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PPQ = 100

# MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Date opened (Date of first enclosure) <u>18-11-2003</u>	1. Attention is drawn to the notes on the inside flap. 2. Enter notes of related files on page 2 of this jacket	DIVISION/ESTABLISHMENT/UNIT/BRANCH <u>DAS SEC</u>
		[FULL ADDRESS & TELEPHONE NUMBER]
Registered file reference <u>D/DAS/64/3</u>		
Part No. <u>AB</u>		
SUBJECT <u>UFOs</u>		
<u>Public Correspondence and Requests for Information</u>		
[BLOCK CAPITALS]		

RECORD OF KEYWORDS: (23/6/04.)

Referred to	Date	Min/Encl	Referred to	Date	Min/Encl	Referred to	Date	Min/Encl
<b>CLOSED</b>								
<b>SEE</b>								
<b>PART AC.</b>								
2014								

FOR DRO USE ONLY

1st Review date

2nd Review date

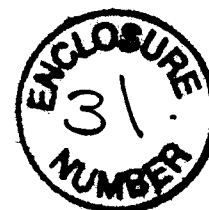
PA ACTION  
(MOD Form 262F must be completed at the time of file closure)







From: Section 40  
Directorate of Air Staff – Freedom of Information 1



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Zone H, Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) 020 7218 2140  
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000  
(Fax) Section 40

Section 40

Hull  
East Yorkshire

Section 40

Your Reference:

Our Reference:

D/DAS/64/3

Date:

26 July 2004

Dear Section 40

Thank you for your e-mails dated 5 July and 23 July 2004.

I have enclosed a copy of the file – ‘UFOs: Alleged UFO incident – Crash of Lightning F6, 8 September 1970 that you requested back in April. Sorry for the long delay.

We have removed personal details in accordance with the Data Protection Act of 1998.

I hope this will be of help.

Yours sincerely

Section 40



Section 40

---

**From:** Section 40

**Sent:** 26 July 2004 16:39

**To:** Section 40

**Subject:** Internet-Authorised:UFO enquiry

Dear Section 40

Thank you for your e.mail that you sent to my colleague Section 40 dated 23 July 2004.

I have sent a copy of the file D/Sec(AS)12/6 which you requested with a covering letter. Sorry for the long delay.

The personal details have been taken out with accordance to the Data Protection Act of 1998.

Hope this will be of help.

Yours sincerely

Section 40



Section 40

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**From:** Section 40  
**Sent:** 23 July 2004 00:41  
**To:** Section 40  
**Subject:** Re: information on UFO's

Dear Section 40

It is now seven days since I responded to your E mail regarding File D/Sec(AS)12/6. I had hoped to have received the relevant details by now.

I enclose once again my Snail address and look forward to receiving the file above ASAP.

Thank you for your prompt attention to my query.

My address is:

Section 40

Hull,  
East Yorkshire.

Yours in appreciation

Section 40



**Section 40**

**From:** **Section 40**  
**Sent:** 14 July 2004 23:18  
**To:** **Section 40**  
**Subject:** RE: Request for information on UFOs

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your prompt attention to my query, I look forward to receiving the relevant details at your earliest convenience...

My address is:

**Section 40**

Hull,  
East Yorkshire.

Yours in appreciation

**Section 40**

-----Original Message-----

**From:** **Section 40**  
**Sent:** 14 July 2004 12:03  
**To:** **Section 40**  
**Subject:** Request for information on UFOs

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your message of 5 July to my colleague, **Section 40** concerning your request for a copy of file D/Sec(AS)12/6. I apologise for the length of time you have been waiting for a response. We have been waiting to find out the status of another file concerning this incident before deciding how much of this file can be released. We have also moved offices' which has also added to the delay. Thank you for your patience, I am now in a position to reply.

First, it may be helpful if I explain the background to the incident involving Captain William Shaffner USAF on 8 September 1970. The official records show that Captain Shaffner was the pilot of a Lightning aircraft which took off from RAF Binbrook at approximately 2025 GMT to take part in a Tactical Evaluation Exercise involving the interception, shadowing and shepherding of low speed targets. The target aircraft was a RAF Shackleton maritime reconnaissance aircraft flying at 1500 feet off the north east coast. Captain Shaffner was vectored onto the target and reported that he was in visual contact, but no further messages were received and it was subsequently established that the aircraft had crashed into the sea. Captain Shaffner apparently abandoned the aircraft after it hit the sea, but despite a prolonged search he was never found and is presumed to have drowned.

Over the years since the accident there has been a lot of speculation in the press that Captain Shaffner had encountered an 'unidentified flying object'. However, there is absolutely no evidence of any 'unidentified aircraft' having been involved, nor is there any reason to suppose that there is any UFO connection with what remains a tragic accident.

File D/Sec(AS)12/6 contains mostly newspaper cuttings, enquiries from the press and UFO groups about the accident, and MOD replies. I have copied the file for you and if you would like to e-mail me your full address, I will put these in the post. Please note we have moved location and my e-mail address has now changed to **Section 40**

The Aircraft Accident Report file (mentioned in paragraph 1) containing full details of the enquiry into

15/07/2004

the accident has been selected for preservation in The National Archives (TNA) and is currently awaiting collection and cataloguing by TNA. Once these actions are complete you will be able to view the original documents by visiting TNA . The catalogue of all the material currently available at TNA and details of how to get there, can be found on their website at [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk).

I hope this is helpful.

**Section 40**

Ministry of Defence  
Directorate of Air Staff – Freedom of Information  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Zone H  
Main Building  
Whitehall  
London  
SW1A 2HB



(on databases)

**DAS-SEC3**

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**From:** Section 40  
**Sent:** 05 July 2004 03:48  
**To:** das-sec3@defence.mod.uk  
**Subject:** file D/Sec(AS)12/6

Dear Section 40

I am emailing to enquire the present status of my letter request of 18 April 2004 for file D/Sec(AS)12/6 and your letter response of 29 April 2004.. Is there any news yet about the recall of this file and it's processing and preparation?

Sincerely

Section 40



LIGHTNING AIRCRAFT TYPE F-6 MARK XS-894 NUMBER 550N UNIT 11GP STR BINBROOK BASE 8-9-70 DATE W/O SEVERITY

FATAL										
NARRATIVE OF EVENTS										
TAKE OFF	TIME	PLACE	NO	TIME	HEIGHT	SPEED	NO	TIME	HEIGHT	SPEED
	2130A	BINBROOK	1	2142A	170 Ft	Kts	3		75	Kts
LANDING			2	APPROX		Kts	4			

A USAF exchange officer, classified as "limited combat-ready" + who was permitted to participate in a Tactical Evaluation exercise. At 1834Z he was called to readiness & ordered to scramble at 1947Z but was denied fuel to dispatch shortly after taxiing out. After some delay he asked the ground crew to expedite the turn-around servicing because he had been informed that he would be scrambled as soon as his aircraft was ready. He started up before the servicing was complete & without signing the turn-around certificate & taxied out at 2025Z. The turn-around card holding the certificate fell off the aircraft as he entered the Runway. The aircraft took off carrying live missiles in contravention of the Runway Orders applicable to the type of sortie ordered. The plane vectored onto a Strakeleton aircraft flying as a low speed target at 1500' off the Yorktown coast, with the requirement to shadow and in a certain eventuality to shepherd it on its approach to the coast. The pilot was turning in these tactics. He announced visual contact with the target but no further message was received. His aircraft subsequently disintegrated & fell into the sea from which it was salvaged almost intact. The body of the pilot has not been recovered.

Major Council Group - Bureau of Aeronautics

SPEC. REC.  SEE ATTACHED CARD

P-1022 ACTION

U.S. STATE

F765B	F765C	F1669	F412	RM. 824	CHECKED	CASUALTY INDEX

LIGHTNING F6 X3 194 53PN 116 57C BINbrook 8.9.70 FATAL WO

NARRATIVE OF EVENTS										
AIRCRAFT TYPE	MARK	NUMBER	UNIT	CHD	BASE	DATE	SEVERITY			
TAKE OFF	TIME	PLACE	NO	TIME	HEIGHT	SPEED	NO	TIME	HEIGHT	SPEED
LANDING			1		Fe	Kts	3		Fe	Kts
			2		Fe	Kts	4		Fe	Kts

A combination of a difficult task, as noted, crew experience + lack of training in the low speed. Visident + shepherding techniques led to a situation where the pilot failed to monitor the height of his a/c whilst slowing down + requiring his escape pod that he had inadvertently flown but a/c into the sea. The pilot had attempted to recover the situation by selecting reverse, which failed to take effect, with the a/c tail skimming on the water. He had then initiated an ejection which was unsuccessful because of the interruption of the sequence by the failure of the canopy to jettison. He then tragically abandoned the a/c but because he has not been found, he was presumed to have drowned. During or after his escape. The higher permission strike on the canopy by a cartridge occurred because of negligent sensing in that the firing unit was incorrectly seated because of damaged screw threads. Personnel + omission in orders, instructions + the training syllabus, concerning low speed + the training + the training and shepherding techniques.

SPEC. REC. V										
F.1022 ACTION										
MODS. STATE										
FS 3a ACTION	F765B	F765C	F1669	F412	FIN. REV.	CHECKED				

# DON'T BELIEVE



# EVERYTHING YOU READ !

An article was carried in the Grimsby Evening Telegraph recently; it consisted of a full page spread on 2 consecutive days and concerned the loss of Lightning F6 XS894 on 8 Sep 70, flown by a USAF exchange pilot, Capt Schaffner. These are some extracts from those pages:

*Headline: MYSTERY OF A JET AND ITS 20,400MPH "TARGET"*

*The aircraft, XS894, disappeared into what is fast becoming one of the greatest aviation puzzles of all time. The ditching was witnessed by the crew of a Shackleton aircraft but no trace of Capt Schaffner was ever found. More than a month later the wreckage was found by RN divers. The cockpit was empty and the canopy closed.*

*On this particular night, a radar operator at Saxa Vord picked up an unidentified aircraft between the Shetlands and Norway flying at 630mph at 37,000ft. It increased speed to 900mph and climbed to 44,000ft and QRA at Leuchars was scrambled. The contact then turned through 180 degrees and disappeared from the screens. Its speed was estimated in the region of 17,400mph. During the next hour, the mystery contact reappeared several times.*

*The contact was being monitored by the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System at Fylingdales and the information was being relayed to the North American Air Defence (NORAD) Command at Cheyenne Mountain. Strategic Air Command HQ at Omaha ordered its B52 bombers into the air. A request was made from a high level within NORAD, through HQ STC, for RAF Binbrook to send Capt Schaffner to join the Lightnings looking for the mystery contact. By now, the contact was flying parallel to the East Coast 90 miles east of Whitby at 530mph at 6,100ft - an ideal interception by a Binbrook Lightning. What follows is drawn from what I have been told is the official transcript of the conversation*

*between Schaffner and Staxton Wold:*

*Schaffner: There is ... blueish light. Very bright. It's a conical shape. It's like a large soccer ball. It's like it's made of glass. Contact in descent. About 70ft ... it's levelled out again. It's turning, coming straight for me, am taking evasive action, I can hardl....*

*Staxton: 94? Come in 94, are you receiving.*

*A radar operator who had been tracking the Lightning and the mystery object watched in disbelief. The 2 blips merged into one, decelerating rapidly from over 500mph until they became stationary 6,000ft over the North Sea 140 miles out from Alnwick. Shortly afterwards the single blip separated into 2, one maintaining its southerly heading at 600mph, the other turning to head north-west and vanishing at a speed later calculated to be around 20,400mph. While all this was going on a Shackleton was ordered to hold station around Flamborough Head. Then Staxton Wold re-established contact with Capt Schaffner.*

*Staxton: 94 what is your condition?*

*Schaffner: Not too good, I feel kinda dizzy. I can see shooting stars. The compass is useless, can you bring me in GCI?.*

*Staxton: Er... Hold station, 94 over.*

*HQ STC had instructed Staxton Wold to request Schaffner to ditch his Lightning off Flamborough. It appears the reason for the decision to ditch was a fear that the Lightning had somehow become "contaminated" during its mystery interception over the North Sea. The Shackleton watched the Lightning ditch and called for a helicopter. The crew noticed the canopy up but could not see the pilot. On their next pass, they called that the aircraft was sinking fast but the canopy had been closed again. The search for the pilot involved the Shackleton, a Whirlwind from Leconfield and several lifeboats but the pilot was not found. On 7 Oct 70, divers from HMS Keddleston inspected the wreckage and said that Capt Schaffner's body was still in the cockpit. But when the wreckage was brought to the surface, there was no trace of Capt Schaffner. Just an empty cockpit.*

*The wreckage was taken in some secrecy to RAF Binbrook. The ejector seat seemed to be "wrong" and there was a suspicion among the investigators that it was not the one fitted to the aircraft when it took off. At the end of the day the investigation team was told that as nothing useful had been discovered, their job was over. They were all called into the main office at Farnborough and told in no uncertain terms that they were not to discuss any aspect of the ditching. The reason was simple - national security.*



**That dramatic story is how a major regional newspaper described the loss of one of our Lightnings. The Lightning was popular with the Humberside population and this article would undoubtedly have attracted interest. In contrast, this is the RAF's version of events:**

The pilot of the accident aircraft was a USAF exchange officer who had completed 2 tours on the USAF F102 all weather fighter. He had accumulated 121 hours on the Lightning, of which 18 were at night. He had been declared Limited Combat Ready after only 8 weeks on the Sqn; this unusually short period of time was based on his previous experience as well as his performance thus far on the Lightning. The limitation on his operational status was partially due to the requirement to complete all the stages of visident profiles; at the time of the accident, he was qualified in 2 of the 3 phases of visident, which meant that he would be capable of carrying out shadowing and shepherding tasks, only if he was in visual contact with the target.

The Sqn was participating in a Taceval at RAF Binbrook and the Sqn Cdr had authorised this pilot to participate, in the belief that he would not be involved in a shadowing or shepherding mission. However, unbeknown to the Stn or Sqn, the Taceval team had just changed the exercise scenario from normal interceptions to shadowing or shepherding on slow speed low-flying targets. The targets were Shackletons flying at 160kts at the minimum authorised height of 1,500ft.

After maintaining one hour at cockpit readiness, the pilot was scrambled. While he was taxiing, the scramble was cancelled and he returned to the dispersal, ordering fuel only and no turnaround servicing. This was contrary to standing instructions and the engineering officer ordered a full turnaround. The turnaround was delayed and, during this delay, the pilot was warned that he would be scrambled as soon as he was ready. He told the groundcrew to expedite the servicing but started his engines and taxied before the servicing was complete. He got airborne at 2030Z.

The pilot climbed to FL 100 and was handed over to GCI; he was then given a shadowing task against a 160kt target at 1,500ft. At a range of 28nm, he was told to accelerate to M0.95 in order to expedite the take over from another Lightning. He called that he was in contact with the lights but would have to manoeuvre to slow down; his voice sounded strained as though he was being affected by 'g'. His aircraft was seen by the other Lightning pilot; it

appeared to be about 2,000yds astern and 500-1,000ft above the Shackleton, in a port turn. The Shackleton crew then saw the aircraft, apparently very low. Shortly afterwards, the Lightning pilot failed to acknowledge instructions and emergency procedures were initiated. A search by the Shackleton, and a further air/sea search the following day, failed to detect any trace of the aircraft or pilot.

The wreckage was located nearly 2 months later with surprisingly little damage. The canopy was attached, but not closed, and there was no sign of the pilot. The aircraft appeared to have struck the sea at a low speed, planed on the surface and come to rest comparatively slowly.

The ejection seat handle had been pulled to the full extent allowed by the interrupter link in the main gun sear. (The interrupter link ensures that the seat does not fire unless the canopy has gone). The canopy gun sear had been withdrawn but the cartridge had not been struck with sufficient force to fire it (during servicing, the firing unit had been incorrectly seated because of damaged screw threads). The canopy had been opened normally, the QRB was undone, as was the PEC, and the PSP lanyard had been released from the life jacket.

It was concluded that the difficult task, carried out in rushed circumstances, combined with a lack of training in this profile, led to the pilot failing to monitor his height while slowing down. He had inadvertently flown into the sea but had attempted to recover the situation by selecting reheat; this was ineffective with the tail skimming the water. He attempted to eject, but this was unsuccessful due to the canopy failing to jettison. He then manually abandoned the aircraft, but was never found. He was, therefore, presumed to have drowned during or after his escape.

**Wing Commander Spry says**

**There are a number of points which are raised by this article, the first of which is do not believe all you read in the newspapers! Among the serious points to consider are the distractions and stress caused by the false scramble and interrupted turnaround, as well as the supervisory failure of allowing a LCR pilot to participate in a Taceval by night. Close supervision during exercise conditions, in a single seat environment, is almost impossible. Minimum qualifications are laid down for a reason!**

LOOSE MINUTE

D/DPR/325/1/1

10 Mar 93

Dep Hd AHB(RAF)

Copy to:

Sec(AS)2 - [REDACTED]  
DPO(RAF)

LOSS OF LIGHTNING XS 894

Reference:

A. D/AHB(RAF)8/10 dated 9 Mar 93 (not to DPO(RAF)).

1. Reference asked for comment on your draft reply to Sky TV. I am entirely happy with your form of words.

2. Perhaps 'RAF Bimbroke' (sic) exists on some alternative Earth?

[REDACTED]

DDPR (RAF)

[REDACTED]

NoA,

LOOSE MINUTE

D/AHB(RAF)8/10

9 Mar 93

Draft cleared subject to amendments - see attached.  
Also advised that we believe the pilot's name was Schaffner.

DDPR(RAF)  
Sec AS 2 - fac [redacted]

[redacted]  
11/3

LOSS OF LIGHTNING XS 894

Ref A: D/DPR(RAF)325/1/1 LM dated 27 Jan 93  
Ref B: D/AHB(RAF)8/27/1 LM dated 1 Feb 93

1. You will remember, I am sure, our recent exchange at Refs A & B concerning the loss of Capt Schafner USAF in XS894. Unfortunately SKY Television are doing a documentary on UFOs, and they picked up on the Evening Telegraph story and have asked me to supply them with further information (see attached). I thought it best that you both be aware of SKY's interest in this aircraft, and indeed the subject in general.
2. I should also be grateful if you would both indicate that you are content that my attached draft reply to Mr [redacted] does not give any hostages to fortune. Sorry to inflict this on you, but we must do our best to bring SKY back down to earth!!

[redacted]

[redacted]  
Dep Hd AHB(RAF)  
[redacted]



3 March, 1993

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

One of my colleagues spoke on the phone (Wed) about a television documentary we're making for SKY TV about UFO's.

I was particularly interested in the case of the English Electric Lightning (XS894) that was ditched into the North Sea on the 8th September 1970 after being scrambled from RAF Bimbroke in Lincolnshire.

I'd be grateful if you could supply me with any information about the incident.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
Producer, SKY NEWS FEATURES

SKY TELEVISION PLC

HEAD OFFICE: 6 CENTAURS BUSINESS PARK GRANT WAY ISLEWORTH MIDDLESEX TW7 5QD  
TELEPHONE 071-782 3000 FAX 071-782 3030

DRAFT

[REDACTED] Esq  
Sky News Features  
Sky Television  
6 Centaurs Business Park  
Grant Way  
Isleworth  
Middx  
TW7 5QD

Our Reference  
D/AHB(RAF)8/10

LOSS OF LIGHTNING XS 894

Thank you for your letter of 3 March 1993 concerning the accident to the above aircraft and the death of Captain W O Schafner USAF. ~~Surviving Ministry of Defence records indicate that the aircraft took off from RAF Binbrook at approximately 2025 hours Greenwich Mean Time to take part in a Tactical Evaluation Exercise involving the interception, shadowing and shepherding of low speed targets.~~

*The facts surrounding this accident are*

The target aircraft in this case was a Royal Air Force Shackleton maritime reconnaissance aircraft flying at 1500 feet off the north east coast. Capt Schafner was vectored onto the target and reported that he was in visual contact, but no further messages were received and it was subsequently established that the aircraft had crashed into the sea. Capt Schafner apparently abandoned the aircraft after it hit the sea, but despite a prolonged search he was never found and is presumed to have drowned.

~~The accidental loss of aircraft during demanding manoeuvres at low level over the sea is not unknown. There is absolutely no evidence of any "unidentified aircraft" having been encountered, nor is there any reason to suppose that there is any UFO connection with what remains a tragic accident.~~

DRAFT

# THE FATAL FLIGHT OF FOXTROT 94



TONY DODD

## THE FATAL FLIGHT OF FOXTROT 94

**S**axa Vord was one of a chain of British radar stations who's task was to scan the skies and guard against intrusion from unidentified aircraft approaching from the North Sea or the sensitive 'Iceland Gap'. The year was 1970 when the cold war was at its height with Russian aircraft making regular flights into the North Atlantic to test reaction from NATO fighters.

At 8.17pm. on the night of September 8th 1970, a radar operator at Saxa Vord picked up a contact of an unidentified aircraft over the North Sea between the Shetlands and Norway.

The contact was monitored for several minutes at a steady speed of 630mph at 37,000ft on a south-westerly heading. The contact was then seen to turn 30 degrees to head due south with its speed increasing to 900mph and its altitude lifting to 44,000ft.

In accordance with normal procedure Saxa Vord flashed a message to the *quick-reaction-flight* at RAF Leuchers on the east coast of Scotland. Two *Lightning* interceptors were scrambled within minutes and headed out across the North Sea. So far it had been a routine scramble, but it was then that the radar plotters on the Shetland Isles saw something on their screens which left them amazed. The contact which had been travelling at speeds consistent with Russian warplanes had turned through 180 degrees and within seconds had disappeared from the screens. Later they calculated the speed of the object at 17,400mph.

During the next hour the mystery contact reappeared several times, and each time the *Lightnings* were sent to investigate, but the object turned and disappeared again.

By this time two *F4 Phantoms* of the US Air Force had been scrambled from Keflavik in Iceland and with their sophisticated radar were able to track the intruder themselves. As they attempted to close on the object they found that they had no more success than the *Lightnings*.

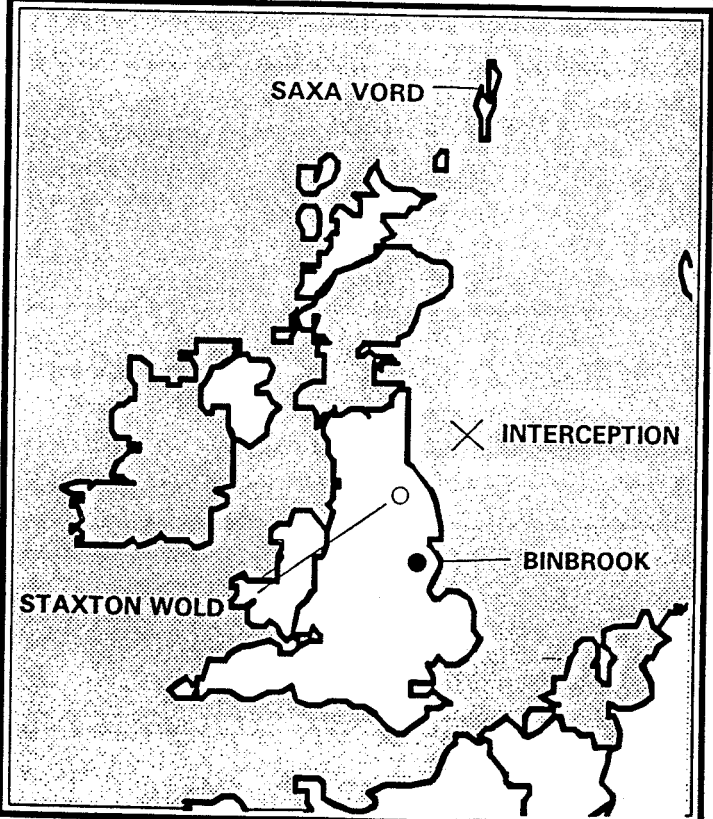
The cat and mouse game was now causing alarm to NATO commanders. The alert had reached such a level that the contact was being monitored by the Ballistic Missile Early Warning station at Fylingdales, also with a second BMEWS in Greenland. The North American Air Defence Network at Cheyenne Mountain and the US Detection and Tracking Centre at Colorado Springs also became involved in the incident.

During this time the *Lightnings* and *Phantoms* made repeated attempts to get close to the object, but as they approached it disappeared off the radar screens. Eventually the *Lightnings* were ordered back to base whilst the *Phantoms* continued to patrol.

At 9.39pm radar controllers picked up the contact again. This time its speed was decelerating to 1,300mph which was almost the limit of the *Lightnings* and *Phantoms*. It was at this time holding an altitude of 18,000ft and heading southwest, off the northern tip of Denmark.

Two more *Lightnings* were scrambled from RAF Leuchars to patrol northeast of Aberdeen and a further two from RAF Coltishall in Norfolk. The contact was now between these two lines of fighters. While this was taking place, Fylingdales were informed that Strategic Air Command HQ at Omaha, Nebraska, was ordering its B52 bombers into the air.

The order could have only come from the



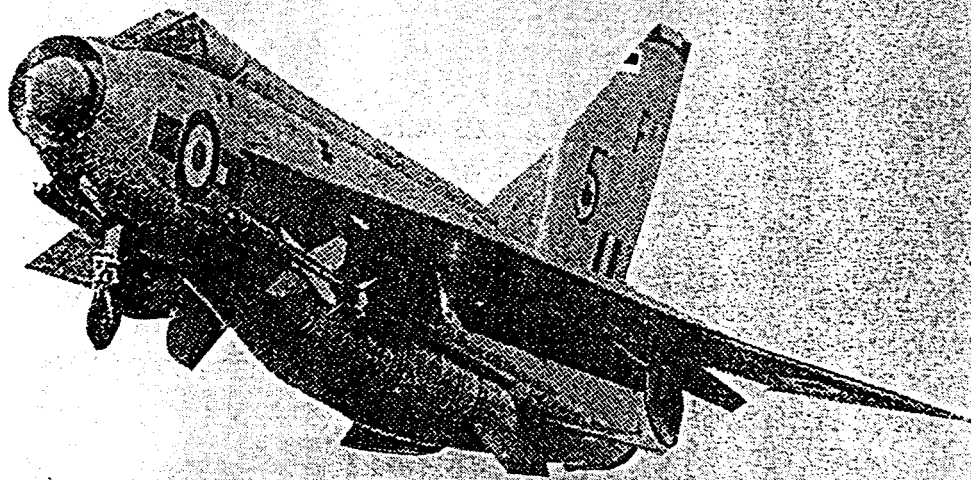
highest level. What had started as a routine sighting of a Russian aircraft had now reached the **White House** and presumably **President Richard Nixon**.

At this time NORAD was informed that a US pilot of great experience was presently on an exchange visit with the RAF at Binbrook, the north Lincolnshire fighter base near Grimsby. Enquires were made and it was discovered that the pilot was on station, and by coincidence, 'Flight Available'.

out one aircraft, flown by Captain Schaffner. The Americans wanted one of their own men present when the object was eventually cornered.

Captain Schaffner was sitting in the crew room of 5 Squadron when the call came from High Wycombe. Schaffner was still in his flying suit, after returning earlier that evening from a training sortie in one of the squadron's aircraft. When the call came Schaffner ran out of the building across the runway towards two *Lightnings* which were standing virtually

One of the men on the ground crew at the time was Brian Mann of Grimsby, who was driving one of the fuel bowsers. He remembers XS894 being refuelled at a rate of 150 gallons per minute, when suddenly the aircraft engines started. He said, "*The windows of the tanker almost went in, I took off the hoses and got out of the way.*" Mr. Mann remembered Captain Schaffner disregarding the ground marshal, who was the eyes and ears of the pilot on the ground, as he swung the *Lightning* round.



ONE OF THE LIGHTNINGS FROM THE ILL-FATED SQUADRON.  
COURTESY: GRIMSBY EVENING TELEGRAPH

At 9.45pm a request was made from the highest level within NORAD through Strike Command's UK Headquarters at High Wycombe, for RAF Binbrook to send **Captain William Schaffner** to join the *Lightnings* search for the mystery object. By this time four *Lightnings*, two *Phantoms* and three tankers were already airborne and they were joined by a Shackleton from Kinloss which was ordered to patrol on a north-south heading at 3,000ft 10 miles from the east coast.

Binbrook's QRA *Lightnings* were being held in reserve but it was decided to send

ready for flight. One XS894, was in the process of having its fuel tanks topped up. Schaffner climbed the ladder into the aircraft and hauled himself into the cockpit. He waved aside the ground crews who were expected to carry out pre-flight checks, ordered the refuelling to stop and failed to sign the regulation form stating that he was happy with the aircraft.

The aircraft was armed with two *Red Top* air-to-air missiles, one was armed, the other a dummy. The aircraft's guns had enough 30mm canon shells for a six-second burst.

At 10.06pm the aircraft blasted off Binbrook's runway into the night sky. Those on the ground saw it disappear with a sheet of flame from its twin tail pipes as it headed out over the North Sea.

By now the mystery contact which had led to five *Lightnings*, two *Phantoms*, three tankers and a Shackleton being scrambled was being tracked by radar controllers at **Staxton Wold**, which stands on high ground overlooking Scarborough. The contact was flying parallel to the east coast 90 miles east of Whitby, at a speed of 530mph and an altitude of 6,100ft.

That follows next is drawn from information given to the *Grimsby Evening Telegraph* newspaper who broke the story and was reported as being an official transcript of the conversation between Captain Schaffner and the radar station at Staxton Wold.

**Schaffner:** I have visual contact, repeat visual contact. Over.

**Staxton:** Can you identify aircraft type?

**Schaffner:** Negative, nothing recognizable, no clear outlines. There is bluish

**Staxton:** Is it part of the object or independent? Over.

**Schaffner:** Negative, nothing.

**Staxton:** Can you assess the rate...?

**Schaffner:** Contact in descent, gentle. Am going with it... 50 no about 70... it's levelled out again.

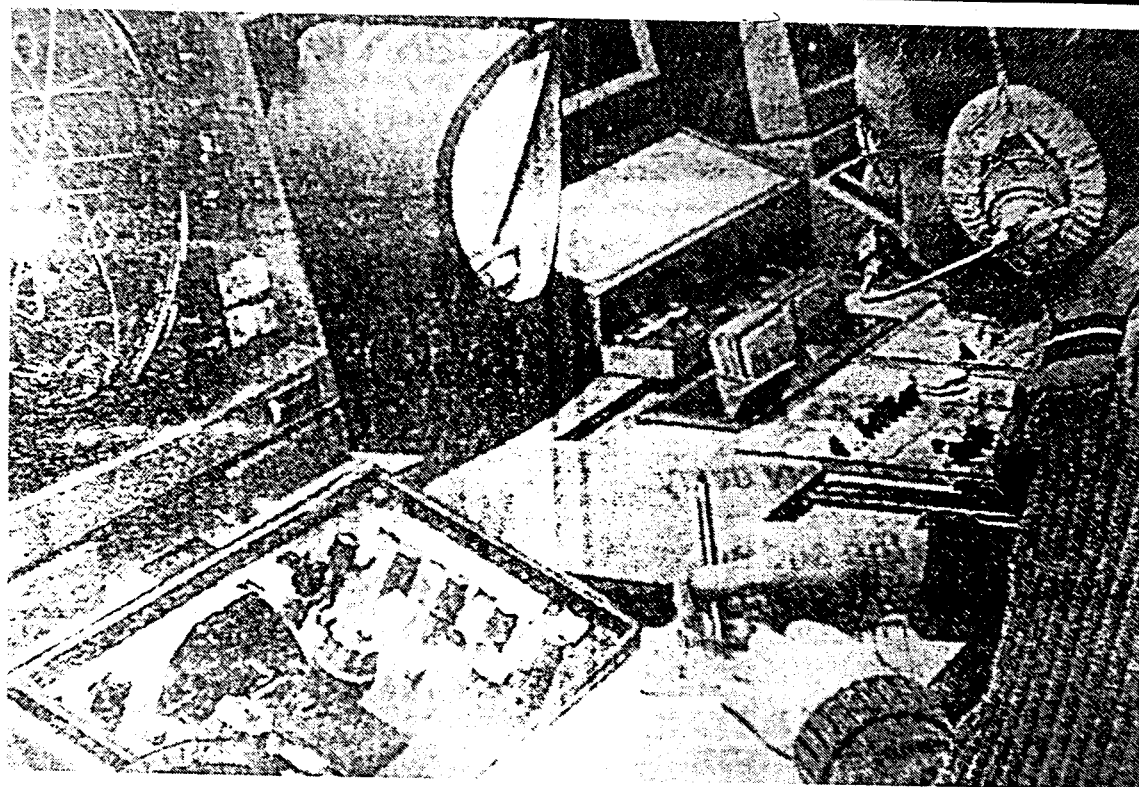
**Staxton:** Is the ball object still with it. Over.

**Schaffner:** Affirmative. It's not actually connected... maybe a magnetic attraction to

North Sea.

Two and a half minutes after the blip came to a halt it started accelerating rapidly to 600mph and climbing to 9000ft, heading south towards Staxton.

Shortly afterwards, the single blip separated into two. One maintaining it's southerly heading, somewhat erratically, at about 600mph and descending slowly, the other turning through 180 degrees to head north westerly and vanishing at a speed later calculated to be around 20,400mph.



**TRACKING THE UNIDENTIFIED OBJECTS**  
COURTESY: GRIMSBY EVENING TELEGRAPH

light. Hell that's bright... very bright.

**Staxton:** Are your instruments functioning 94. Check compass. Over.

**Schaffner:** Affirmative, GCI I'm along side of it now, maybe 600ft off my... It's a conical shape, jeeze that's bright, it hurts my eyes to look at it for more than a few seconds.

**Staxton:** How close are you now?

**Schaffner:** About 400ft he's still in my three o'clock. Hey wait... there's something else. It's like a large soccer ball... It's like it's made of glass.

the conical shape. There's a haze of light Ye'ow... it's within that haze. Wait a second, it's turning... coming straight for me... shit... am taking evasive action... a few... I can hardly...

**Staxton:** Come in 94. Foxtrot 94 are you receiving? Over, come in.

As the controller lost contact with Captain Schaffner, a radar operator who had been tracking the Lightning and the mystery object watched in amazement. The two blips on the screen representing the aircraft and it's quarry, slowly merged into one. Decelerating rapidly from 500mph until they became stationary 6000ft above the

At this time a Shackleton which had been on patrol off the Firth of Forth was ordered to hold station around Flamborough Head. Then Staxton Wold re-established contact with Captain Schaffner.

**Schaffner:** GCI... are you receiving? Over.

**Staxton:** Affirmative 94, loud and clear. What is your condition?

**Schaffner:** Not too good. I can't think what has happened... I feel kind of dizzy... I can see shooting stars.

**Staxton:** Can you see you instruments? Over.

**Schaffner:** Affirmative, but er... the compass is u/s...

**Staxton:** Foxtrot 94, turn 043 degrees. Over.

**Schaffner:** Er... all directional instruments are out. Repeat u/s. Over.

**Staxton:** Roger 94, execute right turn, estimate quarter turn. Over.

**Schaffner:** Turning now.

**Staxton:** Come further 94. That's good, is your altimeter functioning? Over.

**Schaffner:** Affirmative GCI.

**Staxton:** Descend to 3,500ft. Over.

**Schaffner:** Roger GCI.

**Staxton:** What's your fuel state 94? Over.

**Schaffner:** About 30 per cent GCI.

**Staxton:** That's what we calculated. Can you tell us what happened 94?

**Schaffner:** I don't know, it came in close... I shut my eyes... I figure I must have blacked out for a few seconds.

**Staxton:** OK 94. Standby.

At this time the Shackleton arrived over Flamborough and began circling before XS894 was vectored into the area by Staxton controllers.

**Schaffner:** Can you bring me in GCI?

**Staxton:** Er... Hold station, 94. Over... Foxtrot 94 can you ditch the aircraft? Over.

**Schaffner:** She's handling fine. I can bring her in. Over.

**Staxton:** Negative 94. I repeat, can you ditch the aircraft? Over.

**Schaffner:** Yeah... I guess.

**Staxton:** Standby 94. Over. Oscar 77. Over.

**Shackleton 77:** Receiving. Over.

**Staxton:** 94 is ditching. Can you maintain a wide circuit? Over.

**Shackleton:** Affirmative GCI. Over.

**Staxton:** Thanks 77. Standby 94 execute ditching procedure at your discretion. Over.

**Schaffner:** Descending now, GCI. Over.

A period of six to seven minutes elapsed without contact, then suddenly.

**Shackleton:** He's down GCI. Hell of a splash... he's down in one piece though. Over.

A further two minutes elapsed.

**Shackleton:** GCI. Over.

**Staxton:** Receiving you 77. Over.

**Shackleton:** This is odd GCI, she's sinking fast, but the canopy's closed again.

**Staxton:** Can you confirm the pilot clear of the aircraft?

**Shackleton:** He's not in it. We can confirm that. He must be in the water somewhere.

**Staxton:** Any distress signals or flares? Over.

**Shackleton:** Negative GCI, we're going round again. Over.

A short time later the Shackleton was back in contact with Staxton Wold.

**Shackleton:** She's sunk GCI, there's a slight wake where she was, still no sign of the pilot. I say again GCI, we need a chopper fast. Over.

**Staxton:** A whirlwind's on it's way from Leconfield, are you positive you saw no sign of the pilot. Over.

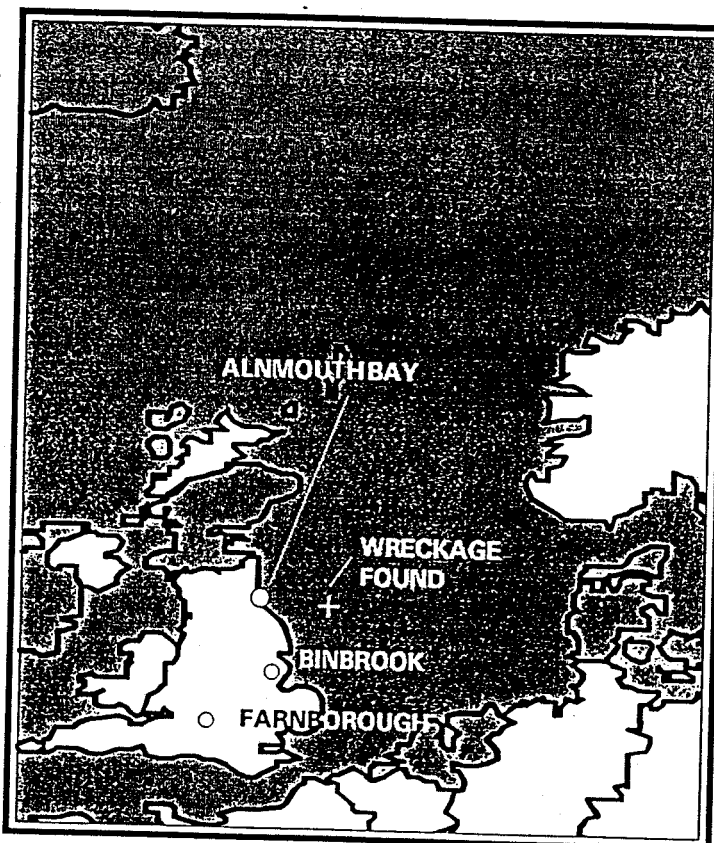
**Shackleton:** Nothing GCI. The first pass we assumed he was un-strapping. He must have got out as we went round for the second pass, but why shut the canopy? Over.

**Staxton:** That's what we were thinking. Maintain patrol 77, he must be out there somewhere.

**Shackleton:** Roger GCI.

A short time later the search and rescue helicopter arrived and a systematic search of the area began. Lifeboats from Bridlington, Filey and Flamborough arrived and joined in the search as the weather began to deteriorate. The search continued overnight and into the next day, without success and without receiving any transmissions from the beacons carried by the pilot and no distress flares were seen at any time.

The following day the Evening Telegraph reported that flares had been seen about 10 miles off shore and the Grimsby trawler



**Staxton:** Can you see the pilot yet? Over.

**Shackleton:** Negative, were going round again, pulling a tight one. Over.

Two minutes elapsed.

**Shackleton:** The canopy's up... she's floating OK... can't see the pilot, we need a chopper out here GCI. No sign of the pilot, where the hell is he?

**Staxton:** You sure he's not in the water? Check your SABRE receptions. Over. (Note: Sabre was the search and rescue beacon carried by all RAF aircrew)

**Shackleton:** No SABRE yet, no flares either. Hang on we're going round again.



Ross Kestrel which had been in the area had gone to investigate, but found nothing.

The missing pilot was not found and at that time no wreckage from the aircraft had been located. Three weeks later the *Evening Telegraph* reported that the fuselage of the aircraft had been located on the sea-bed and quoted that the ejector seat was still in the aircraft giving rise to the belief that the body of the pilot was still in the aircraft.

On October 7th, divers from HMS Kiddleston inspected the wreckage and said that Captain Schaffner's body was still in the cockpit. But that was the start of the biggest mystery of all. When the aircraft was brought to the surface and returned to Binbrook, there was no trace of Captain Schaffner, the cockpit was empty.

The wreckage was eventually lifted from the sea some five miles from Flamborough Head and transported in some secrecy to RAF Binbrook.

Air crashes in the North Sea in those days were relatively common and much of the wreckage found its way into Grimsby where the *Evening Telegraph* reporters were on hand to record the event, but not with XS894.

It was also common practice for crashed aircraft to be taken to the MoD Crash Investigation Branch at Farnborough where detailed examination took place in an attempt to find the cause of accidents, but this didn't happen with XS894. Instead, the remains of the aircraft, which were in good condition, were taken straight to Binbrook where it was placed behind shutters in a hangar at the far corner of the base.

The Accident Investigation team from Farnborough arrived at Binbrook in the belief that they were about to start a detailed investigation, one which would lead to a report to the Ministry of Defence to assist with the eventual board of enquiry, but they were in for a surprise.

They were amazed to find that many of the cockpit instruments were missing. These included the E2B compass, voltmeter, standby direction indicator, standby inverter indicator and the complete auxiliary warning panel from the starboard side of the cockpit, below the voltmeter. This was a serious breach of regulations and although the investigation team were told the instruments would be returned shortly, they never were.

The investigators found there was a revolting fusty smell in the cockpit while the whole aircraft still had a slimy feel

to it following its month's immersion in the North Sea.

The ejector seat also seemed to be 'wrong', and there was a suspicion that it was not the original one fitted to the aircraft when it had taken off on its last flight from Binbrook. They were given assurances by the officer commanding 5 Squadron that the seat had not been tampered with, but some of the investigators were not convinced.

Brian McConnell, a former sergeant who was serving at Binbrook at the time of the incident, said that the cartridge on the seat had failed because of faulty installation, but this contradicted the story of the Shackleton crew who stated that they had seen the cockpit open. Had any attempt been made to fire the ejector seat, the cockpit canopy would have blown off. It also comes into conflict with the order Captain Schaffner received instructing him to ditch his aircraft, even though he stated that the *Lightning* was still handling fine with plenty of fuel left.

When the accident investigators were eventually allowed to examine the plane, they were constantly supervised by five civilians, two of whom were Americans. After a few hours, the investigators were told that as nothing useful had been found, "their job was over."

The following day, they were summoned to the main office at Farnborough and told in no uncertain terms that they were not to discuss any aspect of the ditching of XS894, even with their own families. The reason given? "National Security."

No further information has been forthcoming and the investigation file is still classified. When we recently contacted the Ministry of Defence, we were informed that the incident had been an unfortunate accident and that there was nothing related to UFOs being involved.

Enquiries were made through our own channels and we were informed that the aircraft had eventually been taken to Kirkland Air Force Base in America. When questioned about this, the Ministry of Defence spokesman said that this was quite possible and not unusual because the pilot of the aircraft had been American. This in no way inferred that the MoD were admitting that the aircraft had been sent to America.

When the story first appeared in the *Grimsby Evening Telegraph*, Pat Otter,



the Editor and author of the story was amazed by the response he received from the public. He was contacted by a member of the accident investigation team who had been sent to examine the aircraft, (he related the earlier account).

People came forward who reported that they had personally witnessed UFOs in the area on the date of the incident. Two pilots who had been flying *Lightnings* on the night of the incident came forward and gave their own account of the incident.

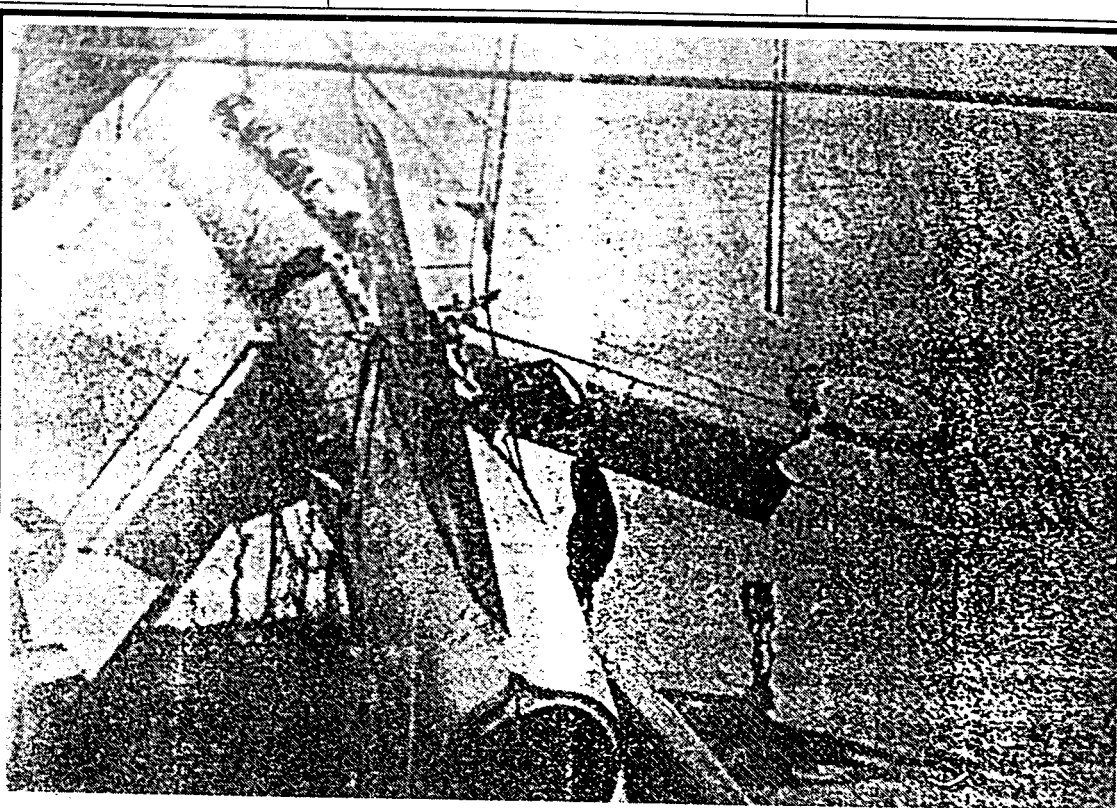
They were Mike Streten, a former 5 Squadron CO, and Furz Lloyd, a very experienced *Lightning* pilot.

airborne early warning Shackleton from 8 Squadron based at Lossiemouth. A crew member reported that he had last seen the navigation lights of the *Lightning* passing to the rear and below his aircraft. The *Lightning* pilot, Capt. William Schaffner was an experienced USAF pilot who had recently joined 5 Squadron. Immediately following the pilot's failure to acknowledge radio transmissions from both the Shackleton and ground control a search was initiated.

"No trace was found and the immediate search was called off for the night. The following morning, a comprehensive search was mounted, but no wreckage, oil slicks or other tell tale signs of the missing pilot were found. It was not until two months later that

"From my own flying experience night flying over the North Sea, with stars above and lights of fishing boats below, disorientation affected all pilots from time to time.

"The evidence indicated that Capt. Schaffner had most likely suffered from this since the only way the aircraft would have hit the sea without breaking up was from hitting it at a slow speed and at a very shallow glance angle, most probably planing over it as he rapidly decelerated. It is a matter of fact that the only way the canopy could be opened and remain with the aircraft was if the aircraft was doing less than 150 Knots or so. Therefore the most likely situation that the pilot found himself in was the nightmare of having hit



**THE WRECKAGE OF THE LIGHTNING AIRCRAFT RETRIEVED  
COURTESY: GRIMSBY EVENING TELEGRAPH**

Mike Streten stated:

"On the night of the loss of Foxtrot 94, September 8th 1970. I was night flying with 23 Squadron, based at Leuchars. I remember the initial report of the loss of the aircraft well; at that stage I only knew that the pilot was missing and I knew that Binbrook was undergoing its annual Tactical Evaluation. The immediate facts we were able to glean on that fateful night were that the pilot had been shadowing an

a Royal Navy mine sweeper found the aircraft virtually intact at the bottom of the sea. :

"I remember the reports on the aircraft well, the aircraft was effectively in one piece. What was very unusual, however, was that the canopy was still attached to the aircraft and all the ejector seat straps and the seat dinghy were still in the aircraft. There was no trace of the pilot whatsoever.

the sea while trying to recover from slow speed situation.

"With the aircraft on the sea and sinking rapidly, the quickest way out would have been to open the canopy, unstrap and disconnect the seat dinghy lanyard thereby relying on the life jacket for floatation and subsequently for the manual activation of the SABRE emergency beacon (contained

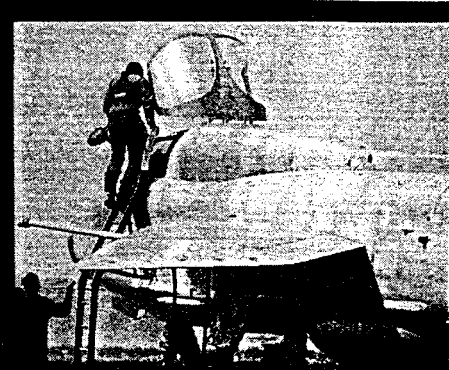
**CONTINUED ON PAGE 30**

around the time of the incident involving XS894 many reports of UFOs were being received by the local police and coast guards in the Bridlington area. The following are two such reports. Mrs. Jill Cooper of Bridlington informed me that she remembers her sighting as if it had been yesterday.

"She stated that 20 years ago she had been working in her kitchen when her four-year-old son who was playing in the back garden, came running into the house very excited insisting that she go out into the garden to see the strange objects in the sky. She said: 'When I got outside I could see bright things in the sky, but it wasn't until I got my binoculars that I could see six saucer-shaped objects. They were metallic silver in colour and at the centre of each of them were orange swirling flames.' She stated that each of the objects were approximately three inches in diameter at arms length. She estimates that she was no more than half-a-mile from the hovering objects. She watched them for approximately five minutes, but returned into the house to answer the telephone. On the night of September 8th 1970, a couple and their daughter were waking their dog along a coastal path at Almouth Bay, Northumberland.

"This was almost opposite the point over the North Sea where Schaffner made his interception, when they saw and heard something strange:

'We had been walking for approximately 10 minutes when we heard a high pitched humming noise.' "They later told the MoD



**PILOT BOARDING LIGHTNING**

personnel... 'The dog kept cocking her head to one side and growling. It seemed impossible to tell from which direction the noise was coming, it seemed everywhere. It lasted for about 10 - 15 seconds.

'About five minutes later the eastern sky lit up rather like sheet lightning, only it took

about 10 seconds to die down again. Over the following three minutes this happened many times, but it was only visible for a second or two at a time. It appeared similar to the Northern Lights. The whole spectacle was completely silent. After two or three minutes, there was another flare up of the sheet lightning.'

