UFO crash. If Zooform phenomena were present at the lake, there may be variations within the local Electromagnetic field. Such fluctuations are often recorded during incidences of Paranormal/ Supernatural activity. Including by myself at a haunted location on the edge of the Pennines, but that's ~~ANOTHER STORY. TO THIS END, I WAS ARMED WITH A~~ gadget to detect such weird deviations, the aforementioned EMF (Electro Motive Force) meter. The consensus opinion from the Ghost Hunting community is Spooks produce an Electromagnetic field of around 3 to 6 milligauss (quite a strong field). However, a figure has not yet been established for Zooform

Phenomena, perhaps because the Zooform concept is so new.

It was first described by Janet and Colin Bord in *Alien Animals* and defined by Jonathan Downes in *The Owlman and Others*. An EMF meter and a Zooform entity have not been in the same place at the same time. Not yet anyway. Maybe the CFZ will score a first with this? So, to this end, I kept the meter on a low scale, if a reading registered, I would move up through the range to get an accurate reading. However, the last few sentences may be a bit irrelevant; the meters scale hardly fluttered.

My reconnaissance involved more than tinkering with electronic gizmos. I endeavoured to survey as much of the Lake as possible. I searched the bits of the shoreline that were accessible, for any Crocodilian prints or markings. I tried to spot any possible Crocodile "slides", as described by that barking-mad Australian bloke. The one from early evening TV whose name escapes me. I studied the wall of reeds, peering into the green maze, scouring for a large reptilian shape. My fingertip hovered over the camera button. But no luck. After about four hours of questing I decided to head back to the car, and drive in search of food; Fortean investigations build an appetite.

A couple of dog walkers were encountered, both of whom were happy to chat. One believed the beast to be a big fish. This fellow was one of several local people who spoke of large fish in the lake, including Pike. The other dog owner proposed an entirely new theory to solve this cryptozoological conundrum. "Margaret Thatcher came up from London and went for a swim".

I snacked on petrol station sandwiches, and returned to the lake to find the road partially blocked by what looked like a scale model of Jodrell Bank. I threaded my car past a large white van, a huge satellite dish bolted to its roof. It was a BBC Television outside broadcast unit. They were, of course looking into the Crocodile sightings. I chatted to the crew, "I'm a member of the Centre of Fortean Zoology, we investigate mystery animals. The CFZ is the largest and only professional organisation of its kind in the world..." The conversation progressed and resulted in an interview with their Anchorman, Ashley Blake.

He wanted to know if the mystery beast could be dangerous. I answered probably not, only if

it was quite large and someone got very close. What should someone do if they saw the animal? The response to that one was easy: "Report it, straight away, at www.cfz.org.uk". Of course the sixty four thousand dollar question, the crux of the matter, the reason I was there in the first place, "Could there really be a Crocodile loose in a small Staffordshire lake?" I answered thus: "Yes, it is, unfortunately, not unknown for people to have, large exotic pets such as Dwarf Crocodiles, Spectacled Caimans and Alligators, this is completely illegal of course. When they grow too large, or the novelty value wears off, they are dumped. It could also be the witnesses saw a large fish that looks reptilian. There is a particular fish, which is absolutely enormous, the Sturgeon, which can look like a Crocodile, especially from the top." I based my comments on the original witnesses report to the local Police and RSPCA; they were five members of a local family.

John Mizzen, his Daughter Linda Charteris and his three young granddaughters encountered something which was large and alive. John had taken his family to the waters edge to feed a pair of Swans and their Cygnets. Following a substantial underwater commotion a head appeared on the surface. It scared the three children and unnerved Linda. John could only describe it in one way. Alligator. Both John and Linda thought it was after the Cygnets. Distracted by the frightened children Linda only saw it for a few seconds, but was insistent it was large dark coloured flat head, moving silently through the water. John had a longer look, and estimated that the body was five feet long and the tail two feet.

I do not think my statement that the Cygnet Cruncher possibly being a Sturgeon too unreasonable. We even have a precedent from Loch Ness Monster lore. Naturalist and Loch Ness ecology expert, Adrian Shine believes that misidentified Sturgeon could be Nessie herself, the Queen of all Monsters. He thinks they enter the Loch via the river Ness in search of mates. He supports his argument with a case from 1932. Miss K Macdonald saw an 8-foot long creature splashing up the river Ness. The description was remarkably similar to a Crocodile. Shine thinks that this "Crocodile" was in fact, a Sturgeon.

Our Cryptid, could of course, be exactly what John and Linda thought it was. As I've said it is not unknown for Crocodilians to be in this country (completely illegal, in contravention of the 1976 Dangerous Animals act, and

sometimes, laws against exploiting endangered species).

Because of its relatively small size, African Dwarf Crocodiles (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*) have become popular the world over as novelty pets. An endangered species, from West and tropical Africa they grow to a maximum of about five feet. Ten of these were confiscated, very recently, by customs Officers at Heathrow airport. They were smuggled, on a flight from Nigeria, stuffed into sacks in the aircrafts hold. All ten animals survived.

The Speckled Caiman (*Caiman Crocodilius*) originates from South America and grows up to seven feet in length. In September 2002 Police and the RSPCA retrieved two such animals from a squalid Oldham council flat. Another story, sounding like the introduction to a joke, but true, is of a fellow who bought a "Lizard" in a sack, from a man in an Essex pub. The moron paid £20 and staggered home. Once sober he discovered he was the owner of a Speckled Caiman.

A five foot long American Alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*), was found a few years ago in a spare bedroom in Chesterfield. The unfortunate animal had been kept in pond liner for years. After being rescued it was sent to a Norfolk Wildlife Park. The American Alligator is by far the largest of the Crocodilians I have mentioned here, the largest males grow up to about fifteen feet, and if tales spun by everglades moon shiners are to be believed, up to twenty feet, (although I'm not suggesting for one moment anything close to that size is at large in Roman View Lake).

There is another candidate, to match our Cryptids e-fit. Some thing struck a chord, in John and Linda's account; it was the statement that the beast was after the Cygnets. This stirred a memory. Later in the day, after several local people told of large Pike (*Esox lucius*) in the lake, it came back. A couple or three decade ago, my Farther a keen and vastly experienced Angler, enthralled me with tales of this mighty predator. He told me that Pike pluck Wildfowl from the surface. Could a Pike be mistaken for a Crocodilian? I searched the triple double-u for Pike images, and was quite stunned by the remarkable similarity between a Pike and Crocs head. The eyes are on top; even the jaw line matches the sinister "Crocodile Smile". But John said the animal was seven feet long, even allowing for a little adrenaline fuelled exaggeration, this would be a truly enormous specimen of *E. lucius*.

The largest officially recognised example weighed in at 67lb, (I can't find any mention of its length, but according to the Pike Anglers Club of Great Britain, it would have been about five feet long). There are many claims of even bigger fish. Ireland, with its many ancient and largely undisturbed Loughs is home to numerous mammoth Pike legends. Claims of up to 90lbs have been made. There is one story from the Connemara region, in the North West of the country. It tells of a scuba diver who was terrified by a Pike, over six feet long.

