

WARMINSTER PHOTOGRAPHS

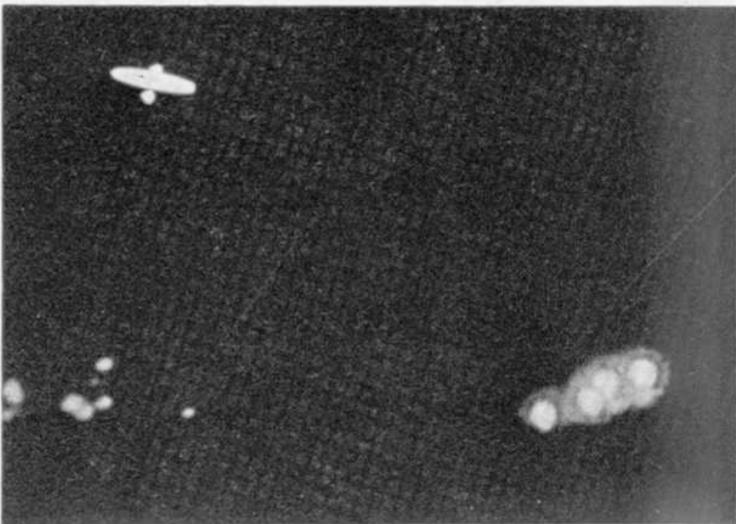
A Tentative Interpretation

Pierre Guérin

Dr. Guérin is Director of Research at the Astrophysical Institute of the French National Centre for Scientific Research. Translation of this article by Gordon Creighton.

THROUGH the kindness of my friend Charles Bowen I was able to borrow the negative of the strip of 35 mm. film on which, on March 28, 1970, over Cradle Hill, Mr. Foxwell had photographed an object in the shape of a flying saucer seen in cross-section.

To start with, I cleaned the strip in distilled water. It turns out, in fact, that the marks which are to be seen on the enlargement reproduced on page 5 of FSR, Vol. 16, No. 4, and on the enlargement of the same photograph reproduced on page 6 of the same issue, and which Mr. Percy Hennell suggested might have been an abrasion aggravated by an attempt at retouching,



Photograph 1

are not at all due to an abrasion of the rear surface of the film.* They are due simply to a deposit, in the form of a halation, resulting from the softening product added to the water of the final rinsing of the film before

* **Editor's note:** Mr. Hennell first examined the negative strip in the presence of Gordon Creighton and myself, and suggested that the unfortunate mark on photograph 2 was possibly an abrasion. It was decided at that meeting that he would not attempt to clean the negatives in any way, but would make his enlargements from the film in the condition in which it was handed to us. The resulting prints were published in FSR, Vol. 16, No. 4, and once that was done we were very pleased when Dr. Guérin suggested that he should clean the negatives and examine them further in his laboratory.

the latter was set out to dry. This deposit dissolves very easily in distilled water.

After the film had thus been completely cleaned, I examined it with a very strong lens and made direct contact copies on Kodak "Kodacolor" plan-film (positive copies for projection) and "Kodakone" (negative copies reproducing the negative of the original strip); and furthermore I made new enlargements of the strip, on soft paper. These copies and these enlargements have needed no retouching.

In my opinion there is no question of the object photographed being in any possible way the result of faking. The question that arises is why the appearance of this object on the photographs is so different from its appearance to the eye according to the descriptions given by the witnesses (FSR, same issue, page 7).

In this connection it should be noted that the eye is not sensitive to the ultra-violet radiations of wave-lengths of less than 0.36 microns, whereas all photographic films are, whether panchromatic or not. On the other hand, the sensitisation of the panchromatic films in commercial use (such as the Ilford HP 4 emulsion) drops off very sharply in the red area for wave-lengths of more than 0.63 micron, while the eye remains sensitive to them up to around 0.70 micron and even a bit beyond that.