"The family called in at the local Police Station to report what they had seen and heard."

Their's was one of many similar reports that night to the police and RAF at nearby Boulmer. The time and location fit in exactly with the events going on 60 miles south at Staxton Wold. They could have been watching some kind of natural phenomenon, or could there be another explanation? What do you think?

If any reader has any additional information in relation to this incident, I would be very pleased to hear from them.

My grateful thanks to Roy Otter of the Grimsby Evening Telegraph who has provided a great deal of material and cooperated fully in this case, which needless to say is still ongoing.

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## ALIENS IN ENGLAND

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

overhead and we all turned our heads. On turning to see more of this Avebury apparition we found it had vanished, though there was nowhere for it to have gone! [FIG. 4]



## A 'SUIT OF MANY COLOURS'

One afternoon in May 1973, about 4.00pm, a girl named Fay, aged seven, together with a young boy, claimed to have seen a seven-foot tall figure wearing a green tunic and red collar. The figure also had a yellow pointed hat with knob and antennae and was holding what looked a microphone. The incident occurred close to disused Sandown Airport on the Isle of Wight. The figure then disappeared close to an old hut.

## TRIANGULAR ALIENS?

Julian Garside, then sixteen years of age, was driven home from work on a friend's motor-bike on 20th September, 1973. As they passed Stainland Woods, between Huddersfield and Halifax, Julian noticed three

bright triangular lights. He tapped his friend on the shoulder and they stopped to look. They both saw three triangular 'shapes', yellowish-white and around five feet tall, 'gliding' uphill through the woods.

Though scared, they followed, and as they did so, the 'entities' speeded up; This wood runs about half-a-mile uphill and when they reached the top, the figures had disappeared. However, above the hill was a round, orange light shaped like a road-crossing beacon, and as they watched, it moved away. One strange thing that both commented on was that there was a strong smell resembling engine oil, which seems completely incompatible with either aliens, ghosts or UFOs!

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'ALIENS IN ENGLAND'  
CONCLUDES NEXT ISSUE!

LOOSE MINUTE

D/AHB (RAF) 8/27

1 Feb 93

DDPR (RAF)

Copy to:

Sec (AS) 2 - fao [redacted] (*less enclosures*)

LOSS OF LIGHTNING XS 894

Ref: D/DPDR (RAF) 325/1/1 LM dated 27 Jan 93

1. You asked at reference for any information relating to the loss of XS894 and its pilot, Capt Schafner USAF.
2. Enclosed for your delectation and delight are copies of the aircraft accident card, and extracts from the F340 Operations Record Books of the various units involved. The documents tend to indicate that there is NO mystery, and that it is the age old problem of pilots handling high performance aircraft close to the sea on an unfamiliar task. Clearly, however, the Evening Telegraph's Pat Otter could easily make a living writing SF novels!

[redacted]  
 Dep Hd AHB (RAF)  
 [redacted]

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)12/6

28 Jan 93

DDPR(RAF)

Copy to:

AHB - 

LOSS OF LIGHTNING XS894

Ref A: D/DPR/325/1/1 dated 27 Jan 93

1. Thank you for your minute at Reference, and for sending the articles from the Evening Telegraph.
2. Following the publication of these articles last year, I had a number of enquiries from UFO organisations and researchers. As a result I tracked down the original Board of Inquiry papers relating to the crash, and made a thorough study of the whole incident.
3. As you recognise, this accident predated the Military Aircraft Accident Summary procedure. I have not found any official published statement on the crash, but given the time that has elapsed, I am not surprised.
4. In response to the questions that were put to me, I produced some unclassified sentences setting out what happened to the aircraft. I have attached one of my letters, which can be drawn upon in response to any queries that you receive. Notwithstanding all the stories about the loss of this aircraft, there is no UFO story here!
5. Please let me know if you require anything further.

  
Sec(AS)2a  




From: [REDACTED] Secretariat(Air Staff)2a, Room 2745

E5



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
Main Building Whitehall London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct Dialling) 071-21-8 2140  
(Switchboard) 071-21-89000  
(Fax) 071-21-8

[REDACTED]

Batley  
West Yorks

[REDACTED]

Your reference

Our reference

D/Sec(AS)12/3

Date

2 November 1992

Dear [REDACTED]

Your letter dated 20 October to RAF West Drayton, in which you asked about the crash of an RAF Lightning on 8 September 1970, has been passed to this office.

I have done some research into the loss of the aircraft, and have discovered that it was taking part in a Tactical Evaluation Exercise designed to practise the night shadowing and shepherding of low speed targets. For the purpose of the exercise, the targets involved were Shackleton aircraft. The Lightning crashed into the sea while attempting to intercept one of the Shackletons. There is no indication of any "unidentified aircraft" having been encountered, and no reason to suggest that there is any sort of UFO incident in any way connected with this tragic crash.

I hope this is helpful, and I wish you luck with your research.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]





LOOSE MINUTE

D/DPR/325/1/1

27 Jan 93

Sec(AS)2

Copy to:

AHB - [REDACTED]

LOSS OF LIGHTNING XS 894

1. I have recently been sent the attached cuttings from the Evening Telegraph relating to the loss of Lightning XS 894 and its pilot in 1970. It makes fascinating reading!

2. Do we have a line on this? I do not believe we issued Military Aircraft Accident Summaries in those days, but presumably we did have some cleared statement on the mystery.

[REDACTED]

DDPR(RAF)

[REDACTED]

minutes were airborne and heading over the North Sea. After checking the position of their tanker, a Victor K1A, the two fighters were guided north by Saxa Vord. So far it was a routine scramble for what was then assumed to be a Russian Bear or Badger, the long-range reconnaissance aircraft used to test the nerves of the Royal Air Force.

But it was then that the radar plotters on the Shetland Islands saw something on their screens which they found impossible to believe.

During the next hour the mystery contact reappeared several times, approaching from the north. Each time the Lightnings were sent north to intercept, it turned and disappeared again.

By now two F4 Phantoms of the US Air Force had been scrambled from the American base at Keflavik in Iceland. They had much more sophisticated radar than the British Lightnings and were able to pick up the mystery contact themselves.

But when they, too, tried to get close enough to identify what was

at Cheyenne Mountain and the US Detection and Tracking Centre at Colorado Springs.

In the meantime, the cat-and-mouse game over the North Sea between the Lightnings and Phantoms and the mystery contact was still going on. Then, at 21.05 after the fighters had made yet another abortive attempt to get close, the contact vanished off the radar screens.

The Lightnings were ordered to return to Leuchars while the Phantoms were instructed to carry out a Combat Air Patrol to the east of Iceland.

Then, at 21.39, radar controllers picked up the contact again. This time its speed was decelerating to 1,300mph — almost the limit of both the Lightnings and Phantoms — at a holding altitude of 18,000ft. It was on a south-west-erly heading coming from the northern tip of Denmark.

Two more Lightnings were scrambled from Leuchars, and were ordered to rendezvous with a Victor tanker and then maintain a CAP on a 50-mile east-west

front, 200 miles north-east of Aberdeen. As a precaution, two further Lightnings were ordered into the air from Collishall in Norfolk and, with another tanker, to form a CAP 170 miles east of Great Yarmouth. The contact was somewhere between these two lines of supersonic fighters.

While all this was going on, RAF staff at Fylingdales, which was in constant contact with NORAD at Cheyenne Mountain, heard, ominously, that the Strategic Air Command HQ at Omaha, Nebraska, was ordering its B52 bombers into the air.

It was an order which could only have come from the highest level. What had started as a routine sighting of what was believed to be a Russian aircraft, had now reached the White House and, presumably, President Richard Nixon.

**N**ORAD was told by officials at the Pentagon that a USAF pilot of great experience was presently on an exchange visit with the RAF and was stationed at Binbrook, the North Lincolnshire fighter base a few miles from Grimsby.

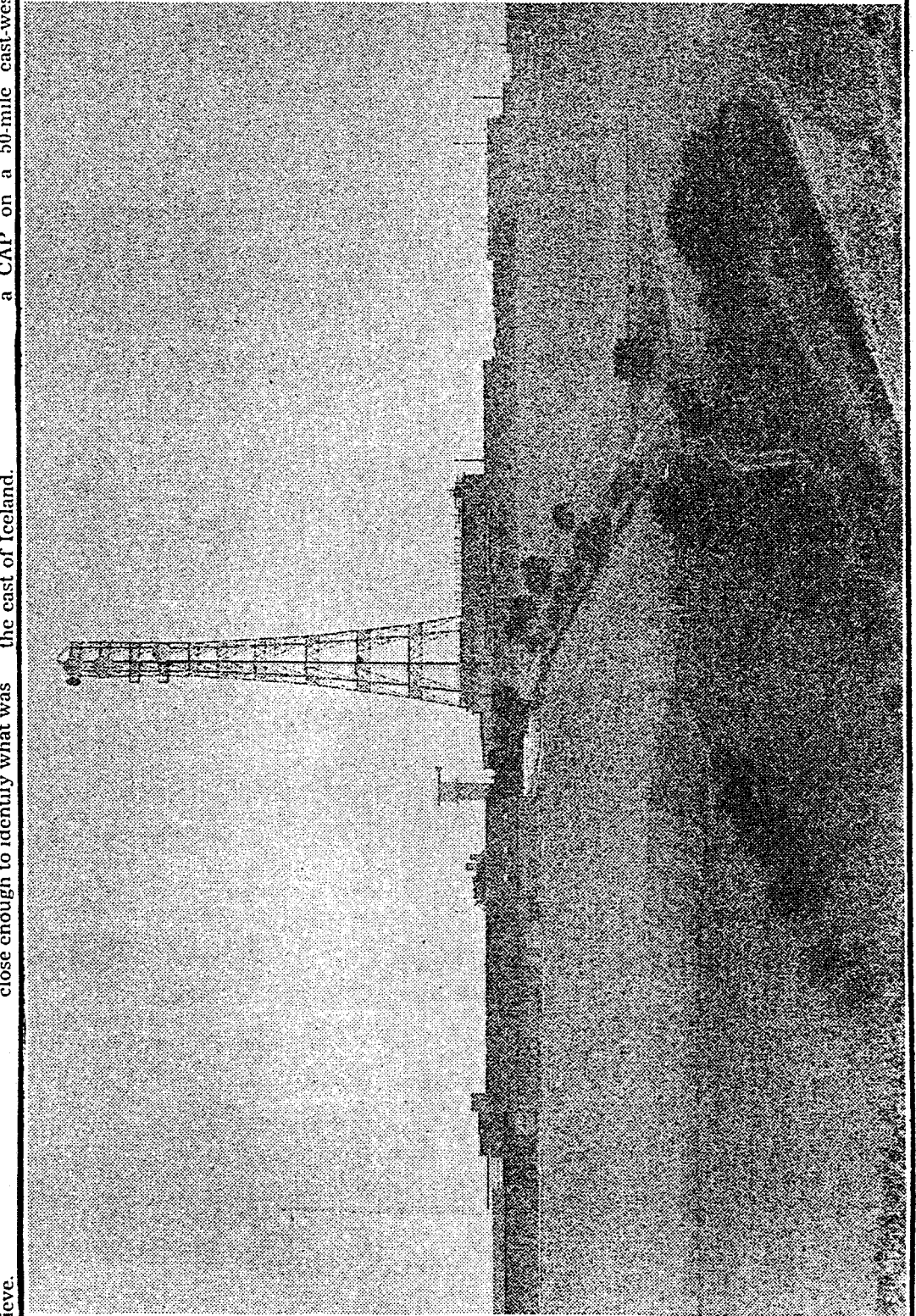
Rapid inquiries were made and it was discovered the pilot was on the station and was, by coincidence, "flight available".

At around 21.45 a request was made from a very high level within NORAD, through Strike Command's UK headquarters at High Wycombe, for RAF Binbrook to send Capt William Schafer "if at all possible" to join the QRA Lightnings looking for the mystery contact.

By this time four Lightnings, two Phantoms and three tankers were already airborne and they were joined by a Shackleton Mk3 from Kinloss, which was ordered to patrol on a north-south heading at 3,000ft, 10 miles out from the east coast.

Binbrook's QRA Lightnings were being held in reserve, but it was decided to send out a single aircraft from the North Lincolnshire airfield — flown by Capt Schafer. The Americans wanted one of their own at the sharp end when it came to cornering the mystery contact.

**● TOMORROW: Contact over the North Sea.**



Staxton Wold radar station near Scarborough — Schafer's link on his last mission.

happy with the aircraft. It was armed with two Red Top air-to-air missiles, one of which was live and the other a dummy, and enough 30mm cannon shells for a six-second burst.

One of the men on the ground crew at the time was Brian Mann of Grimsby, who was driving one of the fuel bowzers. He remembers XS894 being refueled at a rate of 150 gallons a minute when suddenly the engines started. "The windows on the tanker almost went in. I panicked, took the

**Schafer:** Affirmative, GCI. I'm alongside it now, maybe 600ft off my... it's a conical shape. Jeeze, that's bright, it hurts my eyes to look at it for more than a few seconds.

**Staxton:** How close are you now?  
**Schafer:** About 400 feet. He's still in my three o'clock. Hey wait... there's something else. It's like a large soccer ball... it's like it's made of glass.

**Staxton:** Is it part of the object or independent? Over.

**Schafer:** It... no, it's separate from the main body... the conical shape... it's at the back end, the sharp end of the shape. It's like bobbing up and down and going from side to side slowly. It may be the power source. There's no sign of ballistics.

**Staxton:** Is there any sign of occupation? Over.

**Schafer:** Negative, nothing.

**Staxton:** Can you assess the rate...?

**Schafer:** Contact in descent gentle. Am going with it... 50... no about 70ft... it's levelled out again.

**Staxton:** Is the ball object still with it? Over.

**Schafer:** Affirmative. It's not actually connected... maybe a magnetic attraction to the conical shape. There's a haze of light. Ye'ow... it's within that haze. Wait a second, it's turning... coming straight for me... shit... am taking evasive action... a few... I can handle...

**Staxton:** 94? Come in 94. Foxtrot 94, are you receiving? Over. Come in 94. Over.

● **NEXT INSTALMENT: Schafer ditches and disappears.**

● **A radar controller vectored Schafer onto the mystery object**



started to move again, accelerating rapidly to 600mph and climbing to 9,000ft, heading south back towards Staxton.

Shortly afterwards, the single blip separated into two, one maintaining its southerly heading, somewhat erratically, at between 600 and 630mph and descending slowly, the other turning through 180 degrees to head north-westerly and vanishing at a speed later calculated to be around 20,400mph.

While all this was going on, a Shackleton MR3, which had been on patrol off the Firth

of Forth, was ordered south to hold station around Flamborough Head.

Then, Staxton Wold re-established contact with Captain Schafer.

**Schafer:** GCI... are you receiving? Over.  
**Staxton:** Affirmative 94. Loud and clear. What is your condition? Over.

**Schafer:** Not too good. I can't think what has happened... I feel kinda dizzy... I can see shooting stars.

**Staxton:** Can you see your instruments? Over.

**Schafer:** Affirmative, but, er... the compass is u/s...  
**Staxton:** Foxtrot 94,

turn 043 degrees. Over.  
**Schafer:** Er... all directional instruments are out, repeat u/s. Over.

**Staxton:** Roger 94, execute right turn, estimate quarter turn. Over.

**Schafer:** Turning now.  
**Staxton:** Come further, 94. That's good. Is your altimeter functioning? Over.

**Schafer:** Affirmative, GCI.  
**Staxton:** Descend to 3,500ft. Over.

**Schafer:** Roger, GCI.  
**Staxton:** What's your fuel state, 94? Over.

**Schafer:** About thirty per cent, GCI.  
**Staxton:** That's what

we calculated. Can you tell us what happened, 94? Over.

**Schafer:** I don't know. It came in close... I shut my eyes... I figure I must've blacked out for a few seconds.  
**Staxton:** OK 94. Standby.

At this stage the Shackleton arrived over Flamborough Head and began circling before XS894 was vectored into the area by the Staxton controllers.

**Schafer:** Can you bring me in, GCI? Over.

**Staxton:** Er... Hold station, 94. Over.  
Several minutes then

Over. Oscar 77. Over.  
**Shackleton:** 77. Over.  
**Staxton:** 94 is ditching. Can you maintain wide circuit? Over.

**Shackleton:** Affirmative GCI. Over.  
**Staxton:** Thanks 77. Standby. 94, execute ditching procedure at your discretion. Over.

**Schafer:** Descending now, GCI. Over.  
Between six and seven minutes then elapsed.

**Shackleton:** He's down, GCI. Hell of a splash... he's down in one piece though. Over.  
**Staxton:** Can you see the pilot yet? Over.

**Shackleton:** Negative. We're going round again, pulling a tight one.  
Two minutes later:

**Shackleton:** The canopy's up... she's floating OK... can't see the pilot. We need a chopper out here, GCI. No, no sign of the pilot. Where the hell is he?  
**Staxton:** You sure he's not in the water, 77? Check your SABRE receptions. Over. (Note: SABRE was the search and rescue beacon carried by all RAF aircraft).

the crew of the Shackleton were back in contact with Staxton Wold.

**Shackleton:** She's sunk GCI. There's a slight wake where she was. Still no sign of the pilot. I say again, GCI, we need a chopper here fast. Over.

**Staxton:** A Whirlwind's on the way from Leconfield. Are you positive you saw no sign of the pilot? Over.

**Shackleton:** Nothing GCI. The first pass we assumed he was unstrapping. He must have got out as we went round for a second pass... but why shut the canopy? Over.

**Staxton:** That's what we were thinking. Maintain patrol 77, he must be there somewhere. Over.

**Shackleton:** Roger, GCI. Over.

Shortly afterwards the search and rescue Whirlwind from nearby Leconfield arrived on the scene and began a systematic search of the ditching area. The aircraft were shortly joined by lifeboats from Bridlington, Flamborough and Filey

wife was at Binbrook, waiting for news of his husband.

But the Ministry of Defence were doubtful whether there would be any good news for her. "I don't think he got out of the plane," a spokesman told a reporter. "No wreckage has been found."

Three weeks later the Evening Telegraph reported that the fuselage of the aircraft had been located on the seabed and noted that the ejector seat was still intact "giving rise to the belief that the body of the pilot is still in the wreckage".

On October 7, the Telegraph reported that divers from HMS Keddleston had inspected the wreckage and said Captain's Schafer's body was still in the cockpit.

But that was the start of the biggest mystery of all. When the aircraft was brought to the surface and returned to Binbrook, there was no trace of Captain Schafer. Just an empty cockpit.

● **TOMORROW:** A cloak of secrecy.



When the Shackleton came round again the Lightning's canopy had closed. Illustration by TREVOR HARRIES.



The radar plotters watched as the Lightning slowly went down.



were taken straight to Binbrook which was placed behind what appears to have been a series of shuttlers in the far corner of a hangar.

A team from Farnborough arrived one wet winter's day at Binbrook in the belief that they were about to start a detailed investigation which, in turn, would lead to the preparation of a report on the incident to the Ministry of Defence, the report being used as the basis for an eventual inquiry into the loss of Lightning XS894. But they were in for a surprise.

They were astonished to find many of the cockpit instruments missing. These included the E2B compass, voltmeter, standby direction indicator, standby inverter indicator and the complete auxiliary warning panel from the starboard side of the cockpit below the voltmeter.

This was a serious breach of regulations and, although the investigation team was promised the instruments would be returned shortly, they never were.

The investigators found there was a revolting fusty smell in the cockpit while the whole aircraft still had a slimy feel to it following its month-long immersion in

the it, it would have been obvious that also seems to conflict with the account we have been given of the order from Staxton Wold to Captain Schafer to ditch his aircraft rather than attempt to return to Binbrook or land at Leconfield, only a few minutes' flying time from Flamborough. And, remember, Schafer has told his ground controllers that XS894 was still handling "fine" and he had plenty of fuel left.

During the few hours the investigators were allowed to examine the aircraft, they themselves were constantly supervised by five civilians, two of them Americans.

**A**t the end of the day the investigation team was told curtly that, as nothing useful had been discovered, their job was over.

The following day they were all called into the main office at Farnborough and told in no uncertain terms they were not to discuss any aspect of the ditching of XS894, even with their own families. The reason given was simple — national security.

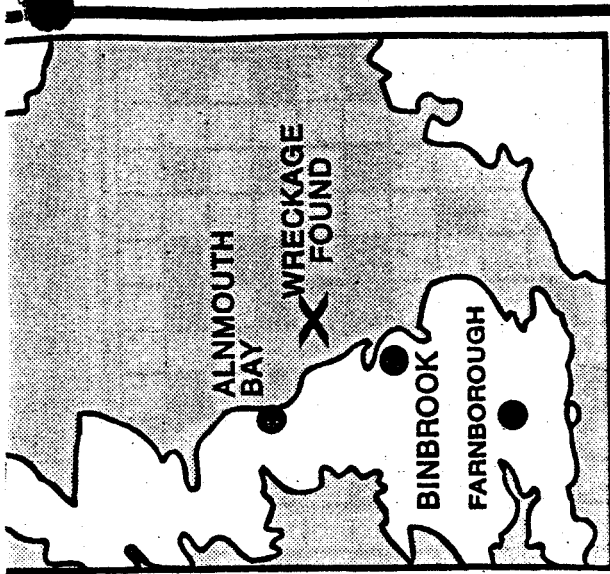
again. Over the following three minutes this happened many times, but the 'lightning' was only visible for a second or two at a time. It appeared very similar to the Northern Lights. The whole spectacle was completely silent.

"After two or three minutes there was another flare-up of 'sheet lightning' which lasted about the same time as the first. This was followed by that awful shrill sensation, only this time it was worse. You could actually feel your ears ringing."

**T**he family called in at the local police station to report what they had seen and heard. Their's was one of many similar reports that night to both the police and the RAF at nearby Boulmer.

The time and the location fit in exactly with events going on 60 miles south at Staxton Wold and they could have been watching some kind of natural phenomena.

Or there could be another explanation. What do you think?



# New revelations on the watery fate of Foxtrot 94

AT PRECISELY six minutes past 10 on the night of September 8, 1970, a single Lightning jet fighter took off from RAF Binbrook.

Ground crew on the flight line were accustomed to Lightnings being scrambled in a hurry at any time of night or day. Binbrook, after all, was a frontline fighter station and its aircraft shared QRA (Quick Reaction Alert) duty with other East Coast airfields to provide cover should any unidentified aircraft appear on the radar screens.

But there was something different about this scramble.

For a start, it was normal for QRA aircraft to take off in pairs. Two aircraft were kept at a state of instant readiness at all times, ready for just such an emergency. But on this occasion only one aircraft took off. And it wasn't one of the QRA aircraft.

Then there was the manner of the take-off. The pilot had raced out from the 5 Squadron crew room, adjacent to the apron, and had climbed aboard while a Lightning was in the process of being refuelled.

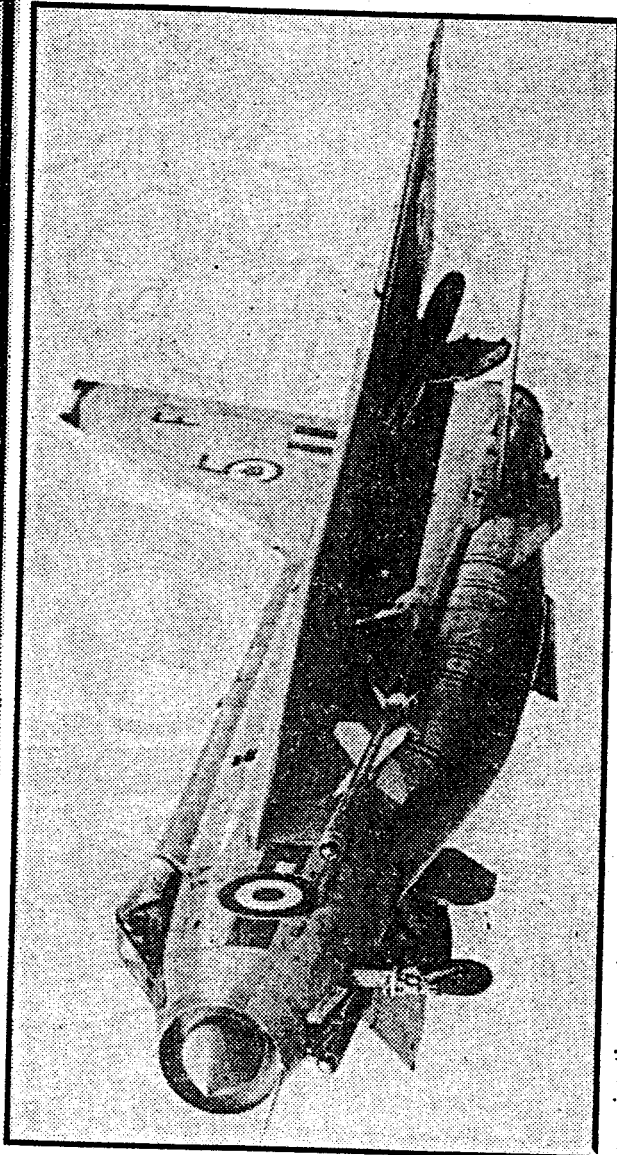
He angrily waved away ground staff who asked him to sign the form required before any military aircraft leaves the ground and ordered the refuelling to be disengaged. It was no ordinary pilot strapped into the cockpit of the Mach 2

ditched in the sea off Flamborough Head. The ditching was witnessed by the crew of a Shackleton reconnaissance aircraft. Flares were spotted by the Grimsby trawler, Ross Kestrel. But no trace of Capt Schafner was ever found.

More than a month later the wreckage of the aircraft was found on the sea bed by Royal Navy divers. Despite earlier reports to the contrary, the cockpit was empty and Capt Schafner had vanished — completely and utterly.

Eventually the aircraft was recovered and taken, unusually, to RAF Binbrook. There it was kept under wraps in the corner of a hangar. When a team from the MoD's Crash Investigation Branch arrived from Farnborough they

Intrigued



examine the remains of XS894. He was so puzzled by what he saw and the treatment the investigation team determined that he was the bottom of the mystery once and for all.

He had started his inquiries two years earlier and, by a strange coincidence, was in Cleethorpes following up lines of inquiry in and around Binbrook when the

story appeared in the Evening Telegraph.

## Transcript

Now, four years on, he believes he has peeled back a little bit more of the mystery surrounding XS894 and the disappearance of Capt Schafner.

The Evening Telegraph has a copy of his account of what he believes happened that night. Some of it has come from his dogged investigations; some

from official documents he has obtained; and some, most tellingly, from what he maintains is a transcript of the final conversations between Capt Schafner, a radar controller at Slaxton Wood, near Scarborough, and the crew of the Shackleton which witnessed the crash.

This is the story we are going to tell over the next few nights. The information in it is

quite remarkable. Our source has to remain anonymous and we cannot corroborate all the information in his report. What information we can is certainly in line with the results of my own inquiries four years ago.

All we ask you to do is to read our stories carefully — and make up your own mind.

● **TOMORROW: The final take off of XS894.**

with a... near WINDY, along



...and gone wrong on a night exercise. But the body of the pilot was never recovered.  
Four years ago the puzzle turned into a mystery when it was disclosed that when the wreckage of aircraft was lifted from the sea bed off Flamborough the cockpit was found to be firmly closed — and completely empty.  
The mystery deepened following publication

Evening Telegraph which, if it is correct, makes the loss of Lightning XS894 one of the strangest aviation stories of all time.  
The information has been sent to us by a man who was involved in the initial investigation of the loss of the aircraft in 1970 and was so disturbed by what he found that he has devoted the last five years to a detailed investigation into the last hours of XS894.

Now we have been handed assured is a transcript of XS894 and its pilot. We have authenticated the information readers to make their own judgment on the validity of the story we have published.  
The Riddle of Foxtrot starts in the Evening Telegraph tomorrow and runs for a week.  
Don't miss it!

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He angrily waved away ground staff who asked him to sign the form required before any military aircraft leaves the ground and ordered the refuelling lines to be disengaged.

It was no ordinary pilot strapped into the cockpit of the Mach 2 interceptor. It was Captain William Schafner, of the United States Air Force, who was on his second tour as an exchange pilot with the RAF.

### Disappeared

Schafner was a vastly experienced jet fighter pilot with combat time behind him in Vietnam. He had been at Binbrook for some time and his wife was living on the base with him.

No pre-flight checks were made and, as bemused ground crew looked on, the Lightning taxied out to the end of the runway, turned and immediately took off, using reheated air to gain speed and height as quickly as possible.

The aircraft, XS894, a Lightning F6 of 5 Squadron, the call-sign of which that night was Foxtrot 94, turned over the North Sea — and disappeared into what is fast becoming one of the great aviation puzzles of recent times.

Early the following morning XS894

## By PAT OTTER

ditched in the sea off Flamborough Head. The ditching was witnessed by the crew of a Shackleton reconnaissance aircraft. Flares were spotted by the Grimsby trawler, Ross Kestrel. But no trace of Capt Schafner was ever found.

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Eventually the aircraft was recovered and taken, unusually, to RAF Binbrook. There it was kept under wraps in the corner of a hangar.

When a team from the MoD's Crash Investigation Branch arrived from Farnborough they were permitted to spend only a very brief time examining the wreckage of XS894. What they did discover disturbed them. And what happened later disturbed them even more.

### Reticent

I first came across the mysterious story of XS894 six years ago. An outline of the story was related to me by Barry Halpenny, an aviation enthusiast and author who lived at the time in Market Rasen and who was researching for a book on aviation mysteries.

He suggested that I should dig out the cuttings on the crash and look further into it. There was more to the story of XS894 than met the eye, he told me.

I anticipated difficulties in investigating a 16-year-old ditching incident in the North Sea, but not on the scale I was to encounter over the next few weeks.

Normally helpful press contacts at the Ministry of Defence responded initially by

promising to help, but then became very reticent.

Similar inquiries to the United States embassy and to the US Air Force at Alconbury proved also to be dead-ends. Calls were not returned. Contacts were unavailable.

At that stage I enlisted the aid of Bob Bryant, then Northcliffe Newspapers' aviation correspondent and a man with close links with both the RAF and the USAF.

Bob was to spend weeks checking out a story he found more intriguing by the hour. He paid numerous visits to the Ministry of Defence and spent hours on the telephone to contacts in the United States. But everywhere he heard the ominous sound of doors being slammed.

### Intrigued

He finally admitted defeat. But Bob was absolutely certain there was an official blanket of secrecy over the events surrounding the crash of that Lightning in the North Sea all those years ago.

Barry Halpenny finally published an abridged version of the story in a book which appeared in September, 1988. At the same time the Evening Telegraph carried my story of the mystery of XS894.

Subsequently we were contacted by two former airmen who had both been at Binbrook at the time and added further fuel to the mystery by recalling their memories of that night.

It was a story which puzzled and intrigued thousands of Evening Telegraph readers. But, perhaps most interestingly of all, it was a story which grabbed the attention of a man spending 10 days in a Cleethorpes guest house.

Sixteen years earlier he had been one of the crash investigators who went to Binbrook to



examine the remains of XS894. He was so puzzled by what he saw and the treatment the investigation team received that he was determined to get to the bottom of the mystery once and for all.

He had started his inquiries two years earlier and, by a strange coincidence, was in Cleethorpes following up lines of inquiry in and around Binbrook when the

story appeared in the Evening Telegraph.

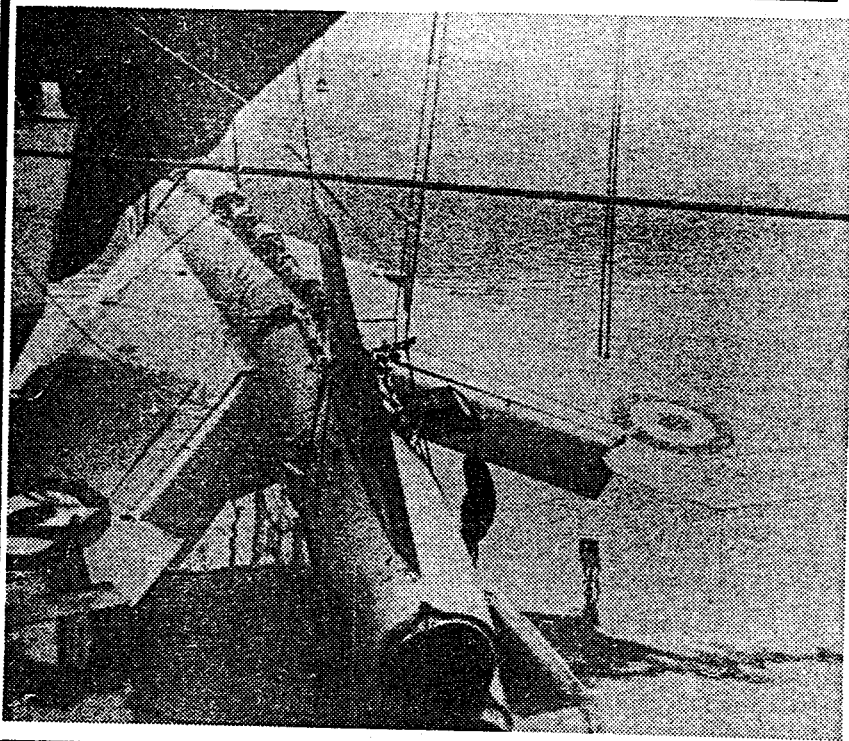
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# Shedding light on Lightning mystery



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By  
PAT OTTER

THIS is Foxtrot 94, the Lightning at the centre of a mystery that has puzzled the day it was fished from the sea.

It is pictured slung over the recovery vessel Kiwi at Bridlington Bay, after it was brought to the surface some two weeks after it crashed on September 19, 1982.

What is remarkable about the aircraft. It is almost intact although it does seem to have been severely damaged. This could be explained when the aircraft hit the sea during its recovery.

The cockpit, which was empty, is not visible because the air brakes on the aircraft were extended, indicating that the aircraft was as slowly as possible when it hit the sea.

Information passed to the Telegraph by a man involved in the investigation of the aircraft suggests that the pilot was ordered to ditch after intercepting a strange aircraft in the North Sea.

But two former Lightning pilots said they believed Foxtrot 94 was shot down during a low-level low-altitude mission involving a Shackleton.

What is not disputed is that the aircraft has never been found of.

XS894 has not yet been found.

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He had started his inquiries two years earlier and, by a strange coincidence, was in Cleethorpes following up lines of inquiry in and around Binbrook when the

with a second B-1 in Greenland.

The information the investigation team was relating was relayed to the American Air Defence Command at Cheyenne Mountain, Colorado Springs, US Detection and Tracking Centre at Colorado Springs.

In the meantime, the Phantom mouse game over the sea between the Lightning and the Phantom. The contact was still going on at 21.05 after the fighters were ordered to get close, the contact was broken on the radar screens.

The Lightnings were ordered to return to Leuchars. The Phantom was instructed to carry out a Combat Air Patrol in the east of Iceland.

# Inscrambling the riddle of Foxtrot 94

What did happen over the North Sea on the night of September 8, 1970, the night the crew of a Lightning jet fighter from RAF Binbrook mysteriously disappeared?

The time it appeared to be almost a routine flight — an aircraft ditching after something went wrong on a night exercise. But the crew of the pilot was never recovered.

Four years ago the puzzle turned into a mystery when it was disclosed that when the wreckage of aircraft was lifted from the sea bed at Binbrook the cockpit was found to be closed — and completely empty.

The mystery deepened following publication

of the story when the Evening Telegraph was contacted by former airmen who had been serving at Binbrook at the time and who recalled the strange circumstances leading to the final take-off of that particularly aircraft.

Now new information has been passed to the Evening Telegraph which, if it is correct, makes the loss of Lightning XS894 one of the strangest aviation stories of all time.

The information has been sent to us by a man who was involved in the initial investigation of the loss of the aircraft in 1970 and was so disturbed by what he found that he has devoted the last five years to a detailed investigation into the last hours of XS894.

Four years ago, when the Evening Telegraph conducted its own investigation into the loss of the aircraft and its pilot, Captain William Schafer, an experienced American on an exchange tour with the RAF, we found all official doors firmly closed.

Now we have been handed what we are assured is a transcript of the final hours of XS894 and its pilot. We have no means of authenticating the information. We are asking readers to make their own judgement on the validity of the story we are about to tell.

The Riddle of Foxtrot 94 starts in the Evening Telegraph tomorrow and runs for five nights. Don't miss it!

**PRECISELY** six minutes past 10 on the night of September 8, 1970, a single Lightning jet fighter took off from RAF Binbrook.

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## By PAT OTTER

But there was something different about this flight.

At a start, it was not a QRa aircraft.

Two aircraft were at a state of readiness at all times, ready for just an emergency. On this occasion one aircraft took off.

And it wasn't one of the QRa aircraft.

When there was the order of the take-off, the pilot had raced out to the 5 Squadron room, adjacent to the apron, and had boarded while a briefing was in the process of being held.

Eventually the air-ground staff who were required before the military aircraft was to be refuelled and the refuelling was to be discontinued. There was no ordinary

promising to help, but then became very reticent.

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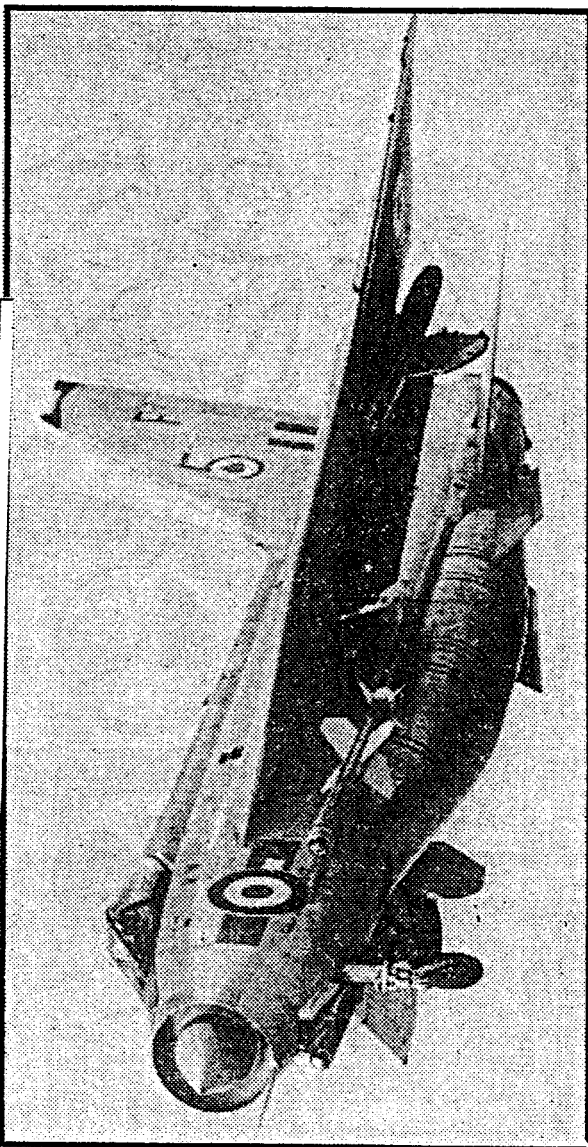
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● **TOMORROW:** The final take off of XS894.



# Cat-and-mouse with a 17,400mph radar blip

**T**HE chain of events which led to the crash of Lightning XS894 from 5 Squadron at RAF Binbrook and the disappearance of its pilot began at 8.17 on the night of September 8, 1970, in an isolated building on the Shetland Islands.

Saxa Vord was one of the chain of radar stations whose task it was to spot unidentified aircraft approaching the North Sea or the sensitive "Ice-land gap".

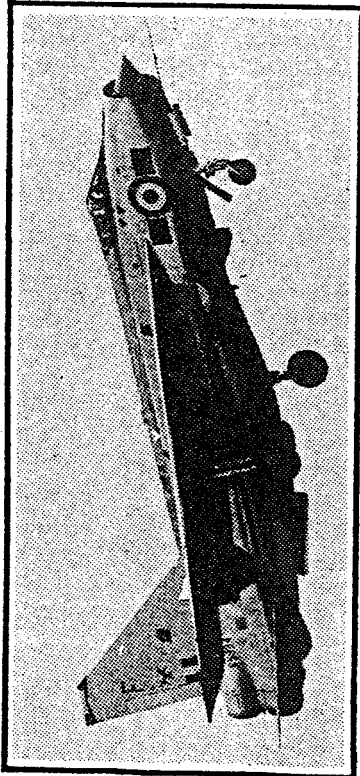
Remember, this was 1970 when the Cold War was at its height and Russian long-range aircraft made regular sorties into the North Atlantic and along the British coast to test the reaction of Nato fighters.

On this particular night, a radar operator at Saxa Vord picked up the blip of an unidentified aircraft over the North Sea halfway between the Shetlands and Ale-sund, in Norway.

The contact was monitored for several minutes at a steady speed of 6300mph, at 37,000ft, holding altitude and on a south-westerly heading. Then Saxa Vord noted the contact was turning through 30 degrees to head due south. It increased speed to 9000mph (mach 1.25) and climbed to 44,000ft.

Following laid-down procedures, radar controllers at Saxa Vord flashed a scramble message to the Quick Reaction Alert Flight at the nearest Nato airfield, RAF Leuchars on the east coast of Scotland, not far from Dundee. There two Lightning interceptors, which had been ready on the

TONIGHT we start our detailed look at the events leading up to the ditching in the North Sea of Lightning Foxrot 94, a single-seat fighter from 5 Squadron at Binbrook whose final flight is at the centre of one of the most puzzling aviation stories since the war. Just what was it that its pilot, American William Schafner, was sent to intercept out over the North Sea 22 years ago and why was he eventually ordered to ditch his aircraft off Flamborough Head rather than return to North Lincolnshire? Now new information has been passed to the Evening Telegraph. PAT OTTER reports on a story you may not believe . . .



**XS894 pictured at Binbrook in 1967. It was the first F6 Lightning delivered to 5 Squadron.**

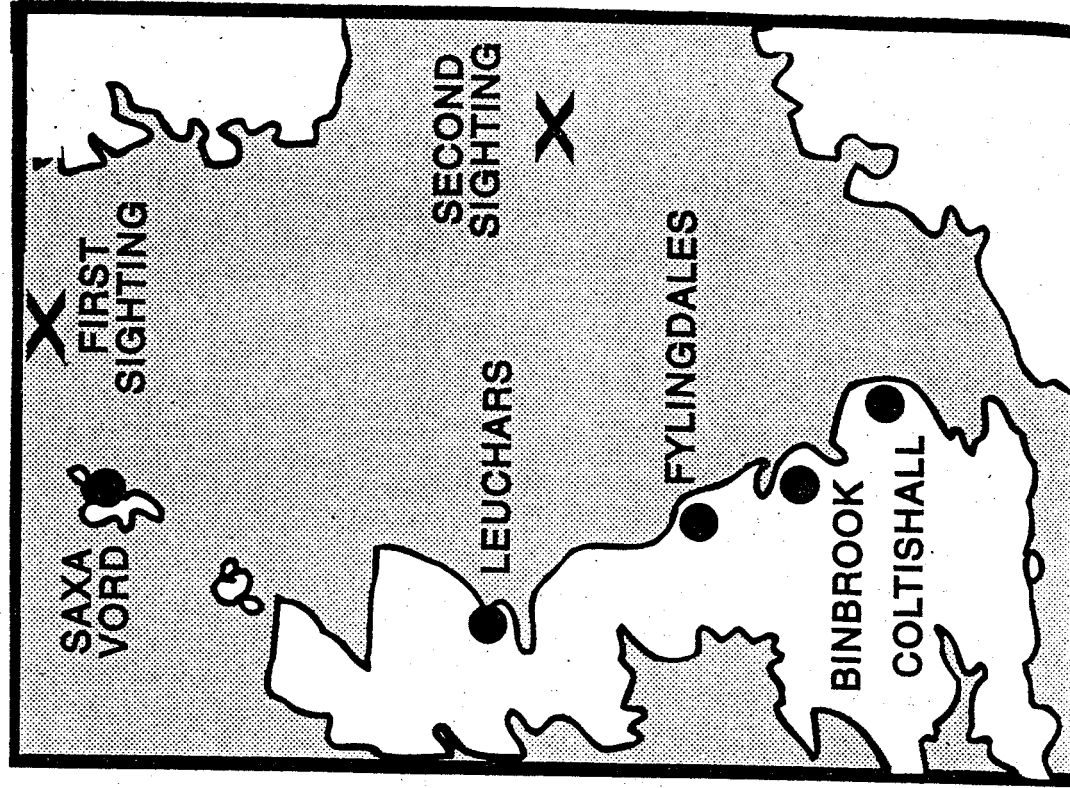
The contact they had been tracking at speeds and altitudes consistent with modern Russian warplanes turned through 180 degrees on a due north heading and within seconds disappeared off their screens. Later they calculated that to do this its speed must have been in the region of 17,400mph.

With the contact now gone, the Lightnings were vectored south to rendezvous with the tanker

by now beginning to cause some alarm to Nato commanders, they found they were just as impotent as the Lightnings.

The alert had reached such a level that the contact was being monitored by the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System at Fylingdales Moor, near Whitby, along with a second BMEWS in Greenland.

The information they were col-





PART THREE OF AN AMAZING SERIES — THE RIDDLE OF FOXTROT 94

# Rendezvous with the mysterious intruder

NATO forces were being brought up to full alert by a mystery object picked up on radar over the North Sea. At first it appeared to be yet another Russian aircraft out to test the reflexes of Allied air forces. But then the object began behaving in a way which baffled radar controllers. Nuclear bombers in the United States were ordered into the air while the Pentagon decided that its man on the spot, a experienced Vietnam veteran then on an exchange visit to the RAF at Binbrook, should take a look. PAT OTTER continues the story of the last flight of Foxtrot 94.

**CAPTAIN** William Schafer was sitting in the crew room of 5 Squadron when the call came from High Wycombe.

The room overlooked the apron where a line of silver Lightnings stood, illuminated by the high-intensity sodium lighting. The crew room itself was sparsely furnished, with ageing chairs which had seen better days, a bar which dispensed nothing stronger than black Nescafe and walls adorned with plaques and photographs donated by visiting RAF and overseas air force units. Schafer was still in his flying suit, after returning earlier that evening from a training sortie in one of the squadron's aircraft. He is remembered by those at Binbrook as a small, powerfully-built man who loved to fly the single-seat Lightnings, so different from the new generation of sophisticated aircraft then starting to come into service in the USAF.

When the call came, Schafer was helped into the remainder of his flying gear by other 5 Squadron aircrew, went out through the door, turned right and raced across the apron.

Two Lightnings in the line-up were virtually ready for flight. One, XS894, was in the process of having its fuel tanks topped up and was already connected to a power starter.

Schafer climbed the step ladder, hauled himself into the cockpit, strapped in and started the engines. He waved aside the ground crew, who were expected to help carry out the standard pre-

hoses off and got out of the way," he was to say later.

Mr Mann remembered Schafer disregarding the ground marshal, who was the eyes and ears of the pilot on the ground, as he swung the Lightning round. "His actions were unorthodox to say the least," he said.

At 22.06 XS894 blasted off from Binbrook's main runway into the night sky. Those on the ground saw it disappear with a sheet of flame from its twin tail pipes as Schafer used rehearsal. It turned over the Wolds and the last they saw was its navigation lights heading out towards the North Sea.

By now the mystery contact which had led to five Lightnings, two Phantoms, three tankers and a Shackleton being scrambled over the North Sea was being tracked by radar controllers at Staxton Wold, which stands on high ground overlooking Scarborough.

The contact was flying parallel to the east coast, 90 miles east of Whitby at 550mph at 6,100ft — an ideal course for an interception by a Binbrook Lightning.

What follows next is drawn from what we have been told is the official transcript of the conversation which took place between Schafer and the radar station at Staxton Wold.

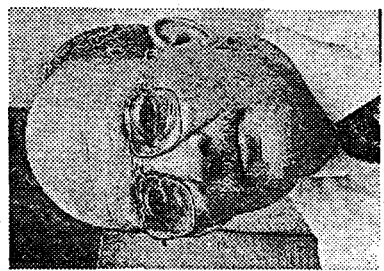
**Schafer:** I have visual contact, repeat visual contact. Over.

**Staxton:** Can you identify aircraft type?

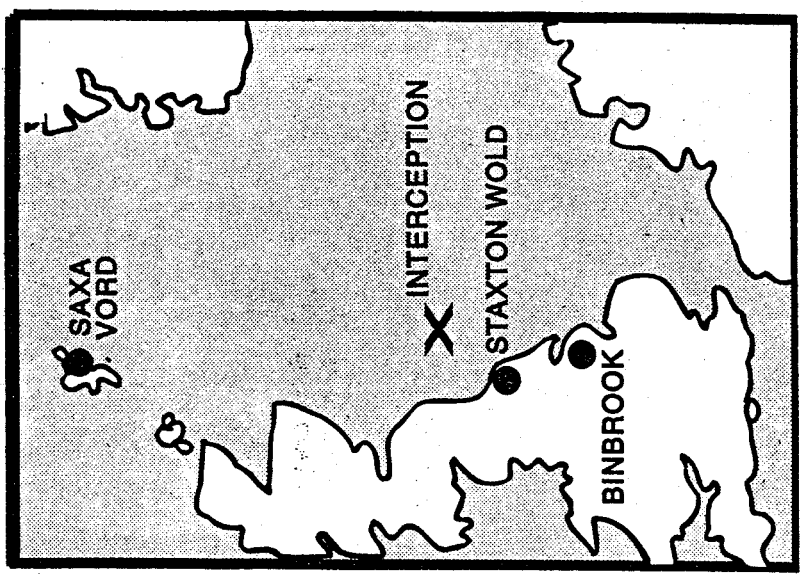
**Schafer:** Negative, nothing recognisable, no clear outlines. There is... bluish light. Hell, that's



● THE LIGHTNING



● BRIAN MANN



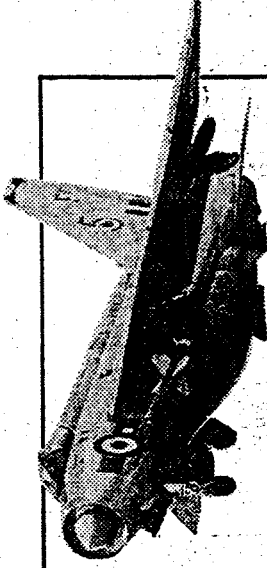
# Mystery as pilot cannot be found

**J**UST as the controller at Staxton Wold lost contact with Captain Schafer, a radar operator, who had been tracking the Lightning and the mystery object it had intercepted, it was watched in disbelief.

The two blips on the screen, representing the fighter and its quarry, slowly merged into one, decelerated rapidly from over 500mph until they became stationary 6,000ft above the North Sea, 140 miles out off Alnwick.

What exactly happened inside the ground control centre at Staxton is open to conjecture. But our information is that one suggestion was that the two Lightnings then on Combat Air Patrol off the Scottish coast should be sent south immediately but it was over-ruled by the senior fighter controller, who continued to try to re-establish contact with Captain Schafer in Foxtrot 94. Two and a half minutes after the simple

**RADAR** controllers at Staxton Wold, just south of Scarborough, had guided the Lightning jet fighter from Binbrook to the mystery contact which had been eluding its Nato trackers for almost four hours. The pilot, Captain William Schafer, a USAF pilot on an exchange tour with the RAF, reported seeing something not contained in any of the official aircraft recognition manuals. It was conical in shape and incredibly bright with what Schafer described as something like a "soccer ball" in its wake. Then Schafer's radio went silent. PAT OTTER continues the story of the riddle of Foxtrot 94.



elapsed as Schafer was left to circle the Flamborough area along with the Shackleton. In the meantime, Strike Command HQ at High Wycombe had instructed Staxton Wold to request Schafer ditch his Lightning off Flamborough. Although he had plenty of fuel to reach either nearby Leconfield or his home base of Binbrook, it appears the reason for High Wycombe's decision was a fear that the Lightning had somehow become contaminated during its mystery interception over the North Sea.