The rest of my day a Roman View was spent chatting to local people, and watching the media Circus build up. By the end of the day there were three television crews. I met an Official from Dudley Zoo. A marvellous chap named Dr Dave Beeston. I spent some time chatting to Dave; he leant towards the creature being a large fish and even commented "I wish I'd brought my fishing tackle". Although Dave did agree that John and Linda's description sounded Crocodilian.

I was of lucky enough to meet John Mizzen and Linda Charteris. I would like to take this opportunity to offer them my absolute gratitude. Both were kind enough to speak into my recorder (these recordings are now on the CFZ website). John and Linda struck me as totally sincere and sensible witnesses. Their concerns were for the welfare of the local Wildlife, and they had no interest in publicity seeking. John told of other witnesses. Two schoolboys, who had been playing truant, had seen the creature at close range, on the shoreline. Also, a shift worker, up for work at dawn, saw it swimming through the water from Roman View.

I headed back to Yorkshire after twelve hours at the Lake. Ideas churning in my head. Croc, Alligator, Fish or Zooform? Fort only knows. I reached the M1 about 8 pm. I was completely knackered and immensely hungry. My thoughts turned from Cryptids to a hot bath, the Monty Python tape and flat (but cold) Scrumpy Jack. I would be home soon. I had been on the M1 for a few moments, when the traffic ground to a halt. Stopped dead. And it started to rain. The Knights who say "nee" and my cider would have to wait a little longer.

A few days later, I had a phone call. It was Ashley Blake, the BBC presenter who had interviewed me. "Hello, Mark, what do you think of the Video...of the Crocodile, in the Lake..."

A man by the name of Mr Price had taken some video footage of something strange in Roman View Lake. Later, I spoke to Linda Charteris. She watched the footage on Central TVs lunch time bulletin, she said it showed a

Crocodile and looked like what she and John had seen.

It seemed that Fortean Zoology's days at Roman View Lake were not yet done.

UFOs: SUB ROSA* DOWN UNDER THE AUSTRALIAN MILITARY & GOVERNMENT ROLE IN THE UFO CONTROVERSY (part 7)

BY BILL CHALKER

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The author is a leading Australian UFO researcher and a contributing editor to the International UFO Reporter. An industrial chemist with an honours science degree from the University of New England he has worked in quality assurance and laboratory management. His book, The OZ Files - the Australian UFO Story, was published in 1996. He coordinates the NSW based UFO Investigation Centre (UFOIC).

Bill has allowed his work to be published in Project Red Book on numerous occasions, and it is now my pleasure to begin a major series on Bill's research into the secret investigations of the Australian government and military of UFOs.

Sub Rosa: refers to "under the rose", meaning "in secret".

THE RAAF AND THE UFO PROBLEM

A Department of Air minute paper, dated February, 1966, revealed that there were "no written responsibilities for (RAAF) Operational Command in the UFO field." It indicated that the minute writer (Squadron Leader ____ AI-2) had "reviewed the current 'Ad Hoc' system in the practice of processing U.F.O reports and with 'minor criticisms', found that it appeared to be working satisfactorily, entailing the minimum of work by this Directorate [i.e. Directorate of Air Force Intelligence - DAFI - B.C.]."

After much discussion a DAFI directive was issued to both Commands (Operational and Support Commands - B.C) in March, 1966. Group Captain I.S. Podger (for the Chief of the Air Staff), wrote in it:

The main purpose of the investigation of any UFO is to establish whether or not the subject of the report poses a threat to the security of Australia. The identification of the cause of the UFO report and its classifications as aircraft, balloon, missile, astronomical body or phenomena etc, is of minor importance and mainly for the benefit of members of the public whose interest may have been aroused by the report.

The directive also specified:

No attempts should be made to answer public enquiries at unit or command level. Requests by members of the public for information on UFOs in Australia and for the RAAF assessment of their origin etc should be referred to the Department of Air where they will be dealt with by the Directorate of Public Relations.

It was not long before a conflict arose between the Directorates of Air Force Intelligence and Public Relations. It came to a head with the director of the Directorate of Public Relations (DPR) forward a detailed minute paper to DAFI, dated 16th August, 1966. It was entitled UFOs - RAAF HANDLING OF PROBLEM. The conflict was over whether "the distribution to interested members of the public of the 'Summary of Unidentified Aerial Sightings Reported to Department of Air from 1960'" was to cease.

The Directorate of Air Force Intelligence (DAFI) was "keen to soft-pedal the UFO business" and gave "the reason for this cessation (as) the undesirability of wetting the interest of the public in UFOs."

DPR's reaction was terse and to the point: The 'Summary' grew out of a requirement for certain statistical UFO information to provide material for a ministerial reply to a parliamentary question.

DPR willingly undertook to draft an answer for the Minister (a task which entailed folio-for-folio research through some four or five parts of the relevant file), because it felt that the otherwise burdensome task had some distinct side-benefit, namely, the collation of an unclassified and innocuous summary of UFO 'sightings' in Australia for the past five years. DPR envisaged the day when it would be able to reply to all public UFO enquiries by the mere despatch of the 'summary' covered, if thought necessary, by a letter in which we explain that we are not prepared to engage in any subsequent disputation (i.e. take our 'Summary' or leave; we have told you all we know).

In order to keep this 'Summary' current, D/DAFI (Ops) was good enough to agree to provide DPR with the basic information which DPR would expect to have been security cleared for general release before adding the information to the 'Summary'.

The DPR director made, "a plea to remove the present restriction on the sharing of our unclassified UFO information with the public...."

The DPR director said, "In summary: by continuing with the old policy of playing our UFO cards close to the chest, we only foster the incorrect (but nevertheless widely held) belief that we have much vital information to hide. On the other hand, by maintaining a current 'Summary' (which DPR is prepared to do, with your continued help) we dispose in one blow, of the UFO enthusiasts belief that:

- (a) he is not being taken into the RAAF's confidence; and
- (b) the RAAF is desperately determined to suppress UFO information to prevent national panic...

The Director of Public Relations concluded his Minute Paper to the Director of Air Force Intelligence, by stating, "while security is not DPR's affair, our relations with the general public (cranks and all) certainly are and I feel strongly, from the PR point of view, that we are handling this whole UFO business in an unnecessarily rigid and unimaginative way."

This theme was continued in another Department of Air Minute Paper, entitled *Unidentified Flying Object - RAAF policy* and dated 12th October, 1966. It emerged following a request from author, Richard Tambling, who had requested permission to publish B.G. Roberts' Ballarat UFO conference presentation, in his forthcoming book, as an official view. DAFI were not inclined to do this. The minute paper confirmed that uncertainty and confusion were keynotes in RAAF UFO policy during 1966 - hallmarks that would continue, albeit waxing and waning, right up to today. It stated:

There appears to be some confusion concerning Departmental policy over UFOs ... on file... there is a ministerial statement to the effect:

"Anyone who is interested in sightings of UFOs can apply to the Department of Air for information on the subject and is welcome to a synopsis of UFO sightings which includes a very brief assessment of the probable causes."

This statement was made in answer to ministerial representation.