Consequently the interpretation of this divergence between what the photographic film "saw" and what the witnesses saw could be quite simple: namely, that

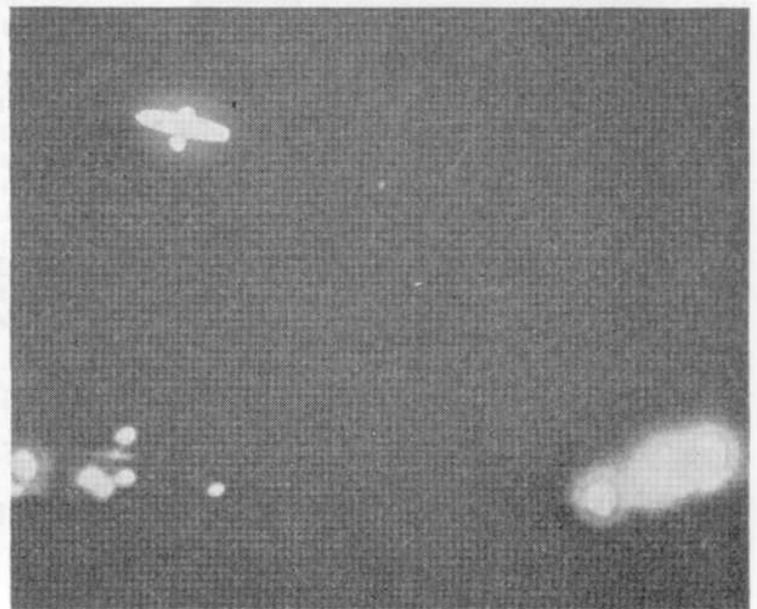


Photo 1. Under-developed print



Photograph 2

the object photographed was emitting ultra-violet light, which the eye does not see. Around the object, however, a ruby-red halo, probably of a monochromatic colour and doubtless due to some phenomenon of air ionisation, was visible only to the eye and in actual fact has made no impression on the film. This halo, the shape of which incidentally is elliptical, is seen very well in the first photographic image, but it is extremely weak, so much so that it vanishes on the paper prints where the sky is over-developed to total blackness: only the "tail-end" of the film's sensitivity, namely in the extreme end of the red, has permitted the registration of this halo, but with a degree of intensity incomparably weaker

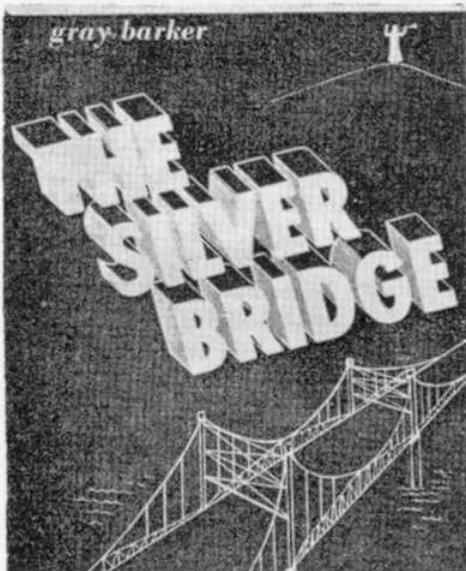
than the intensity permitted by the range of sensitivity of the eye.

If this interpretation is correct, the consequences which we can draw from it are important. As will be known, in a recent issue of *Flying Saucer Review* (Vol. 15, No. 4), John Keel disputed the presence of any solid material object inside the variable luminous phenomena which he calls "soft sightings", claiming thereby that the solid phase of the UFO phenomenon is only one of the aspects—and no doubt the least frequent aspect—of the phenomenon in question. The Warminster sightings do indeed appear to furnish us with an example of "soft sighting" linked with the presence, at its centre, of a solid object not visible to the eye but emitting ultra-violet light.

That the UFOs can appear, or disappear, on the spot, when leaving or entering our usual four-dimensional space-time is probably true. But it would be rash to assert that they do not always possess a material, solid body right from the very moment that they have penetrated into this space-time. Despite the claims of John Keel, the "soft sighting" could in fact very well be merely secondary effects of the presence of solid objects, whether or not visible to the eye, in the gaseous medium of our atmosphere. This hypothesis had already been formulated long ago, and the Warminster sightings seem to confirm it.

Mrs. E. Spencer

We take this opportunity of wishing a speedy recovery to our indefatigable subscriptions assistant (with us since issue No. 1), who has been admitted to hospital once more for operative treatment.



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