It may well be that the fear was that the aircraft has suffered radiation contamination although some weeks later, when the wreckage was examined at Binbrook, no trace of contamination by anything other than salt water was found.

Staxton: Foxtrot 94. Can you ditch aircraft? Over.

Schafer: She's handling fine. I can bring her in. Over.

Staxton: Negative, 94. I repeat, can you ditch aircraft? Over.

Schafer: Yeah... I

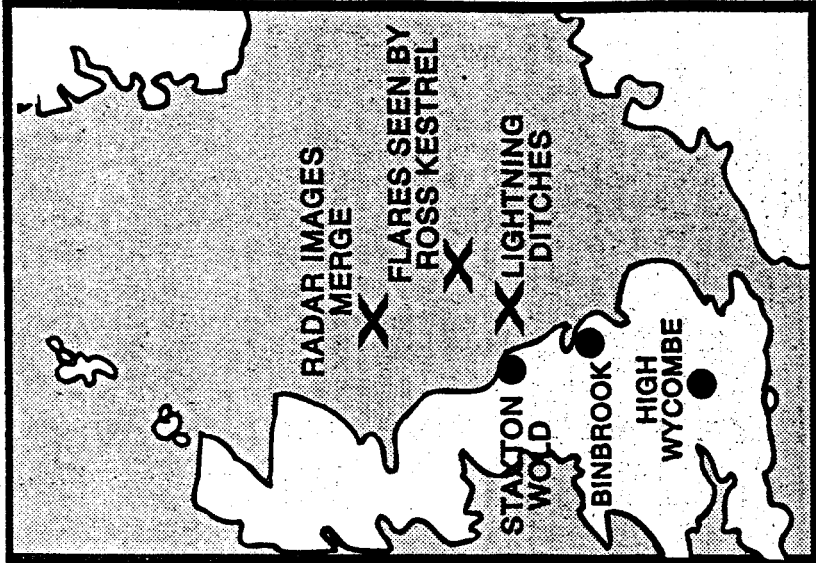
**SEABED HUNT FOR FIGHTER**  
ROYAL NAVY divers went off from Scarborough to look for wreckage of jet

**Yorks Coast search for jet pilot**  
ROYAL NAVY divers have been sent to look for wreckage of jet

**Hopes fade for Lincs. jet pilot**  
Hopes of picking up the pilot of a missing Blackburn jet from RAF Binbrook, which crashed in Scarborough, are fading

**Binbrook jet found by divers**  
ROYAL NAVY divers have found wreckage of jet

**How the loss was reported in the Evening Telegraph and Scarborough Evening News.**



as the weather began to deteriorate. The search continued well into the next day but there were no transmissions from the pilot and on board the aircraft and the official reports say no distress flares were seen. However, the following day the Evening Telegraph reported flares had been seen about 10 miles offshore and the Grimbsby trawler Ross Kestrel, which was passing through the Flamborough area, had gone to investigate but, even though more flares were seen, she found nothing.

**Shackleton:** No SABRE yet. No flares, either. Hang on. We're going round again. Another two minutes elapsed.

**Shackleton:** GCI. Over.

**Staxton:** Receiving you, 77. Over.

**Shackleton:** This is odd, GCI. She's sinking fast but the canopy's closed up again. Over.

**Staxton:** Can you confirm pilot clear of aircraft? Over.

**Shackleton:** He's not in it, we can confirm that. He must be in the water somewhere.

**Staxton:** Any distress signals or flares yet? Over.

**Shackleton:** Negative, GCI. Going round

the Telegraph

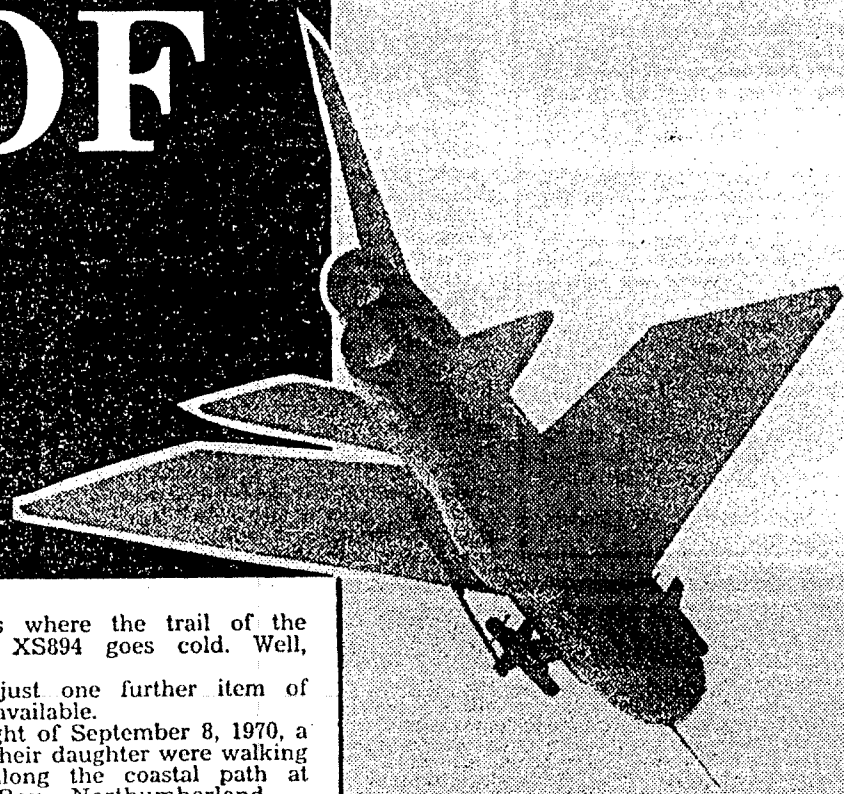


THE loss of the Binbrook Lightning and its American pilot had simply been reported as just another air crash by newspapers along the north-east coast of England. Repor-

ters were used to handling stories like this, which occurred with some regularity. The ditching of XS894 provided front-page stories for the Grimsby Evening Telegraph and the

Scarborough Evening News on September 9, 1970. But they only told part of the story. PAT OTTER concludes our investigation into the Riddle of Foxtrot 94.

# SHROUD OF SECRECY ON XS894



**W**HEN the wreckage of XS894 was finally lifted from the sea bed some five miles off Flamborough Head, it was taken in some secrecy straight to RAF Binbrook.

Air crashes in the North Sea in those days were relatively common and much of the wreckage found its way into Grimsby where often Evening Telegraph photographers were on hand to record the event. But not with XS894.

It was also common practice for wrecked aircraft to be taken to the MoD's Crash Investigation Branch at Farnborough where detailed examinations were carried out in an attempt to find the cause of accidents. But this

of the North Sea.

The ejector seat also seemed to be 'wrong' and there was a suspicion later among the investigators that it was not the one fitted to the aircraft when XS894 took off from Binbrook on its final flight. They were even given an assurance by the OC of 5 Squadron that the seat had not been tampered with. But some of the investigators were not convinced.

Interestingly, an Evening Telegraph reader, who was serving at Binbrook at the time, told us in 1988 that he recalled seeing an official report on the crash which suggested that the seat was faulty and this was why Captain Schafer failed to eject.

Brian McConnell, a former sergeant at Binbrook, said the cartridge on the seat had failed to fire because of faulty installation. However, this is very much at odds with the eye-witness account of

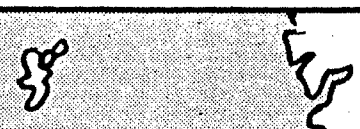
And that's where the trail of the mystery of XS894 goes cold. Well, almost.

There is just one further item of information available.

On the night of September 8, 1970, a couple and their daughter were walking their dog along the coastal path at Alnmouth Bay, Northumberland — almost opposite the point over the North Sea where Schafer made his interception — when they saw and heard something strange.

"We had been walking for maybe 10 minutes when we heard a very high-pitched humming noise," they later said in a statement to MoD personnel. "The dog kept cocking her head to one side and growling. It seemed impossible to tell from which direction the noise was coming, it seemed everywhere. It lasted for maybe 10 to 15 seconds."

## INVESTIGATORS' JOB CURTAILED



# Foxtrot 94: The a pilot who flew

**T**WO weeks ago the Evening Telegraph began telling the story of XS894, a single seat Lightning jet fighter from 5 Squadron at RAF Binbrook which crashed into the sea off Flamborough Head on the night of September 8, 1970. The aircraft was recovered some time later almost intact.

The cockpit canopy was closed but there was no sign of the pilot, an American on an exchange tour with the RAF. We had told the story some years ago but recently we were given new evidence — which we were unable to corroborate — on the disappearance of the Lightning.

It came from a man who has spent some years investigating the disappearance of XS894 that night. He had been one of the original crash investigators and was so puzzled by what he saw that he was determined to get to the bottom of the mystery.

The result was a report so intriguing that we decided to publish it in full and let you, the reader, make up your own mind. It has proved to be one of the most talked-about stories for years.

The response has been tremendous and tonight we publish some of the views we have received. Certainly, the evidence from the experts — men who were flying Lightnings themselves that night — is compelling. On these pages Mike Streten, a former 5 Squadron CO, and Furz Lloyd, a vastly experienced Lightning pilot, both give their accounts of what they believe did happen to XS894.

But the ultimate mystery still remains — what did happen to the pilot?

**O**n the night of the loss of Foxtrot 94, September 8, 1970, I was night flying with 23 Squadron, based at Leuchars.

I remember the initial report on the loss of the aircraft well; at that stage I only knew the pilot was missing and I knew that Binbrook was undergoing its annual Tactical Evaluation (TACEVAL).

The immediate facts that we were able to glean on that fateful night were that the pilot had been shadowing and shepherding an Airborne Early Warning (AEW) Shackleton from 8 Sqn based at Lossiemouth. A crew member had reported that he had last seen the navigation lights of the Lightning passing to the rear and below of the aircraft.

The Lightning pilot, Capt William Shaffner (not Schafer as reported at the time), was an experienced USAF pilot who had recently joined 5 Squadron. Immediately following the pilot's failure to acknowledge radio transmissions from both the Shackleton and the controlling



By MIKE STRETEN

radar at Patrington, an initial air/sea search was initiated.

No trace was found and the immediate search was called off for the night. The following morning a comprehensive search of the area was mounted — no trace of wreckage, tell-tale oil slicks of the missing pilot were found. Indeed, it was not until some two months later that a Royal Navy minesweeper found the aircraft virtually intact at the bottom of the sea.

I remember the initial reports on the aircraft very well. The aircraft was effectively in one piece. What was very unusual, however,

was that the canopy was still attached to the aircraft and all the ejection seat straps and the seat dinghy were still in the aircraft. There was no trace whatsoever of the pilot.

**I**N terms of the mission profile for the shadowing/shepherding procedure, the aircraft told most of the story leading up to the tragic death of its pilot.

To carry out the intercept against a very slow target, in this case doing about 165 knots, the Lightning was required to fly a specific geometric profile which enabled the speed of the target to be determined fairly

accurately. As I recall, once the interceptor had closed with the target, breakaway was initiated at minimum radar range and the procedure repeated so that the target's progression along its track could be covered.

I, therefore, deduced that following the last observation of the Lightning (non-standard since it was observed below the target), the pilot was initiating his breakaway prior to re-initiating the set procedure. The danger was that the Lightning would be flying slowly and that control was therefore commensurately less positive.

From my own extensive night flying experience over the North Sea, with stars above and the lights of fishing boats below, disorientation affected all pilots from time to time.

The evidence indicated that Capt Shaffner had most likely suffered from this since the only way the aircraft could have hit the sea without breaking up was from hitting it at a slow speed at a very shallow angle, most probably planing over

it as he rapidly decelerated.

It is a matter of fact that the only way the canopy could be opened and remain with the aircraft was if the aircraft was doing less than 150 knots or so. Therefore the most likely situation that the pilot found himself in was the nightmare of having hit the sea while trying to recover from a slow-speed situation.

With the aircraft on the sea and sinking rapidly, the quickest way out would have been to open the canopy, unstrap and disconnect the sea dinghy lanyard thereby relying on the life jacket for flotation and subsequently the manual activation of SARBE emergency beacon (contained in the pocket of the jacket) to transmit the emergency frequency for location and subsequent rescue.

Since his body has never been found, this must remain a mystery but not along the line of the source of your information.

**W**HEN Foxtrot 94 took off that night it was to take part in routine exercise. And the aircraft was armed with nothing more than dummy acquisition missiles.

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# Fishing out Foxtrot 94

## SHEDDING LIGHT ON MYSTERY LIGHTNING



By PAT OTTER

THIS is Foxtrot 94, the Binbrook Lightning at the centre of a major air mystery, the day it was fished out of the North Sea.

It is pictured slung from the bows of the recovery vessel Kinless, probably in Bridlington Bay, after it had been hauled to the surface some two months after it crashed on September 8, 1970.

What is remarkable is the condition of the aircraft. It is almost completely intact although it does seem the fuselage is damaged. This could have happened when the aircraft hit the sea or during the recovery.

The cockpit, which was closed and empty, is not visible but it is noticeable that the air brakes on the fuselage are extended, indicating the pilot was flying as slowly as possible when the Lightning hit the sea.

Information passed to the Evening Telegraph by a man investigating the loss of the aircraft suggests the American pilot was ordered to ditch the Lightning after intercepting a strange object over the North Sea.

But two former Lightning pilots have said they believed Foxtrot 94 hit the sea during a low-level low-speed exercise involving a Shackleton aircraft.

What is not disputed is that no trace has ever been found of the pilot. XS894 has not yet given up all its secrets.

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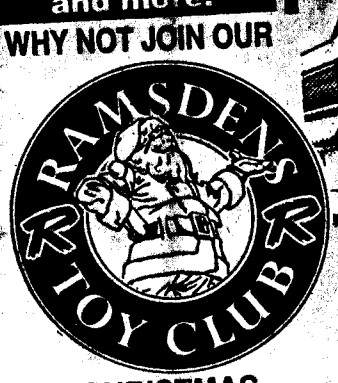
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# Vindictive crash was a tragic error of judgement that night

By **FRIZ LLOYD** of **Middle Rasen**, a former Lightning pilot and now a member of the Lightning Association



However, during Tactical Evaluation Exercise all missions would start following a scramble call, either by telebrief connected to the local radar station or via a radio call to the aircraft. Anyone able to listen in to such transmissions would think that World War Three had started!

To make a TACE VAL more realistic, spurious information relating to raids in other sectors would be broadcast to "flesh out" events in the local sector and thereby make the atmosphere before scramble more realistic.

Thus the reported events off Saxa Vord, the Leuchars Quick Reaction Alert aircraft and the involvement of Phantoms from Keflavik against what the reader must conclude could only have been a UFO, is mere conjecture.

Similarly, the alleged dialogue between NORAD and HQ Strike Command is all "embroidery" and only adds myths to the basic truths of the events that really took place. Of such things all legends have been made. As for any pilot taking a Lightning that had not been fully refueled — ask any former Lightning pilot

whether that ever happened. The aircraft was always "short on fuel", even before engine start. Believe me, it did not happen!

And the purported radio conversations between the pilot and the radar station — or indeed the order to ditch, your source has allowed the power of the pen to embroider even more fairytales.

The Lightning was not cleared to ditch under any circumstances and even if a pilot was ordered to do so, he would have ejected since the chances of a successful ditching at sea at night would have been many thousands to one. Nevertheless, when Foxtrot 94 hit the sea with its apparently just what happened. That is an incontrovertible fact. However, it was inadvertent and not planned or ordered by any higher authority as is alleged in the articles.

**T**HERE was no UFO that night. Nor was there anything unusual about the weather.

As for the recovery of the aircraft to Binbrook and the reluctance to allow it to be examined, once a Board of Inquiry had been convened, any pieces of wreckage recovered are

not available to be examined by anyone other than those the Board has given its express permission to do so, hence the hanger scene.

Angry at the reluctance of Ministry of Defence officials to reveal details, the findings of the Boards or Inquiry are not revealed to the general public except in the most general terms and, moreover, in 1970 nothing other than a press release would ever have been published officially about the accident. This was the establishment procedure.

However, there was no attempt to hide the facts of the case to the Royal Air Force at large and, moreover, in this case the whole procedure for shadowing and shepherding was reviewed to ensure it was as safe as it could be and the Lightning squadrons were informed accordingly.

To conclude, the tragic death of Captain William Schaffner was most probably caused by a loss of aircraft control, at low speed following pilot disorientation, during a shadowing and shepherding procedure against an AEW Shackleton during a TACE-

VAL of Binbrook and Patrington.

There were no other unusual circumstances and no UFOs. This story must not be allowed to become a myth upon which others who specialise in "mysteries" can base "truths" in the future.

It was a miracle that the aircraft hit the sea in an attitude and at a speed that allowed it to remain in one piece. The mystery is what happened to Captain Schaffner once the aircraft was in the sea and, since his body was never found, we will never know.

● **Mike Stretton** flew for some 2,000 hours in Lightnings, was at one time Chief Interceptor Weapons Instructor on the aircraft and in the early 1980s served as CO of 5(F) Squadron at Binbrook.

**I WAS** an operational Lightning pilot at the time and on the night in question Binbrook was participating in a Tactical Evaluation, a peacetime assessment of a unit's wartime effectiveness.

As part of this exercise, 5 Squadron's USAF exchange officer was airborne on a routine shadowing sortie. At night, or in poor weather conditions, this involved flying the Lightning as slow as was practically possible while maintaining radar contact. This involved weaving behind the target in an attempt to keep the radar blip on the screen.

It was during his attempt to remain behind the target in this demanding exercise that the pilot tragically hit the sea.

XS894 impacted right wing slightly low. The pilot survived the crash and vacated the cockpit prior to the aircraft sinking. It would have been almost impossible for him to extricate himself and his liferaft from the aircraft in this situation.

Evidence from the recovered wreckage suggested that he unstrapped and stepped over the side. A cold North Sea at night without protection from the elements afforded by the liferaft would have presented him with little hope of survival.

The recovery of the wreckage and the subsequent Board of Inquiry

were subject to no more secrecy than any other accident. The usual procedure was to publish initial and subsequent findings as the Board progresses.

The wreckage of XS894 was displayed openly at Binbrook and photographed without restriction once the investigation was complete. The result of the Inquiry was published routinely in RAF Flight Safety magazine and leaflets and all the events surrounding the crash could be explained logically. This includes the cockpit being shut when the aircraft was recovered, which is easily explained by the loss of hydraulic pressure.

This accident was an unfortunate error of judgement which cost an American pilot his life — not some stranger than fiction tale.



## I was a witness to the rendezvous in the sky

□ I WAS a witness to some of the events of the night of September 8, 1970.

I had just decided to take some fresh air before retiring for the night and, as I stepped into my back garden I saw a redish object in an east north-easterly position, about 30-degrees above the horizon. It appeared to be stationary for about three minutes. As I watched I heard what appeared to be a jet aircraft heading in the direction of the object I was watching.

Then the object appeared to speed off in a north westerly direction to the north of my position, about 60-degrees above the horizon and appeared to be climbing slightly. As I watched it appeared to change colour from red to a pale blue.

I have seen other objects in the sky at various times with a similar appearance to this one and I now believe they were UFOs. I also believe the authorities which conduct investigations into UFO activity do cover up the truth. I would be pleased to hear from anyone interested in this subject.

— Norman Whiston, 3 Jubilee Avenue, New Holland, South Humberside.

○○○○

□ I FOUND the story engrossing. But there are inconsistencies,

particularly concerning the order for the pilot to ditch his aircraft. I would have thought this was a risky enough proposition in broad daylight, but much worse by night.

Even if the order was given, why was he not instructed to orbit until a search-and-rescue helicopter to arrive? It does not make sense to order him to ditch and then send the helicopter.

He surely would have been better advised to have turned his aircraft out to sea and then ejected.

I can accept the UFO — but not the ditching. It comes over as very dubious to me.

— John Walsh, Grimsby Road, Cleethorpes.

○○○○

□ I READ with great interest your series of articles concerning the fate of Foxtrot 94. Clearly, there is a mystery surrounding the jet's disappearance.

I am part of a national group of investigators who specialise in researching such mysteries and I would be glad of any further information readers may have. Any information, no matter how seemingly irrelevant, will be dealt with in confidence and gratefully acknowledged.

— Andy Roberts, 84 Elland Road, Brighouse, West Yorks.

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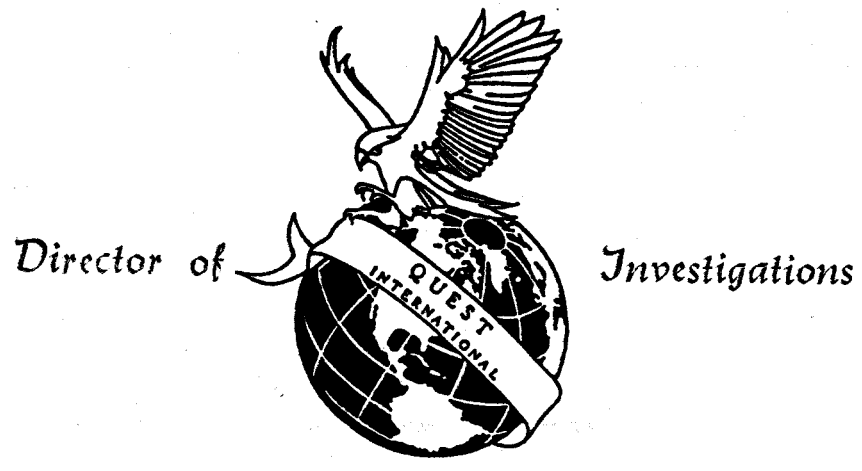
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28. 11. 92.

Dear ██████████

Thank you for taking the time to let me know your findings regarding the unfortunate incident when the R.A.F. Lightning was lost in 1970. I have extended my area of enquiry into the United States in the hope of getting some feedback from my ex military friends.

I enclose the latest copy of our journal and news clippings regarding the Bonnybridge incidents. I have been promised more and will send them to you when I receive them.

Thank you again for your help.

Yours Sincerely,

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...quite impossible. "he said.

(See pages 2 and 3)

# UFO PROBE STEPS UP

SCIENTISTS from across Britain are set to hit Bonnybridge in a bid to investigate the UFO sightings made in the area.  
And the national media has been in the village as news of the phenomenon spreads. More and more sightings of UFOs are being reported — local people claim to have seen lights and other objects in the sky. Now UFO experts have pledged to look further into the reports and will visit the area. (See page 19)

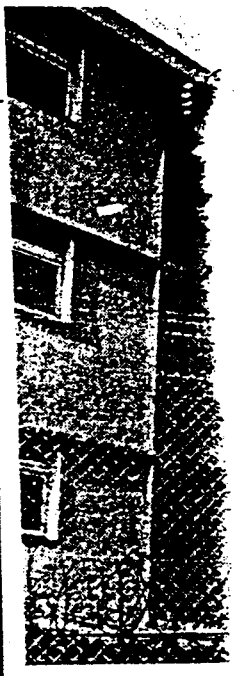
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## Local support for UFO claims



MORE people are claiming to have seen UFOs in the Bonnybridge area.  
Following last week's Advertiser story on sightings of unidentified flying objects around the village, more people have reported seeing strange lighted crafts in the sky.

Now a team of scientists are urging anyone who has seen anything to contact them.

Malcolm Robinson of the Psychic Phenomena Unit said: "We are taking this whole thing very seriously indeed. I would appeal to anyone who has seen any sort of object to contact me on (0259) 724033."

Local councillor Billy Buchanan has been inundated with calls from people who have had a "close encounter".

"Now that it's out in the open," said Councillor Buchanan, "more people are coming forward. Before, they said nothing for fear of being laughed at".

Councillor Buchanan has also attacked national newspaper reports at the weekend which he said ridiculed the people who had come forward to report the sightings.

Television, radio and national newspaper reporters have been in the area to talk to some of the people who have had sightings.

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14 ADVERTISER: Wednesday November 4 1992

# UFO probe

AN investigation is underway into sightings of unidentified flying objects in Falkirk District.

Environmental Health boss Malcolm Macdonald confirmed this week that his department had received an inquiry regarding an UFO sighting in the Bonnybridge area.

And Councillor Billy Buchanan has revealed that

he was approached by a "visibly shaken" local businessman claiming he had seen "a strange lighted object in the sky".

In a statement to the Advertiser, Councillor Buchanan said: "This is not the only sighting in this area and I take the matter seriously. I contacted Falkirk District Council's environment department to check if there had been any military manoeuvres in the area."

Councillor Buchanan also added that he firmly believed the businessman — who wished to remain anonymous — and had known him for many years.

"I could understand his reluctance to speak to anybody on this matter as he quite rightly assumes he would be laughed at and ridiculed," said the Bonnybridge councillor.

"If anyone else has seen something please phone me — I will take it seriously."

Environmental Health boss Malcolm Macdonald said the UFO inquiry would be treated with the same sincerity as any other query.

"It is not one of the usual lines of complaint we receive," he added.

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LAST NIGHT



Spoke to KP. She has no problems  
we are content on the UFO side.  
Confirmed with Sqn Ldr [redacted] that  
Sec(AS) content, and asked that  
we receive a copy of the West  
Drayton Station magazine when  
published. [redacted]

30/11

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DRAFT

In the 1970s, military aircraft accident reports were not available to the public. However, we have been able to obtain permission to bring the following into the public domain, and perhaps lay the mystery of XS894 to rest at last.

On 8 September 1970, RAF Binbrook was taking part in a Tactical Evaluation exercise. During the evening, the evaluation directing staff arranged for Shackleton aircraft to act as targets in order to test the Lightning pilots in the demanding task of intercepting slow flying aircraft.

Captain Schaffner's Lightning was scrambled at 2030 hours and ordered to climb to 10000 feet. He was a United States Air Force pilot serving with the RAF but, although he was relatively experienced on F102 all weather aircraft, he had only flown 120 hours on Lightnings. He was steered towards the target by a ground based radar controller and informed that the aircraft was flying at 1500 feet and 160 knots. Because of its handling characteristics, the Lightning was difficult to fly at such a relatively low speed and the intercept was, therefore, a very difficult one. Eleven minutes after take-off, Captain Schaffner's Lightning was seen by another Lightning pilot in the vicinity, approximately one mile behind the Shackleton, slightly above it, and in a left hand turn. Contact with the Lightning was then lost, and a search began.

The Lightning was located and recovered some 2 months later. It was remarkably intact, except that the left hand wing and some fuselage panels were missing. The canopy was attached, and open, but there was no sign of the pilot.

An inquiry determined that the cause of the accident was that the pilot had inadvertently flown into the sea, while performing a difficult task. He had skimmed the water and attempted to recover the situation by selecting reheat. However, this was unsuccessful.

and he attempted to eject. This was also unsuccessful because the ejection seat sequence failed to operate correctly. Realising that the ejection sequence had failed, the pilot had unstrapped and abandoned the aircraft, only to drown during or after his escape. The inquiry also discovered that the ejection sequence malfunction was due to servicing error.

Following the investigation, a number of changes were made in the training of pilots for such intercepts and the servicing methods employed on the ejection system.

Conclusion as original.

No attribution to I of FS(RAF).

### CONCLUSIONS?

So, how did this tragic accident come to be represented as a sinister conspiracy of silence redolent of UFOs and official cover ups? Without doubt some elements of the official report can be seen in the

newspaper stories but serie blue lights and hyper-sonic targets? One theory advanced by 2 former Lightning pilots who have commented on the Grimsby Evening Telegraph stories is that the Interval scenario could have included an escalating level of alert, with Keflavik based F4s chasing supersonic intruders around the Iceland - Faroes gap. However, there we must leave the story.

### Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Pat Omer of the Grimsby Evening Telegraph for permission to print and reproduce their photograph and other published material.



From: [REDACTED]

Secretariat(Air Staff)2a, Room 8245



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

Main Building Whitehall London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct Dialling) 071-21-82140  
(Switchboard) 071-21-89000  
(Fax) 071-21-8

[REDACTED]  
Grassington  
Skipton  
North Yorkshire  
[REDACTED]

Your reference

Our reference

D/Sec(AS)12/3

Date

23 November 1992

Dear [REDACTED]

When I wrote to you on 5 November, I said that I was trying to locate an Unclassified Military Aircraft Accident Summary (MAAS) for the crash that occurred on 8 September 1970, involving a Lightning F6 aircraft from RAF Binbrook. I have found out that the procedure whereby a MAAS is issued for every military aircraft crash was not set up in 1970, and there is therefore no documentation on this accident that I can release.

I have now tracked down the file relating to this crash, and a thorough read of it has not turned up any information that might support any of the UFO stories that are being told about the accident. The file is classified - as are all such files on aircraft crashes - so I will not be able to release any papers. The facts of the accident are, as I indicated in my last letter, that the aircraft flew into the sea while taking part in an exercise which involved the interception of Shackleton aircraft. The facts simply do not match up with any of the allegations made in any of the articles that you kindly sent me; there was no high speed UFO, no order to ditch the aircraft, no contamination of the wreckage, and nothing unusual about the handling of the Board of Inquiry.

On another matter, when we last spoke, you mentioned that you were investigating a spate of sightings in Bonnybridge, and asked whether we had received any reports that might tie in with what was described. At the time we had not, and I can confirm that this is still the case.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,  
[REDACTED]



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)12/6

16 Nov 92

DI55c - 

CRASH OF LIGHTNING F6 XS894 - ALLEGED UFO INCIDENT

1. We spoke last week about the stories that are currently circulating concerning the crash of a Lightning F6 on 8 September 1970. Essentially, it is alleged that this aircraft was ordered to ditch following an encounter with a UFO.
2. I have attached copies of all the correspondence on this alleged encounter, together with the newspaper articles that first carried the story. I have tracked down the Aircraft Accident Report, and as you will see, there is no indication that there was any UFO sighting at any time during the period running up to the crash. The original file on the accident, which will contain the full Board of Inquiry report, is being sent to us from Archives.
3. I would be grateful for any views you have on this matter. I will keep you informed of developments.

  
Sec(AS)2a  


From: [REDACTED]

Secretariat(Air Staff)2a, Room 8245



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

Main Building Whitehall London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct Dialling) 071-21-82140  
(Switchboard) 071-21-89000  
(Fax) 071-21-8

[REDACTED]  
Tullibody  
Clackmannanshire  
Scotland  
[REDACTED]

Your reference

Our reference

D/Sec(AS)12/3

Date

12 November 1992

Dear [REDACTED]

Your letter to Sqn Ldr [REDACTED] at RAF Kinloss has been passed to this department, as we are the focal point for all enquiries on UFOs and related matters.

Following a number of recent approaches from researchers, who had heard stories that a Lightning F6 aircraft crashed on 8 September 1970, during an encounter with a UFO, I tracked down the Aircraft Accident Report (AAR) for this particular crash. This document is classified Restricted, as is the case for all AARs, and cannot therefore be released. From my reading of this document I can tell you that the Lightning was taking part in a Tactical Evaluation Exercise designed to practise the night shadowing and shepherding of low speed targets. For the purpose of the exercise, the targets involved were Shackleton aircraft. The Lightning crashed into the sea while attempting to intercept one of the Shackletons. There is no indication of any unidentified target having been encountered, and no reason to suggest that there is any sort of UFO incident in any way connected with this tragic crash.

I hope this is helpful, and I wish you luck with your own research.

Yours sincerely,  
[REDACTED]



RESTRICTED

KIN/20/1/6/2/Air

Royal Air Force  
Kinloss  
Forres  
Moray IV36 CRA

Forres [REDACTED]

MODUK Air - SEC(AS)2

9 Nov 92

UFOs - LIGHTNING INCIDENT - 8 SEP 70

Reference: Letter from [REDACTED] 5 Nov 92 (attached).

1. Further to our conversations about the renewed interest in the fatal accident involving a Lightning from RAF Binbrook on 8 Sep 70, I have today received the attached letter from a [REDACTED] - researcher (and probably entire staff of) Strange Phenomena Investigations. Enclosed with Mr [REDACTED]'s letter are 5 articles, dated between 9 and 13 Oct 92, from the Evening Telegraph, which is apparently published by Grimsby and Scunthorpe Newspapers Ltd, 80, Cleethorpe Road, Grimsby, DN31 3EH. The articles are the work of PAT OTTER.
2. I am reluctant to "add fuel to the fire" over this issue, as the newspaper articles are somewhat sensationalised, and imply that the MOD has shrouded the whole issue in a security blanket. Similarly, the articles apparently quote "official transcripts" of conversation between the Lightning pilot and the radar controller at Staxton Wold.
3. I think that the attached letter perhaps warrants a reply from you, although it is likely that any line will be interpreted by the researchers as further evidence of "sinister doings".
4. The newspaper articles are too poor to fax: they will follow in the 1st class mail.
5. Finally, I shall withhold my reply to Mr [REDACTED] until I hear from you about this matter. Sorry to pass the buck, but this one could be messy if handled incorrectly.

[REDACTED]

Sqn Ldr  
for OC

RESTRICTED

# STRANGE PHENOMENA INVESTIGATIONS

STRANGE PHENOMENA  
INVESTIGATIONS RESEARCHER  
CLACKMANNANSHIRE, SCOTLAND

5th November 1992.

Tele: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Please find enclosed the articles regarding the UFO sighting and subsequent loss of a XS894 Lightning aircraft (and missing pilot ?)

As I said on the phone, this case is currently being researched, not only in this country, but overseas as well, and I shall keep you up to date on any important breakthroughs. Please let me know how you get on with your own enquiries, any help from yourself would be greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
Founder S.P.I.



File note,

Sec (AS) 1 + IFS agree  
this is going too far - IFS  
intent to produce a MAAS  
in slow time.

13/11



~~Agon~~, [ ] delete.

[redacted] has informed me that  
RAF West Prayton plan to publish an article in  
their station magazine re the loss of X5894.  
The article draws from the existing press coverage  
and then gives an account of what actually  
happened. Relevant extract attached. Are you  
content with this? [redacted]

# FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION COVER SHEET

Unclassified / Restricted

From: (Name)

SON IDE [redacted]

(Appt)

MOD IFS (RAF) 401A

Inspectorate of Flight Safety (RAF)  
Ministry of Defence  
Room... 415.....  
Aadal House  
Theobalds Road  
London WC1X 8RU

Fax Tel: [redacted]

See (AS) 2.

ARTICLE!

10 NOV 92

No. of Sheets 1 + 4

IFS Contact Tel: [redacted]

Copies to: [redacted]

Please mark any return Fax to IFS (RAF) Room 416 AA

Our File Reference:

Covering Facsimile

TO:

FS1b  
IFS  
Astral House

REVIEW OF MATERIAL FOR RAF WEST DRAYTON STATION MAGAZINE

1. The RAF West Drayton station magazine is planning to publish a story in its next issue arising from material in recent editions of the Grimsby Evening Telegraph about the loss of XS894 in Sep 1970. Sqn Ldr [REDACTED] as supplied me with a copy of the official report on the loss of XS894 and asked that I submit to you the material from the report which we plan to publish, for vetting.

2. I would be grateful if you would review the material I have extracted from the accident report and confirm that we may go ahead with publication. The paragraphs derived from the report are sidelined. My fax number is [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Fit Lt  
[REDACTED]

**Schaffner " Yeah..I guess, over"**

Then as the Shackleton was vectored toward the planned ditching area, Schaffner prepared himself. The report states that Capt Schaffner's last transmission came as he prepared to ditch the Lightning, " Descending now GCI, over" and goes on to relate how the Shackleton arrived on the scene to see the Lightning floating on the sea, but with no sign of the pilot. Despite a search by the Shackleton and a lengthy air sea rescue operation the next day no sign of Capt Schaffner was ever found. On October 7th 1970 a Navy recovery vessel, HMS KEDDLESTONE located the remarkably intact wreckage of XS894 and brought it to the surface. The ejection seat was still in the cockpit; the canopy was still attached but open.

### SHROUD OF SECRECY ON XS894

When the wreckage of XS894 was recovered it was taken straight to Binbrook and kept screened off from prying eyes in one corner of a hangar. The Evening Telegraph report states that investigators from Farnborough were allowed only a cursory inspection and goes on to imply that the real reason for the accident was suppressed and that normally well connected journalists and researchers met with silence and closed doors when they tried to investigate the affair.

### LINK REVEALS THE TRUTH ABOUT XS894!

For many two years on the details of military aircraft accidents are perhaps a little less closely guarded. Indeed summaries of most contemporary accident reports are regularly published in Flight and Aviation News. However, we do not think that a summary of a 1970s report has ever been published and we are indebted to the Inspectorate of Flight Safety for their permission to bring the following into the public domain, and perhaps lay the mystery of XS894 to rest at last.

On 4 Sep 70 4 Sqn was participating in a NATO TACEVAL exercise at RAF Binbrook. Captain W Schaffner was serving as an exchange pilot on the squadron and was relatively inexperienced on the Lightning, although he had 2 tours on the F103 Delta Dagger and instructor pilot experience.

On the day of the accident Capt Schaffner was at cockpit readiness for 73 minutes before being scrambled at 1947 hrs. After taxiing the scramble order was cancelled and Schaffner returned to the dispersal where he ordered fuel only and no turn round servicing. This was countermanded by the duty engineering officer who ordered a full turnround. The turnround was delayed and during this delay the pilot was warned that he would be scrambled as soon as he was ready. He asked the

groundcrew to expedite the turnaround, however, before it was completed he called for engine start, failed to sign the servicing certificate and taxied out at 2025 hrs. As he entered the runway a metal board and attached servicing certificate fell from the aircraft. Unknown to the station and the squadron, the TACEVAL scenario had been changed and Schaffner was being scrambled to intercept and shadow a Shackleton aircraft which was flying at 1500' and 160 kts. Such a task was not, at the time, part of the syllabus for Lightning training but it was a war role and was thus subject to Taceval.

The pilot took off at 2030 hrs and still unaware of his target was ordered to Flight Level 100 and handed over to GCI who advised him of his target's details. At a range of 28 miles he was ordered to accelerate to Mach 0.95 to expedite a rapid takeover from another Lightning. Although sounding surprised, Capt Schaffner complied and reported visual contact with lights, \* whereupon he ~~was~~ "of the Shackleton"? commenced a series of manoeuvres to slow the aircraft down and position himself for the shadowing task. At 2041 hrs XS894 was seen by the departing Lightning to be about 2000 yards astern the target in a port turn and between 500 and 1000 feet above (i.e. 2000' - 2500' above the surface). The Shackleton crew then saw the Lightning apparently very low and when, at 2042 hrs no response was received from Capt Schaffner the GCI controller initiated emergency procedures.

The wreckage was indeed recovered remarkably intact, apart from some missing fuselage panels and a broken off port wing which could be attributed to impact with the sea. Examination revealed that the aircraft had struck the sea at a low speed in a roll-down attitude at a minimal rate of descent. Both throttles were in the reheat gate, the gear was up, the flaps down and the airbrakes out. The aircraft appeared to have planed the surface and come to rest comparatively slowly. There was no sign of fire or explosion and expert examination revealed no indication that the aircraft was other than serviceable on impact.

The ejection seat had been initiated but due to a malfunction it had failed to operate correctly.

[The enquiry concluded that a difficult task in rushed circumstances had led the pilot to lose awareness of his height so that as a result he had flown into the sea.] The pilot attempted to recover the situation by selecting a seat which failed to take effect. He thus initiated ejection but this was unsuccessful and having survived he manually abandoned the aircraft only to be drowned either during or after his escape. The ejection sequence failed because of mis-servicing which was subsequently deemed to have been culpably negligent.

## CONCLUSIONS?

So, how did this tragic accident come to be represented as a sinister conspiracy of silence redolent of UFOs and official cover ups? Without doubt some elements of the official report can be seen in the

newspaper stories but eerie blue lights and hyper-sonic targets? One theory advanced by 2 former Lightning pilots who have commented on the Grimsby Evening Telegraph stories is that the Taceval scenario could have included an escalating level of alert, with Keflavik based F4s chasing supersonic intruders around the Iceland - Faroes gap. However, there we must leave the story.

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We would like to thank Pat Otter of the Grimsby Evening Telegraph for permission to preets and reproduce their photograph and other published material.

Sqn Ldr R A Heath (FS 1b at IFS) checked our material and kindly agreed to the publication of the facts extracted from the official accident report.



KIN/20/1/6/2/Air

RESTRICTED

Royal Air Force  
Kinloss  
Forres  
Moray IV36 ORA

Forres [REDACTED]

MODUK Air - SEC(AS)2

9 Nov 92

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Sqn Ldr  
for OC

RESTRICTED

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INVESTIGATIONS RESEARCHER  
GLACKMANNANSHIRE SCOTLAND

5th November 1992.

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Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
Founder S.P.I.

# Cat-and-mouse with a 17,400mph radar blip

**T**HE chain of events which led to the crash of Lightning XS894 from 5 Squadron at RAF Binbrook and the disappearance of its pilot began at 8.17 on the night of September 8, 1970, in an isolated building on the Shetland Islands.

Saxa Vord was one of the chain of radar stations whose task it was to spot unidentified aircraft approaching the North Sea or the sensitive "Iceland gap".

Remember, this was 1970 when the Cold War was at its height and Russian long-range aircraft made regular sorties into the North Atlantic and along the British coast to test the reaction of Nato fighters.

On this particular night, a radar operator at Saxa Vord picked up the blip of an unidentified aircraft over the North Sea halfway between the Shetlands and Alesund, in Norway.

The contact was monitored for several minutes at a steady speed of 630mph, at 37,000ft, holding altitude and on a south-westerly heading. Then Saxa Vord noted the contact was turning through 30 degrees to head due south. It increased speed to 900mph (mach 1.25) and climbed to 41,000ft.

Following laid-down procedures, radar controllers at Saxa Vord flashed a scramble message to the Quick Reaction Alert Flight at the nearest Nato airfield, RAF Leuchars on the east coast of Scotland, not far from Dundee.

There two Lightning interceptors, which had been ready on the flight line for just such an alert, minutes over the North Sea.

After checking the position of their tanker, a Victor K1A, the two fighters were guided north by Saxa Vord. So far it was a routine scramble for what was then assumed to be a Russian Bear or Badger, the long-range reconnaissance aircraft used to test the nerves of the Royal Air Force.

But it was then that the radar plotters on the Shetland Islands saw something on their screens which they found impossible to believe.

**TONIGHT** we start our detailed look at the events leading up to the ditching in the North Sea of Lightning Foxtrot 94, a single-seat fighter from 5 Squadron at Binbrook whose final flight is at the centre of one of the most puzzling aviation stories since the war. Just what was it that its pilot, American William Schafner, was sent to intercept out over the North Sea 22 years ago and why was he eventually ordered to ditch his aircraft off Flamborough Head rather than return to North Lincolnshire? Now new information has been passed to the Evening Telegraph. PAT OTTER reports on a story you may not believe...



XS894 pictured at Binbrook in 1967. It was the first F6 Lightning delivered to 5 Squadron.

The contact they had been tracking at speeds and altitudes consistent with modern Russian warplanes turned through 180 degrees on a due north heading and within seconds disappeared off their screens. Later they calculated that to do this its speed must have been in the region of 17,400mph.

With the contact now gone, the Lightnings were vectored south to rendezvous with the tanker and remained airborne on Combat Air Patrol.

During the next hour the mystery contact reappeared several times, approaching from the north. Each time the Lightnings were sent north to intercept, it turned and disappeared again.

By now two F4 Phantoms of the US Air Force had been scrambled from the American base at Keflavik in Iceland. They had much more sophisticated radar than the British Lightnings and were able to pick up the mystery contact themselves.

But when they, too, tried to get close enough to identify what was

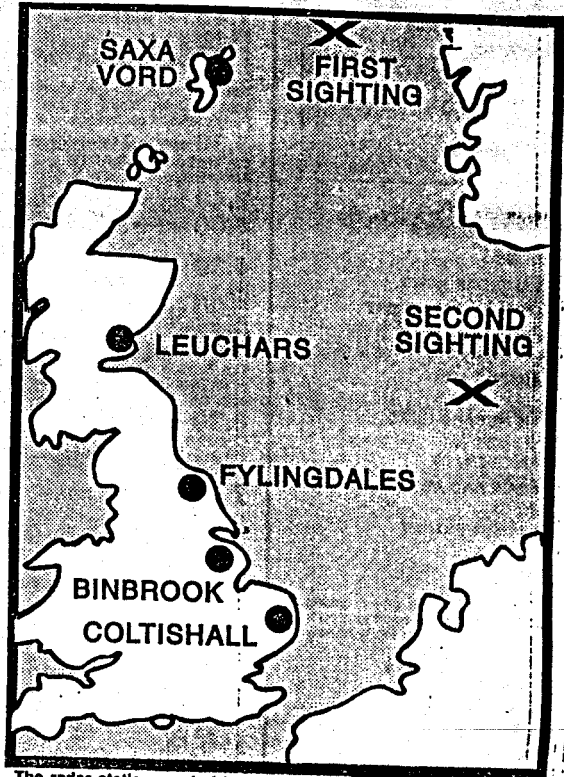
by now beginning to cause some alarm to Nato commanders, they found they were just as impotent as the Lightnings.

The alert had reached such a level that the contact was being monitored by the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System at Fylingdales Moor, near Whitty, along with a second BMEWS in Greenland.

The information they were collecting was relayed to the North American Air Defence Command at Cheyenne Mountain and the US Detection and Tracking Centre at Colorado Springs.

In the meantime, the cat-and-mouse game over the North Sea between the Lightnings and Phantoms and the mystery contact was still going on. Then, at 21.05 after the fighters had made yet another abortive attempt to get close, the contact vanished off the radar screens.

The Lightnings were ordered to return to Leuchars while the Phantoms were instructed to carry out a Combat Air Patrol to the east of Iceland.



The radar stations and airbases put on alert by the first contacts that night.

Then, at 21.39, radar controllers picked up the contact again. This time its speed was decelerating to 1,300mph — almost the limit of both the Lightnings and Phantoms — at a holding altitude of 18,000ft. It was on a south-westerly heading coming from the direction of the Skagerrak, off the northern tip of Denmark.

Two more Lightnings were scrambled from Leuchars, and were ordered to rendezvous with a Victor tanker and then maintain a CAP on a 50-mile east-west

front, 200 miles north-east of Aberdeen. As a precaution, two further Lightnings were ordered into the air from Coltishall in Norfolk and, with another tanker, to form a CAP 170 miles east of Great Yarmouth. The contact was somewhere between these two lines of supersonic fighters.

While all this was going on, RAF staff at Fylingdales, which was in constant contact with NORAD at Cheyenne Mountain, heard, ominously, that the Strategic Air Command HQ at Omaha, Nebraska, was ordering its B52 bombers into the air.

It was an order which could only have come from the highest level. What had started as a routine sighting of what was believed to be a Russian aircraft, had now reached the White House and, presumably, President Richard Nixon.

**N**ORAD was told by officials at the Pentagon that a USAF pilot of great experience was presently on an exchange visit with the RAF and was stationed at Binbrook, the North Lincolnshire fighter base a few miles from Grimsby.

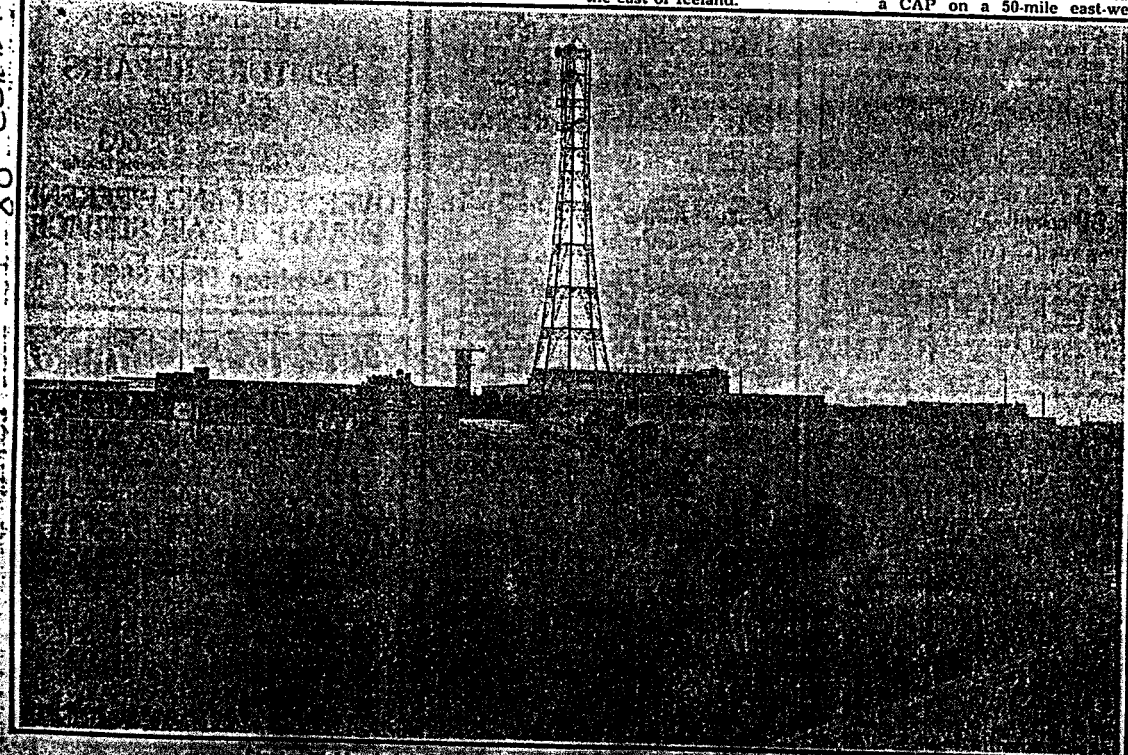
Rapid inquiries were made and it was discovered the pilot was on the station and was, by coincidence, "night available".

At around 21.45 a request was made from a very high level within NORAD through Strike Command's UK headquarters at High Wycombe, for RAF Binbrook to send Capt William Schafner "if at all possible" to join the QRA Lightnings looking for the mystery contact.

By this time four Lightnings, two Phantoms and three tankers were already airborne and they were joined by a Shackleton Mk3 from Kinloss, which was ordered to patrol on a north-south heading at 3,000ft, 10 miles out from the east coast.

Binbrook's QRA Lightnings were being held in reserve, but it was decided to send out a single aircraft from the North Lincolnshire airfield — flown by Capt Schafner. The Americans wanted one of their own at the sharp end when it came to cornering the mystery contact.

**● TOMORROW:** Contact over the North Sea.



Saxa Vord radar station near Scarborough — Schafner's link on his last mission.

0.4 72 359 232  
DN 31 3 E H  
GRIMSBY  
SCUNTHORPE  
80 CLETHORPE



# 'It's turning... straight for me'

**C**APTAIN William Schafer was sitting in the crew room of 5 Squadron when the call came from High Wycombe.

The room overlooked the apron where a line of silver-finish Lightnings stood, illuminated by the high-intensity sodium lighting. The crew room itself was sparsely furnished, with ageing chairs which had seen better days, a bar which dispensed nothing stronger than black Nescafe and walls adorned with plaques and photographs donated by visiting



Brian Mann — I panicked

RAF and overseas air force units. Schafer was still in his flying suit, after returning earlier than evening from a training sortie in one of the squadron's aircraft. He is remembered by those at Binbrook as a small, powerfully-built man who loved to fly

the single-seat Lightnings, so different from the new generation of sophisticated aircraft then starting to come into service in the USAF.