It would appear, however, that the policy represented by this statement may not have reflected the view of DAFI, despite earlier, although inconclusive evidence of his concurrence.

...DAFI has proposed to DGPP who in turn referred to DCAS that our approach to UFO reports be liberalised. It does not appear that either DGPP or DCAS were aware of the Minister's statement. In my opinion we must either comply with the terms of that statement or inform the minister of our 'new' approach, if it is not intended to provide the synopsis of sightings and on this I am not at all together clear from reading the files.

It would, however, seem that agreement has not been reached that DPR is to handle all enquiries for information, however, it does not appear that DPR has been consulted on the extent of the liberalisation proposed by DAFI in answer to his (DPR) submission [the August 16, 1966, minute paper - B.C.] and could DPR indicate his views.

It would also appear that there is some need for rationalisation of our files on this subject.

There are at least 4 different files which contain a confusion of policy, reported sightings and requests for information. Three of these files are classified, two of which are SECRET although there appears to be nothing in the files consistent with this

classification. Could DAFI and DPR consider rationalising these files please...

As it turned out, the 'Summary' did indeed become the public front of the RAAF involvement in the Australian UFO controversy. By the end of the sixties, the 'Summary' crystallised as a largely annual affair. No. 1 covered reports from 1960 to 1968. No. 2 covered 1969 accounts, while 1970 and 1971 reports appeared in 'Summary' No. 3. From 1972 to 1977 inclusive, the summaries appeared somewhat erratically, covering each year with numbers 4 to 9. The RAAF had embarked on a course that locked them into a bureaucratically orchestrated formula for handling the "UFO problem."

THE EMERGENCE OF AN "INVISIBLE COLLEGE" DOWN UNDER

The RAAF files also held a copy of a detailed 1967 report written by Dr. Michael J. Duggin, of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) National Standards Laboratory, Division of Physics. It was a report about a striking close encounter in the Sydney suburb of Canterbury. The report was directed by Dr. Duggin to Dr. Allen Hynek. Duggin, an Australian physicist, had recently joined Hynek's informal international "invisible college" of collaborating scientists. From Dr. Hynek Dr. Duggin had secured a letter of introduction dated 16 November 1966 on Dearborn Observatory, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois stationary. It stated:

Dr.M. Duggin is collecting information on UFOs and is part of an International effort to collate information on this phenomenon from several countries. For many years I have acted as a scientific monitor on this scientifically vexing problem of UFOs, and a number of colleagues and I have agreed to act as a "clearing house" for the investigation of which Dr. Duggin is a part. Any cooperation which may be expended to Dr. Duggin would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours, J. Allen Hynek, Director, Dearborn Observatory.

Dr. Duggin contacted Squadron Leader Baxter of the RAAF in his initial attempts to get official cooperation. In a 20 December, 1966, letter to Sqd. Ldr. Baxter he wrote,

I would like to add a few details to today's telephone conversation. Dr. Vallee, an astronomer at the University of Chicago and Professor J. A Hynek, whom I saw in Chicago a few weeks ago, are very interested in the UFO phenomenon from the point of view of a scientific investigation. So am I and so are many other scientists in other countries. These gentlemen have carefully documented files on many (about 6000) sightings in many different countries. Many of these sightings are doubtful but there are a large number which it has not so far been possible to explain in terms of natural phenomena. These are the cases of interest.

Dr. Vallee has at his disposal a computer program for an automatic question-answering system (which was originally developed for stellar astronomy). He has asked Dr. O. Fontes in Brazil, Professor (sic?) Michel in France, myself and several other scientists in different countries to collect data on sightings and where possible interview those who originate the report in order to determine its reliability and so weight it for future statistical analyses. This information will be coded, so that it can be punched onto an IBM card and later fed onto a magnetic library tape for use with the question-answering system.

Present investigations have indicated the existence of certain patterns in this phenomenon but unfortunately much more data is required before great reliance can be placed on the results of such an investigation. Several reports from isolated observers, contiguous in time and consistent in description, would appear to suggest that perhaps some observations are made sequentially along great circle routes. Again more data is needed.

"Landing" reports have been quite frequent in South America and, I believe, in the Southern hemisphere as a whole.

What is needed is information, (1) as soon as it is turned in, so that the case can be correlated with other information, if possible, at Dearborn Observatory, (2) results of the follow-up.

I would like to investigate cases myself where possible and would be very willing to be of any help I can.

Dr. Hynek is the scientific advisor on UFOs to the U.S. Air Force. I am enclosing a letter from him to substantiate my request. I stress that this is a scientific investigation and that although my interest is extracurricular, I feel that it is very necessary to subject those unexplained phenomena to scientific investigation.

The Directorate of Air Force Intelligence (DAFI) reviewed Dr. Duggin's request. A Department of Air Minute Paper from Wg. Cdr. N.G. Marshall, D/D AFI (Ops) to DAFI addressed the issue:

You will note that one of the scientists involved in this UFO investigation is Dr. Hynek who is stated to be the scientific advisor on UFOs to the United States. Dr. Duggin, however is acting in an extracurricular capacity.

You will note that these scientists are mainly interested in the unexplained UFOs, but as far as I can make out they would like information on all sightings. As you know, we already have an official arrangement with CSIRO whereby we can pass to them any report on which we would like their assistance, so it would really be only a question of stretching this arrangement slightly to pass them a copy of all reports. However, Dr. Duggin's interest is unofficial as far as CSIRO is concerned and this may cause embarrassment.

These scientists, with all the documents and facilities available to them, are obviously in a position to assist us in this matter, and though I am not keen on releasing the details of the RAAF investigations or anything which may increase the interest of the general public in this field, I think we should give these scientists the information they require.

However, although they would like the information as soon as possible, I recommend that we stick to our present system for UFO investigations, i.e. the nearest RAAF Base investigates the report and passes it up through Command Headquarters to Department of Air. If we change the system to allow CSIRO to get a copy of the report before it has completed the RAAF process, we may get two concurrent investigations of the same report.

Annotations to this minute paper indicated,

"Seen by DAFI who agrees." Other file folios indicated that CSIRO were asked if all reports could go to Dr. Duggin and that CSIRO agreed to Dr. Duggin acting in an unofficial capacity. Thus Dr. Duggin's report to Dr. Hynek on an impressive close encounter in 1967 was an extension of the process that had been put into play. The RAAF were sanctioning, albeit sometimes in a token fashion, the activities of the "invisible college".

A SECRET MILITARY "RAPID INTERVENTION" TEAM

By 1968, Harry Turner, who prepared the classified 1954 report on the DAFI UFO reports, was working in the Directorate of Scientific and Technical Intelligence (DSTI) of the Joint Intelligence Bureau (JIB). At the end of 1954, Turner, a University of Western Australia trained physicist, went to England, where he worked at Harwell - the British atomic energy research establishment. He returned to Australia in 1956 and until 1964 was stationed at Maralinga. There he was the Australian Health Physics Representative during the controversial atomic bomb trials. When he joined DSTI, Turner functioned as a JIB liaison with DAFI and used the connection to try to once again encourage serious research within the secret world of Defence Science and intelligence.