When the call came, Schafer was helped into the remainder of his flying gear by other 5 Squadron aircrew, went out through the door, turned right and raced across the apron.

Two Lightnings in the line-up were virtually ready for flight. One, XS894, was in the process of having its fuel tanks topped up and was already connected to a power starter.

Schafer climbed the steep ladder, hauled himself into the cockpit, strapped in and started the engines. He waved aside the groundcrew, who were expected to help carry out the standard pre-flight checks, ordered the refuelling to stop and failed to sign the regulation form signifying he was happy with the aircraft.

It was armed with two Red Top air-to-air missiles, one of which was live and the other a dummy, and enough 30mm cannon shells for a six-second burst.

One of the men on the ground crew at the time was Brian Mann of Grimsby, who was driving one of the fuel bowlers. He remembers XS894 being refuelled at a rate of 150 gallons a minute when suddenly the engines started. "The windows on the tanker almost went in. I panicked, took the hoses off and got out of the way," he was to say later.

Mr Mann remembered Schafer disregarding the groundcrew marshaller, who was the eyes and ears of the pilot on the ground, as he swung



NATO forces were being brought up to full alert by a mystery object picked up on radar over the North Sea. At first it appeared to be yet another Russian aircraft out to test the reflexes of Allied air forces. But then the object began behaving in a way which baffled radar controllers. Nuclear bombers in the United States were ordered into the air while the Pentagon decided that its man-on-the-spot, an experienced Vietnam veteran then on an exchange visit with the RAF at Binbrook, should take a look. PAT OTTER continues the story of the last flight of Foxtro 94.

the Lightning round. "His actions were unorthodox to say the least," he said.

At 22.06 XS894 blasted off from Binbrook's main runway into the night sky. Those on the ground saw it disappear with a sheet of flame from its twin tail pipes as Schafer used ratchet. It turned over the Wolds and the last they saw was its navigation lights heading out towards the North Sea.

**B**y now the mystery contact which had led to five Lightnings, two Phantoms, three tankers and a Shackleton being scrambled over the North Sea being tracked by radar controllers at Staxton Wold, which stands on high ground overlooking Scarborough.

The contact was flying parallel to the east coast 90 miles east of Whitby at 530mph at 6,100ft — an ideal course for an interception by a Binbrook Lightning.

What follows next is drawn from what we

have been told is the official transcript of the conversation which took place between Schafer and the radar station at Staxton Wold.

Schafer: I have visual contact, repeat visual contact. Over.

Staxton: Can you identify aircraft type? Schafer: Negative, nothing recognisable, no clear outlines. There is... bluish light. Hell, that's bright... very bright.

Staxton: Are your instruments functioning. 94? Check compass. Over.

Schafer: Affirmative, CCI. I'm alongside, it now, maybe 600ft off my... it's a conical shape. Jeez, that's bright, it hurts my eyes to look at it for more than a few seconds.

Staxton: How close are you now? Schafer: About 400ft, he's still in my three o'clock. Hey wait... there's something else. It's like a large soccer ball... it's like it's made of glass.

Staxton: Is it part of the object or independent? Over.

Schafer: It... no, it's separate from the main body... the conical shape... it's at the back end, the sharp end of the shape. It's like bobbing up and down and going from side to side slowly. It may be the power source. There's no sign of ballistics.

Staxton: Is there any sign of occupation? Over.

Schafer: Negative, nothing.

Staxton: Can you assess the rate? Schafer: Contact in descent, gentle. Am going with it... 50... no about 70R... it's levelled out again.

Staxton: Is the ball object still with it? Over.

Schafer: Affirmative. It's not actually connected... maybe a magnetic attraction to the conical shape. There's a haze of light that... Wait a second, it's turning... coming straight for me... shiv... am taking evasive action... few... I can handle.

Staxton: 94? Come in 94. Foxtro 94, are you receiving? Over. Come in 94. Over.

● NEXT INSTALLMENT: Schafer 'installs' and disappears

# 'Alarming' greenhouse gas levels

NITROGEN dioxide levels are to be monitored in Grimsby. Four sites will be surveyed as part of a 10-year national survey of air levels of the gas.

Grimsby's Public Health and Licensing Committee approved the recommendation by Ian Bolton, Director of Environmental Services.

Nitrogen dioxide, along with carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide, is one of the main greenhouse gases.

The results will offer a judgement on several government anti-pollution policies.

These have included the introduction of catalysts on motor vehicles, and low emission burners on industrial plants which are the main sources of nitrogen dioxide emissions.

The cost of monitoring will be between £500 and £600. A simple device to monitor emissions will be installed at each site. The tube will be replaced each month and taken for testing.

The need for long-term testing became apparent after a 1991 survey showed that nitrogen dioxide concentrations were about 35 per cent greater than in 1986.

"The levels are very alarming," said Mr Bolton. "The results from Grimsby in 1986 were more typical of a rural rather than an urban environment."

"Any increase since then is undesirable. However, a national policy is required to solve the problem," he added.

# New safety rules lead to cutbacks in Christmas lighting

NEW safety regulations are set to make sweeping changes to Grimsby's traditional Christmas lights and decorations.

The Council's Events and Allotments Committee, which runs the town's Christmas lighting, has already been forced to spend an extra £2,500 this year to meet the standards.

And they could be asked for the same amount for the next two years until all the work has been completed.

Under the new rules the council needs new transformers if it is to put up lights in St James Square.

Victoria Street will be decorated as usual, as the pedestrianisation scheme was carried out with the regulations in mind.

But there will be no lights this year on Cleethorpe Road, where they would hang down too low to comply with the regulations.

One-off Pierre Dibby, Grimsby's Sport's and Leisure Officer said: "If we don't pay the one-off amount this year, there wouldn't be the same amount of lighting as in previous years."

The council's extra spending means that the Chamber of Trade must provide all the funding for the charity Christmas Fair.

The committee also heard that the tree presented to Grimsby by the people of Trondheim will be moved from St James Square to Riverhead Square and that there would be no tree this year on Hainton Avenue.

# 'Sorry' driver double drink driving limit

SELF-EMPLOYED Ulceby glazier John McCann's erratic driving early one morning attracted the attention of a police patrol, a court heard.

And when they stopped him outside his Southfield Close home McCann (31), was unable to provide a breath sample, said Charles Appleby, prosecuting.

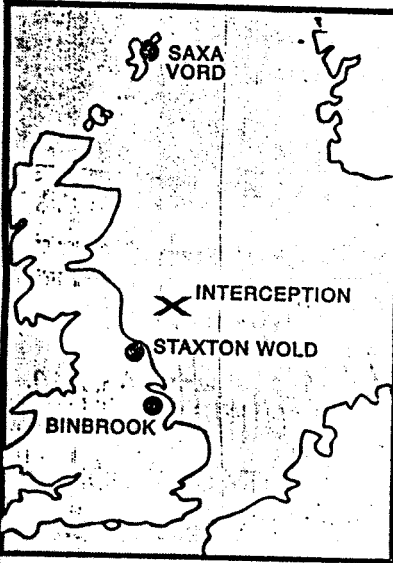
However a further sample taken at Grimsby Police Station revealed McCann, at 83 megins of alcohol in 100mls of breath, was more than double the legal limit.

He was banned from driving for 18 months and ordered to pay a £300 fine as well as £30 prosecution costs.

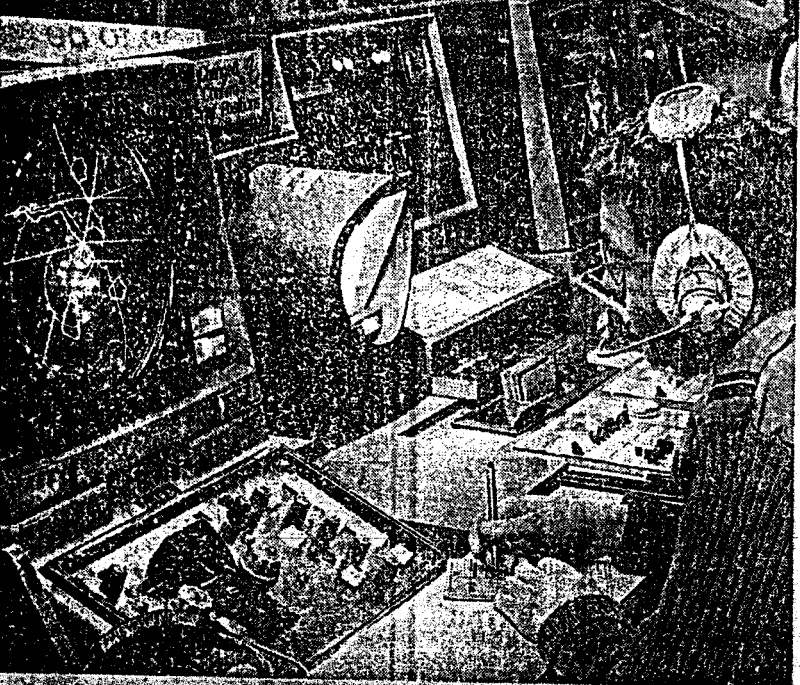
In court McCann said he had had a few drinks at the home of a friend.

He said he would now have to employ someone to drive for him.

"I am very sorry for what has happened," he said. "I can't afford for it to happen again."



The spot where the interception was made



A radar controller vectored Schafer onto the mystery object

# New Revelations on Fate of Foxtrof 94

AT precisely six minutes past 10 on the night of September 8, 1970 a single Lightning jet fighter took off from RAF Binbrook.

Ground crew on the flight line were accused to Lightning being scrambled in a hurry at any time of night or day. Binbrook, after all, was a front-line fighter station and its aircraft shared GRA — Quick Reaction Alert — duty with other East Coast airfields to provide cover should any unidentified aircraft appear on the radar screens.

By PAT OTTER

But there was something different about this scramble. For a start, it was normal for GRA aircraft to take off in pairs. Two aircraft were kept at a state of instant readiness for just times ready for just such an emergency. But on this occasion, only one aircraft took off. And it wasn't one of the GRA aircraft.

Then there was the manner of the take-off. The pilot had raced out from the 5 Squadron crew room, adjacent to the apron, and had climbed aboard while a Lightning was in the process of being refuelled.

Captain Schahner was ever found.

More than a month later the wreckage of the aircraft was found on the sea bed by Royal Navy divers. Despite earlier reports to the contrary, the cockpit was empty and the canopy closed. Captain Schahner had vanished. Completely and utterly.

And this was no ordinary pilot strapped into the cockpit of the Mach 2 interceptor. His was Captain William Schahner of the United States Air Force, who was on his second tour as an exchange pilot with the RAF. Schahner was a vastly experienced jet fighter pilot with combat time behind him in Vietnam. He had been at Binbrook for some time and his wife was living on the base with him.

No pre-flight checks were made and, as a bemused ground crew looked on, the Lightning taxied out to the end of the runway. It turned left and immediately took off, using ratchet to gain speed and height as quickly as possible. The aircraft, XS894, a Lightning F6 of 5 Squadron, whose call sign that night was 'over the North Sea', disappeared into the night. What is fast becoming one of the great aviation puzzles of recent times.

I anticipated difficulties in investigating a 16-year-old ditching incident in the North Sea, but not on the day of the crash. I was to encounter the next few weeks.

Normally, helpful press contacts at the Defence Ministry. But no trace of a Ministry official. Defence Ministry. But no trace of a Ministry official.



Later the aircraft was recovered and taken, unusually, to RAF Binbrook. There, it was kept under wraps in the corner of a hangar. When a team from the MOD's Crash Investigation Branch arrived from Farnborough they were permitted to spend only a very brief time examining the wreckage of XS894. What they did discover disturbed them. And what happened later disturbed them, even more.

I first came across the mysterious story of XS894 six years ago. An outline of the story was related to me by Barry Halpeny, an aviation enthusiast and author who lived at the time in Market Harborough. He was researching for a book on aviation mysteries at the time. He suggested I dig out the clippings on the crash and look further into it. There was more than met the eye, he told me.

I anticipated difficulties in investigating a 16-year-old ditching incident in the North Sea, but not on the day of the crash. I was to encounter the next few weeks.

Normally, helpful press contacts at the Defence Ministry. But no trace of a Ministry official. Defence Ministry. But no trace of a Ministry official.

graph carried my own story of the mystery of XS894.

Subsequently, we were contacted by two former airmen who had both been at Binbrook at the time and added further fuel to the mystery by recalling their own memories of that night.

It was a story which puzzled and intrigued thousands of Evening Telegraph readers. But perhaps most interestingly of all, it was a story which grabbed the attention of a man spending 10 days in a Cleethorpes guest house.

Coincidence Sixteen years earlier he had been one of the crash investigators who went to Binbrook to examine the remains of XS894. He was puzzled by what he saw and the treatment of the investigation team. Our investigation team received that he was determined to get to the bottom of the mystery once and for all.

Now, four years on he believes he has peeled back a little bit more of the mystery surrounding XS894.

The disappearance of Captain Schahner, the Evening Telegraph now has a copy of his account of what he believes happened that night. Some has come from his dogged investigations. Some from official documents he has obtained. And some, most tellingly, from what he maintains in a transcript of the final conversations between Captain Schahner, a radar controller at Staxton (Wold), near Scarborough, and the crew of the Shackleton which witnessed the crash. This is the story we are going to tell over the next few nights.

The information in it is quite remarkable. Our source has to remain anonymous and we cannot corroborate all the information in his report. What information we can is certainly in line with the results of my own inquiries over the years ago. All we ask you to do is to read our stories carefully and make up your own mind.

● TOMORROW: The final tale of XS894.





# Mystery as pilot cannot be found

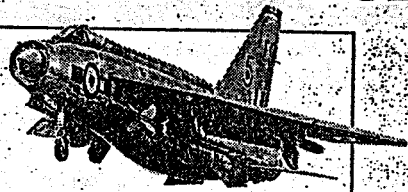
JUST as the controller at Staxton Wold lost contact with Captain Schafer, a radar operator, who had been tracking the Lightning and the mystery object it had intercepted, watched in disbelief.

The two blips on the screen, representing the fighter and its quarry, slowly merged into one, decelerated rapidly from over 500mph until they became stationary 6,000ft above the North Sea 140 miles out, off Alwick.

What exactly happened inside the ground control centre at Staxton is open to conjecture. But our information is that one suggestion was that the two Lightnings then on Combat Air Patrol off the Scottish coast should be sent south immediately but it was over-ruled by the senior fighter controller, who continued to try to re-establish contact with Captain Schafer in Foxtrot 94.

Two and a half minutes after the single blip on the radar screen came to a halt it started to move again, accelerating rapidly to 600mph and climbing to 9,000ft, heading south back towards Staxton. Shortly afterwards, the single blip separated into two, one maintaining its southerly heading, somewhat erratically, at between 600 and 630mph and descending slowly, the other turning through 180 degrees to head north-westerly and vanishing at a speed later calculated to be around 20,400mph. While all this was going on, a Shackleton MR3, which had been on patrol off the Firth

RADAR controllers at Staxton Wold, just south of Scarborough, had guided the Lightning jet fighter from Binbrook to the mystery contact which had been eluding its Nato trackers for almost four hours. The pilot, Captain William Schafer, a USAF pilot on an exchange tour with the RAF, reported seeing something not contained in any of the official aircraft recognition manuals. It was conical in shape and incredibly bright with what Schafer described as something like a "soccer ball" in its wake. Then Schafer's radio went silent. PAT OTTER continues the story of the riddle of Foxtrot 94.



**SEABED HUNT FOR FIGHTER**

**Yorks Coast search for jet pilot**

**Hopes fade for Lincs. jet pilot**

**Binbrook jet found by divers**

How the loss was reported in the Evening Telegraph and Scarborough Evening News.

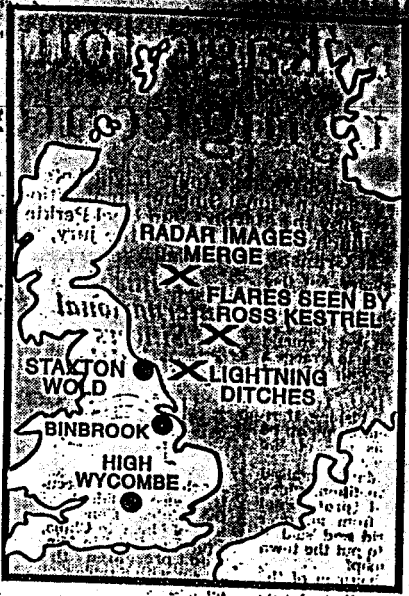
of Forth, was ordered south to hold station around Flamborough Head. Then, Staxton Wold re-established contact with Captain Schafer. Schafer: GCI... are you receiving? Over. Staxton: Affirmative 94. Loud and clear. What is your condition? Over. Schafer: Not too good. I can't think what has happened... I feel kinda dizzy... I can see shooting stars. Staxton: Can you see your instruments? Over. Schafer: Affirmative, but, er... the compass is w/s... Staxton: Foxtrot 94,

turn 043 degrees. Over. Schafer: Er... all directional instruments are out, repeat w/s. Over. Staxton: Roger 94, execute right turn, estimate quarter turn. Over. Schafer: Turning now. Staxton: Come further, 94. That's good. Is your altimeter functioning? Over. Schafer: Affirmative, GCI. Staxton: Descend to 3,500ft. Over. Schafer: Roger, GCI. Staxton: What's your fuel state, 94? Over. Schafer: About thirty per cent, GCI. Staxton: That's what

we calculated. Can you tell us what happened, 94? Over. Schafer: I don't know. It came in close... I shut my eyes... I figure I must've blacked out for a few seconds. Staxton: OK, 94. Standby. At this stage the Shackleton arrived over Flamborough Head and began circling before XS894 was vectored into the area by the Staxton controllers. Schafer: Can you bring me in, GCI? Over. Staxton: Er... Hold station, 94. Over. Several minutes then

elapsed as Schafer was left to circle the Flamborough area, along with the Shackleton. In the meantime, Strike Command HQ at High Wycombe had instructed Staxton Wold to request Schafer ditch his Lightning off Flamborough. Although he had plenty of fuel to reach either nearby Leconfield or his home base of Binbrook, it appears the reason for High Wycombe's decision was a fear that the Lightning had somehow become contaminated during its mystery interception over the North Sea.

It may well be that the fear was that the aircraft has suffered radiation contamination although some weeks later, when the wreckage was examined at Binbrook, no trace of contamination by anything other than salt water was found. Staxton: Foxtrot 94. Can you ditch aircraft? Over. Schafer: She's handling fine. I can bring her in. Over. Staxton: Negative, 94. I repeat, can you ditch aircraft? Over. Schafer: Yeah... I've sunk a GCI. Staxton: Standby, 94. Over. Oscar 77. Over. Staxton: 94 is ditching. Can you maintain wide circuit? Over. Staxton: Affirmative. GCI. Over. Staxton: Thanks 77. Standby, 94, execute your discretion. Over. Schafer: Descending now, GCI. Over. Between six and seven minutes the sign of the pilot? Over. Shackleton: Nothing. GCI. The first pass we had a splash... he's down in the water, 77? Over. One piece though. Over. Staxton: Can you see the pilot yet? Over. Shackleton: Negative, why shut the canopy? Over. Staxton: That's what we were thinking. Main cabin door 77. Must be there somewhere. Over. Shackleton: Roger. GCI. Over. Shortly afterwards the search and rescue Whirlwind from Leconfield arrived on the scene and began a systematic search of the ditching area. The aircraft were shortly joined by lifeboats from Bridlington, Flamborough and Filey



Shackleton: No. SABRE yet. No flares, either. Hang on. We're going round again. Another two minutes elapsed. Shackleton: GCI. Over. Staxton: Receiving you, 77. Over. Shackleton: This is odd. GCI. She's sinking fast. But... the canopy's closed up again. Over. Staxton: Can you confirm pilot clear of aircraft? Over. Shackleton: He's not in it, we can confirm that. He must be in the water somewhere. Staxton: Any distress signals or flares yet? Over. Shackleton: Negative, GCI. Going round again. Over. Ninety seconds later the crew of the Shackleton were back in contact with Staxton Wold. Shackleton: She's slightly wake when she was. Still no sign of the pilot. I say again, GCI, we need a chopper here, fast. Over. Staxton: A Whirlwind on the way from Leconfield. Are you positive you saw no sign of the pilot? Over. Shackleton: Nothing. GCI. The first pass we had a splash... he's down in the water, 77? Over. One piece though. Over. Staxton: Can you see the pilot yet? Over. Shackleton: Negative, why shut the canopy? Over. Staxton: That's what we were thinking. Main cabin door 77. Must be there somewhere. Over. Shackleton: Roger. GCI. Over. Shortly afterwards the search and rescue Whirlwind from Leconfield arrived on the scene and began a systematic search of the ditching area. The aircraft were shortly joined by lifeboats from Bridlington, Flamborough and Filey

as the weather began to deteriorate. The search continued well into the next day but there were no transmissions from the beacons carried by the aircraft and the official reports say no distress flares were seen. However, the following day the Evening Telegraph reported flares had been seen about 10 miles offshore and the Grimsby trawler *Rosa Kestrel*, which was passing through the Flamborough area had gone to investigate. But, even though more flares were seen, they found nothing.

The Telegraph also reported that Captain Schafer's wife was at Binbrook waiting for news of her husband. But the Ministry of Defence were doubtful whether there would be any good news for her. "I don't think he got out of the plane," a spokesman told a reporter. "No wreckage has been found." Three weeks later the Evening Telegraph reported that the fuselage of the aircraft had been located on the seabed and noted that the ejector seats were still intact. "It's a bit of a relief that the body of the pilot is still in the wreckage." On October 7, the Telegraph reported that divers from HMS *Kiddleston* had inspected the wreckage and said: "Captain Schafer's body was still in the cockpit. But that was the start of the biggest mystery of all. When the aircraft was brought to the surface and returned to Binbrook, there was no trace of Captain Schafer. Just an empty cockpit. (Tomorrow: A cloak of secrecy.)



When the Shackleton came round again the Lightning's canopy had closed. Illustration by TREVOR HARRIES.

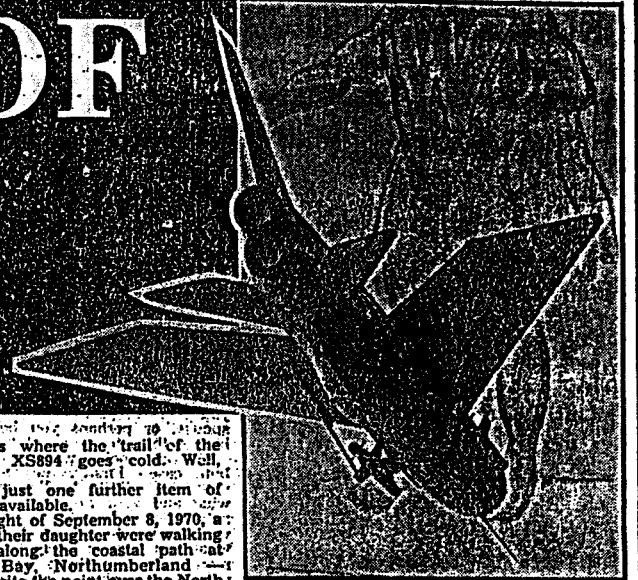


The rescue pilots watched as the Lightning slowly went down.

THE loss of the Binbrook Lightning and its American pilot had simply been reported as just another air crash by newspapers along the north-east coast of England. Reporters were used to handling stories like this, which occurred with some regularity. The ditching of XS894 provided front-page stories for the Grimsby Evening Telegraph and the Scarborough Evening News on September 9, 1970. But they only told part of the story. PAT OTTER concludes our investigation into the Riddle of Foxtrot 94.

Scarborough Evening News on September 9, 1970. But they only told part of the story. PAT OTTER concludes our investigation into the Riddle of Foxtrot 94.

# SHROUD OF SECRECY ON XS894



**W**HEN the wreckage of XS894 was finally lifted from the sea bed some five miles off Flamborough Head, it was taken in some secrecy straight to RAF Binbrook.

Air crashes in the North Sea in those days were relatively common and much of the wreckage found its way into Grimsby where often Evening Telegraph photographers were on hand to record the event. But not with XS894.

It was also common practice for wrecked aircraft to be taken to the MoD's Crash Investigation Branch at Farnborough where detailed examinations were carried out in an attempt to find the cause of accidents. But this didn't happen with XS894.

Instead the remains of the aircraft, which was in remarkably good condition, were taken straight to Binbrook where it was placed behind what appears to have been a series of shutters in the far corner of a hangar.

A team from Farnborough arrived one wet winter's day at Binbrook in the belief that they were about to start a detailed investigation which, in turn, would lead to the preparation of a report on the incident to the Ministry of Defence, the report being used as the basis for an eventual inquiry into the loss of Lightning XS894. But they were in for a surprise.

They were astonished to find many of the cockpit instruments missing. These included the E2B compass, voltmeter, standby direction indicator, standby inverter indicator and the complete auxiliary warning panel from the starboard side of the cockpit below the voltmeter.

This was a serious breach of regulations and, although the investigation team was promised the instruments would be returned shortly, they never were.

The investigators found there was a revolting fusty smell in the cockpit while the whole aircraft still had a slimy feel to it following its month-long immersion in

the North Sea. The ejector seat also seemed to be 'wrong' and there was a suspicion later among the investigators that it was not the one fitted to the aircraft when XS894 took off from Binbrook on its final flight. They were even given an assurance by the OC of 5 Squadron that the seat had not been tampered with. But some of the investigators were not convinced.

Interestingly, an Evening Telegraph reader, who was serving at Binbrook at the time, told us in 1988 that he recalled seeing an official report on the crash which suggested that the seat was faulty and this was why Captain Schafer failed to eject.

Brian McConnell, a former sergeant at Binbrook, said the cartridge on the seat had failed to fire because of faulty installation. However, this is very much at odds with the eye-witness account of the Shackleton crew who saw the canopy raised. Had any attempt been made to fire it, it would have been blown off. It also seems to conflict with the account we have been given of the order from Staxton Wold to Captain Schafer to ditch his aircraft rather than attempt to return to Binbrook or land at Leconfield, only a few minutes' flying time from Flamborough. And, remember, Schafer has told his ground controllers that XS894 was still handling 'fine', and he had plenty of fuel left.

During the few hours the investigators were allowed to examine the aircraft, they themselves were constantly supervised by five civilians, two of them Americans.

**A**t the end of the day the investigation team was told curtly that as nothing useful had been discovered, their job was over.

The following day they were all called into the main office at Farnborough and told in no uncertain terms they were not to discuss any aspect of the ditching of XS894, even with their own families. The reason given was simple — national security.

And that's where the 'trail' of the mystery of XS894 goes cold. Well, almost. There is just one further item of information available.

On the night of September 8, 1970, a couple and their daughter were walking their 'dog' along the coastal path at Alnmouth Bay, Northumberland — almost opposite the point over the North Sea where Schafer made his interception — when they saw and heard something strange.

"We had been walking for maybe 10 minutes when we heard a very high-pitched humming noise," they later said, in a statement to MoD personnel. "The dog kept cocking her head to one side and growling. It seemed impossible to tell from which direction the noise was coming, it seemed everywhere. It lasted for maybe 10 to 15 seconds.

"About five minutes later the eastern sky lit up rather like sheet lightning, only it took about 10 seconds to die down again. Over the following three minutes this happened many times, but the lightning was only visible for a second or two at a time. It appeared very similar to the Northern Lights. The whole spectacle was completely silent.

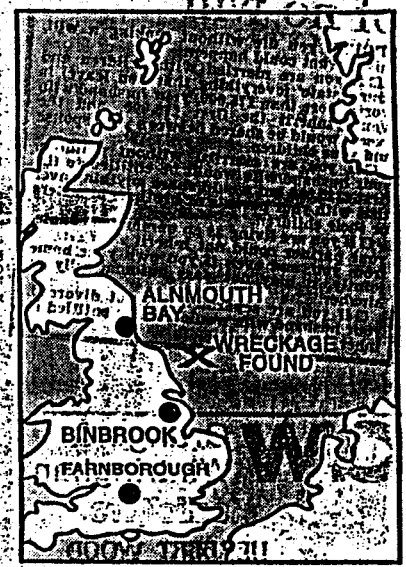
"After two or three minutes there was another flare-up of 'sheet' lightning, which lasted about the same time as the first. This was followed by that awful shrill sensation, only this time it was worse. You could actually feel your ears ringing."

The family called in at the local police station to report what they had seen and heard. Theirs was one of many similar reports that night to both the police and the RAF at nearby Boulmer.

The time and the location fit in exactly with events going on 80 miles south at Staxton Wold and they could have been watching some kind of natural phenomena.

Or there could be another explanation. What do you think?

## INVESTIGATORS' JOB CURTAILED





MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
Main Building Whitehall London SW1A 2HB

See also E 70, 76 + 80

Telephone (Direct Dialling) 071-21-8 2140  
(Switchboard) 071-21-89000  
(Fax) 071-21-8

[redacted]

Grassington  
Skipton  
North Yorks  
[redacted]

Your reference

Our reference

D/Sec(AS)12/3

Date

5 November 1992

Dear [redacted]

I thought it would be useful if I wrote to confirm the points I made yesterday when we spoke about the crash of a Lightning F6 aircraft, on 8 September 1970.

Following a number of approaches from researchers, who had heard stories that this aircraft had crashed during an encounter with a UFO, I tracked down the Aircraft Accident Report (AAR) for this particular crash. This document is classified Restricted, as is the case for all AARs, and cannot therefore be released. From my reading of this document I can tell you that the Lightning was taking part in a Tactical Evaluation Exercise designed to practise the night shadowing and shepherding of low speed targets. For the purpose of the exercise, the targets involved were Shackleton aircraft. The Lightning crashed into the sea while attempting to intercept one of the Shackletons. There is no indication of any unidentified target having been encountered, and no reason to suggest that there is any sort of UFO incident in any way connected with this tragic crash.

As I mentioned, I am trying to track down further papers relating to this accident, in the hope that there will be an Unclassified Military Aircraft Accident Summary (MAAS), that I can release. Given the time that has elapsed since the accident, there are no guarantees that I will be successful. I will let you know what, if anything, I track down.

I hope this is helpful, and I wish you luck with your own research.

Yours sincerely,  
[redacted]

[redacted]





Director of Investigations



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SKIPTON  
NORTH YORKSHIRE  
[REDACTED]  
ENGLAND

TEL./FAX. [REDACTED]

5. 11. 92.

Dear [REDACTED]

Pleased find enclosed the newspaper articles on the strange circumstances surrounding Capt. Schafer and his lightening aircraft, call sign Foxtrot 94.

I would be grateful if you could answer the following questions from the files in your possession. Obviously within the areas of your permitted release instructions, although after 22 years I find it hard to imagine what is still secret about the operation. Unless the aircraft did have an encounter with a UFO.

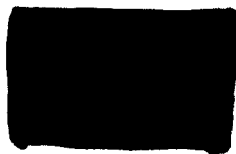
- 1/ Why was an American pilot scrambled to intercept the object, when English pilots were on duty at scramble readiness ready to fly identical aircraft from the same base.
- 2/ Why was the lightening aircraft left in the water for such a long period after crashing. Was there any fear of contamination from whatever it had encountered.
- 3/ Why was the pilot ordered to ditch the aircraft when he told the control that the aircraft was airworthy and had plenty of fuel.
- 4/ What were the findings of the enquiry into the the missing pilot, particularly when the aircraft canopy was closed when the aircraft was recovered and the ejector seat was still in position.

5/ What were the findings of the enquiry regarding the amazing speeds of the UFO tracked on radar in excess of 20,000 mph.

6/ Where there any electro/magnetic abnormalities found when the aircraft was examined.

I would be grateful for any answers you could let me have which would throw some light on this incident.

Yours Sincerely.





# Making sense of lights in the sky

UFOS over Humberside are not just the experience of fighter pilots - one Bridlington mother is still trying to make sense of what she saw 20 years ago. After reading the Hull Daily Mail's account of one of the most puzzling aviation stories of the century, Mrs June Cooper recalled what she saw in 1970 - and is seeking others who might also have seen something, but who have kept quiet until now.

In a two-part feature the Mail looked at events leading up to the final flight of a fighter plane before it ditched in the sea off Flamborough Head.

Mrs Cooper was in her Queensgate home one September afternoon about 20 years ago while her four-year-old son Grahame was playing in the garden. He came rushing in and with

**By Hull Daily Mail**  
NEWS REPORTER

great excitement insisted that his mum hurry out to the garden to see the strange objects in the sky.

Mrs Cooper said: "When I got outside I could see bright things in the sky. But it wasn't until I got out my binoculars and had a good look that they became clear.

"Through the binoculars I could see six saucer-like objects. They were silver metallic with centres like the jet exhaust of a plane.

"I was even more amazed to see yellow and orange swirling flames inside the centres."

Just then Mrs Cooper's telephone rang and she went indoors to answer it. When she got back to the garden the objects had disappeared. Mrs Cooper said: "I told my husband and family what I

had seen, but none of my neighbours were home when it happened and I didn't mention it to them.

"It is not the sort of thing that happens in Bridlington, so I didn't want anyone to think I had imagined it.

"But I know what I saw, and Grahame still remembers it. I couldn't wait to read the papers next day and listen to the news, but there was no mention of anything out of the ordinary having happened in this area."

Mrs Cooper's family forgot the incident until she read the Mail's story.

She added: "It brought it all back to me and I could not help wondering if the incidents were connected.

"They both happened about the same time. I would be interested to know if anyone else witnessed what I saw that afternoon."

## Cash for community schemes

GUARDIANS of two similarly-titled funds to help rural areas are hoping confusion surrounding them will be dispelled after a shake-up.

Humberside Community Chest and Humberside Economic Chest were administered by the Community Council of Humberside and Humberside County Council respectively.

After a meeting last week, the county council agreed to relinquish control of the Economic Chest, in favour of the Community Council, a registered charity based in Howden which tries to help rural communities.

Mr Roger Newton, project officer with the Community Council of Humberside said very often in the past, the funds in the two chests

had remained unclaimed because people did not know anything about them, or even that they existed.

"From now on, the Community Council will administer both funds. Both are aimed at encouraging community initiatives but the Economic Chest is more from community enterprise, whereas the Community Chest is more for social projects.

"From now on, both will be under one heading and we will sort out from which pot a particular project may be funded."

All district councils in Humberside contribute to the Community Chest. Holderness Borough Council has given £750 for the past three years.

To NIGHTS Hull Daily Mail : TUES 3<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 1992



PAT OTTER

TONIGHT we start our two-part detailed look at the events leading up to the ditching in the North Sea of Lightning Foxtrot 94, a single-seat fighter from 5 Squadron at Binbrook whose final flight is at the centre of one of the most puzzling aviation stories since the war. Just what was it that its pilot, American, William Schafer, was sent to intercept out over the North Sea 22 years ago and why was he eventually ordered to ditch his aircraft off Flamborough Head rather than return to North Lincolnshire? Now new information has come to light. Pat Otter, assistant editor of the Mail's sister paper, The Grimsby Evening Telegraph, reports.

# At last, the sensational true story behind Capt Schafer

The chain of events which led to the crash of Lightning XS894 from 5 Squadron at RAF Binbrook and the disappearance of its pilot began at 8.17 pm on the night of September 8, 1970, in an isolated building on the Shetland Islands. Saxa Vord was one of the chain of radar stations whose task it was to spot unidentified aircraft approaching the North Sea or the sensitive 'Iceland gap'. Remember, this was 1970 when the Cold War was at its height and Russian long-range aircraft made regular sorties into the North Atlantic and along the British coast to test the reaction of Nato fighters. On this particular night, a radar operator at Saxa Vord picked up the blip of an unidentified aircraft over the North Sea halfway between the Shetlands and Alesund in Norway. The contact was monitored for several minutes at a steady speed of 630mph, at 37,000ft holding altitude and on a south-westerly heading. Then Saxa Vord noted the contact was turning through 30 degrees to head due south. It increased speed to 900mph (Mach 1.25) and climbed to 44,000ft. Following laid-down procedures, radar controllers at Saxa Vord flashed a scramble message to the Quick Reaction Alert Flight at the nearest Nato airfield, RAF Leuchars on the east coast of Scotland not far from Dundee. There two Lightning interceptors, which had been ready on the flight line for just such an event, were scrambled and within



After checking the position of their tanker, a Victor KIA, the two fighters were guided north by Saxa Vord. So far, it was a routine scramble for what was then assumed to be a Russian Bear or Badger, the long-range reconnaissance aircraft used to test the nerves of the Royal Air Force. But it was then that the radar plotters on the Shetland Islands saw something on their screens which they found impossible to believe. The contact they had been tracking at speeds and altitudes consistent with modern Russian warplanes, turned through 180 degrees on a due north heading and within seconds disappeared off their screens. Later they calculated that to do this its speed must have been in the region of 17,400mph. With the contact now gone, the Lightnings were vectored south to rendezvous with the tanker and remained airborne on Combat Air Patrol.



During the next hour, the mystery contact reappeared several times, approaching from the north. Each time the Lightnings were sent north to intercept, it turned and disappeared again. By now two F4 Phantoms of the US Air Force had been scrambled from the American base at Keflavik in Iceland. They had much more sophisticated radar than the British Lightnings and were able to pick up the mystery contact themselves. But when they, too, tried to get close enough to identify what was by now beginning to cause some alarm to Nato commanders, they found they were just as impotent as the Lightnings. The alert had reached such a level that the contact was being monitored by the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System at Fylingdales Moor, near Whitby, along with a second BMEWS in Greenland. The information they were collecting was relayed to the North American Air Defence Command at Cheyenne Mountain and the US Detection and Tracking Centre at Colorado Springs. In the meantime, the cat-and-mouse game over the North Sea between the

Lightnings and Phantoms on one hand and the mystery contact, was still going on. Then, at 21.05 after the fighters had made yet another abortive attempt to get close, the contact vanished off the radar screens. The Lightnings were ordered to return to Leuchars while the Phantoms were instructed to carry out a Combat Air Patrol to the east of Iceland. Then, at 21.39, radar controllers picked up the contact again. This time its speed was decelerating to 1,300mph - almost the limit of both the Lightnings and Phantoms - at a holding altitude of 18,000ft. It was on a south-westerly heading coming from the direction of the Skagerrak, off the northern tip of Denmark. Two more Lightnings were scrambled from Leuchars, and were ordered to rendezvous with a Victor tanker and then maintain a CAP on a 50-mile east-west front, 200 miles north-east of Aberdeen. As a precaution, two further Lightnings were ordered into the air from Coltishall in Norfolk and, with another tanker, to form a CAP 170 miles east of Grimsby. The contact was still going on, RAF Fylingdales, which was in constant contact with NORAD at Cheyenne Mountain, heard ominously, that the Strategic Air Command HQ at Omaha, Nebraska was ordering its bombers into the air. This was an order which only have come from the highest level. What started as a routine sighting of what was believed to be a Russian aircraft, had now reached the White House and, presumably, President Richard Nixon. Richard Nixon. NORAD was told by officials at the Pentagon that a USAF pilot of great experience was presently on an visit with the RAF and was stationed at Binbrook, the North Lincolnshire base a few miles from Grimsby. Rapid inquiries were made and discovered the pilot was on the ground and was, by coincidence, flight instructor. At around 21.45 a request was made

**What had started as a routine sighting of what was believed to be a Russian aircraft, had now reached the White House and, presumably, President Richard Nixon.**

**Tomorrow: Revealed - what Capt Schafer did**

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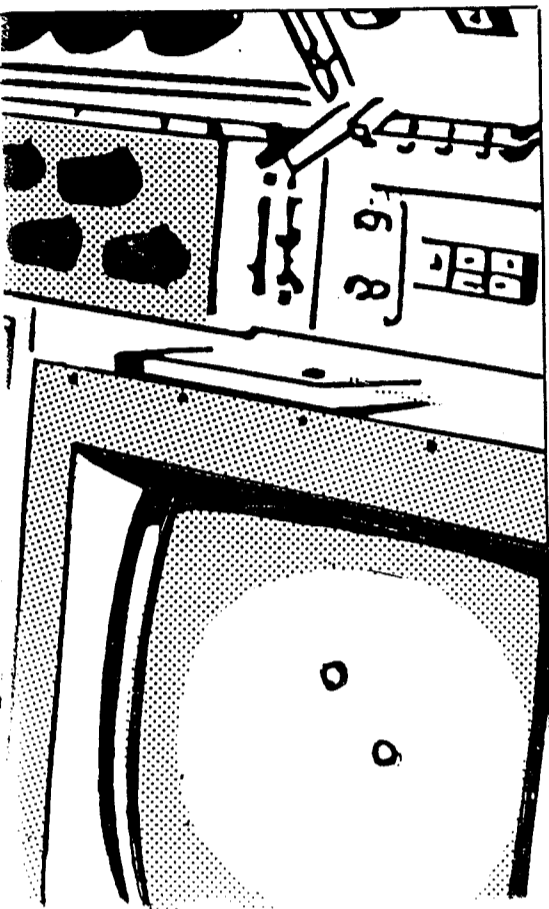
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and the ditching of Lightning Foxtrot 94 in September, 1970

# Schafer's last flight



QRA - Quick Reaction Alert - duty with other East Coast airfields to provide cover should any unidentified aircraft appear on the radar screens. But there was something different about this scramble. For a start, it was normal for QRA aircraft to take off in pairs. Two aircraft were kept at a state of instant readiness at all times ready for just such an emergency. But on this occasion only one aircraft took off. And it wasn't one of the QRA aircraft. Then there was the manner of the take-off. The pilot had raced out from the 5 Squadron crew room, adjacent to the apron, and had climbed aboard while a Lightning was in the process of being refuelled. He angrily waved away ground staff who asked him to sign the appropriate form required before all military aircraft leave the ground and ordered the refuelling lines to be disengaged. And this was no ordinary pilot strapped into the cockpit of the Mach 2 interceptor. This was Captain William Schafer of the United States Air Force, who was on his second tour as an exchange pilot with the RAF. Schafer was a vastly experienced jet fighter pilot with combat time behind him in Vietnam. He had been at Binbrook for some time and his wife was living on the base with him. No pre-flight checks were made and, as bemused ground crew looked on, the Lightning taxied out to the end of the runway, turned and immediately took off, using reheat to gain speed and height

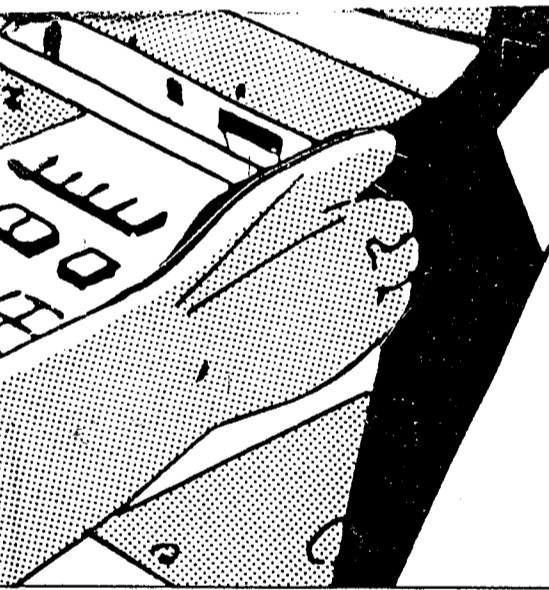
Calls were not returned. Contacts were unavailable.

At this stage I enlisted the aid of Bob Bryant, then Northcliffe Newspapers' aviation correspondent and a man with close links with both the RAF and USAF. Bob was to spend weeks checking out a story he found more intriguing by the hour. He paid numerous visits to the Ministry of Defence and spent hours on the telephone to contacts in the United States. But everywhere he heard the ominous sound of doors being slammed. He finally admitted defeat. But Bob was absolutely certain there was an official blanket of secrecy over the events surrounding the crash of that Lightning's in the North Sea all those years ago. Barry Halpenny finally published an abridged version of the story in a book which appeared in September, 1988. Subsequently we were contacted by two former airmen who had both been at Binbrook at the time and added further fuel to the mystery by recalling their own memories of that night.

Binbrook to examine the remains of XSW894. He was so puzzled by what he saw and the treatment the investigation team received that he was determined to get to the bottom of the mystery once and for all.

**N**ow, four years on, he believes he has peeled back a little bit more of the mystery surrounding XS894 and the disappearance of Captain Shafner. I now have a copy of his account of what he believes happened that night. Some has come from his dogged investigations. Some from official documents he has obtained. And some, most tellingly, from what he maintains is a transcript of the final conversations between Captain Schafer, a radar controller at Staxton Wold, near Scarborough, and the crew of the Shackleton which witnessed the crash. This is the story we are going to tell tomorrow. The information in it is quite remarkable. Our source has to remain anonymous and we cannot corroborate all the information in his report. What information we can is certainly in line with the results of my own inquiries four years ago. All we ask you to do is to read our stories carefully - and make up your own mind.

**I**t was a story which puzzled and intrigued readers. But, perhaps most interestingly of all, it was a story which grabbed the attention of a man spending 10 days in a Cleethorpes guest house. Sixteen years earlier he had been one of the crash investigators who went to



the North Sea - and disappeared into what is fast becoming one of the great aviation puzzles of recent times. Early the following morning XS894 ditched in the sea off Flamborough Head. The ditching was witnessed by the crew of a Shackleton reconnaissance aircraft. Flares were spotted by the Grimsby trawler Ross Kestrel as reported in the Hull Daily Mail. But no trace of Captain Schafer was ever found. More than a month later the wreckage of the aircraft was found on the sea bed by Royal Navy divers. Despite earlier reports to the contrary, the cockpit was empty and the canopy closed. Captain Schafer had vanished. Completely and utterly. Later the aircraft was recovered and taken, unusually, to RAF Binbrook. There it was kept under wraps in the corner of a hangar. When a team from the MoD's Crash Investigation Branch arrived from Farnborough they were permitted to spend only a very brief time examining the wreckage of XS894. What they did discover disturbed them. And what happened later disturbed them even more.

**I** first came across the mysterious story of XS894 six years ago. An outline of the story was related to me by Barry Halpenny, an aviation enthusiast and author who lived at the time in Market Rasen, who was researching for a book on aviation mysteries at the time. He suggested I dig out the cuttings on the crash and look further into it. There was more to the story of XS894 than met the eye, he told me.

I anticipated difficulties in investigating a 16-year-old ditching incident in the North Sea, but not on the scale I was to encounter over the next few weeks. Normally helpful press contacts at the Ministry of Defence responded initially by promising to help, but then became very reticent. Similar inquiries to the United States embassy and to the US Air Force at Alconbury proved also to be dead-ends.

here a very high level within NORAD, through Strike Command's UK headquarters at High Wycombe, for RAF Binbrook to send Captain William Schafer "if at all possible" to join the QRA Lightnings looking for the mystery contact. By this time four Lightnings, two Phantoms and three tankers were already airborne and they were joined by a Shackleton Mk3 from Kinloss, which was ordered to patrol on a north-south heading at 3,000ft, 10 miles out from the east coast. Binbrook's QRA Lightnings were being held in reserve but it was decided to send out a single aircraft from the North Lincolnshire airfield - flown by Capt Schafer. The Americans wanted one of their own at the sharp end when it came to cornering the mystery contact.

**A**t precisely six minutes past 10 on the night of September 8, 1970, a single Lightning jet fighter took off from RAF Binbrook. Ground crew on the flight line were accustomed to Lightnings being scrambled in a hurry at any time of night or day. Binbrook, after all, was a front-line fighter station and its aircraft shared

countered off Flamborough Head

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In yesterday's Mail we revealed how an unidentified flying object evaded fight

# 'Hell, that's bright



PAT OTTER

NATO forces were being brought up to full alert by a mystery object picked up on radar over the North Sea. At first it appeared to be yet another Russian aircraft out to test the reflexes of Allied air forces. But then the object began behaving in a way which baffled radar controllers. Nuclear bombers in the United States were ordered into the air while the Pentagon decided that its man-on-the-spot, an experienced Vietnam veteran then on an exchange visit with the RAF at Binbrook, should take a look. Pat Otter concludes the story of the last flight of Foxtrot 94.

**C**aptain William Schafer was sitting in the crew room of 5 Squadron when the call came from

High Wycombe. The room overlooked the apron where a line of silver-finish Lightnings stood, illuminated by the high-intensity sodium lighting. The crew room itself was sparsely furnished, with ageing chairs which had seen better days, a bar which dispensed nothing stronger than black Nescafe, and walls adorned with plaques and photographs donated by visiting RAF and overseas air force units. Schafer was still in his flying suit, after returning earlier that evening from a training sortie in one of the squadron's aircraft. He is remembered by those at Binbrook as a small, powerfully-built man who loved to fly the single-seat Lightnings, so different from the new generation of sophisticated aircraft then starting to come into service in the USAF. When the call came, Schafer was helped into the remainder of his flying gear by other 5 Squadron aircrew, went out through the door, turned right and raced across the apron.

Two Lightnings in the line-up were virtually ready for flight. One, XS894, was in the process of having its fuel tanks topped up and was already connected to a power starter. Schafer climbed the steep ladder, hauled himself into the cockpit, strapped in and started the engines. He waved aside the ground crew, who were expected to help carry out the standard pre-flight checks, ordered the refuelling to stop and failed to sign the regulation form signifying he was happy with the aircraft. It was armed with two Red Top air-to-air missiles, one of which was live and the other a dummy, and

enough 30mm cannon shells for a six-second burst. One of the men on the ground crew at the time was Brian Mann of Grimsby, who was driving one of the fuel bowzers. He remembers XS894 being refuelled at a rate of 150 gallons a minute when suddenly the engines started. "The windows on the tanker almost went in. I panicked, took the hoses off and got out of the way," he was to say later. Mr Mann remembered Schafer disregarding the ground marshal, who was the eyes and ears of the pilot on the ground, as he swung the Lightning round. "His actions were unorthodox to say the least," he said.

At 22.06 XS894 blasted off from Binbrook's main runway into the night sky. Those on the ground saw it disappear with a sheet of flame from its twin tail pipes as Schafer used reheats. It turned over the Wolds and the last they saw was its navigation lights heading out towards the North Sea.

By now the mystery contact which had led to five Lightnings, two Phantoms, three tankers and a Shackleton being scrambled over the North Sea was being tracked by radar controllers at Staxton Wold, which stands on high ground overlooking Scarborough.

The contact was flying parallel to the east coast 90 miles east of Whitby at 530mph at 6,100ft — an ideal course for an interception by a Binbrook Lightning. What follows next is drawn from what we have been told is the official transcript of the conversation which took place between Schafer and the radar station at Staxton Wold.

**Schafer: I have visual contact, repeat visual contact. Over.**

**Staxton: Can you identify aircraft type?**

**Schafer: Negative, nothing recognisable, no clear outlines. There is .....bluish light. Hell, that's bright ..... very bright.**

**Staxton: Are your instruments functioning, 94? Check compass. Over.**

**Schafer: Affirmative, GCI. I'm alongside it now, maybe 600ft off my ..... It's a conical shape. Jeeze, that's bright, it hurts my eyes to look at it for more than a few seconds.**

**Staxton: How close are you now?**

**Schafer: About 400ft, he's still in my three o'clock. Hey wait ..... there's something else. It's like a large soccer ball ..... it's like it's made of glass.**

**Staxton: Is it part of the object or independent? Over.**

**Schafer: It ..... no, it's separate from the main body ..... the conical shape ..... it's at the back end, the sharp end of the shape.**

**It's like bobbing up and down and going from side to side slowly. It may be the power source. There's no sign of ballistics.**

**Staxton: Is there any sign of occupation? Over.**

**Schafer: Negative, nothing.**

**Staxton: Can you assess the rate .....?**

**Schafer: Contact in descent gentle. Am going with it ..... 50ft ..... no about 70ft ..... it's levelled out agin.**

**Staxton: Is the ball object still with it? Over.**

**Schafer: Affirmative. It's not actually connected ..... maybe a magnetic attraction to the conical shape.**

**There's a haze of light. Ye'ow ..... it's within that haze. Wait a second, it's turning ..... coming straight for me ..... am taking evasive action ..... a few ..... I can hard.....**

**Staxton? 94? Come in 94. Foxtrot 94, are you receiving? Over. Come in 94. Over.**

Just as the controller at Staxton Wold lost contact with Captain Schafer, a radar operator, who had been tracking the Lightning and the mystery object it had intercepted, watched in disbelief.

The two blips on the screen, representing the fighter and its quarry, slowly merged into one, decelerated rapidly from over 500mph until they became stationary 6,000ft above the North Sea 140 miles out off Alnwick.

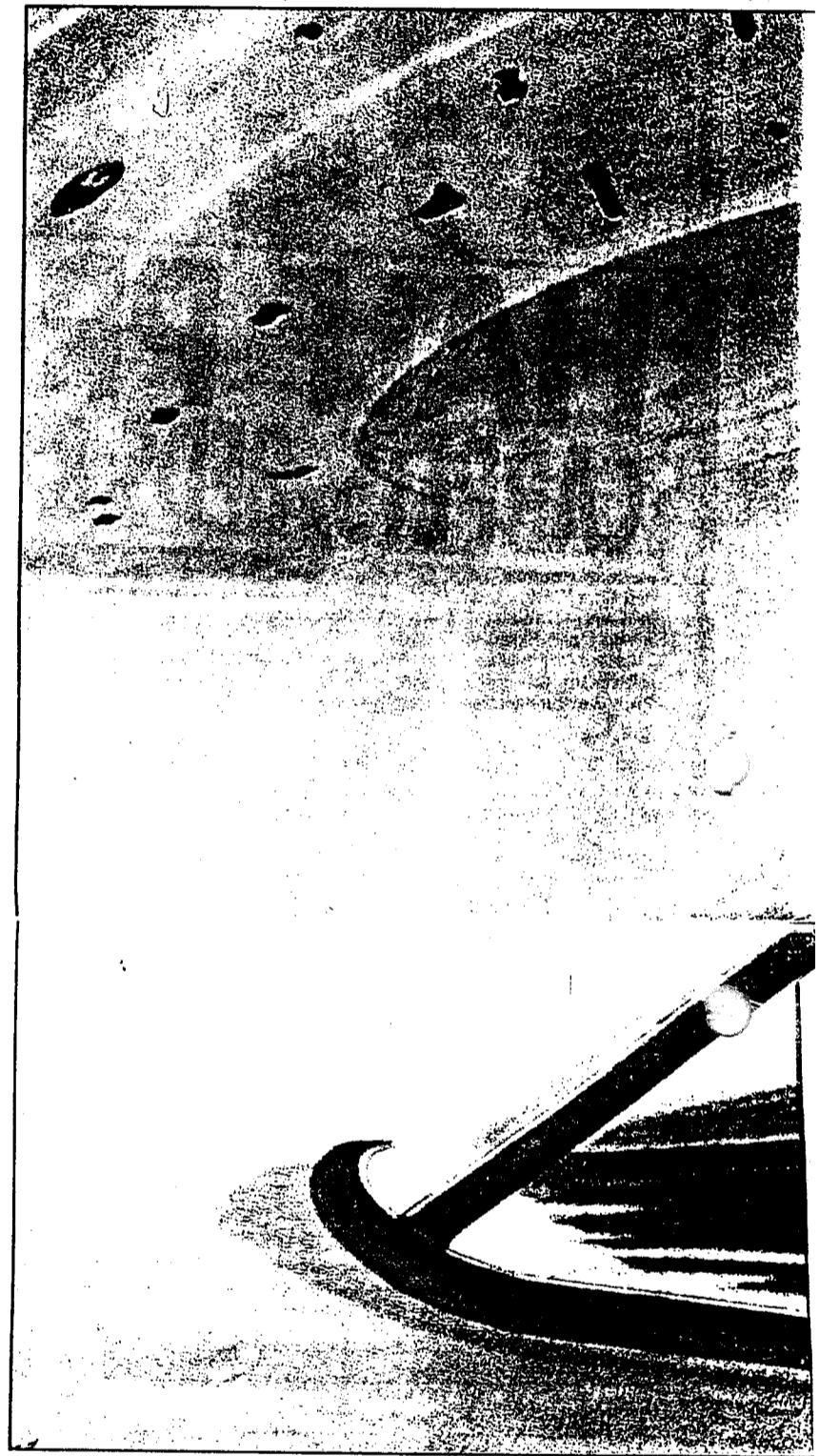
What exactly happened inside the ground control centre at Staxton is open to conjecture. But our information is that one suggestion was the two Lightnings then on Combat Air Patrol off the Scottish coast should be sent south immediately but it was overruled by the senior fighter controller, who continued to try to re-establish contact with Captain Schafer in Foxtrot 94.

Two-and-a-half-minutes after the single blip on the radar screen came to a halt it started to move again, accelerating rapidly to 600mph and climbing to 9,000ft, heading south back towards Staxton.

Shortly afterwards, the single blip separated into two, one maintaining its southerly heading, somewhat erratically, at between 600 and 630.mph and descending slowly, the other turning through 180 degrees to head north-westerly and vanishing at a speed later calculated to be around 20,400mph. While all this was going on, a Shackleton MR3, which had been on patrol off the Firth of Forth, was ordered south to hold station around Flamborough Head. Then, Staxton Wold re-established contact with Captain Schafer.

**Schafer: GCI ..... are you receiving? Over.**

**I don't feel too good. I can't think what has happened ..... I feel kinda dizzy ..... I can see shooting stars.**



**Staxton: Affirmative 94. Loud and clear. What is your condition? Over.**

**Schafer: Not too good. I can't think what has happened ..... I feel kinda dizzy ..... I can see shooting stars.**

**Staxton: Can you see your instruments? Over.**

**Schafer: Affirmative, but, er ..... the compass is u/s.....**

**Staxton: Foxtrot 94, turn 043 degrees. Over.**

**Schafer: Er ..... all directional instruments are out, repeat u/s. Over.**

**Staxton: Roger 94, execute right turn, estimate quarter turn. Over.**

**Schafer: Turning now.**

**Staxton: Come further. 94. That's good. Is your altimeter functioning? Over.**

**Schafer: Affirmative, GCI.**

**Staxton: Descend to 3,500ft. Over.**

**Schafer: Roger, GCI.**

**Staxton: What's your fuel state, 94? Over.**

**Schafer: About thirty per cent, GCI.**

**Staxton: That's what we calculated. Can you tell us what happened, 94? Over.**

**Schafer: I don't know. It came in close ..... I shut my eyes ..... I figure I must've blacked out for a few seconds.**

**Staxton: OK 94. Standby.**

At this stage the Shackleton arrived over Flamborough Head and began circling before XS894 was vectored into the area by the Staxton controllers.

**Schafer: Can you bring me in, GCI? Over.**

**Staxton: Er ..... Hold station, 94. Over.**

Several minutes then elapsed as Schafer was left to circle the Flamborough area along with the Shackleton.

In the meantime, Strike Command HQ at High Wycombe had instructed Staxton Wold to request Schafer ditch his Lightning off Flamborough.

Although he had plenty of fuel to reach either nearby Leconfield or his home base of Binbrook, it appears the reason for High Wycombe's decision was a fear that the Lightning had somehow become contaminated during its mystery interception over the North Sea. It may well be that the fear was that the aircraft had suffered radiation contamination although some weeks later, when the wreckage was examined at Binbrook, there



FLASHBACK to the Hull Daily Mail on Wednesday, September 9, 1970, and a report of how hopes were fading of finding American pilot Capt W Schafer following an intensive search.

aircraft. Today, we reveal what happened when contact was finally made

# Light, very bright



ILLUSTRATION: Geoff Woolston

next day but there were no transmissions from the beacons carried by the pilot and on board the aircraft and the official reports say no distress flares were seen. However, the following day it was reported flares had been seen about 10 miles offshore and the Grimsby trawler *Ross Kestrel*, which was passing through the Flamborough area, had gone to investigate but, even though more flares were seen, she found nothing. It was also reported that Captain Schafer's wife was at Binbrook waiting for news of her husband. But the Ministry of Defence were doubtful whether there would be any good news for her. "I don't think he got out of the plane," a spokesman told a reporter. "No wreckage has been found."

Three weeks later it was reported that the fuselage of the aircraft had been located on the seabed and noted that the ejector seat was still intact "giving rise to the belief that the body of the pilot is still in the wreckage." On October 7, it was reported that divers from HMS *Keddleston* had inspected the wreckage and said Captain Schafer's body was still in the cockpit. When the wreckage of XS894 was finally lifted from the sea bed some

months later, a diver serving at Binbrook at the time, told us in 1988 that he recalled seeing an official report on the crash which suggested that the seat was faulty and this was why Captain Schafer failed to eject. Brian McConnell, a former sergeant at Binbrook, said the cartridge on the seat had failed to fire because of faulty installation. However, this is very much at odds with the eyewitness account of the Shackleton crew who saw the canopy raised. Had any attempt been made to fire it, it would have been blown off. It also seems to conflict with the account we have been given of the order from Staxton Wold to Captain Schafer to ditch his aircraft rather than attempt to return to Binbrook or land at Leconfield, only a few minutes' flying time from Flamborough. And, remember, Schafer has told his ground controllers that XS894 was still handling "fine" and he had plenty of fuel left. During the few hours the investigators were allowed to examine the aircraft, they themselves were constantly supervised by five civilians, two of them Americans. At the end of the day the investigation team was told curtly that as nothing useful had been discovered, their job was over. The following day they were all called into the main office at Farnborough and told in no uncertain terms they were not to discuss any aspect of the ditching of XS894.

those days were relatively common and much of the wreckage found its way into Grimsby where often photographers were on hand to record the event. But not with XS894.

It was also common practice for wrecked aircraft to be taken to the MoD's Crash Investigation Branch at Farnborough where detailed examinations were carried out in an attempt to find the cause of accidents. But this didn't happen with XS894.

Instead, the remains of the aircraft, which was in remarkably good condition, were taken to Binbrook where it was placed behind shutters in the far corner of a hangar. A team from Farnborough arrived one wet winter's day at Binbrook in the belief that they were about to start a detailed investigation which, in turn, would lead to the preparation of a report on the incident to the Ministry of Defence, the report being used as the basis for an eventual inquiry into the loss of Lightning XS894. But they were in for a surprise.

They were astonished to find many of the cockpit instruments missing. These included the E2B compass, voltmeter, stand-by direction indicator, stand-by inverter indicator and the complete auxiliary warning panel from the starboard side of the cockpit. This was a serious breach of regulations and, although the investigation team was promised the instruments would be returned shortly, they never were. The ejector seat also seemed to be 'wrong' and there was a suspicion later among the investigators that it was not the one fitted to the aircraft when XS894 took off from Binbrook on its final flight. They were even given an assurance by the OC of 5 Squadron that the seat had not been tampered with. But some of the investigators were not convinced.

Interestingly, the reader, who was

about five minutes later the eastern sky lit up rather like sheet lightning, only it took about 10 seconds to die down again.

mystery of XS894 goes cold. Well, almost. There is just one further item of information available. On the night of September 8, 1970, a couple and their daughter were walking their dog along the coastal path at Alnmouth Bay, Northumberland - almost opposite the point over the North Sea where Schafer made his interception - when they saw and heard something strange. "We had been walking for maybe 10 minutes when we heard a very high-pitched humming noise," they later said in a statement to MoD personnel. "It seemed impossible to tell from which direction the noise was coming, it seemed everywhere. It lasted for maybe 10 to 15 seconds. "About five minutes later the eastern sky lit up rather like sheet lightning, only it took about 10 seconds to die down again. Over the following three minutes this happened many times, but the 'lightning' was only visible for a second or two at a time. It appeared very similar to the Northern Lights. The whole spectacle was completely silent. "After two or three minutes there was another flare-up of 'sheet lightning'.

This was followed by that awful shrill sensation, only this time it was worse. You could actually feel your ears ringing." The family called in at the local police station to report what they had seen and heard. Their's was one of many similar reports that night to both the police and the RAF at nearby Boulmer. The time and the location fit in exactly with events going on 60 miles south at Staxton Wold and they could have been watching some kind of natural phenomena. Or there could be another explanation. What do you think?

no trace of contamination by anything other than salt water.

Staxton: Foxtrot 94. Can you ditch aircraft? Over.

Schafer: She's handling fine. I can bring her in. Over.

Staxton: Negative, 94. I repeat, can you ditch aircraft? Over.

Schafer: Yeah ..... I guess.

Staxton: Standby 94. Over. Oscar Over.

Shackleton: 77. Over.

Staxton: 94 is changing. Can you maintain wide circuit? Over.

Shackleton: Affirmative GCI. Over.

Staxton: Thanks 77. Standby 94, execute ditching procedure at your discretion. Over.

Schafer: Descending now, GCI. Over.

Seven six and seven minutes elapsed.

Shackleton: He's down, GCI. All of a splash ..... he's down in the piece though. Over.

Staxton: Can you see the pilot yet? Over.

Shackleton: Negative. We're going round again, pulling a tight one.

Two minutes later:

Shackleton: The canopy's up ..... she's floating OK ..... can't see the pilot. We need a chopper out here, GCI. No, no sign of the pilot. Where the hell is he?

Staxton: You sure he's not in the water, 77? Check your SABRE receptions. Over. (Note: SABRE was the search and rescue beacon carried by all RAF aircrew).

Shackleton: No SABRE yet. No flares, either. Hang on. We're going round again.

Another two minutes elapsed.

Shackleton: GCI. Over.

Staxton: GCI. Over.

Shackleton: This is odd, GCI. She's sinking fast but ..... the canopy's closed up again. Over.

Staxton: Can you confirm pilot clear of aircraft? Over.

Shackleton: He's not in it, we can confirm that. He must be in the water somewhere.

Staxton: Any distress signals or flares yet? Over.

Shackleton: Negative, GCI. Going round again. Over.

Ninety seconds later the crew of the Shackleton were back in contact.

Shackleton: She's sunk, GCI. There's a slight wake where she was. Still no sign of the pilot. I say again, GCI, we need a chopper here fast. Over.

Staxton: A Whirlwind's on the way from Leconfield. Are you positive you saw no sign of the pilot? Over.

Shackleton: Nothing GCI. The first pass we assumed he was unstrapping. He must have got out as we went round for a second pass ..... but why shut the canopy? Over.

Staxton: That's what we were thinking. Maintain patrol 77, he must be there somewhere. Over.

Shackleton: Roger, GCI. Over.

Shortly afterwards the search and rescue Whirlwind from nearby Leconfield arrived on the scene and began a systematic search of the ditching area. The aircraft were shortly joined by lifeboats from Bridlington, Flamborough and Filey as the weather began to deteriorate. The search continued well into the



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[REDACTED]

Batley  
West Yorks

[REDACTED]

Your reference

Our reference

D/Sec(AS)12/3

Date

2 November 1992

Dear [REDACTED]

Your letter dated 20 October to RAF West Drayton, in which you asked about the crash of an RAF Lightning on 8 September 1970, has been passed to this office.

I have done some research into the loss of the aircraft, and have discovered that it was taking part in a Tactical Evaluation Exercise designed to practise the night shadowing and shepherding of low speed targets. For the purpose of the exercise, the targets involved were Shackleton aircraft. The Lightning crashed into the sea while attempting to intercept one of the Shackletons. There is no indication of any "unidentified aircraft" having been encountered, and no reason to suggest that there is any sort of UFO incident in any way connected with this tragic crash.

I hope this is helpful, and I wish you luck with your research.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]



ycled Paper

# INDEPENDENT

UFO

## NETWORK

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Batley,  
West Yorkshire,  
England, [REDACTED]

Tels: [REDACTED]

Date: 20.10.92.

Dear Sir,

I wonder could you help me with some information. I am attempting to research an incident that took place on September 8, 1970.

The incident in question involved an RAF Lightning jet from RAF Binbrook piloted by Captain William Schafer. The aircraft, XS894, a Lightning F6, was Fortrot 94 on the evening in question.

On the evening in question (October 8, 1970) unfortunately the aircraft piloted by Captain Schafer crashed after being 'ordered' to intercept an "unidentified aircraft" picked up on radar by Saza Vord amongst others. A number of other aircraft were also involved as well as other defence establishments.

I would therefore like to request any and all data that you have on this particular incident.

Yours Sincerely, [REDACTED]

From: [redacted] Secretariat(Air Staff)2a, Room 8245

EA



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
Main Building Whitehall London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct Dialling) 071-21-8 2140  
(Switchboard) 071-21-89000  
(Fax) 071-21-8

See also E76,  
+ E80, E85

[redacted]  
Brighouse  
West Yorks  
[redacted]

Your reference

Our reference

D/Sec(AS)12/3

Date

21 October 1992

Dear [redacted],

Thank you for your letter dated 15 October in which you asked if we had any material relating to an alleged UFO incident that occurred during 1970.

Regrettably, if we had received a UFO report, the appropriate file would by now have been archived, and sent to the Public Record Office, where it would be covered by the 30 year rule, and not be available for viewing until 30 years after the last action was taken. Although it does not help in this instance, you will wish to be aware that all UFO reports (even if they were made by pilots) should be submitted to this office. I have certainly not heard this story before, and have come across no references to any such incident.

While we do not have a UFO report, I have been able to trace information relating to the loss of the Lightning aircraft. The aircraft concerned was taking part in a Tactical Evaluation Exercise designed to practise the night shadowing and shepherding of low speed targets. For the purpose of the exercise, the targets involved were Shackleton aircraft. There is no indication of any UFO sighting having occurred, and no indication of any unusual or high speed contact.

I hope this is helpful, and I wish you luck with your research.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted signature]



Recycled Paper

6 OCT 1992

West Yorkshire

15/10/92

Dear [REDACTED]

Having been directed to you as one who deals with UFO reports I wonder if you can help with my enquiry.

My enquiry concerns a UFO sighted and tracked by the RAF during 1970. The details are as follows:

At 20.17 on the night of September 8th 1970 radar operators at Saxa Vord picked up an unidentified target travelling south west. Thinking this was an ordinary intrusion by Russian 'planes they scrambled two Lightnings from RAF Leuchars. As the 'planes were vectored onto the target it accelerated to approx 17,400 mph and vanished from the screen. Hardly the speed of anything flying at the time, I'm sure you will agree. Two F4 Phantoms were then scrambled from the USAF base at Keflavik in Iceland. These also failed to locate the target, despite having radar contact.

Eventually a Lightning was scrambled from RAF Binbrook in Lincolnshire and vectored onto the target by radar controllers at RAF Staxton Wold. The Lightning, number XS894, left Binbrook at 22.06 and managed a visual contact with the object, now off the Yorkshire coast. The Lightning pilot described the object as a UFO, being too bright to look at easily and of a conical shape. As he closed on the object it turned toward him and all radio contact was lost. The Lightning was later found on the sea bed of Flamborough Head.

As the details of time, place etc are so specific perhaps you could let me know anything else which exists on file about this case. If perhaps the information would be elsewhere as the UFO sighting was made by a pilot then perhaps you could forward me the name and address of the correct person to approach. I look forward to receiving your reply and hopefully further details about this fascinating, and obviously well-documented case.

Yours Sincerely  
[REDACTED]



See also E70 + E80, E85.

MALIBY LE MARET  
LINGS.

Dear [redacted]

246

27 OCT 1992

07 10,92.

On several occasions, AHB 3 and AHB 5 have been very helpfull to me. You will probably recall from my file, that I am a former PR I/O MoD (RAF.) I still take a profound interest in the RAF and it's reserves in which I served for many years.

Currently, I am seeking information which has confused me for many years. Now that East-West political relations have "eased" according to general information, perhaps you could give me lots of information on the Lightning Interceptor Fighter No. XS894, which took off from RAF Binbrook during 1970? It was piloted by an American Captain by the name of Schaftner or Shafner. He was on exchange from the USAF; or perhaps secondment. I would like as much as is known/permisible, as I would like to write a bit about it sometime. Actually, I vaguely recall the occurance but had nothing to say about it. The month was September. Perhaps you could also give me a USAF address in that I may obtain another view of it?

I am also seeking information on which RAF station trained air gunners during the second year of the Korean War (Emergency) Maybe it was the one near Blackpool which was also a Driver's School; Weeton?

Finally. Could you please tell me which RAF squadron went to Korea and Japan; also what type of Bombers/Fighters it had. What was its home base, also the Japanese and Korean bases? I am also looking for some aircrew names, mainly pilots; gunners and Wireless Operators.

We last corresponded during Feb, 1990., Ref: D/AHB(RAF)E/1. I am now 63 years of age, but I wish I was young enough to enlist with AHB. Such History would put me in my natural element. One day, I may want to know about the early WW1 signals system, and the radio sets which were used, but that may come later as "enough is enough" for both of us. I am willing to pay for the research of information. Thank you for your past help.

I am, Yours sincerely.

[redacted signature]

AHB3. RAF.

8140

[redacted]  
See AHB

The same accident that was the subject of [redacted] info happy at E70. AHB will reply to that letter, using my response to [redacted] as a basis for their reply.

[redacted] AHB  
[redacted] 1992

LIGHTNING+(CAT4,CAT5)?  
SUBG. : REPO X98942  
SORTED BY: X98942

1 1155 DATES: 70

IDENTIFICATION  
ACCIDENT OBSERPTO TIME: CAT5  
LIGHTNING F6 2142A  
5 SQN  
CL: AIRCREW FACTOR

ACC. NO. : 70: 0034  
URN: BIN\9\170  
TAIL NO. : X9894  
BINDER/DOK  
SAFETY EMERGENCY EQUIP

SUMMARY  
2412N 0032M. Crew 241111N. During exercise. TACEVAL.  
During an interception. Low flying.  
At time: 1700H. GNR.  
Ejection seat. Parts detached. Distraction. Aircraft flew into ground. Ejection abandonment.

THE SQUADRON COMMANDER CLEARED THE PILOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TACEVAL. THEREFORE, IN THE BELIEF THAT HE WOULD NOT BE INVOLVED IN A SHADOWING OR SHEPHERDING MISSION, UNKNOWN TO THE STATION AND SQUADRON, THE TACEVAL TEAM HAD JUST CHANGED THE EXERCISE SCENARIO FROM NORMAL INTERCEPTIONS TO INTERCEPTION, OR SHADOWING OR SHEPHERDING ON SLOW SPEED LOW FLYING TARGETS. THE TARGETS WERE SHACKLETON AVG FLYING AT 160 KNOTS, AND AT THE MINIMUM AUTHORIZED HEIGHT OF 1500 FEET AS SPECIFIED IN GROUP ORDERS. THE PILOT TOOK OFF AND WAS STILL UNWARE OF THE TYPE OR HEIGHT OF HIS TARGET. HE WAS TOLD TO ACCELERATE TOWARDS THE TARGET WHICH WAS 28 NMW AWAY. AT 2039Z, THE PILOT ACKNOWLEDGED INSTRUCTIONS. HE WAS GIVEN VARIOUS ALTERATIONS TO HEADING UNTIL HE ANNOUNCED THAT HE WAS IN CONTACT WITH LIGHTS BUT WOULD HAVE TO MANOEUVRE TO SLOW DOWN. HIS VOICE SOUNDED STRAINED AS THOUGH HE WAS AFFECTED BY 'G'. AT 2041Z THE AVG WAS SEEN BY THE OTHER LIGHTNING PILOT, WHO HAD JUST SLOWEN AWAY FROM THE TARGET, TO BE ABOUT 2,000 YARDS ASTERN AND 500 TO 1,000 FEET ABOVE THE SHACKLETON, IN A PORT TURN. THE SHACKLETON CREW THEN SAW THE AVG, APPARENTLY VERY LOW. WHEN AT 2042Z THE LIGHTNING PILOT CALLED TO ACKNOWLEDGE INSTRUCTIONS. HE INSTITUTED EMERGENCY PROCEDURES. HOWEVER, HE EXPERIENCED DIFFICULTY IN MAKING CONTACT WITH THE SHACKLETON BECAUSE HE DID NOT HAVE IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO 243.0 MHz. AN IMMEDIATE AIR SEARCH BY THE TARGET SHACKLETON, AND SUBSEQUENT AIRSEA SEARCH THE FOLLOWING DAY FAILED TO DETECT ANY TRACE OF THE AVG OR PILOT. FROM CALCULATIONS PROVIDED BY THE BOI AND EXPERT SOURCES, A SEARCH BY A MINESWEEPER "UNAVATED" THE WRECKAGE, NEARLY 2 MONTHS LATER. THE AVG WAS IN A COMPLETE STATE EXCEPT THAT THE PORT WING HAD BROKEN OFF AND BUCKLED UNDER THE FUSELAGE. AND SOME FUSELAGE PANELS WERE MISSING. THE COCKPIT CANOPY WAS ATTACHED BUT NOT CLOSED AND THERE WAS NO SIGN OF THE PILOT. EXAMINATION OF THE WRECKAGE SHOWED THAT THE AVG HAD STRUCK THE SEA AT A LOW SPEED. IN A TAIL-DOWN ATTITUDE WITH A MINIMAL RATE OF DESCENT. IT APPEARED TO HAVE PLUNGED ON THE SURFACE AND COME TO REST COMPARATIVELY SLOWLY. IN A PORT-TURTLES WERE IN THE REHEAT GATES, THERE WAS A NOSE-UP TRIM OF 6 DEG. AVG WAS UP. FLAPS DOWN AND AIRBRAKES OUT. THERE WAS NO SIGN OF FIRE OR EXPLOSION AND EXPERT EXAMINATION REVEALED NO INDICATION THAT THE AVG WAS OTHER THAN SERVICEABLE AT IMPACT. THE BOARD CONCLUDED THAT A COMBINATION OF SPEED VICIDENT AND SHEPHERDING TECHNIQUES, LED TO A SITUATION WHERE THE PILOT FAILED TO MONITOR THE HEIGHT OF HIS AVG WHILST SLOWING DOWN AND ADMIRING HIS TARGET, AND THAT HE HAD INADVERTENTLY SLOWN HIS AVG INTO THE SEA. THE PILOT HAD ATTEMPTED TO RECOVER THE SITUATION BY SELECTING REHEAT, WHICH FAILED TO TAKE EFFECT. WITH THE AVG TAIL SKIDMING ON THE WATER.

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
CONSTRUCTION Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

(REPRODUCED)

Q. LIGHTNING+(CAT4, CAT5)?  
SUBG. REP# X5894?  
SORTED BY:

1 NLS

DATES: 70

IDENTIFICATION

ACCIDENT CAT5  
OBSEPTO TIME: 2142A  
LIGHTNING F6  
S SQN  
CL: AIRCREW FACTOR

ACC. NO.: 70:0054  
USN: BIN5\70  
TAIL NO.: X5894  
BINBROOK  
SAFETY EMERGENCY EQUIP

SUMMARY: (CONT'D)

Probably maint.  
Lack of skill.  
Inadequate orders on briefing.  
Error of skill.

005000000

Lightning F6 XS894  
5 Squadron  
8 September 1970

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ROYAL AIR FORCE  
AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT REPORT

Date: 8 September 1970  
Aircraft: Lightning Mk F6 XS 894  
Crew: One  
Sortie: Tactical Evaluation Exercise - Night  
Shadowing and Shepherding of Low Speed  
Targets  
Casualties: One killed  
Aircraft Damage: Category 5  
Unit: No 5 Squadron, RAF Binbrook

Circumstances

1. No 5 Squadron was participating in a Strike Command Tactical Evaluation (Taceval) exercise at RAF Binbrook. The pilot of the accident aircraft was a USAF exchange officer whose experience included two tours of duty on USAF F102 all weather fighter aircraft. He had accumulated 121 hours on Lightning aircraft, of which 18 were at night, and had obtained a Green Instrument Rating. He had been categorised as "limited combat ready" after 8 weeks on the Squadron. This was an unusually short period but the category was justified by his USAF experience as squadron pilot and OCU instructor, and by his results in simulator training and dual flying tactical and weapons checks on the Lightning. The limitation on his operational status was due to his need for further training in maximum effective use of the Lightning weapons system and because he had not yet met the requirement for full visident missions, he had completed only two of the specified three phases of preparation. In consequence at his stage of training at the time of the accident he would only have been cleared for shadowing and shepherding tasks with the target in full visual contact. The Squadron Commander cleared the pilot to participate in the Taceval, therefore, in the belief that he would not be involved in a shadowing or shepherding mission.

2. On the day of the accident the pilot was ordered to his aircraft at 1834Z hours, and, after waiting on readiness, was scrambled at 1947Z hours. He started taxiing, however his scramble was cancelled and he was ordered back to dispersal. On return he ordered fuel only and no turnaround servicing. According

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to standing instructions the engineer officer on duty ordered a full turnround. The turnround was delayed, and during this delay the pilot was warned that he would be scrambled as soon as he was ready. He asked the groundcrew to expedite the turnround, however, before it was completed he called for engine starting, failed to sign the servicing certificate and taxied out at 2025Z hours. As he entered the runway the metal turnround board and attached servicing certificate fell off the aircraft.

3. Unknown to the station and squadron, the Taceval team had just changed the exercise scenario from normal interceptions to interception, or shadowing or shepherding on slow speed low flying targets. The targets were Shackleton aircraft flying at 160 knots, and at the minimum authorised height of 1500 feet as specified in Group Orders. The minimum speed for Lightning aircraft for visident practices is 200 knots, which was not specified as an order, but was referred to in the Lightning squadron training syllabus. The syllabus made no reference to shadowing or shepherding techniques. Shadowing and shepherding are however included in the war task of Lightning squadrons and, thus, were theoretically subject to Taceval.

4. The pilot took off at 2030Z and was ordered to climb to FL 100; he was still unaware of the type or height of his target. He was handed over to the MRS and was given in a short space of time, the QNH, and height of target (1,500 ft), and a shadowing task with target speed of 160 knots. He was told to accelerate towards the target which was 28 nms away. At 2039Z, the pilot acknowledged instructions to accelerate to 0.95M to effect a rapid take over from another Lightning, this in a tone of surprise. He was given various alterations to heading until he announced that he was in contact with lights but would have to manoeuvre to slow down; his voice sounded strained as though he was affected by 'G'. At 2040Z the MRS broadcast that the Controller was being changed; at this time the Lightning was turning port at about 220 knots. At 2041Z the aircraft was seen by the other Lightning pilot, who had just broken away from the target, to be at about 2,000 yards astern and 500 to 1,000 feet above the Shackleton, in a port turn. The Shackleton crew then saw the aircraft, apparently very low. The MRS Chief Controller had appreciated that this was a difficult interception, and had monitored the latter stages very closely. When at 2042Z the Lightning pilot failed to acknowledge instructions, he instituted

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emergency procedures, however, he experienced difficulty in making contact with the Shackleton because he did not have immediate access to 243.0 Mhz. An immediate air search by the target Shackleton, and subsequent air/sea search the following day, failed to detect any trace of the aircraft or pilot.

Determination of Causes

5. From calculations provided by the Board of Inquiry and expert sources, a search by a FN minesweeper "located" the wreckage nearly 2 months later. The aircraft was in a complete state except that the port wing had broken off and buckled under the fuselage, and some fuselage panels were missing. The cockpit canopy was attached but not closed and there was no sign of the pilot. Examination of the wreckage showed that the aircraft had struck the sea at a low speed, in a tail-down attitude with a minimal rate of descent. It appeared to have planed on the surface and come to rest comparatively slowly. Both throttles were in the reheat gates, there was a nose-up trim of 6°, undercarriage was up, flaps down and airbrakes out. There was no sign of fire or explosion and expert examination revealed no indication that the aircraft was other than serviceable at impact.
6. The ejection seat lower handle had been pulled to the full extent allowed by the interrupter link on the main gun sear. The canopy gun sear had been withdrawn, but the canopy gun cartridge had received only a light percussion strike and had not fired. The canopy had been released by the normal operating lever, the harness QRB was undone, the PEC disconnected and the PSP lanyard had been released from the life preserver and was lying tangled in the cockpit.
7. The Board concluded that a combination of a difficult task in rushed circumstances and lack of training in the low speed visident and shepherding techniques, led to a situation where the pilot failed to monitor the height of his aircraft whilst slowing down and acquiring his target, and that he had inadvertently flown his aircraft into the sea. The pilot had attempted to recover the situation by selecting reheat, which failed to take effect, with the aircraft tail skimming on the water. He had then initiated an ejection which was unsuccessful because of the interruption of the sequence by the failure of the canopy to jettison. He then manually abandoned the aircraft but because he has not been found, he was presumed to have drowned during or after his escape.

CLASSIFICATION

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8. The light percussion strike on the canopy gun cartridge occurred because of negligent servicing, in that the firing unit was incorrectly seated because of damaged screw threads.

9. The Board made a number of recommendations relating to inconsistencies and omissions in orders, instructions and the training syllabus, concerning low speed visidents and the shadowing and shepherding techniques. They also made recommendations concerning the access of MRSs to emergency frequencies, and for remedial action concerning Lightning canopy ejection guns.

Remarks of the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief

10. The AOC-in-C stated that in common with so many accidents, this accident had no single root cause, and he agreed with the Board's conclusions. He said that the pilot made an error of judgment in allowing his aircraft to get into a position from which he was unable to recover. Because of mitigating circumstances, his error was excuseable.

11. The AOC-in-C's comments on the Board's recommendations are covered below.

Subsequent Action

12. The Board's recommendation concerning access to the emergency radio frequency by the MRS was not accepted by the AOC-in-C, who stated that MRSs already have the facility to select 243.0 Mhz although they do not normally monitor it. He considered that the allocation of a safety frequency for use during all peacetime exercises had more merit.

13. The hitherto undetected weakness in training for the identification, shadowing and shepherding of low altitude, low speed targets, have been rectified as follows:

a. No 11 (Fighter) Group Air Staff Orders now specify a minimum speed for visident targets, and minimum target speeds and heights for shadowing and shepherding operations by day and night.

b. New tactics have been devised and published in the Lightning Tactics Manual.

c. Shadowing and shepherding tasks have been included in the Annual Training Syllabus for Lightning Squadrons.

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- d. Pilots of aircraft under GCI control must now read back altimeter settings before descending to low level.
- e. A radio safety frequency is allocated for all exercises.
- f. During all pertinent exercises, a target radio frequency plan will be available so that two way communication between the MRS and target aircraft can be established rapidly in any emergency situation.
14. Servicing procedures for the inspection, re-arming and servicing of canopy firing units have been amended.
15. All ejection seat firing units of a type similar to that which prevented ejection in this accident have been inspected for signs of damage.
16. The design of the canopy firing unit has been examined. No change will be made, however, the Design Authority has been made aware of the failure for consideration in future designs.
17. The deficiencies revealed by the change of controller at the MRS and the over-rapid attempt to effect the changeover of the intercepting aircraft, have been drawn to the attention of the MRS.
18. The effect of the false scramble and the interrupted turnround in producing conditions of stress, has been drawn to the attention of all 11 Group Stations.
19. The deficiencies in planning, and liaison with the station operations staff concerning the change of exercise scenario, have been investigated with the MRS and Taceval Team.
20. Negligence in the fitting of the canopy jettison firing unit could not be attributed to any specific person. The Corporal who was responsible for servicing the unit was found excusably negligent. No disciplinary action was taken against him because of the involvement of other personnel, the lack of clear servicing instructions and guidance on the acceptable degree of burring of the screw threads, the lack of evidence that he had caused the damage to the threads, and because he did not finally fit the unit to the jettison gun.

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DFS(RAF) Cause Coding

21. Main Cause Group: Aircrew Error.

- 22. Codes: 690.6 Inadequate orders.
- 330.5 Servicing error.
- 470.3 Inexperience on aircraft type.
- 716.4 Rushed operation.
- 410.9 Distraction.
- 540 Error of skill (failed to monitor altitude during low level exercise at night) - MAIN
- 232.12 Ejection seat, miscellaneous (canopy firing unit)

*B. Barrett*

Ministry of Defence

30 June 1972

See Distribution List

F O BARRETT  
Air Commodore  
Director of  
Flight Safety (RAF)





From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff – Freedom of Information 1



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Zone H, Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial) 020 7218 2140  
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Shipston-On-Stour  
Warwickshire

**Section 40**

Your Reference:

Our Reference:  
D/DAS/64/3

Date:  
20 July 2004

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letter dated 13 June 2004.

You will know from previous correspondence from my colleague **Section 40** that there were no other sightings of an 'Unidentified Flying Object' in the Stratford-Upon-Avon area on the 6 April 2004, other than the names you have just sent to us. They did not file a report with the MOD.

We are satisfied that there is no corroborating evidence to suggest that the United Kingdom's airspace was breached by any unauthorised aircraft.

As to your question of a helicopter flying around the area marked on the map, I have checked and there were no helicopters flying over that area at that time and date of the sighting.

I hope this has been of help.

Yours sincerely

**Section 40**



LF Trace requested

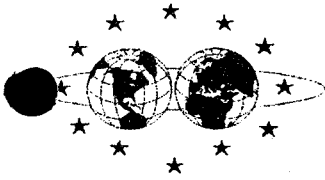
NS SBN

20.45 - 23.00 Z

rotary wing.

No LF helicopters

✓ (on databases)



# CONTACT INTERNATIONAL UFO RESEARCH

PO Box 23  
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OX33 1FL

☎ +44 (0)1869 320989

Section 40  
[Redacted]  
Shipston-On-Stour  
Warwickshire  
Section 40

13/6/04

DEAR SIR,

I'M LOOKING INTO A REPORT OF A UFO SIGHTING ON 6<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2004. SO FAR I HAVE ONLY GOT 3 NEWSPAPER ARTICLES. THAT IS WHY I HAVE NOT WRITTEN SOONER, I WAS WAITING FOR THE WITNESSES TO CONTACT, AND FILL IN A REPORT FORM.

- 1) Section 40 [Redacted] - PASSED UPTON HOUSE APPROACHING THE BANBURY ROAD TOWARDS STRATFORD-UPON-AVON - 21.45
- 2) Section 40 [Redacted], HENLEY-IN-ARDEN - 23.00
- 3) Section 40 [Redacted] / Section 40 [Redacted] - HENLEY-IN-ARDEN TOWARDS GREAT ALNE 24.00 - SEE PHOTOCOPY AND MAP FOR MORE DETAILS

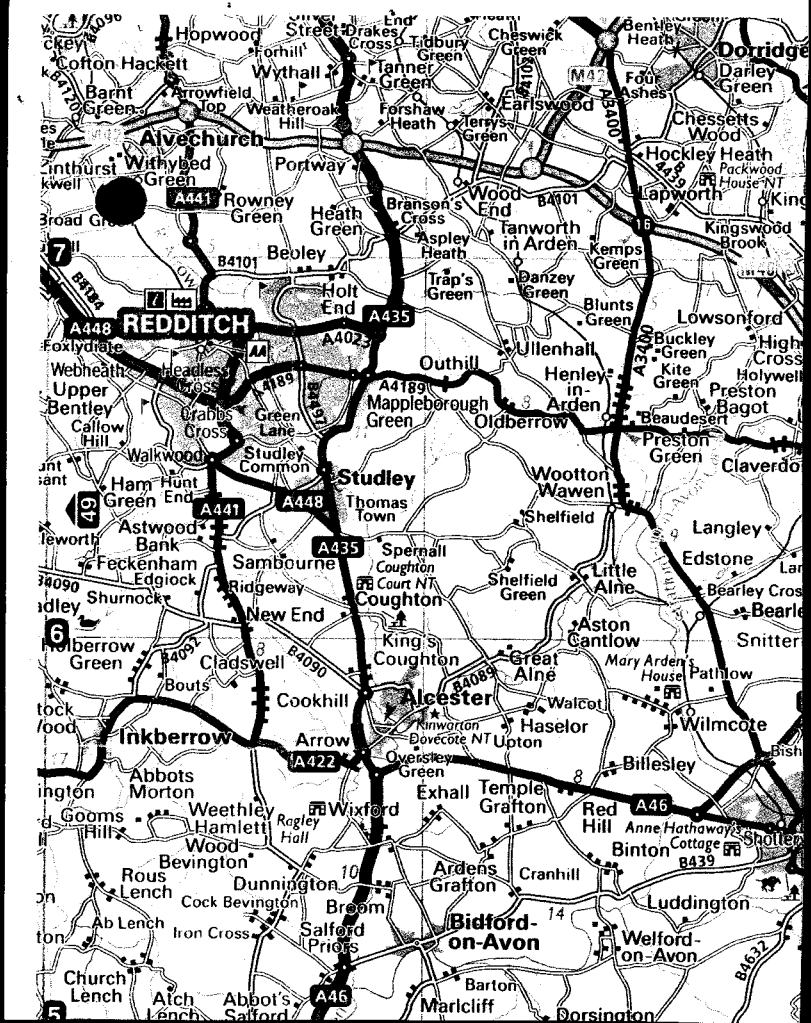
I HAVE ALREADY CHECKED WITH THE POLICE IN STRATFORD-UPON-AVON, THEY HAD NO OTHER WITNESSES, ALSO THE POLICE HELICOPTER WAS NOT FLYING IN WARWICKSHIRE ON THE 6/4/04.

I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF YOU HAD A HELICOPTER FLYING AROUND THE AREA MARKED ON MAP ON THE 6/4/04 AROUND THE ABOVE TIMES OR IF YOU HAD ANYTHING ON YOUR RADAR.

I HAVE ALREADY WRITTEN TO THE M.O.D. WHO COULD NOT TELL ME MUCH (THAT IS WHERE I GOT YOUR ADDRESS FROM) IF YOU COULD PLEASE SEND ME A REPLY TO MY QUESTIONS A.S.A.P. ENCLOSED IS A S.A.E.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

YOURS SINCERELY  
[Redacted]  
Section 40



# Can you shed light on UFO?

TWO students are trying to find a rational explanation behind an unidentified flying object seen hovering outside Stratford.

The friends - 20-year-old Victoria Ricketts from Bidford and 19-year-old Lucy Holbrooke from Broom - were driving back from the cinema in Solihull just before midnight last Tuesday when the strange goings-on began.

Victoria, a student at the University of Lancashire, said they noticed a distant pink light in the sky and thought it was a bright star or planet.

But a few minutes later as the pair drove back to Bidford

through Henley and towards Great Alne, the light that had seemed to be a distant star was suddenly much lower.

The friends decided it was just a plane, with a red light at the back of it and white lights at the front.

They continued driving home through Great Alne but as they turned a corner approaching the village they were suddenly confronted by a sight they still can not comprehend or explain.

According to the students, a binocular-shaped object with two bright headlights at the front and a flashing light at the back was hovering silently at street lamp height only 200 metres in front of them.

"I have never been so petrified in my entire life - never," Victoria told The Standard.

"I am not one of those people who believes in all the alien and UFO madness but how can something go from being the height of a star to the height of a plane to being just off the ground so quickly? It does not make sense."

The object disappeared as soon as a car came rushing up behind the two friends but they believe somebody else must have seen it or can offer a rational explanation.

Did you see the UFO or know what it was? If so, write to the editor at the usual address on page two.



To

Section 40

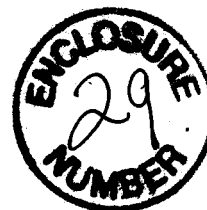
SHIPSTON - ON - STROOK,  
WARWICKSHIRE.

Section 40





From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3a



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue,  
London WC2N 3BP

Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**

**Section 40**

West Kilbride  
Ayrshire

**Section 40**

Your Reference:

Our Reference:

D/DAS/64/3

Date:

22 June 2004

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letter dated 7 June 2004.

You seem to believe we are questioning your intelligence on the matter of 'UFO's, I can assure you, this is not the case. It is simply that the MOD has no expertise or role in respect of the possibility of life on other planets. We remain open-minded, but to date we know of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena. I have therefore, nothing further to add.

Your letter will be placed on our files.

Yours sincerely

**Section 40**

Section 40

Section 40

w/ Killbride  
Appstore

Section 40

(Directorate) 3A.

Section 40

Ref D/DAS/64/2

7<sup>th</sup> June 04

One Does not Question the Technology of Ministry of Defence to Protect our Air Space from any threat to UK.

But there are times you have to 'Rise above the masses, to put Right what is wrong.

This is one of those times, your 'Air Space' is 'Being Violated, so is a Possible Threat.'

Your 'Stealth Bomber' cannot times be detected by Radar, so it feasible UFO do same. When needed to.

We're in an age now of Information and all the DATA given, UFO exist Big Time.

We witnessed them with others - on my own. It no trouble for me to point them out to others

But not everybody can handle the unknown.

I have a High IQ, y' 'd been good at Math probably a member of Mensa. But mensa gives me IQ of 124. 'Very well Read, I am.'

I have had assessment done for a project concerning mentally ill. By a team of Drs. Diff' types of Psychiatry Drs - a clinical consultant 'Dr Flowerden' of Aclsa Hospital Ayr. about 6 1/2 years ago.

and found to be well balanced and fulfill person and passed with flying colours. One is not D.o.P?

When you have to eliminate the impossible what ever reason, how ever improbable must be truth. Speak to 'Zacharia Sitchin' Pope John Paul II Has yb saying goes "Soul Judge of truth and endless error Hurled. Yb glory Test the Rebels of the world He had a profound close experiences with UFO - they do in truth. Appear in your Air Space times  
yours sincerely

Section 40



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

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020 7218 2140  
020 7218 9000  
**Section 40**

**Section 40**

Brighton  
East Sussex

**Section 40**

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3  
Date  
11 June 2004

Dear **Section 40**

I am writing in response to your letters dated 7 April, 17 May and 4 June regarding reports of sightings of 'unidentified flying objects'. I will address all your comments in this one reply.

First I will clarify the MOD's position regarding reports of 'UFO' sightings. Most people relate the term 'Unidentified Flying Object' to extraterrestrial craft. The MOD has no expertise or role regarding the possibility of life on other planets. We remain open minded but know of no substantive evidence of the existence of such phenomena or of visits to the UK by extraterrestrial craft. You say that the MOD "has already found something but it is so astounding that we do not know how to tell the public". This is simply not the case.

The integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous surveillance of the UK Air Policing Area by the Royal Air Force. This is achieved by using a combination of civil and military radar installations, which provide a continuous real-time "picture" of the UK airspace. Any threat to the UK Air Policing Area would be handled in the light of the particular circumstances at the time (it might if deemed appropriate, involve the scrambling or diversion of air defence aircraft). From that perspective, reports provided to us of 'UFO' sightings are examined, but consultation with air defence staff and others as necessary is considered only where there is sufficient evidence to suggest a breach of UK air space. The vast majority of reports we receive are very sketchy and vague. Only a handful of reports in recent years have warranted further investigation and none revealed any evidence of a threat.

You mentioned reports from military aircrew and unidentified aircraft tracked on radar. The MOD very occasionally receives a report from military aircrew of a sighting of something that has not been immediately identifiable. These are examined by those staff within the MOD with responsibility for air defence matters. Unidentified aircraft tracks detected on radar should not be confused with UFOs. The fact that the precise identity of an aircraft cannot be established does not render it a UFO. There are a number of reasons why some aircraft cannot be positively identified and, in these instances, assumptions have to be made. In the vast majority of cases, unidentified aircraft can be assumed to be friendly by virtue of behavioural characteristics. Any unidentified aircraft acting suspiciously would normally be intercepted.

In your e-mail of 17 May you asked us to confirm that GCHQ Cheltenham collate and forward to MOD all reports of 'unidentified aircraft sightings'. We are not aware that GCHQ have any role in this area.

Finally, in your e-mail of 4 June you asked if air defence records will be made public under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. When the FOI Act is introduced in January 2005 the public will gain a statutory right to request information from Government Departments. These requests will be handled in accordance with the FOI Act and information will be released whenever possible. Information can be withheld under one of the 23 exemptions in the Act if a harm would be caused by its release. It is likely that, if requested, information concerning the operations of air defence aircraft would be withheld as its release could be useful to hostile nations and therefore damaging to the defence of the UK.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40



**From:** D UK-SO1 AIR OPS 2  
**Sent:** 12 June 2004 03:03  
**To:** DAS-Sec3  
**Subject:** RE: UFO enquiry

**Section 40**

I believe you are spot on on both accounts.

**Section 40**

D UK, SO1 Air Ops 2  
MT 466  
Ext **Section 40**

-----Original Message-----

**From:** DAS-Sec3  
**Sent:** 10 June 2004 09:01  
**To:** D UK-SO1 AIR OPS 2  
**Subject:** UFO enquiry

**Section 40**

One of our correspondents has asked the following and I would be grateful for your advice.

1. "In your letter of 19.2.04 there is a mention of 'scrambling or diversion of air defence aircraft' in relation to potential air threat. I assume that these operations would be logged and recorded in some manner. Is it possible that such records are available to the public under the FOI Act?"
2. "Could you confirm that all reports of unidentified aircraft sightings from all sources are collated and forwarded to the MOD by GCHQ Cheltenham".

With regard to Q1 I thought we could say something along the lines of: "When the FOI Act is introduced in January 2005 the public will gain a statutory right to request information from Government Departments. These requests will be handled in accordance with the FOIA and information will be released whenever possible. Information can be withheld under one of the 23 exemptions in the Act if a harm would be caused by its release. It is likely that, if requested, information concerning the operations of air defence aircraft would be withheld as its release could be useful to hostile nations and therefore damaging to the defence of the UK.

As for Q2, I am not sure whether he means UFO reports or reports of unidentified aircraft in UK airspace. However, as far as I am aware GCHQ do not have a role in collating reports of either.

I would be grateful for your advice on what we can say in reply to these.

**Section 40**

DAS-Sec3  
MT6/73 **Section 40**



AS-SEC3

From: Section 40

Sent: 04 June 2004 11:05

To: Section 40

Subject: Scrambling or diversion of air defence aircraft - Records

Section 40

In your letter of 19-2-04 there is a mention of `scrambling or diversion of air defence aircraft` in relation to potential air threat. I assume that these operations would be logged and recorded in some manner. Is it possible that such records are available to the public under the F.O.I. Act?

Thank you

Section 40

Section 40

brighton

east sussex

Section 40

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***



UFOs /E-MAIL

**TREAT OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE**

To DAS (LA) P1P  
cc.

TO Ref No 3854 /2004

Date 19 MAY 04

The Prime Minister/SofS/Min(AF)/Min(DP)/USofS/MOD\* has received the attached correspondence from a member of the public, which this office has neither retained nor acknowledged. Please send a reply on behalf of the PM/Minister/Department\*.

Ministers attach great importance to correspondence being answered promptly, and your reply should be sent **within 15 working days of the above date**. If, exceptionally, this should prove impossible, an interim reply should be sent within the same timescale. You should be aware that No 10 periodically calls for a sample of letters sent by officials on the PM's behalf for his perusal.