Harry Turner requested access to DAFI's UFO reports. This was granted. In May 1969, at Turner's suggestion a new RAAF UFO report form was devised which was intended to give a more scientific slant to the reports. At this time Turner was working with other scientists to set up a "rapid intervention" team to scientifically investigate cases of UFO physical evidence. A firm proposal was developed with the team to operate within the Defence Science and Technical Organisation (DSTO). The team was to consist of 4 or 5 scientists, with its mainstay to be rapid intervention into UFO "landing" events, for which an aircraft was to be on standby. Turner, in a memo dated November 8th, 1969, to the Director of JIB, indicated that he had Dr. Morton from ANU, Dr. John Symonds from the Australian Atomic Energy Commission and Dr. Mike Duggin, then of the National Standards Laboratory. George Barlow, of Defence Science and Technology (DST) had also offered the help of his group. Turner indicated that Arthur Wills, then Chief Defence Scientist "had agreed to this." The plans for the scientific team had been almost completed and authorisation to proceed appeared imminent. However fate had already intervened.

SUB ROSA FALLOUT IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

In the middle of 1969 a major flap broke out in Western Australia, centred in Perth. One of the reports included an impressive radar visual event at Cloverdale and tracked on Kalamunda radar on May 23rd. The Director of Air Force Intelligence felt that things had gotten out of control and made an appeal for the Defence "intervention" group to assist. Unfortunately

the group had not been finalised, and Harry Turner was seconded to help out.

Turner supplied me with a copy of his report. The radar visual incident was described as follows:

On the 23rd May, 1969, (Mrs. C____'s) 13 year old son, who has an interest in the night sky, noticed from the front door of their house... that to the south and about 10 degrees above the horizon, there was a moving light which he first took to be an aeroplane. As it approached to the SE of the observer, it became apparent to him that its behaviour pattern differed considerably from that of an aircraft. He called his mother who observed...in an easterly direction a steady red light on top of a more diffused blue-white light, and darting haphazardly in a zig-zag pattern, but in general travelling towards a northerly direction until it disappeared behind the house. The two witnesses proceeded to the NW side of the house where they observed a luminous object stationary against the clear starry sky, at an elevation between 10 and 15 degrees and at a bearing of 015 degrees.

The light observed was circular - about half the diameter of a full moon. It was steady in position and intensity for some 15 - 20 minutes. It no longer had a red light on top and had the brightness of a fluorescent streetlight. The edge was not clean cut but was somewhat hazy, even though the night air was perfectly clear. The time at which the object was first sighted was estimated as being 1835 hours.... Shortly before 1900 hours the object moved at extremely high velocity, away from the observers in a general N to NE-ly direction.

Mrs. C____ ...telephoned the shift operator on site. (He) was still talking to Mrs. C____ when a request came from the meteorological radar situated near Perth Airport as to whether he could check out an unidentified echo seen on the meteorological radar. [Turner concluded the met returns were possibly prosaic and unrelated to the main incident - B.C.] The Kalamunda radar operator had not been watching his screen as no aircraft were in the vicinity, but on checking the radar P.P.I. screen, he observed a large echo some 9 miles away at 300 degrees from his position, which placed the echo some 2 1/2 miles north of Mrs. C____'s position. Initial contact was made at 1901 hours and held for only 30 to 40 seconds. The echo which reappeared for short durations on 5 further occasions was twice the size of a large aircraft at that position. The echo has not been seen since it finally disappeared at 1942 hours.

One unusual feature of the Kalamunda report is that the radar is equipped with Moving Target Indicator

(MTI) which suppresses all permanent echoes and all targets moving at speeds less than an estimated 6 knots... The night in question was clear and calm and there is no justification for an MTI breakthrough in the region of the target. Despite the operation of MTI, the unknown target was clearly visible, even though there was no noticeable displacement of its position. The operator had never before met an apparently stationary target that was recorded so clearly despite the operation of MTI. (The operator) paid particular attention to this echo over the whole period of 41 minutes that it occurred, because it was a potential traffic hazard to two aircraft in circuit at about that time, and they had to be warned to avoid the area of the unknown target.... The operator is quite sure ... that the echo's appearance never lasted more than a minute at any one time....

Just before 1900 hours the object moved away from the observer, disappearing from sight in a fraction of a second, and it is possible that it correlates with the stationary echo on radar at 1901 hours. The unusual features of the radar echo are: a) size; (b) the fact that it was seen despite the operation of MTI; and (c) the spasmodic appearance.

It is not possible to readily conceive of an explanation for these observations. All observers were obviously sincerely puzzled individuals with an aversion to publicity....

Harry Turner, a physicist and analyst for the JIB, concluded, "Neither the Kalamunda radar observation nor Mrs. C____'s sighting can be readily explained by conventional objects or phenomena." His report also in part criticised the DAFI system for handling UFO reports, in particular referring to the lack of assistance given to the Air Force Intelligence officer "on the spot".

Hindsight is a wonderful thing, however at the time the DAFI "empire" was under threat. Some years earlier the RAAF had asked JIB to take "the UFO problem" over, but the clandestine side of JIB did not want "a bar of it", as they considered they would then be caught up in what they regarded as a complex conjectural matter, which might drag them into the limelight - the last thing an intelligence organisation would want. However in 1969/1970 with the DAFI empire under threat, the Air Force did not take kindly to criticism, particularly when it came from what DAFI saw as an "outsider" a JIB scientist. The upshot of this was that Harry Turner's access to the DAFI UFO files was withdrawn.

TOO MUCH MONKEY BUSINESS

(PART 3)

BY JONATHAN DOWNES (CFZ)

"Don't worry Ladies and Gentlemen – these chains are made of chrome steel"
The Showman in *King Kong* (1933)

Once again, YUFOS are indebted to our great friend Jon Downes for the following article, which will be appearing in one of Jon's future books. Enjoy...

There are a number of ghostly bear reports in my files, including the well-known events in Hackney Marshes during the mid 1970s, but a rather more obscure episode happened ten years later when a party of three young boys were exploring the woods near Kings Nympton. They saw a large ape or bear-like creature with green cat like eyes, broad shoulders and a large muzzle. There are a number of other stories from the region and they are usually described as being the ghosts of bears either slaughtered in the barbaric sport of bear baiting which was only outlawed as recently as the early nineteenth century, or sometimes the ghosts of dancing bears from Eastern Europe and the middle east which were paraded around country fairs until relatively recently.

In 1992 veteran occultist David Farrant wrote to us with details of an investigation that he had carried out in about 1969 near Salisbury. This involved sightings of a ghostly bear which walked bipedally, and even then, before we had formulated my theories regarding the connection between ghostly bear reports and the worldwide proliferation of BHM phenomena we were struck with the obvious similarities between the apparition that he described and many so-called bigfoot reports.