An 'Open Government Code of Practice on Access to Government Information' came into force in 1997. All replies to members of the public must be in accordance with the procedures set out in the Code. In particular, information can only be withheld if it falls within the scope of a particular exemption. However, some exemptions are subject to a 'public interest test', whereby the harm associated with disclosure must be weighed against the public interest in release. Applicants must be informed of any decision to apply an exemption and of their right to appeal against this decision by writing to D Info(Exp). A full explanation is contained in DCI(Gen) 232/01; further information is available from DG Info on **Section 40**.

It is vital that branches ensure they have simple systems to record and track correspondence received from members of the public. This information should be regularly monitored and reviewed against the targets for answering correspondence published in the Spending Review 2000 Service Delivery Agreement for the Ministry of Defence. In addition, we are required to keep information on the number of **requests for information that specifically refer to the Code of Practice**.

**As part of our monitoring procedure, random spot checks on the accuracy of your branch records on correspondence will be performed throughout the year.**

**Ministerial Correspondence Unit**

Room 222, Old War Office Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2EU

t: **Section 40** or **Section 40**

f: **Section 40**; CHOtS: Ministerial Correspondence; e: [ministers@defence.mod.uk](mailto:ministers@defence.mod.uk).

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**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

\* Delete as appropriate.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

**Ministers**

---

**From:** Section 40  
**Sent:** 17 May 2004 17:54  
**To:** public@ministers.mod.uk  
**Subject:** GCHQ reports

Sir,

Could you confirm that all reports of unidentified aircraft sightings from all sources are collated and forwarded to the MOD by GCHQ Cheltenham.

Thank you,

Section 40

Section 40  
Brighton  
East Sussex  
Section 40

18/05/2004

Section 40

Section 40

Brighton  
East

Sussex

Section 40

Section 40

7-4-

04

Sir,

After studying the standard response to UFO queries which is sent out by the MOD, it is apparent that the Ministry is not being straightforward with the public. A brief analysis of the wording shows :

1. "The MOD does not have any expertise or role in respect of UFO / flying saucer matters..... " As the role of the MOD includes identification of intruding aircraft or objects by radar, visual or aerial interception, this statement is misleading, since the MOD has ample evidence of UFO activity both in the UK and other countries via shared Intelligence gathering.

2. ".....the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena." It is a recorded fact that many RAF pilots , aircrew and groundstaff have reported observations of anomalous objects, some at close range, which they could not identify as known aircraft but which demonstrated superior controlled flight capabilities. It is also a fact that some unidentified aircraft have been tracked by radar and recordings made of the radar display. As described above ,the MOD has access to ALL international evidence.

3. "The MOD examines any `UFO` reports it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the UK`s airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat..... and to date no `UFO` report has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us."

The critical wording here is "evidence of a potential threat ".

The MOD appears to be doing the right thing in rejecting reports which have no solid material basis, BUT have not investigated any of them in depth. Therefore , how can it be assumed that ALL reports do not contain any `evidence of a potential threat`.The wording of this part of the statement is un-intentionally revealing, as "...we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting



reported to us", covers ALL the sightings information reaching the MOD from all sources.

4. "We believe that rational explanations such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them if resources were diverted for this purpose, but it is not the function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. It would be an inappropriate use of defence resources if we were to do so."

cont.

This paragraph condenses the attitude of the MOD to the UFO problem. Whilst admitting that there are sightings, the MOD refutes any suggestion that they should be taken seriously, claiming that they do not have sufficient funds to investigate. This attitude of "there is nothing to find, so we are not looking" is putting a brave face on it, but sooner or later the MOD will be forced to admit to the public that they have ALREADY FOUND SOMETHING but it is so astounding that they don't know how to tell us!

To summarise:

1. The MOD does have expertise in identifying air intrusions.
2. The MOD does have evidence of unidentified flying objects.
3. The MOD covers up evidence by stating "unless there is evidence of a potential threat we do not attempt to identify".
4. The MOD states that all unidentified flying objects are aircraft lights or natural phenomena, which are not worth investigating due to the expenditure involved.

Conclusion:

As the evidence within the public domain has comprehensively demonstrated, a phenomenon exists, which the MOD and government are denying. Whether this attitude is based on misinformation, ignorance or an attempt to protect the public from social upheaval, in the long term it will fail. Despite the best efforts of government to delay the release of information, the truth will out, leaving politicians and civil servants mired in their own denials.

Hopefully, common sense will guide you.

Yours faithfully,

Section 40

email: Section 40

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***



Info

/E-MAIL

**TREAT OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE**

To DAS Sec  
cc.

TO Ref No 3491 /2004

Date 11 MAY 04

The Prime Minister/SofS/Min(AF)/Min(DP)/USofS/MOD\* has received the attached correspondence from a member of the public, which this office has neither retained nor acknowledged. Please send a reply on behalf of the PM/Minister/Department\*.

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Room 222, Old War Office Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2EU

t: [Section 40](#) or [Section 40](#)

f: [Section 40](#); CHOtS: Ministerial Correspondence; e: [ministers@defence.mod.uk](mailto:ministers@defence.mod.uk).

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**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

\* Delete as appropriate.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

**Ministers**

---

**From:** Section 40 [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 08 May 2004 11:04

**To:** public@ministers.mod.uk

**Subject:** MOD standard UFO

Sir,

Please read attached file, I would appreciate your comments.

Thank you,

Section 40 [REDACTED]

Section 40

Section 40

Brighton  
East

Sussex

Section 40  
7-4-04

Sir,

After studying the standard response to UFO queries which is sent out by the MOD, it is apparent that the Ministry is not being straightforward with the public. A brief analysis of the wording shows :

1. "The MOD does not have any expertise or role in respect of UFO / flying saucer matters..... " As the role of the MOD includes identification of intruding aircraft or objects by radar, visual or aerial interception, this statement is misleading, since the MOD has ample evidence of UFO activity both in the UK and other countries via shared Intelligence gathering.

2. ".....the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena." It is a recorded fact that many RAF pilots, aircrew and groundstaff have reported observations of anomalous objects, some at close range, which they could not identify as known aircraft but which demonstrated superior controlled flight capabilities. It is also a fact that some unidentified aircraft have been tracked by radar and recordings made of the radar display. As described above, the MOD has access to ALL international evidence.

3. "The MOD examines any 'UFO' reports it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the UK's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat..... and to date no 'UFO' report has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us."

The critical wording here is "evidence of a potential threat".

The MOD appears to be doing the right thing in rejecting reports which have no solid material basis, BUT have not investigated any of them in depth. Therefore, how can it be assumed that ALL reports do not contain any 'evidence of a potential threat'. The wording of this part of the statement is un-intentionally revealing, as "...we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported



to us", covers ALL the sightings information reaching the MOD from all sources.

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cont.

This paragraph condenses the attitude of the MOD to the UFO problem. Whilst admitting that there are sightings, the MOD refutes any suggestion that they should be taken seriously, claiming that they do not have sufficient funds to investigate. This attitude of "there is nothing to find, so we are not looking" is putting a brave face on it, but sooner or later the MOD will be forced to admit to the public that they have ALREADY FOUND SOMETHING but it is so astounding that they don't know how to tell us!

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Hopefully, common sense will guide you.

Yours faithfully,

Section 40

email: Section 40 [REDACTED]



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone

(Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)  
(GTN)

020 7218 2140  
020 7218 9000

**Section 40**

**Section 40**

Miami 33183  
U.S.A

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3  
Date  
08 June 2004

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your recent undated letter addressed to the Secretary of State for Defence, the Rt Hon Geoff Hoon MP, regarding extraterrestrial craft. Your letter has been passed to this office as we are the focal point within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) for correspondence of this nature.

First it may be helpful if I explain that the MOD examines any reports of 'unidentified flying objects' it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external source, and to date no 'UFO' report has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us. We believe that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them if resources were diverted for this purpose, but it is not the function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. It would be an inappropriate use of defence resources if we were to do so.

With regard to the CD you sent with your letter, the MOD does not have any expertise or role in respect of 'UFO/flying saucer' matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains totally open-minded. I should add, however, that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**



Info / Invention

**TREAT OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE**

To DAS (Sec) TO Ref No 3884 /2004  
cc. DPA, Def. Div. Agc. Date 19.5.24

The Prime Minister/SofS/Min(AF)/Min(DP)/USofS/MOD\* has received the attached correspondence from a member of the public, which this office has neither retained nor acknowledged. Please send a reply on behalf of the PM/Minister/Department\*.

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**Ministerial Correspondence Unit**

Room 222, Old War Office Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2EU

t: **Section 40** or **Section 40**

f: **Section 40**; CHOfS: Ministerial Correspondence; e: [ministers@defence.mod.uk](mailto:ministers@defence.mod.uk).

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\* Delete as appropriate.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

Contact address: **Section 40**

Dear Sir,

Please find enclosed a CD containing information about an extraterrestrial craft. I have been aboard such a craft and can verify the propulsion system as described is the practical alternative for both terrestrial and space travel.

The craft uses two propulsion methods – one is benign and used only to elevate and steer the vessel to a low altitude where a more volatile antimatter system is deployed. Both systems are utilized on the exterior of the craft.

If a vacuum is constantly created over one half of its exterior surface, the pressure of surrounding air on the remaining surface would propel the craft at a high rate.

The antimatter system functions in a similar way, but can be used outside a planets influence for space is full of transitional energy. The power coefficient in a matter/antimatter reaction is considerably greater.

Also, because the atmosphere in front of the craft is constantly evaporated there is no friction or resistance to its movement; it is therefore silent and moving at optimum efficiency. Its acceleration is therefore limitless.

I have the complete constructional details - there are many “inventions” involved, some of which can be used for other applications to supply unlimited energy.

I realize some governments are aware of extraterrestrial activity in our skies and even fire on it occasionally with their laser canons – these countries including USA and S.Africa, I will not approach.

I need not remind you that this is a tiny planet in a seemingly infinite Universe. It is imperative that a means is found to augment an escape from its confines especially in view of recent terrorist events that threaten everyone’s safety and could lead to a nuclear threat. You owe it to the people of your country to investigate any and all possibilities. Leave your Earthly prejudice behind and put any reservations you may have about its construction into writing. Contact me for the answers.

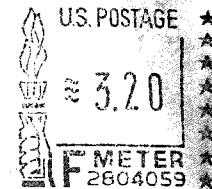
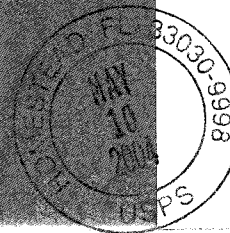
Sincerely,

**Section 40**



Section 40

MIAMI 33183  
USA



LC288076631US

United States Postal Service  
Customs - CN 22 (Old C-1)  
May be opened officially. (Peut être ouvert d'office)  
See Instructions on Reverse

Detailed Description of Contents

CD  
10150

Weight (Poids) 2.80 Total

Gift (Cadeau)  Merchandise (Marchandises)  Commercial Sample

I certify that this item does not contain any dangerous article prohibited by postal regulations.

Section 40

(Signature)

PS Form 2976, June 1997 CN 22 (Old C 1)

AIR MAIL

GEOFF HOON  
THE MINISTERIAL CORRESPONDENCE UNIT  
ROOM 222  
OLD WAR OFFICE  
WHITEHALL  
LONDON SW1A 2EU  
U.K.

AIR MAIL





From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone

(Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)  
(GTN)

020 7218 2140  
020 7218 9000  
**Section 40**

**Section 40**

Burledon  
Nr Southampton  
Hampshire  
**Section 40**

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3  
Date  
8 June 2004

Dear **Section 40**

In my letter of 6 April 2004, I promised to see what information we hold concerning the alleged 'UFO' incident in the vicinity of the home of the Rt Hon Michael Howard QC MP on 8 March 1997.

I have now had an opportunity to view the relevant files and a copy of the papers found are attached for your information. Personal data has been removed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

I hope this is helpful.



Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**

✓  
[REDACTED]  
Folkestone  
Kent  
[REDACTED]

25 May 1997

The Honourable Roger Gale MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Sir,

I have been reading extracts from a book on the subject of UFOs called "Open Skies-Closed Minds" by a Mr Nick Pope. I found the material quite incredible, especially coming from a civil servant in The Ministry of Defence.

What I find quite inconceivable is that the government continue to deny or even acknowledge the existence of UFOs in spite of all the evidence.

For The Ministry of Defence to claim that incidents such as that at Rendlesham Forest in 1980 are of no defence significance is totally outrageous and I feel this policy needs to be reversed.

It would not be a good idea for me to approach my own MP, Michael Howard on this, as I understand he had an experience of his own (see enclosure). Nevertheless, I feel that this particular incident is a grave matter of security.

I hope you will consider raising these issues in Parliament.

Yours Sincerely  
[REDACTED]

# UFOMIEK

## UFO MONITORS EAST KENT

BRAMLING,  
CANTERBURY,  
KENT.  
Tel. [REDACTED]

FOLKESTONE,  
KENT.  
Tel. [REDACTED]

- 1 JUN 1997

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE HOME DEPARTMENT.

THE PETITION OF A NUMBER OF THE RESIDENTS OF THE COUNTY OF KENT AND ELSEWHERE DECLARES THAT THERE WAS AN INCIDENT INVOLVING A SIGHTING OF AN UNIDENTIFIED CRAFT IN THE VICINITY OF THE RESIDENCE OF THE NP FOR FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE (SHEPWAY) ON OR AROUND THE 8TH OF MARCH, 1997.

THE PETITIONERS THEREFORE REQUEST THAT THE HOME DEPARTMENT SHOULD HOLD A FULL PUBLIC ENQUIRY INTO THE SAID INCIDENT, AND PUBLICISE ANY SUCH FINDINGS THAT MAY ARISE FROM SAID INQUIRY.

AND THE PETITIONERS REMAIN ETC."

NAME ADDRESS SIGNATURE

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
MRS [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Mr [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
MR [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
MR [REDACTED]	[REDACTED], DEAL, Kent	[REDACTED]
MR [REDACTED]	[REDACTED], Whitstable, Kent	[REDACTED]
MR [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Canterbury Kent	[REDACTED]
MR [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] LYMINE, HYTHE, KENT.	[REDACTED]
M. [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] LYMINE HYTHE KENT	[REDACTED]
MR [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] BROADSTAIRS, KENT	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Herne Bay	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] (Barth)	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Maidstone Kent	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] MAIDSTONE KENT	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	" " " " " "	[REDACTED]

# UFOMIEK

## UFO MONITORS EAST KENT

Name: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED] HYTHE.

Tel: Age/D.O.B: 4/10/71 (25 Yrs).

Date of observation: 08/03/97. Time: 02:00 hrs

Locality of observation: DONKEY ST BURMASH, WEST HYTHE.

How long was the object visible: 1 minute

Please describe the weather conditions if possible: cloudy. Cold.

Position of Sun/Moon in relation to object seen: N/A.

Please try and describe the object seen as best as you can: TRIANGULAR/ELONGATED.  
Size about 2 planes in length.

Was the object brighter than the background sky: Yes.

If so was it brighter than the Sun/Moon/Headlights: Lights bright Diamond faceted  
effect / -in foil-like.

Was the object observed through binoculars/telescope: N/A.

Try to give an approximation of the objects size: About size in two large passenger  
planes in length.

How did you happen to notice the object: Saw the lights in front of car to  
the left.

Where were you and what were you doing at the time: Driving home after dropping off  
friends - visiting

Please try and estimate the distance of the object: About 3-400 metres.

Are there any Airports/Military/Governmental facilities in the area of your observation:  
Army Ranges nearby.

Have you ever seen anything else which you would describe as unusual: N/A

(If yes please give details on a separate sheet of paper)

Please draw a rough sketch of the area and of the object observed on the reverse of this form.

Have you reported the incident to anyone else (if so who and when): N/A.

Please enclose any photographs/video which will be returned if requested. N/A.

Do you object to us using your name with regard to this report: No.

Thanking you for your co-operation in this matter, and, if you agree, we may contact you further regarding this incident.

Date: 14.3.97.


Signed: [REDACTED]




# UFOMEK

## UFO MONITORS EAST KENT

### STATEMENT OF DECLARATION

I..... 


OF.....  *HYTHE*.....

DECLARE THAT THE DETAILS GIVEN BY MYSELF, ARE TO MY KNOWLEDGE TRUE AND CORRECT. I ALSO APPROVE/~~DO NOT APPROVE~~ OF MY NAME BEING USED IN CONNECTION WITH THE REPORT GIVEN BY ME.

I ALSO APPROVE/~~DO NOT APPROVE~~ OF ANY PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEO FOOTAGE MADE BY ME, OR OF MYSELF PRODUCED BY UFOMEK DURING INTERVIEWS BEING USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH MY REPORT IN ANY PUBLICATION.

SIGNED: 

DATE: ..... *14.3.97* .....

SIGNED: ..  .....

(UFOMEK INVESTIGATOR)

DATE: *14 March 1997* .....

# UFO MONITORS EAST KENT

## UFO MONITORS EAST KENT

BRAMLING,  
CANTERBURY,  
KENT.  
Tel.

FOLKESTONE.  
KENT.  
Tel.

### BURMARSH SIGHTING WITNESS STATEMENT

"It was very early in the morning, I think it was about three o'clock. I was driving back from dropping some friends off and I was coming down the road and I felt, I said afterwards to other people since, that I felt really weird. I was really looking over my shoulder on the way home. I was a bit scared, a weird feeling anyway.

And I saw something in front of me, and thought "Oh my God what the hell is it?", and sort of slowed down because I thought it was coming at me, and it stopped in a field in front of me. Probably 3 to 400 yards away, and I slowed down looking at it. It was just this huge triangle thing, which was a lot bigger than an aeroplane, but there is no way that I could have mistaken it for an aeroplane. or anything like that.

It had lights all around the outside, and this disc attached to the back, and a big light on the front. I pulled up to stop, and as I did it shot off. Literally shot off. I thought "Oh God what is this? This is really, really scary." And it stopped again, sort of another 500 yards away from me, and it did that four times. It just shot further and further away, but stopped four times, sort of moved for about 5-6 seconds, stopped for 2 sec's, then moved again for another 5-6 seconds and so on. The object was moving Westwards., and all the time it was making this weird humming sound. There was no other noise, like an aircraft engine.

It was really peculiar, it was, I wouldn't say shiny, but looked more sort of tin foily, sort of shimmery. It was shiny in places, and not in others. I just don't know what it was, it was so weird. The lights were really bright, a very bright one at the front, and when it shot off, I saw a light in each corner, which were white in colour. The ones around the outside were a sort of yellow-white, and there was also a circle of light in the middle, of the same colour as the outside ones.

When I first saw it, the point was facing me, but when it shot off it sort of.... I don't know, it must have swiveld, but I don't remember it swivelling, because I could see it side on then, and I could see underneath as it shot off, and there was this circle of lights.

I probably got a good look at it literally for a matter of seconds, and then it flicked off, and then stopped for a few seconds, and then it flicked off again and so on. I would say no more than 25 seconds, if that. I saw it for quite a long time in the distance, because I saw all these lights, and thought they were just lights. It wasn't until I got closer that I thought "Bloody hell, what is that?" So maybe I saw it for a lot longer that I thought.

It wasn't something like you see on television, like the futuristic planes,

well you can always tell that they are planes. Where as this was not like that. I was really frightened by it, and I'm not stupid. I don't believe in anything like that (UFO's). This is not something I've ever seen before or like something we would have built. It was just too weird, too odd, and the strange shimmer effect. It looked like an object suspended, had no wobble or anything like that. And when it moved off it was like a fluid movement, it was really odd. There was no slowing down or speeding up during each movement, like when you flip a coin or stone across the water.

The object was like an equilateral triangle, about double the size of an airliner, maybe as big as a football field. It wasn't very thick, but seemed thin along the edges, but sort of mounding in the middle. As I said there was this humming sound, like the sound you hear when you stand under overhead power cables. When I first heard the noise I thought it was the car engine playing up, and put my foot on the accelerator, for a second or two, but the noise was still there, and it was then that I realised the sound was coming from the object.

When the object finally disappeared, I kept looking around in the sky, thinking "Oh God where has it gone?" Looking for lights, anything, even aircraft lights and it was then that I noticed there were no stars visible.

All the time I had the feeling of the hairs standing up on the back of my neck, and I was convinced I had someone in the car with me. I felt really scared, as I drove home. I think I arrived home about twenty past three, maybe half-past three, I don't remember. But I woke everyone up and told them what I had seen and had a drink to calm me down. I was really shaken by the whole thing."

SIGNED: 


**Section 40**

DATE: ..... 25<sup>th</sup> APRIL, 1997 .....

WITNESSED BY: 

**Section 40**

DATE: ..... 25<sup>th</sup> APRIL, 1997 .....

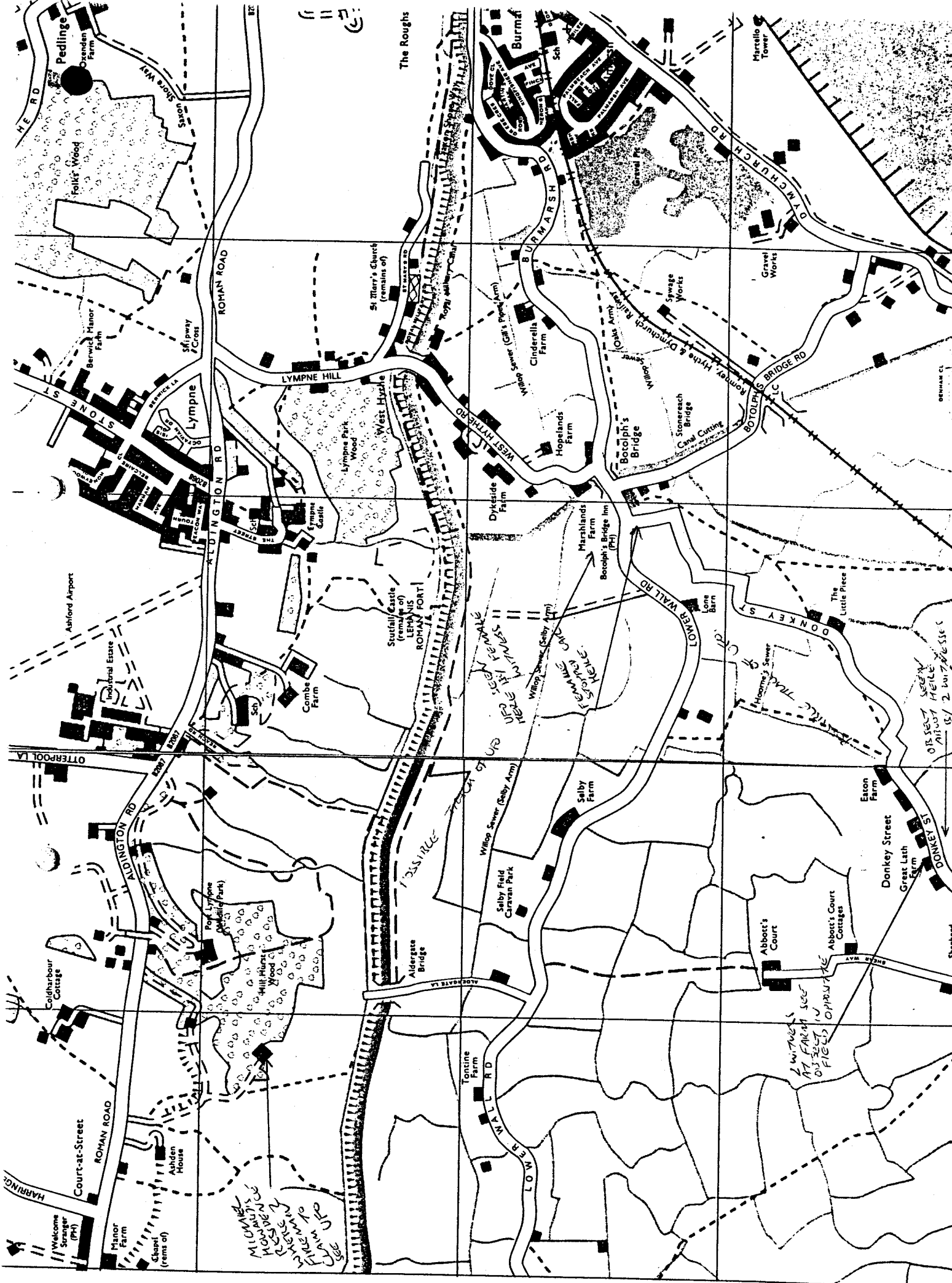
WITNESSED BY: 

**Section 40**

DATE: ..... 25<sup>th</sup> APRIL, 1997 .....

ORIGINAL

25 APR 1997



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The Roughts

Pedlinge  
Orenden Farm  
Folke Wood  
Barnard Farm  
Ashford Airport  
Coldharbour Cottage  
Court-at-Street  
Pisnor Farm  
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Alden House  
HARRING

ROMAN ROAD  
ALDINGTON RD  
STONE ST  
LYMPNE  
LYMPNE HILL  
Lympe Park Wood  
Lympe Castle  
Combe Farm  
Aldergate Bridge  
Tontine Farm  
LOWER WILLOW RD

St Mary's Church (remains of)  
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# UFO is sighted over the marsh!

By Sarah Hall

SHEPWAY has once again become the centre of a wave of suspected UFO sightings.

Three people contacted the *Herald* this week after a strange object was seen looming in the sky over the Romney Marsh area in the early hours of last Saturday morning.

Sophie Wadleigh, 25, of Shepherds walk, Hythe

was amazed to see a large triangular 'space-ship' stop in a field directly in front of her, as she drove home through Donkey Street in New Romney at just after 3am on Saturday morning.

Shocked Sophie said: "It

was so peculiar, it all felt really odd and I heard this humming noise.

"As I looked across the field I saw a large triangular shaped flying craft hovering about 300 metres off the ground.

"It had a large dome at one end and a lot of bright lights around the sides and looked quite shiny — I really had no idea what it

was and just sat in the car looking at it.

"After a few seconds it shot off leaving in a flash of light, travelling about 500m across the field and stopping again.

"It did this four times and then flew into the distance and I watched until it was out of sight.

"I have talked to friends since who have said that it was probably an aeroplane or an advanced Stealth bomber — but I have never seen anything like it before."

And it would seem the strange object was also spotted by two men as they returned home from a night out.

Ji Lane, 23, and Christopher Lee, 27, from Lathe Farm in New Romney were just locking up when they spotted a mysterious shape in the field opposite.

Mr Lane said: "It was crazy — I was getting a drink in the kitchen when I saw these strange lights in the sky just over the field across the road from our house.

"I wasn't sure what they were as they weren't moving so I called Chris and we both watched this weird floating object.

"We could only just make it out as we were quite far away, but when we ran outside to get a better look it had shot into the distance."

## Silent

Mr Lee added: "If it was an aeroplane of some sort you would have expected there to have been loads of noise but this was silent.

"Also it was a lot longer than a plane and moved incredibly quickly — I have no idea what it was and we were both left speechless."

Both descriptions of the UFO fit those researched by the Shepway based UFOMEK monitoring group — who have collated files on reported UFO sightings in the area.

According to UFOMEK strange objects seen in the sky are usually described by 'spotters' as triangular disc-like objects with a

finish almost like a diamond.

These objects are also said to be capable of staying completely still and then shooting off at incredible speeds, normally after a dramatic flash in the air.

Local expert and UFOMEK assistant co-ordinator, Chris Rolfe from Hill Road, Folkestone said: "I am really not at all surprised at the descriptions given about the flying objects — these flying triangles have been spotted all over the country.

## Myth

"The earliest record we have of such a sighting was in 1973, when a group of boys at the Duke of York's school in Dover spotted the triangular shaped UFO.

"We don't know what they are but the humming noise rules out the Stealth bomber myth as they make no noise at all.

"The really peculiar thing about this sighting is that we thought something might happen as much of Folkestone experienced a power cut last week — an occurrence which often happens before or after a sighting."

Mr Rolfe also believes the military know all about the mysterious craft spotted in the sky.

He claims that after several UFO sightings RAF and NATO aircraft have been seen patrolling the area.

He said: "We believe the military know a lot more than they are letting on about these sightings.

"For example a couple who reported a UFO in Thanet also told of military activity in Minnis Bay and numerous other people have seen RAF planes patrolling sighting spots.

"We don't know what these objects are at this moment in time and unfortunately can only record them as Unidentifiable Flying Objects."

Anyone wanting to report a UFO can contact Chris Rolfe at UFOMEK on (01303) 254774.

(LOCAL PRESS)

FOLKESTONE HERALD

13<sup>th</sup> MARCH 1997.



# Spaceships, aliens and the Home Sec

UFO'S spotted over Shepway could have been looking for Home Secretary, Michael Howard, experts have warned.

Following reports of mystery aircraft sightings in New Romney and Burmarsh in last week's *Herald*, Chris Rolfe, co-ordinator of UFOMEK, has highlighted the closeness of the sightings to the Shepway MP's home near the old Lympne Castle ruins.

And he fears that the position of the sightings is more than just coincidence.

Mr Rolfe cautioned: "It would seem the UFO was totally disinterested in Sophie, the girl who reported it and watched it for quite a long time.

**By Sarah Hall**

"This certainly makes it seem like it had a purpose and has left me wondering if it's purpose had something to do with Mr Howard."

However Mr Rolfe was amazed to learn that Mr Howard's party agent knew all about the UFO.

He said: "I phoned Mr Howard's party agent in Folkestone and asked whether Mr Howard had seen anything strange I was immediately asked if I meant the UFO.

"The story in last

week's *Herald* only said Donkey Street as the sight of the spotting.

"Donkey Street is a very long road and the report did not state which end the UFO was seen at - so it seems very odd that those close to Mr Howard already knew that it was near his house."

And now Mr Rolfe and UFOMEK would like to see some questions answered.

"I would like to know whether anyone spotted any strange men poking about around the area afterwards or whether Mr Howard's security system was activated in any way.

"The whole story is creating a lot of interest all over England and when

you think of the implications it is quite easy to see why.

"I would love to know what the Government think of a strange aircraft being spotted near to the home of one of its senior cabinet ministers."

Sophie Wadleigh, of Shepherds Walk, Hythe, who saw the large object in the sky while driving home in the early hours of Saturday, March 8 said:

"The UFO I saw was a large triangular shaped craft with bright lights running all round it's edge - it was above the field which lays directly opposite the turn off to Donkey Street in Burmarsh.

"When you have seen something like that you have to ask yourself why was it there - and maybe the Home secretary was the reason."

When the *Herald* contacted Mr Howard's office he was unavailable for comment.

through her window, and when she 76381.

Extract from The Folkestone Herald; 20.3.97

## CONCLUSIONS

A:- Whilst we do not pretend to know what it was that was observed, we think we can make some suggestions as to what it wasn't.

- (1): AIRCRAFT:- No normal aircraft looks like this object, or even performs the way that this observed object did.
- (2): HELICOPTER:- A helicopter can hover, however the sheer size of the observed object rules this out, and the noise from a helicopter would have been horrendous given the height of the observed object.
- (3): STEALTH TECHNOLOGY:- There have been suggestions that the object observed was a Stealth bomber. Firstly, there are only 15 of these aircraft in the USAF inventory and they have only become on a fully operational status in April of this year (1997), according to our sources.

Because of the sheer cost of the B-2 Stealth bomber (said to be approximately 22 million per aircraft), would the USAF risk flying the aircraft over European Countries?

So far as we know the B-2 has only appeared twice in Europe, both times during International Airshows, at Paris, France in 1995, and again at the 1996 Farnborough Airshow.

The B-2 bomber cannot hover, and makes a tremendous amount of noise, and the shape of the aircraft in no way resembles a triangle. The object observed had many lights on its base, which is something that the Stealth bomber does not have. If the B-2 had the amount of lights that this object had, it would not be Stealth.

- (4): BALLOON:- It has been suggested that the object observed have been a new generation of balloon. This could be a possibility, but again the size of the object which the main witness describes as being about the size of a field, or two passenger planes end to end, rules this out as a possible explanation, until such time as hard evidence becomes available.
- (5): HALLUCINATION:- It is felt that this could not be a possible explanation for the sightings, as we feel it to be impossible for five different witnesses at three different locations (Donkey St, Burmarsh/Lower Wall Rd, Burmarsh/Aldersate Lane Lympne), to experience the same hallucination. Also information has come to light that other witnesses saw the same or similar triangle object at Lydd, and Aldington.
- (6): TEMPERATURE INVERSION:- Due to not having the appropriate data, we cannot say for sure if this could be the answer. However we feel confident that this is not the explanation.

(7): ASTRONOMICAL:- The old chestnut, ie the Planet Venus. This explanation may sound ludicrous, but the M.O.D. and R.A.F. along with the U.S. Air Force, have often come up with this explanation to try and explain sightings of UFO's. However on this occasion it was cloudy/overcast with no stars visible. So unless Venus has the ability to sprout wings and come down and fly several hundred feet in the air below cloud, we think it is safe to assume that this is not the answer, and the Planet Venus was hidden by the Sun's glare to be visible, and will not be fully visible again around June/July (1997). There were no reports of any bright meteors being seen.

B:- The main witness has been fully co-operative throughout the entire investigation, with both ourselves and other persons. We have offered her the opportunity to withdraw her statement on more than one occasion, and she has declined to do so. Stating that she is only reporting what she saw, and believes to be the truth, on what she has seen.

There are also at least four other witnesses in the immediate vicinity, as well as several witnesses to the same or similar object at the town of Lydd (which is approx nine and a half miles South West of the Burmarsh area), at about 02:50/02:55 hours, and at the village of Aldington (which is approx 4 miles North West of the Burmarsh area), at about 03:30 hours. Taking into consideration that the object seen at Lydd and Aldington, is the same one observed in the Burmarsh/Lymene area (the location of Michael Howards residence is approx one and a half miles North West of location of the main witness sightings), we believe that the sequence of events regarding the objects track (movements) could be as follows:-

- 1):- Lydd, at approx 02:50/02:55 hrs.
- 2):- In field opposite Great Lath Farm, Donkey Street, Burmarsh. At 03:00 hrs by Mr Ji Lane, and Chris Lee. Approx 10 miles from Lydd.
- 3):- In field opposite with Donkey Street, and Lower Wall Road, Burmarsh. At 03:00/03:05 hrs approx, by Sarah Hall. Approx 1 mile from Great Lath Farm.
- 4):- Above residence of the then Home Secretary Michael Howard, in Aldersate Lane, Lymene. At some time between 03:05/03:10 hrs by two Firemen?  
Approx 1 and half miles from Lower Wall Rd/Donkey St.
- 5):- At Aldington, at approx 03:30 hrs.  
Approx 2 and half miles from Howards' residence.

C:- With regard to the sightings at Lydd, and Aldington, we are awaiting full reports on these from an independent source.

The two firemen who are rumoured to have seen the object at Michael Howards' residence have not been easy to track down. However if there is any truth to the report, then the two firemen must have been at Mr. Howards' residence in an official capacity, as it is about quarter a mile from the main road (B2067), that runs through the village of Lymene. You cannot see Mr. Howards' residence from the B2067, as the wood (Hill Hurst/Aldersate), blocks the view, which we feel rules out the idea that the two firemen were off duty and driving along the main road. Therefore we believe that they must have either been approaching Mr. Howards' residence, or had arrived when they saw the object. Until the two firemen come forward we cannot know the full facts. All efforts to track them down have been so far met with failure.

D:- We now come to the object being sighted over the residence of Mr. Michael Howard (the then Home Secretary of the British Government). Taking into account the above regarding the two firemen who had reported that they had seen the object above Mr. Howards' residence, to a freelance reporter, it could be that the Security Personnel assigned to the said residence saw the object coming towards them from the Donkey Street/Lower Wall Road (Burmarsh), area to the South/South-East, and thinking that it was an aircraft of some description, or indeed a helicopter hit the panic button, which could explain why the two firemen were there.

Indeed it would be interesting to know if Mr. Howards was in residence at the time of the incident? Also it would be very interesting to know what the security personnel made of the object when they realised that it could in no way be an aircraft or helicopter, none of which they were familiar with? It seems logical to assume that the local Police were contacted, in fact they would probably have arrived at the said residence in answer to the security alert. But who else would have arrived on the scene? Indeed once it was realised that they were not dealing with a normal every day object, who would they have contacted? Would the M.O.D. have been contacted? It is obvious that a full report would have been submitted to persons at a higher level, but how high? The then Prime Minister John Major?

This brings to question the security issue in this incident. For years the Ministry Of Defence, the Royal Air Force, and indeed the British Government, have always stated that UFOs were not a defence issue (the term most frequently used is: "of no defence significance"), and were certainly of no security risk! Yet here we have an object which is unassessable, flying around British airspace, and also entering what could be termed as restricted airspace, as it passes over the residence of the then Home Secretary. If that cannot be classed as a potential security risk, let alone then it seems that the powers that be, do not even have their own senior Cabinet Ministers interests and personal safety at the forefront when it comes to UNIDENTIFIED air traffic! Is it not time for the whole matter of what the British government know about UFOs, (especially with regard to incidence of this nature), to come clean, and stop pussy footins around, telling the British public that there is nothing to the UFO problem? As this case demonstrates, it is time for a change in the way that the situation regarding UFOs are dealt with, and a better understanding between the Ministry Of Defence, the R.A.F. and the Government and the British people, being developed.

E:- FINAL CONCLUSION

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With regard to the whole incident during the early hours of Saturday, 8 March, 1997, the degree of risk can only be one of UNASSESSABLE. The cause of the incident: UNASSESSABLE.





Roger Gale, M.P.

RECEIVED  
MAY 1997 30 MAY 1997

29.5.97

[Redacted]

Folkestone  
kent [Redacted]

House of Commons  
London, SW1A 0AA

01227 722366 (Private Office - a.m. only)  
01227 720593 (FAX - 24hr)  
0171 219 3000 (House of Commons)  
0171 219 4343 (Members' messages)

Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your letter of 25th May which has been received in our office during Mr Gale's absence.

There is a very strict Parliamentary convention and Members of Parliament do not deal with each other's constituents' enquiries and we would normally send your correspondence on to Michael Howard for attention. However, as you do not seem to want to contact Mr Howard we are returning this to you.

With my best wishes  
Yours sincerely

[Redacted Signature]

Parliamentary Office Secretary

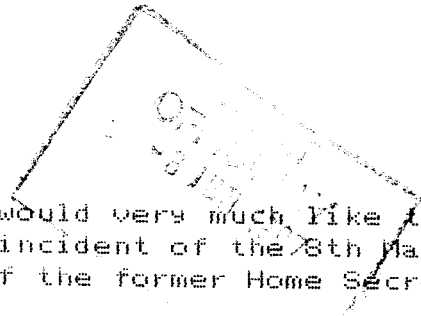
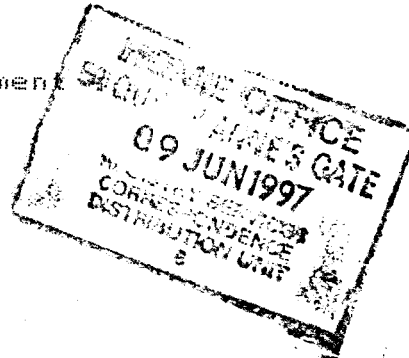
Ho D



Folkestone  
Kent



The Rt Hon Jack Straw MP  
Secretary Of State for The Home Department  
Home Office  
50 Queen Anne's Gate  
London  
SW1H 9AT



Dear Sir,

I would very much like to see a full public enquiry into the recent UFO incident of the 8th March that occurred at/near the residence of the former Home Secretary Michael Howard.

As Michael Howard is my MP, I tried to bring up the issue with Roger Gale MP, who was unable to help (see enclosures). I have turned to your Department as a last resort. I would also like to express my indignance and outrage at the way this incident has been ignored.

I have enclosed a full report and a completed petition which should demonstrate that there is some public concern relating to this issue.

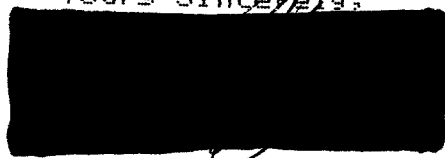
I would be grateful to you, if you would raise this issue as a Parliamentary Question, something to the effect:-

"To ask The Right Hon. Member for Folkestone and Hythe (i) was he in his Sherway Residence during the early hours of 8th March, 1997? (ii) what was the nature of the security incident at his Sherway Residence during the early hours of 8th March, 1997?; and if he will make a statement."

I should also like to point out, that many others including myself do feel that there is a very serious matter of security involving this particular incident. It is also felt that it is quite inconceivable that the Government continue to deny or even acknowledge the existence of UFOs, in spite of all the evidence, such as CIA/NSA/FBI records which have been released over the years in the United States, and of course the MOD records now available for inspection at the Public Records Office. If the Government continue to maintain that there are no serious problems concerning UFOs, then why the records, and Departmental records?

I await your reply with interest.

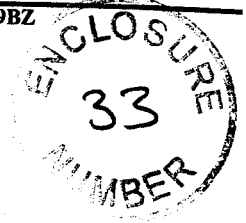
Yours Sincerely,



# KENT

  
**COUNTY CONSTABULARY**

Chief Inspector [redacted] Operations Centre, Police Headquarters, Sutton Road, Maidstone, Kent ME15 9BZ  
Direct Dial: Section 40



[redacted]  
SEC (AS) 2  
Room 8245  
MOD Main Building  
Whitehall  
London  
SW1A 2HB

10 June 1997

Dear [redacted]

I have forwarded the enclosed correspondence to you in case it is of use to your department.

I was contacted in March to verify whether or not we had the incident reported to Kent Police Operations Centre and we did not. [redacted] has now send me the full account which is of no significance to my organisation. I am therefore forwarding it to you.

Yours sincerely

[redacted signature]


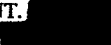
Chief Inspector [redacted]  
Operations Centre

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
SEC (AS) 2  
13 JUN 1997  
FILE




# UFOMIEK

## UFO MONITORS EAST KENT

  
BRAMLING,  
CANTERBURY,  
KENT.  
Tel. 

Reply to:-

  
FOLKESTONE,  
KENT.  
Tel. 

Chief Inspector   
Operations Centre,  
Kent County Constabulary,  
Police Headquarters,  
Sutton Road,  
Maidstone,  
Kent  
NE15 9BZ.


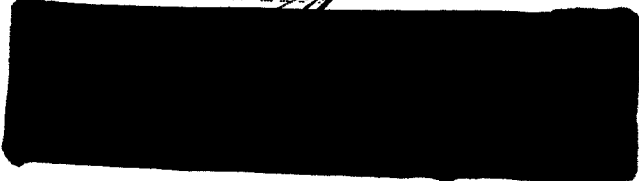
30th May, 1997.

Dear Sir,

I would be most grateful if you would please comment on the enclosed report. Could you also pass this report onto the appropriate senior authorities for their possible interest?

Also, what are the possibilities of our group seeing or even being forwarded copies of past reports to the Kent County Constabulary, from members of the public? I realise there is a question of confidentiality regarding such matters, but we are not interested in the names of the witnesses, only the reports of what they observed.

Thanking you for you time in this matter.

Yours Sincerely   


[REDACTED]  
Folkestone  
Kent  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Air Secretariat (Air Staff) [REDACTED]  
Ministry Of Defence,  
Main Buildings,  
Whitehall,  
London,  
SE1A 2HB.

1st July, 1997.

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you, as I understand that a letter, and a report regarding a UFO sighting in the Burmarsh/Lymene area of Kent, which was sent by myself to the Home Secretary, was passed on to you by his department.

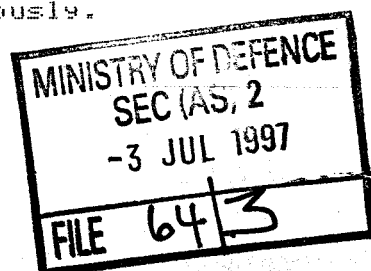
As you may be aware, the said sighting of the "Unidentified craft", was also reportedly seen over the former Home Secretary's (Michael Howard), residence. I will not go into detail as to the alleged witnesses who claimed to have seen it over Mr. Howards' home, (and if you have read the report you will know who they are), but just to say that we are now very close to finding the two fire officers. Incidentally this is not the only fire crew to see something unusual over the Shepway area of Kent. It has come to my notice that a fire crew whilst out on a call at approximately 04:00 hrs, over this past weekend saw a very brightly lit "Unidentified object" over the roof tops of houses.

With regard to the Burmarsh sighting, as stated in the report and letter to the Home Secretary the Rt Hon Jack Straw, MP., in this particular case there is a very serious matter of security. As this involved the "Unidentified craft" not being just near the former Home Secretary's residence, but also possibly over the grounds of his property. I would very much like to know your reaction to this particular incident, or that of your superiors?

As I understand from the Home Office, the report was transferred to your department on the 9th of June, so I wonder what action has been taken by the Ministry Of Defence, regarding this matter, and why your department has not contacted me regarding same? If you would wish me to, I will keep you informed of the investigation as it progresses. I should also point out that the said "Unidentified craft" was also seen at the following places and times:- Lydd 02:10 hrs./Lydd 03:00 hrs./Ashford 03:10 hrs./Smeeth 03:20 hrs./Aldington 03:30 hrs. These sightings were all on the same night, as the Burmarsh/Lymene sightings, and all describe the same object. I also enclose another completed form which should be attached to the report you already have.

I await your reply with interest, however on this occasion can you not please send out your usual standard reply that is normally sent, but a proper serious reply, as I am sure you will agree this is a very serious matter, and demands to be treated seriously.

Yours Sincerely,  
[REDACTED]





ORIGINAL

# UFOMIEK

## UFO MONITORS EAST KENT

### FIELD INVESTIGATION REPORT FORM

Date Of Sighting: 08<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 1997

Time Of SIGHTING: 03:05 Hours

Location Of Sighting: JUNCTION OF DONKEY STREET, WITH LOWER WALL ROAD, BURMARSH, KENT.

National Map Grid Reference Of Observer: APPROX 51°N / 01° 01' E.

National Map Grid Reference Of Object If Known: APPROX ~~51°N~~ 51°N / 01° 01' E

General Description Of Local Terrain Where Object Was Seen: FLAT FIELD WITH CROPS WHERE OBJECT SEEN. HILLS TO THE NORTH, AND FLAT AREAS OF THE ROMNEY MARSH TO THE WEST. THE SEA IS TO THE SOUTH. A SEWER SYSTEM RUNS THROUGH THE FIELD, WITH THE ROYAL MILITARY CANAL RUNNING TO THE NORTH OF THE FIELD UFO WAS SEEN IN WOODS TO THE NORTH AND NORTH WEST OF THE AREA, AND A WILDLIFE ZOO PARK TO THE NORTH WEST.

Are There Any Radio Transmission Masts Near Locality: Yes/No

Are There Any Water Reservoirs Near Locality: Yes/No BUT THERE IS A SEWER SYSTEM RUNNING THROUGH THE FIELD WHERE OBJECT WAS SEEN.

Are There Any Military Installations Near Locality: Yes/No THERE ARE ARMY SMALL ARMS RANGES ABOUT 1/2 MILES TO THE SOUTH EAST, AND ARMY SMALL ARMS RANGES ABOUT 10 MILES TO THE SOUTH WEST.

Are There Any Nuclear Facilities Near Locality: Yes/No DUNGENESS POWER STATION ABOUT 10 1/2 MILES TO THE SOUTH WEST.

Did The Object Leave Any Physical Traces: Yes/No

What Were The Traces Found: N/A-

Did The Object Affect Anything During Its Presence: Yes/No

Name Of Witness: [REDACTED]

Age Of Witness: 25 YRS D.O.B 04/10/71.

Address Of Witness: [REDACTED] HYTHE, KENT.

What Was The Witness Doing Immediately Before The Sighting:

*DRIVING HOME AFTER DROPPING OFF SOME FRIENDS*

What Was The Witness Movements On The Day Of Sighting:

Did Anything Unusual Occur To The Witness Before The Sighting:

*WITNESS SAID SHE FELT THE HAIR ON THE BACK OF HER NECK - STAND-UP WHEN SHE SAW THE OBJECTS LIGHTS IN THE DISTANCE*

Has The Witness Had Any Previous Sightings: ~~Yes~~/No

Has The Witness Ever Had Any Previous Psychic Experiences: ~~Yes~~/No

Was The Witness Receiving Any Medication At The Time Of The Incident: ~~Yes~~/No

Was The Incident Reported To Any Other Organisation (U F O Group/Newspaper Ect )  
*FOLKESTONE HERALD (SOUTH KENT NEWSPAPER)*

If The Incident Was Reported To The Authorities What Feed Back Was There:

If The Incident Was Reported To Another U F O Group What Was Their Conclusions:

*N/A*

What Does The Witness Think The Object Could Have Been: *THOUGHT THAT IT WAS POSSIBLY A STEALTH OF ADVANCED FUTURISTIC AIRCRAFT, BUT THEN FELT THIS WAS NOT POSSIBLE DUE TO OBJECTS BEHAVIOUR, AND WAS A UFO.*

How Do They Come To The Conclusion That They Have Reached:

*BECAUSE OF THE OBSERVED OBJECTS BEHAVIOUR,*

Has The Witness Suffered Any Effects Since The Incident: *No.*

How Did The Witness Come Across During The Time You Spoke To Them Concerning The Incident: *WAS STILL VERY FRIGHTENED AT TIME OF INTERVIEW.*

Has The Witness Ever Read Any Books On UFOs: ~~Yes~~/No

What Is The Witnesses Feeling On UFOs: *SHE FOUND IT FASCINATING SINCE THE SIGHTING.*

Has Any Other Member Of The Witness's Family Ever Seen A UFO: ~~Yes~~/No

Are There Any Other Comments Or Details Regarding This Incident That May Be Of Relevance:

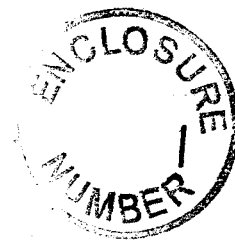
(Please Use A Separate Sheet If Needed)

Signature Of Field Investigator

Date: 14 MAR 1997



From: [REDACTED] Secretariat (Air Staff) [REDACTED]  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax)

**Section 40**

[REDACTED]

Folkestone  
Kent

[REDACTED]

Your reference

Our reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3

Date  
3 July 1997

Dear [REDACTED]

1. Thank you for your recent letter addressed to the Secretary of State for the Home Department concerning an alleged "UFO sighting" near the residence of the former Home Secretary, Michael Howard. Your letter and the supporting papers have been passed to the Ministry of Defence and I have been asked to reply. You also wrote to the Chief Inspector of the Operations Centre, Kent County Constabulary, Maidstone. Chief Inspector [REDACTED] has also forwarded his correspondence to me.

2. The Ministry of Defence examines any reports of "unidentified flying objects" it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity. The integrity of the United Kingdom's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous policing of the UK Air Defence Region by the Royal Air Force which remains vigilant for any potential military threat. Unless there is evidence of such a threat, and to date no "unidentified flying object" sighting has revealed such evidence, no attempt is made to identify the precise nature of each reported incident. We believe that down to earth explanations could be found for these reports, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, if resources were diverted for this purpose. It would, however, be an inappropriate use of defence resources to provide this kind of aerial identification service.

3. The MOD has no expertise or role in respect of "UFO/flying saucer" matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains open-minded. I should emphasize that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

4. MOD Air Defence staff have confirmed that there is no evidence to suggest an unauthorized incursion of the UK Air Defence Region on 8 March. The Home Office has confirmed that no security incident occurred in the home of the former Home Secretary on this date as you allege in your letter.

5. I hope this explains the position.

Yours sincerely,

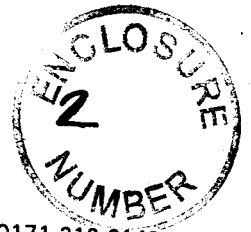




From: [REDACTED] Secretariat (Air Staff) [REDACTED]  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)

0171 218 2140  
0171 218 9000  
**Section 40**



[REDACTED]  
Folkestone  
Kent  
[REDACTED]

Your reference

Our reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3  
Date  
4 July 1997

Dear [REDACTED],

1. Thank you for your letter of 1 July concerning "unidentified flying objects".
2. You should by now have received my letter of 3 July which covers the points you raised in your letter to the Home Secretary.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED] Secretariat(Air Staff) [REDACTED] Room 8245  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax)

**Section 40**

[REDACTED]

Farnborough,  
Hampshire.

[REDACTED]

Your reference

Our reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3

Date  
4 July 1997

Dear [REDACTED]

1. Thank you for your letter of 2 May addressed to the Prime Minister concerning "unidentified flying objects". Your letter was only passed to this office on 26 June for reply and I am sorry for the overall delay. You also wrote in a similar vein to me on 17 June - please take this as a reply to both your letters.

2. As you know from previous correspondence with this office, the Ministry of Defence examines any reports of "unidentified flying objects" it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the UK Air Defence Region might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorized foreign military activity.

3. Unless there is evidence of a potential military threat, and to date no "unidentified flying object" sighting has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported incident. We believe that down to earth explanations could be found for these reports, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, if resources were diverted for this purpose but it would be an inappropriate use of defence resources to provide this kind of aerial identification service.

4. Your letters mention a "UFO" sighting over the home of the former Home Secretary, Michael Howard, near Folkestone. Although the MOD has received reports of an alleged "UFO" sighting near Michael Howard's home on 8 March 1997, MOD Air Defence staff have confirmed that there is no evidence to suggest any unauthorized incursion of the UK Air Defence Region on that date.

5. You have also asked about the MOD's old "UFO" report files. As is the case with other government files, MOD files are subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967. This Act of Parliament states that official files selected for preservation generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action has been taken and are then transferred to the Public Record Office for release into the public domain. It was generally the case that before 1967 all "UFO" files were destroyed after five years, as there was insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their



permanent retention. However since 1967, following an increase in public interest in this subject "UFO" report files are now routinely preserved. A few files from the fifties and sixties did, however, survive and are available for examination by members of the public. They may be viewed at the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU. The references of these files are as follows:

AIR 16/1199	AIR 2/16918
AIR 20/7390	AIR 2/17318
AIR 20/9320	AIR 2/17526
AIR 20/9321	AIR 2/17527
AIR 20/9322	AIR 2/17982
AIR 20/9994	AIR 2/17983
PREM 11/855	

6. You will also wish to know that the Cabinet Office has the responsibility for taking forward the Government's manifesto pledge to introduce a Freedom of Information Act. The timetable currently envisaged involves the publication of a White Paper before this year's Summer Recess. This would be followed by a period of open consultation leading to a draft Bill early next year and further consultation.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

2.5.97

**PRIME MINISTER'S  
CORRESPONDENCE SECTION**

*Writer informed that letter has been  
forwarded to the appropriate  
Government Department  
for a full reply*

Mr Tony Blair PM,  
10 Downing Street,  
London.

Dear Sir,

Firstly I would like to congratulate you in becoming PM and in getting Labour into government.

The main reason for this letter, of which considering the vast amount of work that now lies ahead of you, you probably will find this letter a trivial matter. Nevertheless, do you feel that it is time that this country lifts the lid on the cover up that is being facilitated to hide all material/information concerning UFO's reported in this country and more so the incidents that the MoD have had dealings with. I understand that earlier in the year a large UFO was sighted close to the residence of Mr Michael Howard MP near Folkestone in Kent and that details were *altered* when it was put out in the local papers and did not seem to reach the main tabloids?

We are heading for the millennium, don't you think that it is time this country wakes up to join the modern era approaching us at great speed instead of lying behind cover ups and false denials.

In the mean time I wish you every success. I'm glad that your Labour party has got into number ten.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

Yours Faithfully,

[REDACTED]  
Farnborough,  
Hants,  
[REDACTED]

OFFICIAL ACTION MoD

3

~~DI~~

MoD

PARLIAMENTARY  
BRANCH  
25 JUN 1997  
ROOM 613 MAIN BLDG

17.6.97

[REDACTED]  
Sec (AS) [REDACTED]  
Room 8245,  
MoD,  
Whitehall,  
London.

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you following a phone conversation I had with one of your colleagues on the above date regarding a letter I had sent direct to the new Prime Minister on 2.5.97. I enquired on the matter of his new government stopping the cover up that presently exists on UFO incidents/material etc. As an example I referred to an incident that took place earlier in the year close to the residence of Mr Michael Howard MP near Folkestone in Kent that had many witnesses but whose stories were altered i.e. location of the UFO, to make it appear that it was nowhere near Mr Howard's home when it was reported in the local papers. The main tabloid papers strangely had no mention of it. The reply I obtained by a Miss [REDACTED] advised me that the letter had been forwarded to one of the Principal government departments who would reply to my letter.

As yet I have not received a reply and as your colleague advised me, they too have not received my letter via No. 10.

I would therefore be very grateful if you could advise me on this matter regarding the existing retention of UFO reports etc. by the government/MoD. Would it ever come about that such information would be available to the public as many countries do now have a freedom of information policy whereby people can have access to this information. Many UFO sightings have many witnesses and yet in many cases this information is then hidden. Why is this so? The year 2000 is quickly approaching. Surely it's about time we were allowed to join this new *modern* era. Public opinion on this matter is gaining strength, sooner or later the government and powers that be are going to have to submit and give us the true answers to our questions.

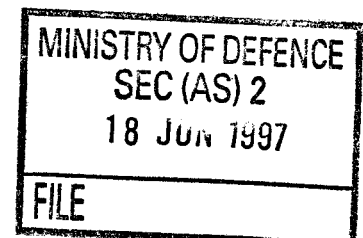
Thank you for your help in this matter.

Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED], Farnborough, Hants, [REDACTED]



Replied

OUR REF  
16/97

[REDACTED]  
Folkestone,  
Kent  
[REDACTED]

Mr Alistair Mc Gowan,  
Ministry Of Defence,  
Main Buildings,  
Whitehall,  
London,  
SW1A 2HB.

8 July, 1997.

Dear Mr Mc Gowan,

I am writing to you regarding a UFO sighting report that was sent to the current Home Secretary (Rt Hon Jack Straw MP). This report regarded the sighting of a reported "Unidentified craft", seen near and possibly above the residence of the former Home Secretary (Rt Hon Michael Howard), on 8 March, 1997.

I have received a reply from [REDACTED] of Secretariat (Air Staff) [REDACTED] of which I was not happy with.

In her letter of 3 July, she states: "MOD Air Defence Staff have confirmed that there is no evidence to suggest an unauthorized incursion of the UK Air Defence Region on 8 March". However at least twelve witnesses observed an "Unidentified craft", at six different locations. All describe seeing the same or similar type object. Can we then conclude in respect of the MOD Air Defence Staff reply, that all these people were seeing something that wasn't there?

The "Unidentified craft", was seen at Lydd at 02:10 and 03:00 hrs/Burmarsh between 03:05/03:07 hrs/Lymene (Mr Howards' property), at 03:08 hrs/Ashford at 03:10 hrs/Smeeth at 03:20 hrs/Aldington at 03:30 hrs. This object was flying around these areas for about one and a half hours, and yet we are expected to believe that Air Defence Staff, did not observe this event on radar?

It should not be forgotten that on the night of March 30/31 1990, when two Belgian F-16 aircraft, were in pursuit of an "Unidentified craft" which came within six minutes of British airspace. And once again the British public were led to believe that the MOD knew nothing of the events of that night. It is a known fact that Belgium is a member of NATO, and that all other NATO member countries are informed of any "uncorrelated" targets, tracked on radar by other Countries, and that they have launched intercept aircraft. So for the MOD not to have known of the events that night, they must have been asleep.

In the letter and document that was sent to the Home Secretary, was also a petition that was signed by concerned members of the public who felt that there was a very serious matter regarding security, with regard to the "Unidentified craft" being seen near the Rt Hon Michael Howards' residence (Burmash one and half mile SE/Aldington two miles NW). Can you please tell me what has happened to this petition?

With regard to the "Unidentified craft" being seen over Rt Hon Howards' residence. This was observed by a Fire Brigade crew, who must have been on the track (road) leading to his property, as you cannot see the above mentioned property from the main road (B2067), because the wood blocks the view. So what was the fire crew doing near the Rt Hon Michael Howards' property at that time of the morning? Again I quote from [REDACTED]'s letter of 3 July, she states:- "The Home Office have confirmed that no security incident occurred at the home of the former Home Secretary on this date". So what were the fire crew doing there? Are we expected to believe that the fire crew were lying? What could they possibly gain from doing so?

I wonder if you have read the report that was passed onto the MOD, by the Home Office? I understand that Chief Inspector [REDACTED], of the Operations Centre, at the Kent County Constabulary Headquarters, has also forwarded a copy of the report/correspondence to the MOD. Should you have read this report, I would be very interested in your comments. Like other concerned residents of Kent, I feel that this incident does pose the possibility of a security risk, if not of a Defence issue.

I await your reply with interest, and thank you for taking the time in looking into this matter.

Yours Sincerely  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] - Sutton Coldfield - West Midlands [REDACTED] - UK

Phone : [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

---

### Fax Cover Sheet

To: [REDACTED] - Secretariat (AS) [REDACTED]

Phone: 0171 218 2140

Fax: Section 40 [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Date: 30/06/97

Pages including this cover: 1

Subject: Rendlesham Forest Incidents

#### Comments:

I am writing an article on the above subject and would like to include the MoD's conclusions concerning the events there over the Christmas period in 1980.

On a separate matter: Have any reports of a large triangular craft seen by former Home Secretary, Michael Howard's house in Kent been forwarded to your office? If not, perhaps you would let me know how to submit such a report.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]





From: [REDACTED], Secretariat (Air Staff) [REDACTED]  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**

[REDACTED]  
Sutton Coldfield  
West Midlands  
[REDACTED]

Your reference

Our reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3  
Date  
11 July 1997

Dear [REDACTED],

1. Thank you for your facsimile message of 30 June in which you asked for MOD comments on the incidents which are alleged to have occurred at RAF Woodbridge/Rendlesham Forest in December 1980.
2. When the Ministry of Defence was informed of the events which are alleged to have occurred at Rendlesham Forest/RAF Woodbridge in December 1980, all available substantiated evidence was looked at in the usual manner by those within the MOD/RAF with responsibility for air defence matters. The judgement was that there was no indication that a breach of the United Kingdom's air defences had occurred on the nights in question.
3. As there was no evidence to substantiate an event of defence concern no further investigation into the matter was necessary. Although a number of allegations have subsequently been made about these reported events, nothing has emerged over the last 16 years which has given us reason to believe that the original assessment made by this Department was incorrect.
4. In your letter you also ask how you might submit a formal report of a "UFO" sighting to the MOD. Anyone who wishes to report an "unexplained" aerial sighting to the MOD can do so by writing to this office with the full details. The report will be assessed in the usual manner to determine whether there is a defence interest.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

6 64/3



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Alasdair McGowan

Telephone **Section 40**

SPECIAL ADVISER TO  
SECRETARY OF STATE

D/SA (16/97)

[Redacted]  
Folkestone  
Kent  
[Redacted]

14th July 1997

Dear [Redacted],

Thank you for your letter of 8th July.

I appreciate that you have already been in correspondence with Secretariat (Air Staff) but, given that this subject does not directly fall within my responsibilities at the MOD, I have passed your letter back to them, as they are the appropriate branch within the Ministry of Defence to deal with this topic.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**  
[Redacted]

A D MCGOWAN



# HOME OFFICE

50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT

Tel: [REDACTED] Fax: [REDACTED]

64/B

David Omand

*Permanent Under Secretary of State*

26 February 1998

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your letter of 30 January concerning the alleged UFO sighting at the former Home Secretary's home in Kent.

As a result of your letter Kent County Constabulary have rechecked their records between the 1-15 March 1997 and have confirmed that no security incident took place at the property in question between these dates or that they have had any correspondence with [REDACTED] about the matter.

Given what the police have had to say, it is doubtful whether much could be gained from a meeting with officials. However should you consider that such a meeting would be helpful then [REDACTED] who is responsible for the arrangements for Mr Howard's security, would be willing to attend and could arrange for a representative from Kent County Constabulary to be present. [REDACTED]

Yours ever,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

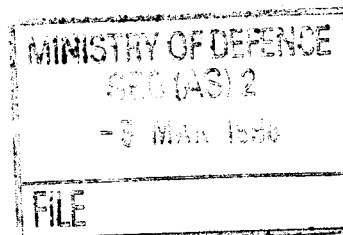
[REDACTED]  
Secretariat (Air Staff) [REDACTED]

Ministry Of Defence

Room 8247

Main Building

London SW1A 2HB



cj\3724



From: [REDACTED], Secretariat (Air Staff) [REDACTED]  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 8247, Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)

[REDACTED]  
0171 218 9000  
Section 40

[REDACTED]  
Home Office  
50 Queen Anne's Gate  
London SW1H 9AT

Your reference

Our reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3  
Date  
25th February 1998

Dear [REDACTED]

1. We spoke recently about my letter to you of 30th January concerning allegations made by a member of the public ([REDACTED]) that a 'UFO' had landed in the vicinity of the former Home Secretary's house in March last year. You said that you hoped to let me have something in reply very soon.
2. We now have two more 'ufologists' asking about this issue:
  - a. [REDACTED] of [REDACTED], Sutton Coldfield claims to be a journalist researching the incident and has asked us to confirm that an incident occurred on the day in question.
  - b. [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] Beaumaris, Anglesey, [REDACTED] has written to say that the Society is jointly holding a conference with the House of Commons Select Committee on Science and Technology on 17th March at which he will be asking two questions. The first concerns the Freedom of Information Act; the second is to request a public inquiry into the alleged incident at Mr Howards house.
3. I would like to respond to all three letter writers as soon as possible, particularly given the date of the Select Committee conference and put the facts, whatever they are, in the public domain. As I said previously, I am more than happy to come along and talk to your colleagues about what might or might not be relevant, or collaborate with lines to take.
4. Could I have something soon please.

Yours ever

[REDACTED]

LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/1

1 Jul 97

ADGE1

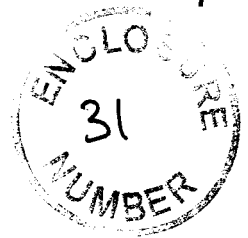
**ALLEGED "UFO" INCIDENT AT THE HOME OF MICHAEL HOWARD**

1. I have been passed a letter which was addressed to the Home Secretary which asks questions about an alleged "security incident" with a possible "UFO" connection at the then Home Secretary's residence on 8 March 1997. Michael Howard was and remains the MP for Folkestone and Hythe and lives in the constituency.
2. Unsurprisingly, the Home Office have confirmed that there was no such security incident involving the Home Secretary on 8 March and in responding along the usual lines I would like to make the following statement:  
  
"... there is no evidence that the UK Air Defence Region was compromised by unauthorized foreign military activity on the date in question."  
  
3. I should be grateful for confirmation that this statement is factual.

[original signed]

Sec(AS)  
MB8245

64/3



LOOSE MINUTE

D/DAO/1/13

2 Jul 97

Sec(AS) [redacted]

ALLEGED 'UFO' INCIDENT AT THE HOME OF MICHAEL HOWARD

Reference: D/Sec(AS)/64/1 dated Jul 97.

1. At Reference, you asked for confirmation that no unauthorised military activity occurred in the UKADR on 8 Mar 97.
2. Having consulted HQ 11/18 Gp, I can confirm that there was no such military activity reported anywhere and, specifically, in the Kent/Folkstone area.
3. Additional inquiries with AIS LATCC, West Drayton, have also confirmed that no unusual or unauthorised air activity, civil or military, was reported or observed in that area on that date. LATCC holds a radar recording of air traffic in the Folkstone area for 8 Mar 97. As a precaution, since the Home Secretary was involved, I have asked for the tape to be preserved until 31 Jul 97 in case further enquiries are launched.

[original signed]

[redacted]

Wg Cdr  
ADGE 1

[redacted]

The Home Office have  
 confirmed that there  
 was no security alert  
 at Mr Howard's home  
 on 8 March at the  
 time in question.

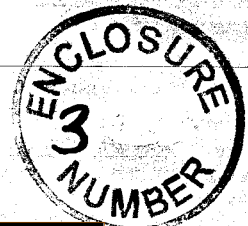
[redacted]

16/6.





From: [REDACTED], Secretariat (Air Staff) [REDACTED]  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
 Room 8247, Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial)  
 (Switchboard)  
 (Fax)

Section 40  
 0171 218 9000  
 Section 40

[REDACTED]

Folkestone  
 Kent

[REDACTED]

Your reference

Our reference  
 D/Sec(AS)/64/3  
 Date  
 29th July 1997

*Dear* [REDACTED],

As you know, the Secretary of State for Defence's Special Adviser, Alasdair McGowan, has forwarded your letter of 8th July to Secretariat (Air Staff).

I am sorry you were not happy with [REDACTED]'s response to your letter to the Home Secretary. In view of the comments you have made to Mr McGowan I have reviewed the correspondence and the way your letter was handled. As you know, the Ministry of Defence has only a limited interest in 'UFO'-related issues and, within the terms of this remit, I am satisfied that you were provided with the facts of the case. There really is nothing further to say.

I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply.

*Yours sincerely*

[REDACTED]

# UFOMEK

UFO MONITORS EAST KENT

BRAMLING,  
CANTERBURY,  
KENT.  
Tel. [REDACTED]

REPLY TO:-

[REDACTED]  
FOLKESTONE,  
KENT.  
Tel. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Secretariat (Air Staff) [REDACTED]  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE,  
Main Building,  
Whitehall,  
London,  
SW1A 2HB.

14 January, 1998.

REF:- D/sec(AS)/64/3 BURMARSH SIGHTING/Rt Hon MICHAEL HOWARD MP.

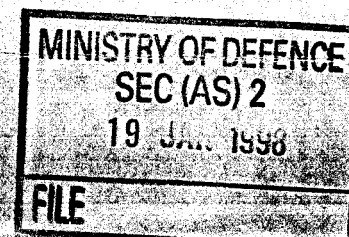
Dear [REDACTED],

You may remember that in July, last year (1997), I was in contact with your department, regarding the sighting of a UFO in the vicinity of the Rt Hon Michael Howard MP residence during the early hours of 8 March, 1997. Your department received (I was led to believe), two copies of the report, one from the Home Office, and one from Chief Inspector [REDACTED] of Kent County Constabulary.

I am now writing to you regarding this sighting again, in the hope that your department has re-considered their position with regard to this sighting, as I think I stated to your department last year, our investigators will not give up on this matter.

We know have correspondence, from Kent County Constabulary which confirms that there was a security incident at the residence of Rt Hon Michael Howard MP, around the date of the UFO sighting. Not only that we were contacted by a member of the security contingent who was on duty on the night in question, who has stated that the unidentified object was directly over the residence of Mr. Howard.

East Kent Euro MP Mark Watts, brought the matter before the European Parliament, on 23 May, 1997, and I have been in contact with Mr Watts' office, and he has promised to look further into the matter.



MOD 1

[REDACTED]

FOLKESTONE  
Kent

HOME OFFICE  
19 JAN 1998  
TREAT OFFICE

The Rt Hon Jack Straw MP,  
Secretary Of State for The Home Department  
Home Office,  
50 Queen Anne's Gate,  
LONDON,  
SW1H 9AT.

0603

15 January, 1998.

Dear Sir,

On the 5 June, last year, I sent you a copy of a report regarding the sighting of a UFO in the Burmarsh/Lymene area of Kent, and at the location of the previous Home Secretary the Rt Hon Michael Howard MP. This incident occurred during the early hours of 8 March, 1997.

The reason I know write to you is to ask whether your staff, or yourself, can please confirm to me that the report was passed by your department to Air Staff [REDACTED] at the Ministry Of Defence, was on the date of 9 June, 1997?

If you or your department could confirm this for me, I would be most appreciative.

Thanking you for your time in this matter.

Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

PARLIAMENTARY  
BRANCH  
28 JAN 1998  
ROOM 6134 MAIN BLDG

FOLKESTONE  
Kent

HOME OFFICE  
11 FEB 1998  
10.10.11

0938

The Rt Hon Jack Straw MP.  
Secretary of State for The Home Department  
Home Office,  
50 Queen Anne's Gate,  
LONDON,  
SW1H 9AT.

1 February 1998

Dear Sir,

On the 5 June, last year, I sent you a copy of a report regarding the sighting of a UFO in the Burmarsh/Lymene area of Kent, and at the location of the previous Home Secretary the Rt Hon Michael Howard MP. This incident occurred during the early hours of 8 March, 1997.

The reason I know write to you is to ask whether your staff, or yourself, can please confirm to me that the report was passed by your department to Air Staff [redacted] at the Ministry Of Defence, was on the date of 9 June, 1997?

If you or your department could confirm this for me, I would be most appreciative.

Thanking you for your time in this matter.

Yours Sincerely,

[redacted signature]



# UFOMEK

## UFO MONITORS EAST KENT

FOLKESTONE, KENT

Tel. [REDACTED] Pager Number [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a1,  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE,  
Main Building,  
Whitehall,  
London,  
SW1A 2HB.

2 February, 1998.

REF:- D/sec(AS)/64/3 BURMARSH SIGHTING/Rt Hon MICHAEL HOWARD MP.

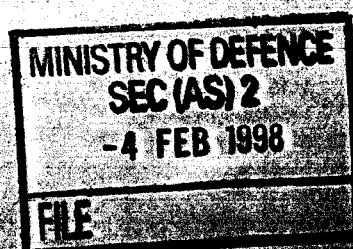
Dear [REDACTED]

You may remember that in July, last year (1997), I was in contact with your department, regarding the sighting of a UFO in the vicinity of the Rt Hon Michael Howard MP residence during the early hours of 8 March, 1997. Your department received (I was led to believe), two copies of the report, one from the Home Office, and one from Chief Inspector [REDACTED] of Kent County Constabulary.

I am now writing to you regarding this sighting again, in the hope that your department has re-considered their position with regard to this sighting, as I think I stated to your department last year, our investigators will not give up on this matter.

We know have correspondence, from Kent County Constabulary which confirms that there was a security incident at the residence of Rt Hon Michael Howard MP, around the date of the UFO sighting. Not only that we were contacted by a member of the security contingent who was on duty on the night in question, who has stated that the unidentified object was directly over the residence of Mr. Howard.

East Kent Euro MP Mark Watts, brought the matter before the European Parliament, on 23 May, 1997, and I have been in contact with Mr Watts' office, and he has promised to look further into the matter.



In your letter of 3 July, 1997, you state that to date no UFO sighting has revealed evidence of being a threat to National Security, however it is quite obvious, even to a blind man, that this particular incident carries very serious security implications. How can an unidentified aerial craft fly so close, or even over the residence of a Senior Cabinet Minister, and no one raise so much as an eyebrow? As far as UFOMEK is concerned the object seen is unidentified, which in our books DOES NOT MEAN that it is an Alien space craft. With it therefore being unidentified, then surely because of its near presence to such an important Government person who held the position of Home Secretary, this must surely be one of the most serious breaches of security that one could ever imagine, as the object in question was unidentified, and therefore by not knowing what it was, should surely raise questions as to its true identity. (Unless of course someone in Government already knows?). The object could just as easily have been a helicopter carrying a terrorist.

Because of the response that we have received from the Kent County Constabulary, it is quite obvious that there was a security incident, yet in your letter of 3 July, 1997, you state that MOD Air Defence Staff confirmed that there was no unauthorized incursion of the UK Air Defence Region on 8 March. Does that mean the incursion was of an authorized nature, and therefore you know what the UFO was? You also state in the same letter that the Home Office confirmed that no security incident occurred in the home of the former Home Secretary. This is at odds with what Kent County Constabulary has stated. How do you account for this?

Also in July of last year, a Mr [REDACTED] from Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands contacted your department by fax, to ask what it knew of the UFO incident near/over the residence of the former Home Secretary? Your department told him that it knew nothing of this incident. Yet it had already received a full report that had been sent to the current Home Secretary the Rt Hon Jack Straw MP, and details (and possibly another copy of the report), from Chief Insp Mike Abbott, of Kent County Constabulary. How can this be explained? You yourself admitted to me, that both the Home Office and Kent County Constabulary had contacted your department regarding this incident, yet it was felt that it was necessary to lie to an inquirer into this matter.

We did not say this - we did not infer drawer to Quebair

I await your reply with interest.

Yours Sincerely

[REDACTED]



# UFOMIEK

## UFO MONITORS EAST KENT

[REDACTED] FOLKESTONE, KENT [REDACTED]  
Tel. [REDACTED] Pager Number [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
Room 8247,  
Main Buildings,  
Whitehall,  
London,  
SW1A 2HB.

10 FEB 1999

Dear [REDACTED]

Recently, your department sent one of our members, Mr [REDACTED], of Ramsgate, Kent, a listing of all UFO sightings reported to the Ministry Of Defence during 1997.

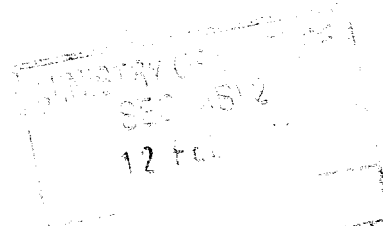
One entry on that listing was for 8 March, 1997, at Hythe, Kent. Would it be possible for you to forward to me a copy of that report, of details of the time of the reported incident on that date, and the exact location, with brief description of what was observed?

I would be most grateful for your co-operation regarding this particular incident.

Would it also be possible for us to obtain copies of incidents that are reported to the police, and in turn passed onto your department? I know from Section 40 [REDACTED], of Quest Publications that this was done in the past.

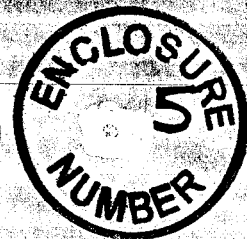
Thanking you for your time and attention regarding this matter.

Yours Sincerely,  
[REDACTED]





From: [REDACTED] Secretariat (Air Staff) [REDACTED]  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax)

Section 40

[REDACTED]  
Folkestone  
Kent  
[REDACTED]

Your reference

Our reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3

Date  
3 March 1998

Dear [REDACTED]

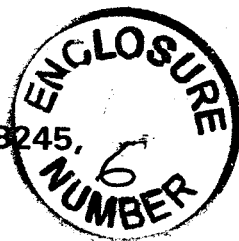
1. Thank you for your letter of 14 January which you sent again on 2 February. Your letter of 15 January addressed to the Home Secretary, which you repeated on 1 February, has been passed to MOD for reply.
2. The extent of the MOD's interest in the alleged events of 8 March last year have been fully explained to you in previous correspondence and, as we have already stated, the Home Office have confirmed that no security incident occurred at the former Home Secretary's home in Kent.
3. As my letter of 3 July made clear, the copy of the report you submitted to the Home Secretary with your undated letter in June last year was passed to the Ministry of Defence.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED], Secretariat(Air Staff) [REDACTED] Room 8245,  
**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**

[REDACTED]  
Folkestone,  
Kent.  
[REDACTED]

Your reference  
Our reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3  
Date  
24 August 1998

Dear [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] has asked me to reply to your letter of 17 August.

You say that you believe the enclosure forwarded with your letter is a fake and ask for advice on how to deal with it. As the document appears to have been unsolicited, I can only suggest that you treat it as you would any other unsolicited item of correspondence.

You also ask about how to respond to telephone calls. Most telephone companies offer an advisory service on how to deal with unwanted callers and you may therefore find it helpful to talk with the organisation providing your own facility.

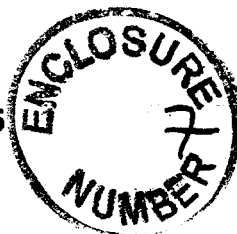
Finally, if you or anyone you know feels threatened in any way by unsolicited mail or telephone calls you may also find it helpful to talk about your concerns with your local police force.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED], Secretariat(Air Staff) [REDACTED] Room 8245  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
Main Building, Whitehall, London, SW1A 2HB



Telephone (Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)

0171 218 2140  
0171 218 9000

Section 40

[REDACTED]  
Folkestone,  
Kent.  
[REDACTED]

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3

Date  
22 February 1999

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your letter of 10 February addressed to [REDACTED]. I have been asked to reply.

Having seen a list of reported 'UFO' sightings for 1997, you asked for a copy of a 'UFO' report from Hythe, Kent dated 8 March 1997. The inclusion of this date in the MOD list of alleged sightings during 1997 reflected the fact that a member of the public drew our attention to a report in a Kent newspaper about an alleged sighting in the Hythe area on that date. The MOD did not receive any reported sightings direct about what was alleged to have occurred although we did receive correspondence seeking more information. As you know, the MOD does not investigate alleged sightings unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source. On this occasion there was no substantive evidence and no further action was taken.

You have also asked for copies of any reports forwarded to the MOD by the civil police. Any reports of this nature would be provided in confidence and would not be available for public scrutiny for 30 years. This is due to the Public Records Act of 1958 and 1967. This Act of Parliament states that official files generally remain closed from public viewing for 30 years after the last action has been taken. It was generally the case that before 1967 all 'UFO' files were destroyed after five years, as there was insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their permanent retention. However since 1967, following an increase in public interest in this subject 'UFO' report files are now routinely preserved. Any files from the 1950s and early 1960s which did survive are already available for examination by members of the public at the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU. Files from 1967 onwards will be routinely released to the Public Record Office at the 30 year point.

Yours sincerely,

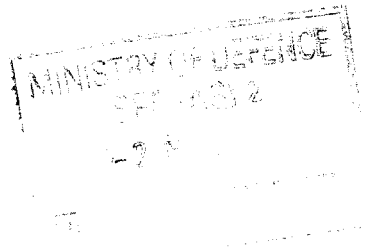
[REDACTED]

# UFOMEK

## UFO MONITORS EAST KENT

Tel. [REDACTED] FOLKESTONE, KENT  
Pager Number [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Secretariat (Air Staff) [REDACTED]  
Room 8245,  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE,  
Main Buildings,  
Whitehall,  
LONDON  
SW1A 2HB.



26<sup>th</sup> February, 1999.

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter of 22 February, regarding my enquiry on the UFO sightings of 8 March, 1997.

Therefore I am writing to you under the terms of the Code of Practice on Access to Government information.

In your letter, you state that the only information that your department has with regard to a sighting on that date is from a member of the public, who drew Air Staff 2, attention to a report in a Kent newspaper. I would very much like to know what newspaper that was, and the date of the article, or the date when this member of the public contacted you department?

How you can say that your department has no other information, with regard to other sightings on the 8 March, 1997, seems impossible to believe, especially when [REDACTED] wrote to myself on the 3 July, 1997, to acknowledge receipt of two reports from the Home Office, and Chief Inspector [REDACTED] of Kent County Constabulary.

The reports we sent to the Home Office, and Kent Police, included a completed UFOMEK report form, signed by the witness, and a complete witness statement on UFOMEK headed paper, also signed and dated by the witness. I also believe that I sent another copy of the report to Section 40 [REDACTED], along with a copy of a Field Investigation Report Form. Therefore if you do not have these letters of correspondence, and supporting documents/papers, then which department has them?

I know from the Home Office that the report I sent them on 5 June, 1997, was passed onto your department on the 9 June, 1997. How you can claim that you only have details of one sighting for the date of 8 March, 1997, from a newspaper article, is absolutely unbelievable!

When the press contacted your department in January, 1998, they were told that they knew nothing about this incident. And when another Journalist contacted Air Staff 2, back in mid-July, 1997, he was sent a fax telling him the same thing. Can you please explain to me why your department still insist on denying all knowledge of the other incidents on the 8 March, 1997, when I they have received details of these as acknowledged by [REDACTED] in her letter of 3 July, 1997, to me (copy enclosed).

Thanking you for your time and attention regarding this matter, and I await your reply with interest.

Yours Sincerely,  
[REDACTED]





From: [REDACTED] Secretariat(Air Staff)2a, Room 8245  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
Main Building, Whitehall, London, SW1A 2HB

Telephone (Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)

0171 218 2140  
0171 218 9000

Section 40



[REDACTED]  
Folkestone,  
Kent.  
[REDACTED]

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/Sec(AS)/64/3

Date  
29 March 1999

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter of 26 February regarding an alleged incident near the former Home Secretary's house on 8 March 1997.

In previous correspondence, it was stated that Sec(AS)2 have no additional information regarding this sighting. You then pointed out that [REDACTED] had formerly referred to reports forwarded to this office from the Home Office and the Police. I assumed you were aware of these reports as they were originally written by you and addressed to the Home Office and Police. They were then forwarded to Sec(AS) for reply. I can confirm that Sec(AS)2 holds all the papers you sent directly to us regarding the incident, including the UFOMEK report form and UFOMEK witness statement.

I have enclosed newspaper cuttings regarding the alleged incident over the former Home Secretary's house on 8 March 1997.

Yours sincerely,  
[REDACTED]

RECEIVED

17 AUG 1998



**ROYAL AIR FORCE**

1<sup>st</sup> August 1997

[REDACTED]

As a scheduled first hand warning, you are no longer permitted to carry on investigations into the supposed triangular-shaped object that was seen over Burmarsh, Kent.

The report of this unidentified craft by [REDACTED] on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 1997 (which was received by researchers at UFOMEK) was made at haste. She had actually seen a Rapid Response military aircraft, but as to new developments, I am not permitted to release details on its structure. The "disc like" shape Sarah saw attached to the rear of the aircraft was a distance radar, but yet again due to new developments I can only be vague about its description and function.

May I state, therefore, this is not Official Denial. Your co-operation into this matter is vital for the security of military intelligence. You should now, therefore, proceed to leave this mistake for [REDACTED] to realise and forget. Other reports have come through from Dymchurch of a similar supposed UFO. These reports were acknowledged by us and the relevant people were told the situation.

From our obvious co-operation, we would appreciate yours. This matter, as we both know is also causing "emotional stress" for certain individuals, and should only strengthen the need to pass this case by as solved.

**Once again this is a Conditional Warning.**

Yours Sincerely,

Section 40  
[REDACTED]

Wing Commander  
Field Force Commander

# UFOMIEK

UFO MONITORS EAST KENT

[REDACTED] FOLKESTONE, KENT  
Tel. [REDACTED] Pager Number [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Secretariat (Air Staff)  
Ministry Of Defence,  
Room 8247,  
Main Building,  
Whitehall,  
London  
SW1A 2HB.

17 August, 1998.

Dear [REDACTED],

I am writing to you with regard to the enclosed letter that I received this morning. As you can see it is from someone claiming to be an RAF Wing Commander. It is obvious that the letter is a fake, which I feel makes the matter more serious, as it shows that there is someone posing as a member of Her Majesty's Forces, of which I understand can be considered an offence.

The reason I am sending this letter to you, is to make you aware that indeed there could well be someone posing as a member of the Royal Air Force. Should I discover who this is, what action do you suggest I take, if this person should send similar letters or makes telephone calls to either [REDACTED], or myself? Do you think it appropriate for me to report the matter to the local police, or report to you, should the identity of the person be discovered? I do know that through my dealings with the U.S. Airforce in the past, they take a very serious and dim view of persons impersonating personnel from their branch of the armed services.

Should this letter be from a genuine member of the RAF, imparting official information, then surely that is an offence within the constraints of the Official Secrets Act.

I await your reply with interest.

Yours Sincerely,  
[REDACTED]

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
SEC (AS) 2  
19 AUG 1998

FILE

D/Sec(AS) 64/2 Pt E

1997 (Jan-July)

UFO-Sighting Reports.

✓ checked  
Nothing

---

D/Sec(AS) 64/3 Pt I

1997 (March-June)

UFO - Public Correspondence

✓ Record from  
Hayes  
7/4/04.

---

D/Sec(AS) 64/3 Pt L

1997 (Dec) - 1998 (March)

UFO - Public Correspondence

---

D/Sec(AS) 64/4 Pt E

1997-1998

UFOs - Parliamentary  
Questions & Enquiries

✓ Already have in cupboard.

---

Newspaper article - file

D/Sec(AS) 64/5 Pt A

Enc 58. (in cupboard)



From: Section 40

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat) 3  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue,  
LONDON WC2N 5BP

Telephone: (Direct dial) Section 40  
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000  
(Fax) Section 40

CHOTs address: DAS-Sec3

**FAX MESSAGE**

**TO: Hayes Archive**

**SUBJECT: Request for files.**

**DATE: 29 April 2004**

**NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER: 1**

Please could you send me the following file which is required to answer an enquiry from a member of the public.

D/Sec(AS)64/3 Part J - UFO Public Correspondence

My UIN number is F6208A.

Thank you for your assistance. If you have any questions, please give me a call.

Section 40

MODE = TRANSMISSION START=29-APR 09:44 END=29-APR 09:45

STN NO.	COM	ABBR NO.	STATION NAME/TEL.NO.	PAGES	DURATION
001	OK		Section 40	001	00:00'18"

-DIRECTORATE AIR STAFF -

\*\*\*\*\* Section 40 - \*\*\*\*\* Section 40 \*\*\*\*\*





From: Section 40

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat) 3  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue,  
LONDON WC2N 5BP

Telephone: (Direct dial) Section 40  
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000  
(Fax) Section 40

CHOts address: DAS-Sec3  
E-Mail: das-sec3@defence.mod.uk

**FAX MESSAGE**

**TO: Hayes Archive**

**SUBJECT: Recall of files**

**DATE: 7 April 2004**

**NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER: 1**

Please could you return the following files to this office in order for me to answer a request for information from a member of the public. My UIN is F6208A.

- D/Sec(AS)64/2 Part E - UFO Sighting Reports ✓ Checked - Nothing found
- ✓ D/Sec(AS)64/3 Part I - UFO Public Correspondence - Sent to Hayes 30-10-2003.
- D/Sec(AS)64/3 Part L - UFO Public Correspondence - Sent to Hayes 30-10-2003

Please give me a call on the above number if there are any problems.

Section 40

MODE = TRANSMISSION START=07-APR 12:33 END=07-APR 12:33

STN NO.	COM	ABBR NO.	STATION NAME/TEL.NO.	PAGES	DURATION
001	OK		Section 40	001	00:00'19"

-DIRECTORATE AIR STAFF -

\*\*\*\*\* Section 40 - \*\*\*\*\* Section 40 \*\*\*\*\*



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone

(Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)  
(GTN)

020 7218 2140  
020 7218 9000  
**Section 40**

**Section 40**

Bursledon  
Nr Southampton  
Hampshire

**Section 40**

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3

Date  
6 April 2004

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letter dated 19<sup>th</sup> February concerning an 'unidentified flying object' incident in Burmarsh, Kent in 1997. I apologise for the delay in sending a substantive reply.

We are aware that an article appeared in the Daily Mail on 19 January 1998 which alleged that, on the 8 March 1997, a 'UFO' had been seen within the vicinity of the Kent home of the former Home Secretary, The Rt Hon Michael Howard QC MP. MOD Air Defence staff confirmed, at the time, that there was no evidence to suggest an unauthorised incursion of the UK Air Policing Area on this date. Also, the Home Office confirmed that no security incident had occurred.

With regard to your question as to how much information the MOD holds on these events, we hold four general files which cover this period which are currently stored in archives. These contain 'UFO' sighting reports, correspondence from the public, and parliamentary questions and enquiries. The files are not exclusively about this incident, but are all the correspondence the MOD received in order of date of receipt, between January and August 1997. I have recalled these files from archives and when received, I will examine them for any relevant information and write to you again.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**

IFON UK ,  
UFO NETWORK ,  
DIRECTOR / AREA REGIONAL OFFICER ,

Section 40

BURSLEDON ,  
NR , SOUTHAMPTON ,

Section 40

HAMPSHIRE .

19<sup>TH</sup> FEB. 2004

DEAR SIR , MADAM ,

I VERY MUCH HOPE YOU DO NOT MIND ME WRITING TO YOU ABOUT THE FOLLOWING ABOUT THE BURMARSH INCIDENT BACK IN 1997 WHEN A UFO WAS SEEN DIRECTLY OVER TORY LEADER MICHAEL HOWARD'S HOUSE AT BURMARSH IN KENT IN THAT YEAR , I VERY MUCH THINK WE HAVE A BIG COVER-UP STILL GOING ON TODAY WITH THIS INCIDENT ONE THING IS FOR SURE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AT THAT TIME CLAMPED DOWN VERY HARD ON THIS WHOLE INCIDENT AND WITH SOME SUCCESS THEY WERE DETERMINED THAT THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER WOULD NOT COME OUT .

SO CAN I ASK THE MOD HOW MUCH INFORMATION YOU HAD OF THIS UFO INCIDENT ALL I SAY IS LETS HAVE THE REAL TRUTH NO MORE LIES / COVER-UPS ABOUT THIS AT ALL .

THE BURMARSH INCIDENT AS ITS COME TO BE KNOW  
P. T. O.

IS POTENTIALLY BIGGER THAN THE RENDLESHAM  
FOREST INCIDENT WHEN BACK IN 1980 UFO'S WERE  
SEEN IN THE FORESTS AROUND THE USAF BASES OF  
WOODBIDGE AND BENTWATERS .

I VERY MUCH HOPE YOU CAN GET BACK TO ME  
ABOUT THIS INCIDENT VERY SOON IF YOU CAN

David

Section 40

PS

MANY THANKS IN TAKING THE TIME  
INTO LOOKING AT THIS ISSUE .



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone

(Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)  
(GTN)

020 7218 2140  
020 7218 9000

**Section 40**

**Section 40**

Shipston-on-Stour  
Warwickshire

**Section 40**

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3  
Date  
7 June 2004

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letter of 9 May 2004 concerning newspaper reports of a sighting of a 'Unidentified Flying Object' on 6 April near Stratford.

First, it may be helpful if I explain that the Ministry of Defence examines any reports of 'UFOs' it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external source, and to date no 'UFO' report has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. We believe it is possible that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them, but it is not the function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. We could not justify expenditure of public funds on investigations which go beyond our specific defence remit.

With regard to your particular observation, I can confirm that we received no other reports of 'UFO' sightings for 6 April from anywhere in the UK. We are satisfied that there is no corroborating evidence to suggest that the United Kingdom's airspace was breached by unauthorised aircraft.

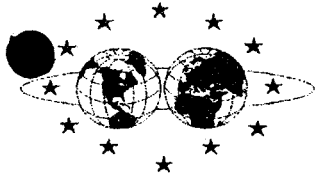
Finally, you asked for the address of RAF Cosford and RAF Gayton, presumably so that you can check if they have received any reports of these events. You may wish to be aware that this office is the focal point within the MOD for correspondence concerning UFO matters and any UFO reports received by RAF stations are passed to us. If, however, you still wish to write to RAF Cosford the full postal address is; RAF Cosford, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV7 3EX. RAF Gayton closed on 31 October 1974.

I hope this is helpful.

Your sincerely,

**Section 40**





# CONTACT INTERNATIONAL UFO RESEARCH

PO Box 23  
Wheatley  
OXFORD  
OX33 1FL

☎ +44 (0)1869 320989

Section 40

Shipston-On-Stour  
Warwickshire

Section 40

9/5/04

DEAR SIR OR MADAM,

I AM THE LOCAL INVESTIGATOR FOR CONTACT INTERNATIONAL (ADDRESS DETAILS TOP LEFT CORNER) AND PHENOMENON RESEARCH ASSOCIATION, (IN DERBY.)

THE REASON FOR MY LETTER IS, COULD YOU PLEASE GIVE ME THE FULL ADDRESS FOR R.A.F. COSFORD, NEAR WOLVERHAMPTON AND R.A.F. GAYDON WARWICKSHIRE, PLUS ANY OTHER R.A.F. STATIONS IN AND AROUND THE STRATFORD - UPON - AVON AREA. AS I AM LOOKING INTO A REPORT OF U.F.O. SIGHTINGS ON THE 6/4/04. DETAILS FROM LOCAL NEWSPAPER ENCLOSED. I AM WAITING TO HEAR FROM THE WITNESSES, BEFORE I CAN START TO PUT TOGETHER A REPORT. PLEASE FIND ENCLOSED A.S.A.E.

YOURS SINCERELY

Section 40

*Jill from Alcester, Warcs.* "It was the 5th August 1997, it was about 10.45pm, we were in a car and I was driving, travelling from Stratford. Then we saw this triangle, it made no noise and had white lights on the corners and a big orange beam in the middle, we saw it for about ten minutes. We travelled about three and a half miles towards it and we actually drove underneath it, as we drove underneath it, it came down towards us and then it was gone in a flash. I believe that someone else saw it a few miles away, on that same evening and at the same time that we saw it.

The Standard, Friday, August 22, 1997

S

# Women shocked by UFO sighting

**A** GIANT Unidentified Flying Object hovered in the South Warwickshire sky - just feet away from two terrified women.

Carole Corden and Jill Day actually passed under the brightly-lit UFO which was about the size of two double decker buses.

The friends spotted the object as they travelled back to Redditch from a show rehearsal in Stratford earlier this month.

Shortly after 10.30pm, as they approached The Stag at Redhill, Carole, a passenger in Jill's Rover, saw something in the sky to the north west.

"It was an absolutely massive bright light - bigger than the moon," she told the Standard.

Their view was blocked by hedgerows and it wasn't until they were about to get off the Alcester by-pass and head

Tim Hunt

towards Studley along Ryknild Street that they both got a full view of the UFO.

"As we approached the last island the light started coming down to tree level," added Carole.

"We slowed right down. We just knew that what we were seeing was something we hadn't seen before.

"It was triangular with three neon lights on each point with a bright, but not dazzling, orange light in the middle, surrounded by black.

"I could see girders on the sides, but it didn't seem to have any depth.

"It all sounds very far-fetched but that's what we saw. At one stage I honestly thought it was going to suck me up."

Jill accelerated away from the scene, with Carole looking back to see the object rising back up into the sky.

It wasn't until the next day that the shock hit them. Things got worse when Carole discovered that the mother of another friend had seen something similar near Birmingham that same night (Tuesday, August 5).

Gloria Dixon of the British UFO Research Association (BUFORA) described their experience as "the classic UFO sighting", but poured cold water on any suggestion of it being extra-terrestrial.

"It's almost certain to be military. There is a prototype UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) which is thought to be flying out of several British Aerospace bases.

"They tend to be silent and low-flying and they are also very frightening."

Did you see anything strange in the sky that night? Send a report of any UFO sightings to the Standard.

## 'UFO' spotted over Shipston

INVESTIGATORS from the British UFO Research Association are scrutinising the skies over Shipston-on-Stour following a sighting earlier this year.

Reports of a UFO sighting in Shipston have reached investigator John Herron, and he is keen to contact other people who may have spotted it.

The UFO was spotted at 7.20pm on Tuesday, March 5 but exact details remain scant.

A police spokesman said no UFO sightings were reported during March.

5/31/96

# Can you shed light on UFO?

TWO students are trying to find a rational explanation behind an unidentified flying object seen hovering outside Stratford.

The friends - 20-year-old Victoria Ricketts from Bidford and 19-year-old Lucy Holbrooke from Broom - were driving back from the cinema in Solihull just before midnight last Tuesday when the strange goings-on began.

Victoria, a student at the University of Lancashire, said they noticed a distant pink light in the sky and thought it was a bright star or planet.

But a few minutes later as the pair drove back to Bidford

through Henley and towards Great Alne, the light that had seemed to be a distant star was suddenly much lower.

The friends decided it was just a plane, with a red light at the back of it and white lights at the front.

They continued driving home through Great Alne but as they turned a corner approaching the village they were suddenly confronted by a sight they still can not comprehend or explain.

According to the students, a binocular-shaped object with two bright headlights at the front and a flashing light at the back was hovering silently at street lamp height only 200 metres in front of them.

"I have never been so petrified in my entire life - never," Victoria told The Standard.

"I am not one of those people who believes in all the alien and UFO madness but how can something go from being the height of a star to the height of a plane to being just off the ground so quickly? It does not make sense."

The object disappeared as soon as a car came rushing up behind the two friends but they believe somebody else must have seen it or can offer a rational explanation.

Did you see the UFO or know what it was? If so, write to the editor at the usual address on page two.

# Was UFO just Venus?

A MYSTERIOUS pink light spotted in night skies near Stratford - sparking rumours of a UFO sighting - could have been the planet Venus, according to astronomy experts.

Steve Smith, chairman of the Stratford Astronomical Society, said Venus was very bright at the moment and although it should appear white in colour, a hazy skyline could make it seem orange or even pink.

The Observer contacted Mr Smith after two students spotted a bright pink star-like light in the skies over Great Alne, between Stratford and Alcester, on April 6.

The friends - 20-year-old Victoria Ricketts from Bidford and 19-year-old Lucy Holbrooke from Broom - were driving towards Great Alne just before midnight when they first noticed the strange light.

But their experience

became more bizarre when the light suddenly dropped much lower in the sky, leading them believe it was a plane, and just minutes later they claim it hovered silently at street-lamp level just metres away from them.

Stratford Quaker Philip Morris also contacted The Observer to report a strange pink-light on the same night.

He was driving back from Adderbury, near Banbury, with two fellow Quakers when at around 9.45pm the group noticed the sky glowing a strange colour.

"We passed Upton House and as we were approaching the Banbury Road towards Stratford most of the low sky was covered in black cloud but below that there was this extraordinary pink glow," he said.

"We thought it might have been a fire or the lights from Stratford but who knows."

**The Observer, Thursday April 22, 2004**

Thursday April 29, 2004

## I saw the UFO too

READING your edition of April 16 (Can you shed light on UFO?) reminded me of something that happened around that date, at around 11pm.

I went into the kitchen to make a drink and went to pull down the window blind and noticed a very bright light in the sky. I thought at first it was a star but it was big and very bright with a little light either side of the big one and I would say around 30 to 40,000 feet up. You could see other stars around.

I kept on watching from the kitchen and in the lounge. About half an hour later I looked again and it disappeared. Then I read your article. Then on April 19 at 10.55pm I again went to make a drink and noticed the same thing. I kept on watching it again, each time it was stationary and there was no noise. Then it suddenly moved. It went at a slight angle to the right in the direction of Birmingham, then took a sharp right angle to the left but it was so fast - I've never seen anything move as fast before. It was gone in a second, nothing on this earth could move so fast.

So you can tell those two young ladies they had seen a UFO, that's certain.

**Ted White  
Castle Close  
Henley**

# fi S

## The truth is out there...

THE OBSERVER has been flooded with tales of strange alien encounters since reporting a UFO-like object flying low in the skies over Great Alne last month.

And a local UFO investigator, who works for Contact International UFO Research but wants to remain anonymous, has compiled a list of the most bizarre extra-terrestrial encounters in and around Stratford over the last fifty years.

- In 1959 just outside the town a man apparently saw a red ball of fire descend to the ground surrounded by a blue hazy mist. Within this curtain of smoke three tall humanlike creatures appeared and ascended into the ball. Seconds later the object turned red and climbed skyward showering sparks onto the ground.

- In 1966 a man and an 11-year-old boy encountered a strange object either on the ground or hovering just above it near Shipston. It was silver and shaped like a bullet with a blue light revolving at the top. Two human-like figures dressed in shiny suits emerged and stood next to the craft. According to reports, the UFO spotted the humans and shone a bright light in their direction causing them to flee.

- In 1967 a 13-year-old schoolgirl spotted two flying saucers from her window in Blue Cap Road, Stratford. According to the girl the objects were flying above each other and were too bright and too fast to be stars.