Bears have also been noted in various parts of The Cotswolds. There is an account of a 'monster' that has generally been described as a mystery cat but, which to me at least exhibits certain para-ursine (or Zooform BHM) characteristics from Gloucestershire in 1988. A lady was frightened to find that her pet cat was badly injured by something that growled at her through the cat flap and poked ferocious looking claws through the tiny orifice at her. A series of accounts of what appeared to be a brown bear from a wood in Oxfordshire in the mid 1990s were collected our my friend and colleague Jan Williams who wrote the

following piece for the Summer 1994 issue of our magazine "*Animals & Men*":

"The ancient forest of Wychwood, straddling the border of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire, was once a favoured hunting ground of kings. In the nineteenth century it was a wild and lawless place, the haunt of highwaymen, Black Dogs, and the dreaded Snow Foresters - strange spirits whose howls and screams could be heard echoing through winter nights, and which were known to attack snowbound travellers.

Remnants of this ancient woodland still exist along the valley of the Evenlode. Despite its proximity to the busy modern city of Oxford and the tourist traps of the Cotswolds, Wychwood remains a secret forest, a refuge for fox, badger and deer, and a memory of Old England.

Residents of Charlbury, within the forest bounds, have taken a lighthearted view of reports of a bear roaming the woods. The village baker sold "Buns to feed the Bear", the butcher displayed "Bear Steaks" in his window, and local publicans played host to bear-suited regulars.

Charlbury's previous claim to cryptozoological fame lay with 'Skippy', an escapee wallaby which bounded around the village for a few months in 1985. Wallabies are becoming commonplace in England, but the wolf which killed 14 sheep in 1935 was more of a rarity. An escapee from Oxford Zoo at Kidlington, it was tracked down by a photographer from the Oxford Mail. Face to face with the wolf, he decided that discretion was the better part of valour and shot it with gun rather than camera.

Whilst many villagers are sceptical regarding the bear, Mr Waring, landlord of 'The Bull' at Charlbury, is keeping an open-mind. He has tracked bears in Canada, and believes a bear

could easily survive in the area. "It is the right sort of terrain, and there is plenty of food in the woods." And he has found large and unusual prints in the woods, though sadly these were too distorted for a definite identification.

The main witness is John Blackwell, who runs a mixed farm at Dean and keeps a variety of livestock. In September 1992, Mr Blackwell saw an unusual animal near his 21-acre wood. Remembering 'Skippy', his first thought was of a wallaby "with its tail chopped off", but closer sightings on the following two nights convinced him that it was a bear.

The animal was the size of an Old English Sheepdog, with small pointed ears, "massive great hocks", and no tail. Its thick fur was a dark rusty-brown, with lighter sandy-brown patches on belly and flanks. The ears were held down, and it walked on all fours with a pronounced "waddling" motion.

The 'bear' was not seen again for several months, but there were indications that something strange was living in the woods. Huge prints were found on the land, the farm dogs barked continually in the area of a thickly overgrown bank, and two fish ponds on the farm were visited by some large animal which left a trail of smashed and flattened rushes. On one occasion cows on the farm were so badly frightened that they refused to eat for five days.

In late May 1993, Mr Blackwell heard a strange hooting noise from the wood. He walked towards the sound, thinking at first that it was a cockerel crowing, but as he got nearer it changed to a continuous howl. Two fallow deer were grazing on the woodland edge. As they moved off, the bear-like animal came out of the trees, following them at a run. It left huge prints, which Mrs Blackwell measured against her size 9 wellingtons. The prints were larger and showed long claws.

On the following day the animal appeared again. It was lying in long grass and put its head up as the farmer approached. Mr Blackwell estimated that it was a third larger than in the previous September.

The farmer says none of his livestock have been attacked and the animal seems curious rather than aggressive towards people. He felt it should be left alone, and only came forward when other reports appeared in the press.

In January of this year, bus driver Greg Gilbert and passenger Sarah Cooper saw a reddish-brown animal walk across the Charlbury road. In contrast to Mr Blackwell's sightings, the creature walked upright, on its hind legs. Another witness, James Graham-Cloete of Chadlington, stated he had seen it standing by the roadside.

A spokesman for the nearby Cotswold Wildlife Park was dismissive. He suggested witnesses were seeing a badger. But John Blackwell is a traditional farmer with an interest in wildlife, who sits up at night and watches badgers. A bear in Oxfordshire may seem unlikely, but is it any more likely that a man who has been watching badgers for twenty years should suddenly mistake one for an exotic animal?

Press reports of unusual animals often encourage other witnesses to come forward, and it seems the 'bear' is not the only strange creature roaming Wychwood. Earlier this year, Mrs Nicky Sherbrook, of Taston near Dean, was surprised to find one of her sheep killed and half-eaten. She said it had been "ripped to shreds". Shortly afterwards, Mrs Sherbrook's 17-year-old son, Harry, was walking with a friend in a field bordering onto woodland when they disturbed a fox-sized animal. It was a light silvery colour, with a black stripe down the spine, a flat cat-like head, and a big bushy tail. It ran very quickly down the field and into the woods, passing a third boy who dashed up to ask the others what it was. All three teenagers are used to foxes, and were quite certain it was not one.

"It looks as though Oxfordshire's 'secret forest' is harbouring cryptic creatures - or was that a Snow Forester howling in the woods?"⁽³⁴⁾

The appearance of this bear was reported widely throughout the UK press, and was treated with some seriousness by mainstream zoological authorities. Amusingly it looked for a while as if, under EC legislation a mate would have to be found for him (or her). The European Brown Bear is a protected species in Europe and because of a particularly inane (but rather charming) piece of EC law, is a protected species in all EC member states (even those where, like the UK, *Ursus arctos* has been extinct for the best part of a millennium!) Serious discussion was taking place as to whether the animal should be caught, sexed and re-released with a mate into the Oxfordshire countryside, when the matter

suddenly dropped from the headlines as the sightings ceased as mysteriously as they had begun. The question must remain as to whether the Brown Bear of The Wychwood was an escaped pet or zoo animal (and the complex legislation surrounding the 1976 Dangerous Wild Animals Act makes the possibility of an escaped bear much less likely than it was say two and a half decades before), or whether, as seems increasingly like it, 'he' was nothing more than a zoiform phantasm of the woods - a 20th Century analogue of the Snow Foresters who once haunted the Royal woodland.

As well as the ghostly bears of southern England, there is one final category of 'creature' that we feel should be included within the broad grouping of BHM Zooform Phenomena.

There are also a number of reports of tailed (and sometimes tail-less) black mystery cats (and occasionally dogs) of considerable size which have been seen walking along on their hind legs. Several authorities on cryptozoology have cited the undoubted fact that *Felis concolor* does, on occasion walk for very short distances on its hind legs,⁽³⁵⁾ but frankly, we are fairly sceptical and would place both the bipedal puma reports and the ghostly bear reports, where we feel that they belong, firmly within the category of BHM Zooform Phenomena.

For the last link in the chain which represents my personal quest for BHM phenomena (at least to date) we have to go back to the subject of UFOs, and indeed we have to visit Rendlesham Forest, the scene of what is perhaps the most significant UFO incident in British history.

During the last few days of December 1980 there were a series of UFO reports in and around Rendlesham Forest. They seemed to be inextricably linked with the two Second World War Air Bases of USAAF Bentwaters and USAAF Woodbridge. On the third night (which was probably - although no-one seems too sure - the 28th December) 'something' happened which according to some eye witnesses involved the landing of an apparently alien spacecraft and the disembarkation of what appeared to be its occupants. The area between Orford Ness and Rendlesham Forest is a very strange place. As well as being one of the most eastern points in the British Isles it has also been the focus for a wide range of bizarre paranormal activity.

Writing in the 13th Century, Ralph of Coggeshall, described a "wild man" caught in fishing nets off Orford Castle. This creature who like so many contemporary sightings of humanoids seen in conjunction with UFOs was seemingly equally at home on land and at sea, lived at the castle for several months.

The wild man is not the only item of cryptozoological interest from the Rendlesham area. The lanes of the area are reputedly haunted by giant spectral black dogs (like the one seen by Lady Rendlesham in Leiston Churchyard at the end of the nineteenth century), that pad malevolently but silently along. An even more disturbing spectre called the *shug monkey*, which is described by witnesses as an unholy combination of mastiff and great ape is also seen on occasion, and in recent years the forest has also been the haunt of mysterious black 'panthers'.⁽³⁷⁾

Southend-based fortean researcher Maxine Pearson is in possession of some video tape which showed the paw print of some huge animal - like that of a cat or a dog, but far bigger and with strange flattened finger nails rather than claws. She thought that it was a print from an alien big cat of some description, but on seeing the film, our immediate thought was of the semi-mystical 'shug monkey'. When a few weeks later in an unimpressively obscure suburb of Miami we were given the aforementioned plaster cast and heard a description of a bizarre dog/ape hybrid seen in conjunction with both UFO activity and animal mutilation episodes, another link in the chain was formed.

There seems no doubt that there is some connection between the two types of phenomena. What the connection is, however, remains obscure. It would be ridiculously simplistic, to my mind at least, to claim that the hairy humanoids, like Lord Kimbote portrayed in *The X Files*, are the denizens of the mysterious space craft. I think that the truth is far less obvious and far more subtle. Both phenomena are inextricably linked, but are symptoms of something far greater and far less easy to understand.

CLAPHAM WOOD INVESTIGATION

By GARY CROMPTON (YUFOS)

A BRIEF HISTORY

Clapham Wood is a densely wooded area nestled in the heart of Sussex's South Downs. The village of Clapham is nothing more than a street with about 35 houses situated in a line backing on to the wood itself. For decades now, Clapham Wood has been at the centre of a paranormal void, a place where anything and everything can and does happen.

It all started at the back end of the 60's and early 70's. Local pets, mainly dogs were going missing when out walking with their owners. Many simply disappeared into thin air, only a few feet from there astonished owners. Others collapsed and died, as if affected by some deadly chemical in the soil. The local media got hold of the story and published a series of articles about the vanishing pets. A local investigator, Charles Walker, started doing his own research into the wood. Surely someone knew why dogs were going missing...who was behind it? What did they want with them?

By this time the wood had become a hotbed of UFO activity, attracting many UFO investigation groups and local media attention. All manner of strange, seemingly paranormal events were taking place. People were collapsing in pain for no reason when walking through the woods, waves of nausea and panic coming over walkers and ramblers for no apparent reason and unusual lights were seen ascending and descending into the wood at night.

The wood has been quieter for some years now and things are not really any clearer today than they were 3 decades ago. The common thinking is that a black occult group known as the Friends of Hecate are behind all of the paranormal events. They are believed to be still practising their dark magic in the woods and at other sites around the area. They are believed to be a well-organised and well-financed group intent on creating untold damage through chaos magic. They tap into the huge network of ley lines around Clapham Wood and other sites to harness their power to invoke the goddess Hecate. Hecate is the goddess of the underworld and her favourite companion is a dog, a connection maybe to the hundreds of missing dogs around the area?

Her favourite place is supposedly at a cross roads, again, maybe a connection to the crossroads in Clapham Wood known as the Chestnuts.

So, now we are in the new millennium, our work at the site begins. Clapham Wood will be an on going investigation. We are looking for any evidence to support the Hecate theory, research into the history of the woods themselves and attend regular night vigils at the site. Is Clapham Wood a play ground for dark occultists? Is it a portal to another world where paranormal events can and do happen? Is it a beacon for UFOs? Only time and hard work will tell.

THE INVESTIGATION

04/05/2002

Our first investigation at the wood was conducted on the 4th May 2002. Myself and Gavin Moulson, a fellow investigator had arranged to meet up with a Sussex based paranormal investigation team called C.O.T.C. We had also arranged to meet author and Clapham Wood researcher Charles Walker.

Charles began his investigations into the wood back in the late 60's and has also co-wrote two books on the subject. C.O.T.C and Charles hold monthly night vigils at Clapham so their knowledge and experience would prove to be very useful.

We had arranged to meet the team at 7:30 p.m. at St Mary's Church.

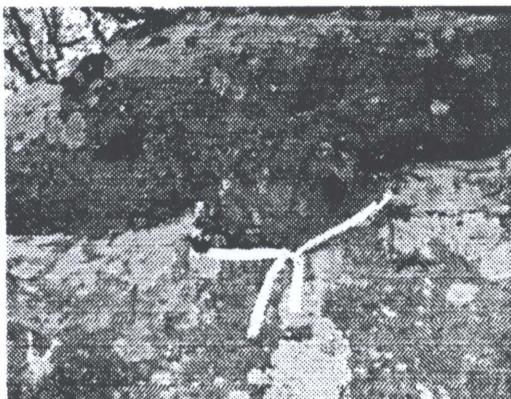


FIG 1 - St. Mary's Church, Clapham

The church overlooks the village of Clapham and is surrounded by the woods on three sides. We had arrived at the village by about 2:30 pm that afternoon so we decided to take a look around the wood in the day-time and to get a feel for the place. The locals seemed nervous and stand off-ish when we tried to enquire about the goings on in the woods. Were they all in on it? Who knows?

We made our way to the church and decided to take the west side of the wood first. The wood is very dense and very quiet, that was the first impression we got. Where were all the birds and animals? After a quick look around we decided to venture into the heart of the woods via the church entrance. This involves going through a field of bulls which is quite a challenge in itself. Upon entering the woods things started to go a little strange. Both myself and Gavin simultaneously felt "drained" of energy and light-headed. We couldn't explain the reason for this so we headed on deeper into the trees. After about 30 seconds or so the feelings subsided and we felt ok again. It was at this point that we noticed our battery power on both mobile phones had gone; mine had no power and had switched itself off, whilst Gavin's had only one bar. Both phones had been charged the night before.

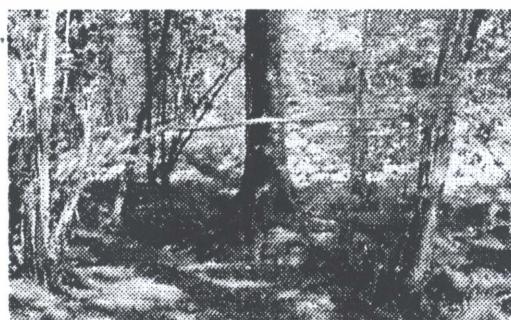
The wood itself appears to be dead. It isn't the usual lush green woodland you expect to find on a sunny day in May, it's almost like a petrified wood, rotten and decaying. The branches snap very easily when weight is applied to them. It was at this point we stumbled upon the oldest tree in the woods. A huge, scary looking monster that, as we later found out, is the tree which ceremonies are held under and manifestations summoned. We inspected the tree and discovered ribbons had been tied around some of the branch stumps (see fig 2).



These may have been Pagan offerings to the wood but could also have been evidence of the Hecate connection we were looking for.

Further investigation of the wood revealed nothing out of the ordinary except for the same "washed out" feelings coming over us at different points in the woodland. It is interesting to note that when we were heading out of the wood, at the place we first felt funny, nothing happened. Could it be some kind of magnetic anomaly?

We decided to take a look around another area of Clapham Woods known locally as the Chestnuts. This is where most of the paranormal events occurred during the 70's. It is a little walk away from the main woods, across the village, through a field and up an embankment. As soon as we arrived at our location we suddenly noticed "archways" made out of the trees. First we saw one, then two, and then suddenly, everywhere you looked, trees had been bent out of their natural shape in to archways. The reason behind this was unclear at the time but to assume it was a natural occurrence is simply unbelievable (see fig 3).



The time to meet the others was drawing near so at this point we decided to have lunch, discuss what we had already encountered and write up our findings. It is strange that, when we had left the woods altogether the power had returned to full in both mobile phones.

The time was now 7:45 p.m. and we had parked up outside St. Mary's church to wait for the others. Our group had now swelled to 7 members. Present were myself and Gavin, Stacey and Stuart Logan, Andy Mercer, Charles Walker and his investigation companion Dave. We had a quick "getting to know you" chat and shared our findings from the day's earlier events. We discussed the tree bending with Charles and he confirmed that this is a practice known as "tree hexing", the reason behind it is still unknown but Charles thought it could be one of two things. Either it

to mark the area for members of the occult group who didn't know the area that well so they could be directed to certain parts of the wood or as magical gateways to entrap whichever unlucky person walked through one with the remains of any malevolent magic that had been summoned. Charles was also sure that the locals were "in on it", whatever "it" was. He argued that the village is so small, and with many of the houses backing onto the woods, it would be very difficult for a group to be active in the woods without anyone knowing about it.

My argument back was why would they keep quiet and appear somewhat afraid by it all. Charles responded by saying he thought many of the "inner circle" of Hecate were powerful public figures who have vast amounts of money at their disposal. Things then turned quite nasty. On our walk to the wood entrance we were stopped by two men carrying shotguns. They asked us what we were doing in the woods tonight and where we were planning on going. We replied that we were night hikers on a walk across the South Downs to which they replied, keep out of the woods, we are shooting pheasant. This may have been a simple coincidence but Charles and the others were convinced this was proof the locals were in on the game and wanted us out.

We pressed on, myself and Gavin somewhat more reluctant than the rest after our run in with the gun-wielding locals. C.O.T.C and Charles insist on no torches during a Clapham investigation. This is simply because you never know who is in there and torches will alert them to our coming. The place at night is the stuff nightmares are made of. It was eerie enough during the day but at night it takes on a whole new meaning. The trees seem to wrap around you, pulling you in almost, the silence is almost noisy and the strange feeling of being followed couldn't be shook.

Andy and Stacy are mediums, they "feel" other, off-worldly presences and try to communicate with them. It was when we came upon the worshiping tree that both members began to sense we were not alone. We had all come equipped with digital still cameras as "orbs" were a common occurrence in the woods. Andy would fire off random shots in the direction he could sense the presence. We followed suit and managed to capture glowing balls of light, invisible to the naked eye on our equipment (see fig 4).

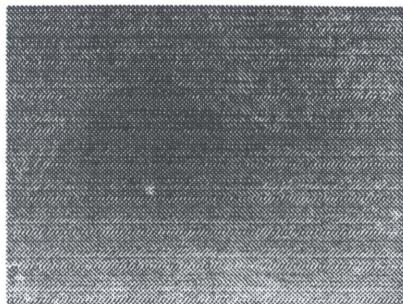


FIG 4 – An 'orb' captured on a digital camera in Clapham woods.

Stacy sensed someone, or something was close by so we ducked into a tree line for cover to see if anything would pass us. Nothing did but Stacy was adamant something was with us that was "evil" and could not be shook. Charles, Stuart and the team took us to various parts of the wood that had been active over the last few months. We still had the strange sense that we were being followed and orbs were cropping up whenever we took any digital pictures.

We had a quick break for a drink in a small clearing in the heart of the woods. The place is so dark it almost seems unnatural. The trees are all bent and twisted out of shape and really seem to close in on you as you sit staring up at the stars. We made a group decision to move on to the "chestnuts" area of the wood. We collected our things and started the 10 minute walk to the area, discussing the tree "hexing" once again.

On our exit from the woods Andy could sense someone behind us, following our every move but, due to the fact we were walking through a field of cows, we were unable to take a photo in case we startled the animals and subsequently got trampled. Our walk to the "chestnuts" took us through a farmer's field and up a steep embankment, it was hard going but our determination drove us on. Once at the chestnuts the mood changed instantly. I became light headed and had to sit for a minute or two, Stacy doubled up in pain and had to rest and strange noises were coming from a large stretch of undergrowth. The noises could well have been from animals but I guess we will never know. Fear was beginning to take a hold on me and Gavin as we walked through this strange place.

We were heading for the crossroads in the wood, the site of the apparent sacrifices and scenes of chaos magic. When we hit the site we set up a small camp from which we would oversee the investigation. Although the night

was hot and muggy, intense cold spots were occurring around us at camp and further out in the woodland. Both Andy and Stacy were aware of several presences around us and again, orbs were appearing on the majority of photos. The icy blasts were so strong at one point you could physically see your own breath in the air. One second you were hot, the next shivering cold with the hair on your arms standing up. I have never experienced this kind of temperature change before in my life and was at a loss for an explanation into what may be causing it. There was no wind, not even a breeze so whatever it was, in my opinion, wasn't natural.

Due to Stacy's intense feelings of pain we decided to end our investigation of the Chestnuts for the evening. We headed back the way we came and Charles pointed out the actual tree that was photographed in the late 70's that, when developed, had a shroud of mist covering it in the shape of a goats head. We took several photos ourselves but nothing on digital camera revealed anything. When we later developed the 35mm exposures 2 bright red orbs were visible to the right of the tree. We saw nothing when the pictures were being taken and there is no natural light source around the area so, again, these anomalous lights remain a mystery.

We eventually made our way back to where we had parked the cars and rested for a few minutes. Stacy didn't want to go any further and decided to stay in the car. The rest of us went back into Clapham wood and walked over an area we had not yet been to. The area in question is directly to the left of the church car park. Charles and Stuart had previously been in this area some weeks earlier and heard a strange drum beating that was getting progressively louder. Although they never saw anyone or anything the drumming was heard by all the party and was defiantly getting closer. We didn't discover anything new on this occasion but again, our investigation was cut short.

Stacy had seen lights in the wood following the same path we had taken minutes earlier so she radioed in to Stuart. We ducked into a patch of undergrowth to see who our guests may be but saw and heard nothing. After what seemed like a life-time we set back off down the path we had just come from, a little shaken but even more intrigued as to what was really going on in this strange place we found ourselves in.

We re-grouped back at the cars and said our farewells to the rest of the team. As we began our long journey home we pondered over just what had happened and realised we had more questions needing an answer than when we first started. Just what was going on in the woods? Is there some occult group practising in the dark woodland? What was behind the tree hexing? Were all the orbs captured spirits from another dimension or something else? One thing is for sure, Clapham Wood is a very eerie, strange place and we couldn't wait for the next opportunity to get back down and carry on our investigation.

(Continued next issue)

** NEXT MEETING **

TUESDAY
9TH SEPTEMBER 2003

7:00pm – 10:00pm

THE OLD QUEEN'S HEAD

POND STREET

SHEFFIELD CITY CENTRE

LAKE-MONSTER-MANIA!

CHINA'S 'LOCH NESS' MONSTER RESURFACES

(July 16, 2003, CNN.com)

Beijing, China (Reuters) — China's legendary "Lake Tianchi Monster" has surfaced anew, with local officials reporting sightings of as many as 20 of the mysterious and unidentified creatures in a lake near North Korea.

Sightings of the strange beast - China's version of the "Loch Ness Monster" - date back more than a century, but like Scotland's famed "Nessie," reports vary and remain unconfirmed.

On the morning of July 11, several local government cadres caught sight of a school of mysterious creatures swimming through the lake in the Changbai mountains, in northeastern Jilin province, the Beijing Youth Daily said on Tuesday.

"Within about 50 minutes, the monsters appeared five times," it quoted one of the officials, provincial forestry bureau vice-director Zhang Lufeng, as saying. "At times there was one, at times there were several. The last time, there was as many as about 20."

He said the creatures, two to three kilometres (1.25-2 miles) in the distance, appeared only as white or black spots. But from the ripples in the water, he and others determined the spots were "living beings."

Officials were not reachable for comment.

In 1903, according to local records, a creature resembling a huge buffalo with a deafening roar sprang out of the water and attempted to attack three people before one them shot it in the belly six times. The beast roared and disappeared back into the water.

A more recently documented sighting compared the head of the monster to that of a human -- except with big round eyes, a protruding mouth and a neck 1.2 to 1.5 metres long.

It also had a white ring separating its neck and torso and smooth, grey skin.

CHAMP, THE FAMED "MONSTER" OF LAKE CHAMPLAIN, MIGHT BE FOR REAL AFTER ALL.

(*The Anomalist*)

Researchers working in the Button Bay area of the lake last month say highly sensitive sonar equipment on their boat captured underwater sounds similar to those emitted by a Beluga whale or dolphin.

"What we got was a biological creature creating biosonar at a level that only a few underwater species can do," said Elizabeth von Muggenthaler, president of Fauna Communications Research, a Hillsborough, N.C., firm that studies how animals communicate.

Von Muggenthaler said her team was on the lake at the behest of the Discovery Channel, which was doing a television show about Champ. She said the TV crew departed a day prior to the first biosonar readings detected by her team.

Von Muggenthaler declined to speculate on the size, nature or physical characteristics of the creature her equipment monitored. She acknowledged there is no evidence the lake is home to a freshwater whale or dolphin.

The biosonar noises picked up by the equipment sound like a rapid series of ticks and are emitted by underwater creatures in their search for food.

What is unusual about the sonar heard in this case was its volume: Ten times louder than any known fish species in the lake. She said the irregular sequence of tick sounds also ruled out any chance the noises were produced by a mechanical device or fish finder.

Von Muggenthaler said the readings were recorded on multiple instruments on June 3, 4 and 10. Some of readings lasted as long as 10 minutes, and she suspects the creature came within 30 feet of her boat during one of the episodes.

While the readings provide no clues about the creature's physical makeup, she said she should be able to say how fast it was moving once analysis of her data by National Instruments Inc. of Austin, Texas, is completed next month.

"I don't know what else to tell you," she said. "That's what I got. That's what it is."

Von Muggenthaler said she hoped her discovery would not cause a spate of ill-advised Champ hunting on the lake.

"It is important to remember that, if there is indeed a creature out there, it is protected by New York and Vermont law," she said. "The best thing people could do for this creature, if it exists, is leave it alone."

The recordings by von Muggenthaler represent the biggest development in the debate about the existence of Champ since the publication of Sandra Mansi's photograph of a serpent-like object taken during a family outing in 1977.

Over the years, hundreds of Champ sightings have been reported by fishermen, boaters and other lake users. Skeptics have claimed Champ is an extravagant piece of folklore perpetuated by witnesses making more out of what they saw than what was actually there.

Von Muggenthaler, a native of Charlotte, was skeptical of Champ's existence while growing up in Vermont.

"I was sort of a scientist at an early age," she said. "To me, you had to see it to believe it."

Steve Smith, director of facilities at ECHO at the Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, said he was uncertain what to make of von Muggenthaler's discovery.

"I just don't know," he said. "Who is to say that it is beyond the realm of possibility" that she had found Champ? He said he is familiar with her work in bioacoustics from a time when she was able to record communications between giraffes at a North Carolina zoo where he was employed.

"Her work is well respected in the zoo community," he said.

BBC 'PROVES NESSIE DOES NOT EXIST'

(27 July, 2003 <http://news.bbc.co.uk>)

A BBC team says it has shown there is no such thing as the Loch Ness monster.

Using 600 separate sonar beams and satellite navigation technology to ensure that none of the loch was missed, the team surveyed the waters said to hide Scotland's legendary tourist

attraction but found no trace of the monster.

Previous reported sightings of the beast led to speculation that it might be a plesiosaur, a marine reptile which died out with the dinosaurs.

The team was convinced that such an animal could have survived in the cold waters of Loch Ness, despite the normal preference of marine reptiles for sub-tropical waters.

The researchers looked at the habits of modern marine reptiles, such as crocodiles and leatherback turtles, to try to work out how a plesiosaur might have behaved.

They hoped the instruments aboard their search boat would pick up the air in Nessie's lungs as it reflected a distorted signal back to the sonar sensors.

The team did find a buoy moored several metres below the surface as a test for the equipment, but, in the end, no Loch Ness monster.

"We went from shoreline to shoreline, top to bottom on this one, we have covered everything in this loch and we saw no signs of any large living animal in the loch," said Ian Florence, one of the specialists who carried out the survey for the BBC.

His colleague Hugh MacKay added: "We got some good clear data of the loch, steep sided, flat bottomed - nothing unusual I'm afraid."

"There was an anticipation that we would come up with a large sonar anomaly that could have been a monster - but it wasn't to be."

The BBC team says the only explanation for the persistence of the myth of the monster is that people see what they want to see.

To prove this, the researchers hid a fence post beneath the surface of the loch and raised it in front of a coach party of tourists. Interviewed afterwards, most said they had observed a square object but several drew monster-shaped heads when asked to sketch what they had seen.

The television programme detailing the investigation, *Searching For The Loch Ness Monster*, was made for BBC One.