- In 1974 an unusual white descending light was spotted in the skies over Aston Cantlow.

- In 1978 a woman spotted a bell-shaped UFO in her Stratford garden with three beings inside it.

- In 1999 a UFO complete with red and blue flashing lights was seen hovering silently over Alderminster.

- And in 2004 two students spotted a binocular-shaped object hovering silently in Great Alne.



# EXIT

## 40 best places in the UK to be abducted by aliens

By SIMON WORTHINGTON

**RE-OPEN the X-files . . . experts have pinpointed the 40 top spots to be abducted by aliens in Britain.**

Researchers studied reported UFO sightings across the country to compile a list of places to experience encounters with extra-terrestrial beings.

Top of the list is Bonnybridge in Lanarkshire – scene of more alien sightings than anywhere else in the UK.

Cley Hill, Wilts, claims second place, followed by The Great Orme – a beauty spot near the North Wales seaside resort of Llandudno.

But aliens do not just stick to the countryside, it seems. Walthamstow, East London, and Lewisham, South London, also make the top ten.

Up to 40,000 Britons and four million Americans claim to have been kidnapped by visitors from another planet.

### Crashed

Bonnybridge has been dubbed the UFO capital of the world by some enthusiasts.

Locals have called for it to be twinned with Roswell, New Mexico – famed for its alleged involvement with a crashed "alien spacecraft" in 1947.

The UK top 40 was compiled by leading UFO expert Nick Pope for Grolsch beer.

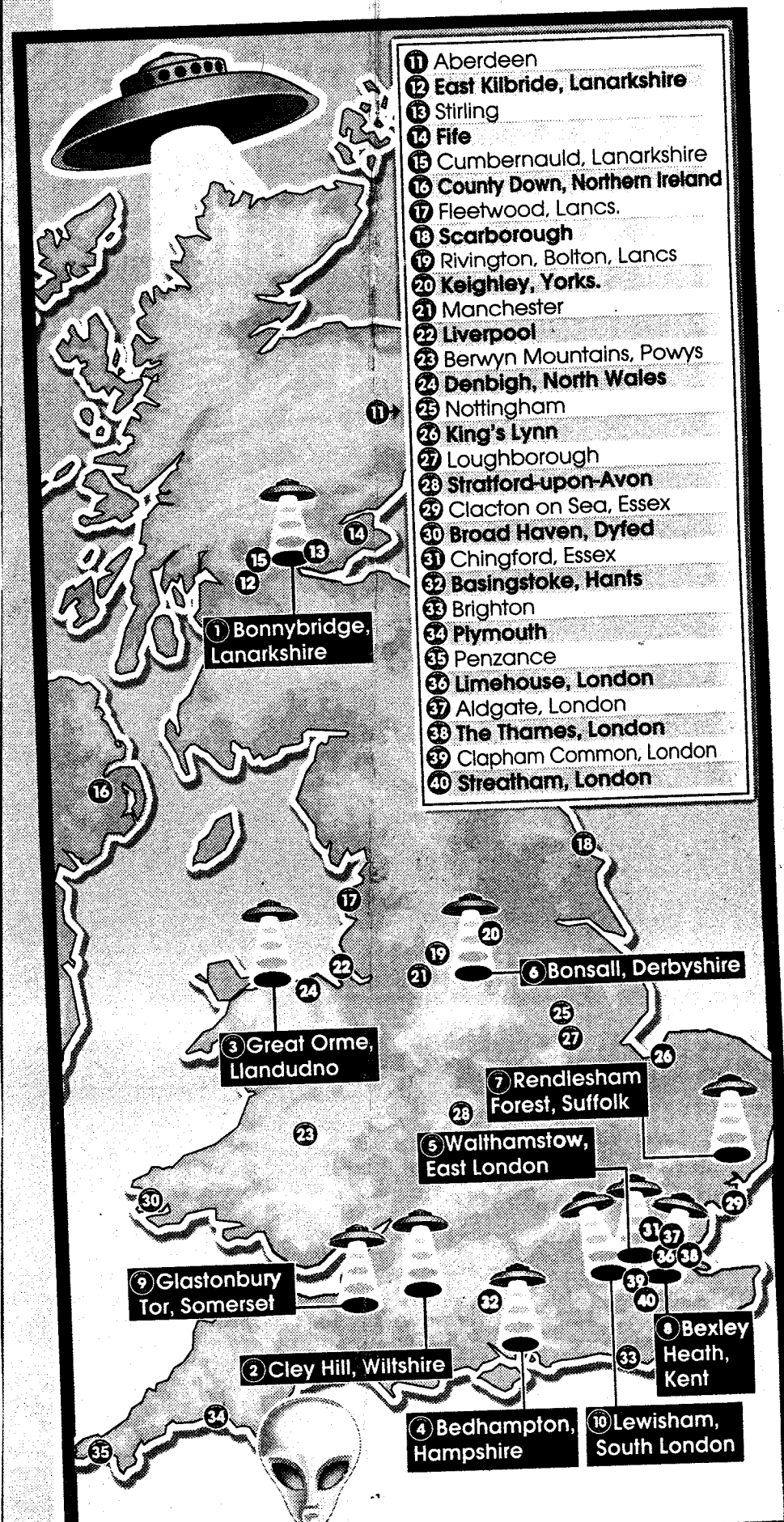
The research, part of a booklet called *How To Be Abducted By Aliens*, accompanies a new TV ad that shows beings from space attempting a kidnap.

Nick, who ran the Ministry of Defence's UFO desk from 1991 to 1994, said: "It is difficult to arrive at a precise number of sightings in any one place as there is no central data collection point.

"We must also take into account widespread under-reporting due to fear of ridicule and the fact most people are . . . where to submit reports.

"However, it is certain sible to gauge the inten current UFO activity.

"Our listed hotspots e up to 20 times as many things as anywhere else"



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E24.

REMOVED -

NOW ON FILE -

64/3/13 PTA.



From: Section 40  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3a



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue,  
London WC2N 3BP

Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) Section 40

Section 40

Hayton  
Retford  
Notts Section 40

Your Reference:

Our Reference:

D/DAS/64/3

Date:

27 May 2004

Dear Section 40

Thank you for your letter dated 7 May 2004.

We have noted your amendments and your letter has been placed on our files.

Yours sincerely

Section 40

## Important Amendment to Letter

Section 40

**Directorate of Air Staff  
Ministry of Defence  
Room/673  
Metropole Building  
Northumberland Avenue  
London WC2N 5BP**

7<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Dear Section 40

Please note the correction below to the recent letter I have sent you, it is important that I correct this error, you must have been completely confused, I type fast and sometimes get in front of myself before it is written

**Please note error in paragraph 7 line 3 / 2<sup>nd</sup> page of letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> May 2004**

**Paragraph wrongly reads;**

I have through this period of investigation tried my hardest to find a technical fault within the equipment or film, **my investigations have been commissioned by some of the most eminent experts within their particular field**, no such technical fault can be found on any platform, therefore we must conclude the object was in aerial view as illustrated upon the reversal slide film.

**The paragraph should read;**

I have through this period of investigation tried my hardest to find a technical fault within the equipment or film, **my investigations have commissioned some of the most eminent experts within their particular field**, no such technical fault can be found on any platform, therefore we must conclude the object was in aerial view as illustrated upon the reversal slide film.

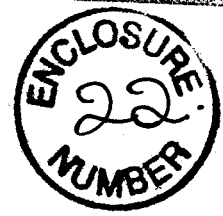
Please accept my apology for this error, it was unintentional.

Section 40





From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3a



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue,  
London WC2N 3BP

Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Hayton  
Retford

**Section 40**

Your Reference:

Our Reference:  
D/DAS/64/3

Date:  
14 May 2004

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letter of 7<sup>th</sup> May to my colleague, **Section 40** who is currently on leave.

Your slide is still with our image analysts and we will write to you again as soon as possible.

As for your idea about placing an advert in your local press, as you observe there are pros and cons, but this is really a matter for you to decide whether you wish to take this course of action.

Yours sincerely

**Section 40**

Section 40

Hayton

Retford Section 40

Notts.

10 May

Tel... Section 40

Mobile

Section 40

Directorate of Air Staff  
Ministry of Defence  
Room/673,  
Metropole Building  
Northumberland Avenue  
London WC2N 5BP  
7<sup>th</sup> May 2004



Dear Section 40

Re our telephone conversation this morning regarding the slide photograph of the object shown in aerial view of which you are at present examining, and as per that conversation I am pleased to enclose a copy of the technical report from Fuji Photo Film, Technical Centre, Bedford.

You will see from the enclosed report that Fuji state clearly the Sensia reversal film has no inherent problem within manufacture or any processing methods; therefore we must conclude the object shown within the photograph was not created through any film anomaly, or later processing.

I have spoken to Section 40 the regional technical specialist from Fuji who told me that all three film emulsions were in place on the film, and they had tried through different technical tests to find any technical reason why the object should be there?, the conclusion was that no film manufacturing fault or developing fault had created the object, in other words the film was in perfect order.

At this time I am awaiting a written report on the lens examination and also transparency examination from Canon Optical International, as you know the lens was an FD series used on the older type Canon camera's, and as you probably already know each lens is made up of different elements, but I can confirm at this time through numerous telephone conversations to that department, the object is not consistent with any type of lens flare, I am assured the opacity level, contrast and brightness take the object in view completely out of this scenario, also the alignment of the object would not coincide with this type of anomaly in the first instance.

The camera as also been thoroughly examined by agents of Canon for any type of mechanical breakdown, one such type of breakdown might have been within the curtain shutter release, sometimes loose material can hang from this mechanism and create an anomaly within a photograph, however such a technical fault or breakdown



would not create the object as shown within the transparency slide, and further more I can confirm that no such technical fault or breakdown has occurred within any part of the camera, in other words the camera is working perfectly ! I shall once again forward the written results to you from this company when I receive them.

I have through this period of investigation tried my hardest to find a technical fault within the equipment or film, my investigations have been commissioned by some of the most eminent experts within their particular field, no such technical fault can be found on any platform, therefore we must conclude the object was in aerial view as illustrated upon the reversal slide film.

I look forward to the results of the examination from your most learned image analyzer, I am at this time thinking of placing an advert within my local press under a P O Box number to see if any one else witnessed this object on the day and time in question, the P O Box would ensure my confidentiality, although such a move might create unwanted attention from press etc, and that I sincerely do not want, however the idea might help us both in attaining what exactly this object was? Although one might attract a certain fraternity, and ultimately any forthcoming witness statement could not be relied upon as being fact, I would be grateful of your opinion regarding this idea, and I can assure you it is only an idea on my behalf.

I will forward all other written information to you as it arrives in my office.

Section 40



**COPY****Fuji Photo Film (U.K.) Ltd.,**  
Technical Centre,  
Unit 10a, St. Martins Way,  
St. Martins Business Centre,  
Bedford, MK42 0LF.

5451

Technical Dept. - Tel: 01234 340040  
Fax: 01234 217728Our Ref: **Monday, April 5, 2004**Equipment & Systems Sales - Tel: 01234 245440  
Fax: 01234 217728

Your Ref:

Equipment & Systems Support - Tel: 01234 211767  
Fax: 01234 245285**Section 40**Hayton  
Retford  
NottsCamera Service - Tel: 01234 218388/217724  
Camera Spares - Tel: 01234 245219/245329  
Fax: 01234 360294/245210**Section 40**Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your recent enquiry regarding an anomaly on Fujichrome Sensia film; I have examined the slides sent in for analysis and can report the following.

I have printed the slides at different contrast levels to help establish the nature of the mark, however this has proved inconclusive. There does not appear to be any detail in the mark itself and there is no colour sensitisation around the mark.

I can confirm that this anomaly not consistent with a film processing problem or any kind of manufacturing fault.

I hope this information is of use to you if you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Section 40****Regional Technical Specialist**



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3a

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue,  
London WC2N 3BP



Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Hull  
East Yorkshire  
**Section 40**

Your Reference:

Our Reference:  
D/DAS/64/3  
Date:  
29 April 2004

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letter dated 18 April 2004.

You requested a copy of file D/Sec(AS)12/6. This file has been recalled from MOD archives and we will write to you again when the file is available. With regard to the costs of providing information, the MOD operates in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (the Code) which states if a request is likely to require over four hours work, each hour's work over the four hours (or part thereof) is charged at £15 per hour. However, we estimate that it will require less than four hours work to prepare the information you have requested and there will therefore be no charge on this occasion.

You enquired about satellite re-entries, space debris and aircraft collisions over the United Kingdom between the 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of December 1980. Fylingdales stated that 12 satellites decayed that week. Six of the satellites were small fragments, but six were large objects such as payloads or rocket bodies for which the decays would have been highly visible to any ground observers. All six large objects had passes over the UK but we are not able to say whether they would have been decaying (and visible) as they passed over the UK.

These are the six large objects:



Explorer 37 Rocket Body	25 Dec
Cosmos 899 Rocket Body	25 Dec
Cosmos 749 Rocket Body	26 Dec
Cosmos 1277 Payload	28 Dec
Ekran 6 Rocket Body	28 Dec
Cosmos 1236 Rocket Body	30 Dec

Fylingdales no longer holds any detailed information which would allow us to relate these to UFO reports in that time period. You also asked about aircraft collisions over the United Kingdom, for

the dates above, there is no record of a mid-air collision between these dates, (with a UFO, or otherwise!)

You also asked about the future release of information on UFOs. This department has already placed three classes of information on UFOs in the MOD Freedom of Information Publication Scheme which can be accessed via the internet at [www.foi.mod.uk](http://www.foi.mod.uk). We recognise that this information is of interest to the public and we are currently reviewing the information we hold to see what additional classes can be added to the Scheme in the near future.

The National Archives (formerly the Public Record Office) houses a number of documents on UFOs. To find out what files are available for viewing please look at PROCAT, The National Archives online catalogue on [www.pro.gov.uk](http://www.pro.gov.uk). There is currently an exercise underway to consider the release in January 2005 or soon after, of files held at The National Archives which are due for release between 2006-2009.

I hope this will be of help.

Yours sincerely

Section 40

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the signature area. The text "Section 40" is printed in orange at the top left of this redacted area.

Section 40

Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3,  
Ministry of Defence,  
Room 6/73,  
Metropole Building,  
Northumberland Avenue,  
London. WC2N 5BP.

Section 40

Hull.  
East Yorkshire.

Section 40

18 April 2004.

Dear Section 40

Can you please help with the following enquiry questions?

1. Under the new Freedom Of Information Act and present Code of Practise, is it possible to release and process a sanitised version of file D/Sec(AS)12/6 'UFOs: Alleged UFO incident – Crash of Lightning F6, 8 September 1970' - relating to correspondence received by MoD regarding the Captain William O. Schaffner, Lightning crash? If so, could you please let me know how much it will cost for a copy of this file and p&p?
2. Is the MoD aware of any satellite re-entries, space debris or aircraft collisions over the United Kingdom or in the United Kingdom between the 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of December 1980? (Was anything tracked by Fylingdales, or anyone else who may have been in a position to inform the MoD, which would fit any of the descriptions above? If so, could you please find out what satellites, or other?)
3. Under the new MoD policy and forthcoming Freedom of Information, has any decisions or reviews been made yet, as to what exactly will feature on the MoD and National Archives website/s relating to the UFO topic, under the publishing scheme? (i.e. which files, or aspects of files?)

Yours sincerely

Section 40

S-Sec3

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Subject:

D UK-SO1 AIR OPS 2  
Request for information

Section 40

I have received a request for information from a member of the public (not Section 40 for a change) who is asking the following;

"Is the MOD aware of any satellite re-entries, space debris or aircraft collisions over the UK or in the UK between the 24th and 31st December 1980? Was anything tracked by Fylingdales, or anyone else who may have been in a position to inform the MOD, which would fit any of the descriptions above? If so, could you please find out what satellites, or other?"

I can check the bit about aircraft collisions with my colleague who deals with aircraft accidents, but would be grateful if you could check the satellite/ space debris bit with your friends at Fylingdales, if they have records that go back that far.

Thanks for your help.

Section 40

DAS-Sec3

MT6/73 Section 40



S-Sec3a

From: DAS-Sec3  
Sent: 27 April 2004 12:14  
To: DAS-Sec3a  
Subject: FW: Request for information

Importance: High

Section 40

Please see below.

Section 40

-----Original Message-----

From: D UK-SO1 AIR OPS 2  
Sent: 26 April 2004 18:19  
To: DAS-Sec3  
Subject: RE: Request for information  
Importance: High

Section 40

Fylingdales reply is outlined below. Please feel free to release all of the information provided.

This query was harder to answer than previous ones due to the elapsed time.

Fylingdales do have a list of all satellites that decayed that week (12 in total) but there is no way of calculating where on the planet the decays occurred.

Six of the satellites were small fragments, but six were large objects such as payloads or rocket bodies for which the decays would have been highly visible to any ground observers. All six large objects had passes over the UK but as stated earlier we are not able to say whether they would have been decaying (and visible) as they passed over the UK.

These are the six large objects:

Id No	Name	Date
03146	Explorer 37 Rocket Body	25 Dec
08010	Cosmos 749 Rocket Body	26 Dec
09884	Cosmos 899 Rocket Body	25 Dec
12100	Cosmos 1277 Payload	28 Dec
12122	Ekran 6 Rocket Body	28 Dec
12124	Cosmos 1236 Rocket Body	30 Dec

Regrettably, Fylingdales no longer holds any detailed information which would allow us to relate these to UFO reports in that time period. Sorry.

Section 40

D UK, SO1 Air Ops 2  
MT 466

Section 40

-----Original Message-----

From: DAS-Sec3  
Sent: 23 April 2004 15:26  
To: D UK-SO1 AIR OPS 2  
Subject: Request for information

*No record of a mid-air collision between these dates - (with a UFO, or otherwise)*

Section 40

You also asked about the future release of information on UFOs. This department has already placed three classes of information on UFOs in the MOD Freedom of Information Publication Scheme which can be accessed via the internet at [www.foi.mod.uk](http://www.foi.mod.uk). We recognise that this information is of interest to the public and we are currently reviewing the information we hold to see what additional classes can be added to the Scheme in the near future.

The National Archives (formerly the Public Record Office) houses a number of documents on UFOs. To find out what files are available for viewing please look at PROCAT, The National Archives online catalogue on [www.pro.gov.uk](http://www.pro.gov.uk). There is currently an exercise underway to consider the release in January 2005 or soon after, of files held at The National Archives which are due for release between 2006-2009.

You requested a copy of file D/Sec(AS)12/6. This file has been recalled from MOD archives and we will write to you again when the file is available. With regard to the costs of providing information, the MOD operates in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (the Code) which states that if a request is likely to require over four hours work, each hour's work over the four hours (or part thereof) is charged at £15 per hour. However, we estimate that it will require less than four hours work to prepare the information you have requested and there will therefore be no charge on this occasion.



From: Section 40

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat) 3a  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue,  
LONDON WC2N 5BP

Telephone: (Direct dial) Section 40  
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000

(Fax) Section 40

CHOTs address: DAS-Sec3a

**FAX MESSAGE**

**TO: Hayes Archive**

**SUBJECT: Request for files.**

**DATE: 23 April 2004**

**NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER: 1**

Please could you send me the following files which are required to answer an enquiry from a member of the public.

D/SEC(AS) 12/6 'UFO's: Alleged UFO incident - Crash of lightening F6, 8 September 1970'

Our UIN no is F6208A.

Thank you for your assistance. If you have any questions, please give me a call.

MODE = TRANSMISSION

START=27-APR 15:18

END=27-APR 15:19

STN NO.	COM	ABBR NO.	STATION NAME/TEL.NO.	PAGES	DURATION
001	OK	2	Section 40	001	00:00'18"

-DIRECTORATE AIR STAFF -

\*\*\*\*\* Section 40 - \*\*\*\*\* Section 40 \*\*\*\*\*



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3a



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue,  
London WC2N 3BP

Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Old Whittington  
Chesterfield  
Derbyshire

**Section 40**

Your Reference:

Our Reference:

D/DAS/64/3

Date:

26 April 2004

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letter.

First, it may help if I explain that the Ministry of Defence has no expertise or role with respect to 'UFO/flying saucer' matters, or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms about which it remains open-minded. To date, however, the MOD is unaware of any evidence which substantiates the existence of the alleged phenomena.

The Ministry of Defence examines any reports of 'unidentified flying objects' it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised foreign military activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external source, and to date no 'UFO' report has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each sighting reported to us. We believe that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them if resources were diverted for this purpose, but it is not the function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. It would be inappropriate use of defence resources if we were to do so.

In your letter you asked for details of a UFO helpdesk? There is no official 'UFO helpdesk' in the UK as far as we are aware. This office is the focal point within the MOD for correspondence relating to UFOs and any sighting reports received by the MOD are forwarded to us.

You also asked for the address of the equivalent of our Public Record Office, in Maryland, USA. We do not have any dealings with this organisation, but a search on the Internet has produced the following address that might be what you are seeking.

The National Archives and Public Records Administration.

8601 Adelphi Road  
College Park

Maryland  
MD 20740-6001  
U.S.A.

The website address is [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov).

I hope this is helpful.

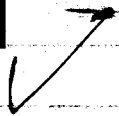
Yours sincerely

Section 40



F. A. O.

Section 40



I was wondering if you could find me the address of any U.F.O helpdesk.

I am interested in the study of paranormal & extra terrestrial activities around the world.

Also if poss the address of the equivalent to our public records office in Maryland.

Any information at all I would be very grateful for please ring if you can on

Section 40

or

Sorry if my message wasn't clear before.

yours

Section 40

Address: Section 40 old Whittington  
Chesterfield Section 40



From: Linda Unwin  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone

(Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)  
(GTN)

020 7218 2140  
020 7218 9000

Section 40

Section 40

Barry  
South Wales

Section 40

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3

Date  
2 April 2004

Dear Section 40

I am writing concerning your letter dated 27 January regarding an article in 'Air Forces Monthly' about an incident at Boscombe Down on 14<sup>th</sup> September 1994, and your ideas for a film script about this incident. Your letter has been passed to this department as we are the focal point within the Ministry of Defence for correspondence concerning 'unidentified flying objects'. I apologise for the delay in sending you a substantive reply.

First, it may be helpful if I explain that the Ministry of Defence does not have any expertise or role in respect of 'UFO/flying saucer' matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains totally open-minded. I should add that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena. The MOD's sole reason for examining the reports of 'UFO' sighting it receives is to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external source, and to date no 'UFO' report has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. We believe it is possible that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them, but it is not the function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. We could not justify expenditure of public funds on investigations which go beyond our specific defence remit.

With regard to your particular enquiry, we have made checks with the Flight Safety organisation at MOD Boscombe Down and they have no record of any incident involving an aircraft with a nose wheel collapse landing there during the whole of 1994. There was also no such incident in either 1993 or 1995. As for your ideas for a script about UFO involvement with this alleged incident, there is no requirement for members of the public to clear scripts with the MOD, particularly as this is a work of science-fiction.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

LOW FLYING UROS



**TREAT OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE**

To DAS(SEC)  
cc.

TO Ref No 1063 /2004

Date 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 2004

The Prime Minister/SofS/Min(AF)/Min(DP)/USofS/MOD\* has received the attached correspondence from a member of the public, which this office has neither retained nor acknowledged. Please send a reply on behalf of the PM/Minister/Department\*.

Ministers attach great importance to correspondence being answered promptly, and your reply should be sent **within 15 working days of the above date**. If, exceptionally, this should prove impossible, an interim reply should be sent within the same timescale. You should be aware that No 10 periodically calls for a sample of letters sent by officials on the PM's behalf for his perusal.

An 'Open Government Code of Practice on Access to Government Information' came into force in 1997. All replies to members of the public must be in accordance with the procedures set out in the Code. In particular, information can only be withheld if it falls within the scope of a particular exemption. However, some exemptions are subject to a 'public interest test', whereby the harm associated with disclosure must be weighed against the public interest in release. Applicants must be informed of any decision to apply an exemption and of their right to appeal against this decision by writing to D Info(Exp). A full explanation is contained in DCI(Gen) 232/01; further information is available from DG Info on **Section 40**.

It is vital that branches ensure they have simple systems to record and track correspondence received from members of the public. This information should be regularly monitored and reviewed against the targets for answering correspondence published in the Spending Review 2000 Service Delivery Agreement for the Ministry of Defence. In addition, we are required to keep information on the number of **requests for information that specifically refer to the Code of Practice**.

**As part of our monitoring procedure, random spot checks on the accuracy of your branch records on correspondence will be performed throughout the year.**

**Ministerial Correspondence Unit**

Room 222, Old War Office Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2EU

t: **Section 40** or **Section 40**

f: **Section 40** CHOtS: Ministerial Correspondence; e: [ministers@defence.mod.uk](mailto:ministers@defence.mod.uk).

Detailed guidance on handling TO Correspondence can be found on dNet at [http://main.chots.mod.uk/min\\_pari/ParlBrch/TOGuid.htm](http://main.chots.mod.uk/min_pari/ParlBrch/TOGuid.htm) If you do not have access to dNet, please inform the Ministerial Correspondence Unit.

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

\* Delete as appropriate.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

✓

**Ronald Thomas**

From: Section 40  
 To: <public@ministers.mod.uk>  
 Cc: Section 40  
 Sent: 28 January 2004 17:19  
 Subject: film script idea  
 from: Section 40  
 To: "Customer Contact" <CUSTOMERCONTACT@qinetiq.com>  
 Cc: Section 40  
 Subject: Re: QinetiQ Enquiry CCT11068 - Filmscript  
 Date: 27 January 2004 14:29

Section 40

Barry  
 S. Wales

Section 40

Dear Sir

The following letter was sent to the above email address, but they also suggested that I contact you regarding the 'Incident' in Question. So here is a copy of that email...

Thankyou for your reply dated 2nd January, sorry it's taken a while to return your enquiry, but I have since found the article concerning the 'Incident' at Boscombe Down on September 14th 1994. Before I begin to mention details of that night, I am not seeking the truth nor do I wish to publicly arouse public controversy/suspicious or gain a notoriety for myself of what happened that night. I am simply researching an idea that I have, by extrapolating that nights events. According to 'AIR FORCES MONTHLY' magazine, an amateur radio ham/person monitored an aircrafts radio frequency descending from over 65,000 feet - only the Shuttle and the U2 and SR71 can fly at such altitudes it was said. Later, the aircraft apparently suffered a nose-wheel collapse and was witnessed to be stored in one of the hangars adjacent to a certain viewing area near runway 23 covered over with a tarpaulin. Now in my story, the 'tarpaulin' was covering power recepticles - (like solar panels) that receive energy from a laser beam fired by a satellite in order for the aircraft to 'power-up' and achieve hitherto bursts of speed. The nose wheel collapse is the result of the pilot having travelled through time, because of what the aircraft had uncovered or had an encounter with a UFO, which began a series of catastrophic events. So the pilot sabotages the nose wheel on the aircraft. So that it cannot make accidental contact with the UFO. This story is based on a science-fiction idea, and in no way is it meant as a detrimental attack on 'Boscombe Down'. However, if the 'incident' in Sept 1994 is a simple explainable account, then that's fine - and I wont have any worries about writing it. The UFO idea is quite good, but I have been pondering on the idea that (ALL) UFO sightings are not extra-terrestrial in their origin - but Human. Experimental crafts built by humans in the future, who have managed to travel through time to our present. This idea would be better, because it would pose more of an interesting story.

At the moment, I am trying to start my own model kit business, and would take up a huge amount of time, so this script would take atleast 2 years to write, I've decided on the title =  
 The title is: TIMESHIFT - THE BOSCOMBE DOWN INCIDENT.

If you have any objections to me writing this script - then please contact me on the email address above.

Thankyou

Best regards

Section 40

— Original Message —

From: "Customer Contact" <CUSTOMERCONTACT@qinetiq.com>  
 To: Section 40  
 Sent: Friday, January 02, 2004 11:31 AM  
 Subject: QinetiQ Enquiry CCT11068 - Filmscript

> Thank you for your enquiry. As you do not state what the incident was it is

30/01/2004

> possible to comment. As the article was published in Airforces Monthly,  
we

> suggest that you contact the Ministry of Defence.

> Regards QinetiQ Customer Contact Team

>

>

> The Information contained in this E-Mail and any subsequent correspondence

> is private and is intended solely for the intended recipient(s).

> For those other than the recipient any disclosure, copying, distribution,

> or any action taken or omitted to be taken in reliance on such information

> is prohibited and may be unlawful.

>

> Emails and other electronic communication with QinetiQ may be monitored.

> Calls to QinetiQ may be recorded for quality control,

> regulatory and monitoring purposes.

**Ronald Thomas**

---

**From:** "Ministers" <Ministers@defence.mod.uk>

**To:** Section 40

**Sent:** 30 January 2004 09:55

**Subject:** RE: film script idea

Thank you for your email to [public@ministers.mod.uk](mailto:public@ministers.mod.uk). For a reply from MOD, please re-send your message together with your full postal address.

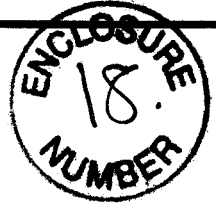
Many thanks,

**MOD Ministerial Correspondence Unit  
Room 222, Old War Office Building,  
Whitehall, London SW1A 2EU**

30/01/2004



From: DAS-Sec3  
Sent: 16 April 2004 16:49  
To: D News RAF  
Subject: Press Enquiry on UFOs



**Section 40**

As promised here is the low down on UFO information and the Publication Scheme. I have done it in a bit of a rush so I hope it makes sense.

I am about to go home so if you need to know anything else please feel free to call my mobile -

**Section 40**

The MOD holds approximately 200 files which contain information about UFOs. Most are stored in MOD archives. These contain UFO sightings reported to the MOD, correspondence with members of the public, MOD policy, parliamentary enquiries and questions, and UFO related press cuttings. There are few specific files for individual 'incidents', with most information simply filed in the order in which it is received. There are no separate files for particular areas of the country.

The MOD appreciates that there is a public interest in this information and for this reason three classes of information were included in the MOD Freedom of Information Publication Scheme when it was launched in November 2002. These classes have proved very popular, so we have decided to review all the information we hold to see what other UFO material can be made more widely available via the Scheme. This is however, a lengthy process as the files contain a great deal of personal data (ie. names, addresses, telephone numbers etc) which all has to be removed before publication in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. In addition, new classes of information have to be agreed with the Information Commissioner before they can be added to the Scheme. However, we hope to start adding new UFO classes to the MOD Scheme by the end of this year.

**Section 40**

DAS-Sec3

**From:** InfoAccess-PMAD  
**Sent:** 16 April 2004 11:51  
**To:** DAS-Sec3  
**Cc:** 2Div-DefencePressOfficerScotland; InfoAccess-AD  
**Subject:** FW: media query

Section 40

We discussed over the phone. I've spoken to Section 40 about the FOI aspects but he does want to talk to someone about the actual files and I agreed to ask you but that it was your decision to speak to him about this. For what its worth, I do think this is a good news story for MOD from an FOI perspective but I think you and your team must have the final say about talking about the content of the files and the plans to publish the extracts on the Publication Scheme.

His phone number is Section 40 or his email is Section 40

I did agree with Section 40 that we would let her have some feedback so I have copied this to her. He suggested to me that he wants to do an initial article on what he hold but would like to do some follow-up pieces as the material is released.

Please give me a call if you want to discuss any of this further.

Section 40  
InfoAccess-PMAD  
SY831 Section 40

-----Original Message-----

**From:** InfoAccess-AD  
**Sent:** 15 April 2004 13:25  
**To:** InfoAccess-PMAD  
**Cc:** InfoAccess-PM1; InfoAccess-PM4  
**Subject:** FW: media query

Section 40

Grateful if you could take this on. Many thanks.

Section 40

-----Original Message-----

**From:** 2Div-DefencePressOfficerScotland  
**Sent:** 15 April 2004 13:07  
**To:** InfoAccess-AD  
**Subject:** media query

Dear Section 40

I was speaking to Section 40 regarding a media enquiry I've had about the publication scheme, and he suggested I speak to you. To put you in the picture.....

A reporter from the Sunday Times Scotland (Section 40) was browsing the MoD website and came across the section on FOI. I speak to Section 40 regularly so he called me to ask what implications the FOI act has for the MoD, and what we're doing to implement it.

After chatting to Section 40 I then went back to Mark and told him about the Publications scheme, explaining that it's our proactive element of managing FOI and that we will be putting information on the website that we predict will be of public interest e.g. UFO files. I also told him about the work of your department and that the biggest challenge we face as such a large and diverse organisation with so many affiliated agencies, is not actually taking decisions on what information to provide, but knowing how to find the information, or even knowing whether we've got it in the first place! I then went on to describe briefly our repository at Hayes.

Section 40 now come back to me asking: are we publishing anything on the site relating to Scotland, e.g. MoD information/files that involve Scottish people, or activities that happened in Scotland. He also wants to know more about the UFO files being published - what is in the files? how many are there? are there any Scottish elements? Where were the files held? etc.

Can you help? Do you know the answers to these questions, and would you be happy to speak to **Section 40** about this?  
If not, could you suggest someone else who I could contact?

I'd be very grateful for some guidance on this!  
With regards,

**Section 40**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Section 40**

Defence Press Officer Scotland  
Room 1 Annandale Block  
Craigiehall  
Edinburgh EH12 6DY

Tel: **Section 40**

Fax: **Section 40**

Mob: **Section 40**

(military code: 94740 + ext)

Internal e-mail: 2div-defencepressofficerscotland

External e-mail: mod.scotland@milnet.uk.net



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3a

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue,  
London WC2N 3BP



Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Chesterfield  
Derbyshire

Your Reference:

Our Reference:

D/DAS/64/3

Date:

15 April 2004

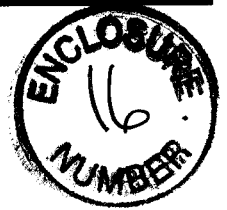
Dear **Section 40**

I am writing to enquire about a message you left on our answerphone. The message was not very clear. Could you please write and tell us what you would like to know by using the above address. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

**Section 40**

To: [Section 40]  
Subject: internet-authorized: Flying Saucer Working Party- Report No.7



Dear [Section 40]

I am writing with reference to your e-mail message of 1 March concerning the Flying Saucer Working Party document (Report No.7) which is included in the MOD Freedom of Information Publication Scheme. Your letter has been passed to me, as this office is the focal point for correspondence concerning 'UFOs' and we were also responsible for including this report in the Publication Scheme. Please accept my apologies for not replying sooner.

The two passages removed from Report No.7 are retained with the approval of the Lord Chancellor, in accordance with Section 3(4) of the Public Records Act 1958. The extracted passages are currently the subject of discussions between the MOD and the relevant party, and if cleared for release in the future, both the record in the Publication Scheme and the original at The National Archive will be amended accordingly.

If you wish to see information about public records and existing legislation then The National Archive have a useful website which provides direct access to a detailed manual about access to public records. This can be found at <http://www.pro.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/access/manual>.

Finally, you commented that you would like to see more UFO related material on-line. You may therefore be interested to know that we recognise that there is a public interest in this information, and we are currently conducting a review of the UFO related records we hold with a view to making more available on-line via the Publication Scheme in the near future.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

[Section 40]  
das-sec3@defence.mod.uk

30<sup>th</sup> March 2004

## DAS\_Sec3

---

**From:** Info-Records1  
**Sent:** 02 March 2004 12:52  
**To:** DAS-Sec3  
**Cc:** InfoAccess-PM4  
**Subject:** RE: Feedback from MOD Pilot Publication Scheme

### Section 40

You are correct:

the retained passages (there are two, not one) are retained in accordance with Section 3(4) of the Public Records Act of 1958. The retention is with the approval of the Lord Chancellor.

The reason for retention is on "Intelligence" grounds, a Lord Chancellor's Instrument covers such retentions.

As is the custom with intelligence matters we do not discuss the details of documentation judged still sensitive. In a couple of cases when sending copies of the report to members of the public I've mentioned that two passages have been retained and that "the extracted passages are currently the subject of discussions between MOD and the relevant party." However, I can confirm that approaches have been made on two occasions to US authorities to clear the offending passages, so far without success!

If **Section 40** wishes to see information about public records and existing legislation I can think of no better website than that of The National Archives, specifically <http://www.pro.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/access/manual> this provides direct access to a detailed manual, now, in its third edition about "Access to Public Records".

### Section 40

-----Original Message-----

**From:** DAS-Sec3  
**Sent:** 02 March 2004 09:44  
**To:** Info-Records1  
**Cc:** InfoAccess-PM4  
**Subject:** FW: Feedback from MOD Pilot Publication Scheme

### Section 40

I have had the following enquiry about the Flying Saucer Working Party Report No.7 in the Publication Scheme.

As far as I am aware the information was withheld under Section 3(4) of the Public Records Act 1958 or 1967. This was because of its reference to the CIA and I think someone was going to ask the Americans if it could be released. If this is correct, are you able to tell me what Section 3(4) says and do you know if anyone has pursued its release with the Americans?

### Section 40

DAS-Sec3  
MT6/73 **Section 40**

-----Original Message-----

**From:** InfoAccess-PM4  
**Sent:** 01 March 2004 10:02  
**To:** DAS-Sec3  
**Cc:** InfoAccess-PM4  
**Subject:** FW: Feedback from MOD Pilot Publication Scheme

Hi **Section 40**



I've had this come through to the Publication Scheme feedback mail box. Are you able to help with some of his query? Let me know if you can  
I will previously find out about exemptions for him

Section 40

-----Original Message-----

From: feedback@foi.mod.uk [mailto:feedback@foi.mod.uk]

Sent: 01 March 2004 02:51

To: InfoAccess-ad2@defence.mod.uk

Subject: Feedback from MOD Pilot Publication Scheme

Section 40 "Network engineer", "ufologyinuk" Section 40

Section 40

Goldenhill

Stoke on Trent

Section 40

,-99,-99,1,-99,-99,-99,"","",1,1,2,2,2,2,2,4,1,"Retention/deletions:

In the Flying Saucer Working Party document (report no. 7), there is a deletion with a stamp "Retained under section 3(4)".

It is not clear which document "section 3(4)" relates to. I did check the links to the "Code of Practice on Access to Government Information" (parts I & II), and The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000, but in both cases section 3(4) does not appear to exist?

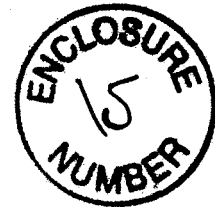
I would be very obliged if you could direct me to a list of exemption codes accessible via the internet as used in this example, ideally via email if possible?

One other observation that I would like to make is that once the Flying Saucer Working Party document has been opened via a browser, it is nigh impossible to get out of and return to the page that the link was on. It can be done by right-clicking on the "back" button and going back more than a single page, but many people will be unaware of this.

Regards,

Section 40

,"I would like to see a lot more UFO related material on-line. Many documents are available in printed form only, and this is a very expensive medium in comparison to .pdf files.", "I'll let you know as I have more exposure to it!",0



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone (Direct dial) 020 7218 2140  
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**  
(GTN)

**Section 40**

Bramley  
Leeds

**Section 40**

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3  
Date  
29 March 2004

Dear **Section 40**

I am writing with reference to your recent undated letter to the Minister (Defence Procurement) about 'Unidentified Flying Objects'. Your letter has been passed to me as this office is the focal point within the Ministry of Defence for correspondence regarding UFOs.

First, it may be helpful if I explain that the MOD does not have any expertise or role in respect of 'UFO/flying saucer' matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains totally open-minded. I should add that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

The MOD examines any reports of 'UFOs' it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external source, and to date no 'UFO' report has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. We believe it is possible that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them, but it is not the function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. We could not justify expenditure of public funds on investigations which go beyond our specific defence remit.

With regard to your particular sightings in 1997, while you were living in New Zealand, I am unable to comment as defence of New Zealand's airspace is a matter for the New Zealand authorities. I therefore suggest that if you wish to pursue your enquiries that you write to the following address;

Ministry of Defence  
PO Box 5347  
Lambton Quay  
Wellington  
New Zealand

● Finally, as for the film you were shown in 1981, it is not the MOD's practice to visit individuals and show them such films, so I am unable to assist you with your search for a copy of this film.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

→ ~~SEE~~ RE: UFO LETTER

DAS (Lower Airspace)

Grateful if you could respond to  
this on behalf of Min(DP)  
to whom the original was  
sent.

Many thanks -

Section 40

S+T Pol Sec 1

Section 40

27 FEB 2004

Section 40

BRAMLEY LEEDS

Section 40

TEL

Dear Sir,

I previously wrote a letter to your office but I don't think it would have reached you because of the nature of the letter. The letter was more like Science Fiction more than anything else, but I can assure you that the letter was a true account of what happened to me. Anyway I will explain what happened to me again just in case the letter did not reach you.

Back in 1981 when I was thirteen years old I was approached by two men, who they were or where they came from I don't know. They showed me a film on television and they were telling me that it was me on the film, and my family and people I would meet. They also said I would be moving to New Zealand some time in the future. They said that they had the technology to go back and forth in time and film future events. Anyway I forgot all about this unusual meeting until I emigrated to New Zealand with my wife and two children.

We moved into a rented house in Howick Auckland and soon after, sometime in 1997 we started seeing unusual lights over and in front of our house. These UFO's were around for about three months, but they were only around at night. I had a local air base telephone me asking questions about these UFO's but I did not tell them everything because they wouldn't have believed me anyway. I remembered back in 1981 the film that the two men showed me contained these UFO's and showed me what was going to happen.

I will tell you about the film I saw back in 1981 because there was something in the film that may enable us to find the film.

 CHIEF  
SCIENTIFIC  
ADVISER

26 FEB 2004

 CENTRE FOR  
POLICE SCIENCE  
LONDON

The film was all of different clips, some were in animated form as well.

Most of the film was of newzealand but some of it was done in america.

Each clip had different variations of a scene then the one that was to happen was shown.

It was like this all the way through the film which lasted about an hour. I was been talked all the way through the film and because of the way it was shown I remembered most of it later on in life.

The film was broadcast on television and, the reason it may be possible to find the film again is because there was something on the film that should have been censured. I remember the same day I saw the film, my father came home from work and he was talking about the film been talked about on the radio.

People were calling and complaining about the nature of the film.

I have contacted the broadcasting standards commission regarding this film but they unfortunately don't have records going back that far.

Maybe you could have more luck in finding the film with my help.

Yours faithfully

Section 40





From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3a



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue,  
London WC2N 3BP

Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Folkestone  
Kent

**Section 40**

Your Reference:

Our Reference:  
D/DAS/64/3

Date:  
15 March 2004

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letter dated 3 March 2004.

In your letter of 27 January 2004, you requested a list of UFO reports received by MOD in 2004 and these were sent with my letter of 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2004. These contained only one page, as there had not been many sightings reported between 1 January and 23<sup>rd</sup> February when I replied.

For your information since my letter, there have been two further sightings reported as follows:

18/02/04 16.02 North Wales Large black object in the sky.

01/03/04 20.00 Lowestoft, Suffolk Yellow lights in circular formation moving fast across the sky.

In your letter of 3<sup>rd</sup> March you enquired about a report made to Dover Police, in July 2004. As we have only reached March 2004 this is a clearly a mistake. Enclosed is a copy of your original letter for easy reference. If however, you wish to clarify which year you are interested in, we would, of course, be happy to assist.

Yours sincerely

**Section 40**

✓

UFOMEK  
UFO MONITORS EAST KENT

Section 40 [redacted] Folkestone, Kent Section 40 [redacted]

Tel: Section 40 [redacted]

e-mail: Section 40 [redacted]

Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3a  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE,  
Room 6/73,  
Metropole Building,  
Northumberland Avenue,  
London,  
WC2N 3BP.

3 March 2004.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for your letter of 23 February, in which you enclosed a listing of sightings reported to the MOD for the year 2004. However you only sent one page covering the months of January and February of that year. Is there a listing for the rest of 2004?

I am also trying to track down a report made to Dover police (in Kent), by a member of the public during the month of July 2004. Do you have any record of such a report from Kent County Constabulary?

Many thanks for your cooperation with regard to this matter.

Section 40 [redacted]

Director of Research / Investigations UFOMEK.



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone

(Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)  
(GTN)

020 7218 2140  
020 7218 9000

**Section 40**

**Section 40**  
Regional Justice Centre  
620 West James Street  
Kent WA. USA 9803Z

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3  
Date  
9 March 2004

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letter of 6 February 2004 concerning information about 'unidentified flying objects'.

First, I should inform you that the Ministry of Defence does not have any expertise or role in respect of 'UFO/flying saucer' matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains totally open-minded. I should add that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

Any reports of 'unidentified flying objects' the MOD receives are examined solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source, and to date no 'UFO' report has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. We believe it is possible that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them, but it is not the function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. We could not justify expenditure of public funds on investigations which go beyond our specific defence remit.

With regard to your request for any information we are able to send regarding UFOs, please find enclosed two sets of documents.

The first is a collection of papers about an alleged 'UFO' sighting at Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk in December 1980. Rendlesham Forest lies between the now disused RAF bases of RAF Woodbridge and RAF Bentwaters and at the time housed US Air Force personnel. The UFO sighting report which is the bases of these papers was made by one of these personnel. At the time of these events all available substantiated evidence would have been looked at in the usual manner by those within the Department responsible for air defence matters. The judgement was that there was no indication that a breach of the United Kingdom's air defences had occurred on the nights in question and no further investigation into the matter was deemed to be necessary. Although a number of allegations have subsequently been made about these reported events, nothing has

emerged over the last 23 years which has given us reason to believe that the original assessment made by the Department was incorrect. These papers are a combination of documents, some contemporary with these events and some are later correspondence.

The second document relates to the Flying Saucer Working Party which was set up in August 1950 at the suggestion of Sir Henry Tizard who thought "flying saucers should be investigated". Records show that at the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Joint Technical Intelligence Committee in June 1951 the Chairman of the Flying Saucer Working Party presented his report. The Committee decided that "the document should be regarded as the final report and, in view of the conclusions the Working Party should be dissolved". The papers of the Flying Saucer Working Party have been open in The National Archive for some years, but no surviving copies of the final report could be found. This copy was discovered in MOD archives during a review of unrelated files in 2002 and has now been released into The National Archive.

I hope you find these documents of interest. Electronic versions of these have been included in the MOD Freedom of Information Publication Scheme and if you have access to the internet they can be viewed at [www.foi.mod.uk](http://www.foi.mod.uk).

Yours sincerely,

Section 40



**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***



LOW flying / UFOs

**TREAT OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE**

To DAS (LA) P & P  
cc.

TO Ref No 1446 /2004

Date 18 FEB 04

The Prime Minister/SofS/Min(AF)/Min(DP)/USofS/MOD\* has received the attached correspondence from a member of the public, which this office has neither retained nor acknowledged. Please send a reply on behalf of the PM/Minister/Department\*.

Ministers attach great importance to correspondence being answered promptly, and your reply should be sent **within 15 working days of the above date**. If, exceptionally, this should prove impossible, an interim reply should be sent within the same timescale. You should be aware that No 10 periodically calls for a sample of letters sent by officials on the PM's behalf for his perusal.

An 'Open Government Code of Practice on Access to Government Information' came into force in 1997. All replies to members of the public must be in accordance with the procedures set out in the Code. In particular, information can only be withheld if it falls within the scope of a particular exemption. However, some exemptions are subject to a 'public interest test', whereby the harm associated with disclosure must be weighed against the public interest in release. Applicants must be informed of any decision to apply an exemption and of their right to appeal against this decision by writing to D Info(Exp). A full explanation is contained in DCI(Gen) 232/01; further information is available from DG Info on **Section 40**.

It is vital that branches ensure they have simple systems to record and track correspondence received from members of the public. This information should be regularly monitored and reviewed against the targets for answering correspondence published in the Spending Review 2000 Service Delivery Agreement for the Ministry of Defence. In addition, we are required to keep information on the number of **requests for information that specifically refer to the Code of Practice**.

**As part of our monitoring procedure, random spot checks on the accuracy of your branch records on correspondence will be performed throughout the year.**

**Ministerial Correspondence Unit**

Room 222, Old War Office Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2EU

t: **Section 40** or **Section 40**

f: **Section 40**; CHOTs: Ministerial Correspondence; e: [ministers@defence.mod.uk](mailto:ministers@defence.mod.uk).

Detailed guidance on handling TO Correspondence can be found on dNet at [http://main.chots.mod.uk/min\\_parl/ParlBrch/TOGuid.htm](http://main.chots.mod.uk/min_parl/ParlBrch/TOGuid.htm) If you do not have access to dNet, please inform the Ministerial Correspondence Unit.

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

\* Delete as appropriate.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

To: Ministry of Defence,  
The Ministerial Correspondence Unit,  
Room 222  
Old War Office,  
Whitehall,  
London, SW1A 2EU

2-6-04

To: Whom it may concern:

Hello, I am writing to you to ask you if it is possible for you to please send me some information regarding Unidentified flying objects, UFOs, flying Saucers.

I am a private researcher doing research on this subject and am considering writing a book in the near future.

I want to thank you so much for all of your time, And I am sure everything you do send me will be of great help to me and my work, And I look forward to hearing back from you in the near future.

Thanks again for everything,

Sincerely,

Section 40

Regional Justice Center  
620 West James Street  
Kent WA, USA. 98032

(Manilla envelopes are ok)





From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone (Direct dial) 020 7218 2140  
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**  
(GTN)

**Section 40**

Abergele  
Conwy

**Section 40**

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3  
Date  
25 February 2004

Dear **Section 40**

I am writing concerning your e-mail message of 17 February to the Ministry of Defence, Ministerial Correspondence Unit regarding the release of information about 'unidentified flying objects'. Your enquiry has been passed to this Department as we are the focal point within the MOD for correspondence regarding UFOs.

First, I should explain that any reports provided to us of 'UFO' sightings are examined, solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. I should add that the integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous surveillance of the UK Air Policing Area by the Royal Air Force. This is achieved by using a combination of civil and military radar installations, which provide a continuous real-time "picture" of the UK airspace. Any threat to the UK Air Policing Area would be handled in the light of the particular circumstances at the time (it might if deemed appropriate, involve the scrambling or diversion of air defence aircraft). Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the UK from an external source, and to date no 'UFO' report has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. We believe it is possible that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them, but it is not the function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. We could not justify expenditure of public funds on investigations which go beyond our specific defence remit.

With regard to public access to the information the MOD holds on UFOs, you may wish to be aware that before 1967 all 'UFO' files were destroyed after five years, as there was insufficient public interest in the subject to merit their permanent retention. However since 1967, following an increase in public interest in this subject, 'UFO' report files are now routinely preserved and are transferred to The National Archive (formerly the Public Record Office) when 30 years have elapsed since the last action was taken. Any files from the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s which have survived are already available for examination by members of the public at The National Archive, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU. Details of the records available can be seen by searching The National Archive on line catalogue, PROCAT, at [www.pro.gov.uk](http://www.pro.gov.uk). Copies of documents can also be requested.

For information less than 30 years old, the Ministry of Defence operates in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (the Code), which encourages the provision of information unless its disclosure would, for example, cause harm to defence, invade an individual's privacy, or if it would take an unreasonable diversion of resources to respond to a request. Information is supplied wherever possible providing it does not fall under one of the exemptions in the Code. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 will supersede the Code when it comes into force in 2005.

You also mentioned access to documents concerning the alleged 'UFO' incident at Rendlesham Forest. The papers the MOD holds on this incident were initially released to a member of the public in May 2001 following a request made under the Code. In November 2002 the MOD launched its Freedom of Information Publication Scheme and recognising the public interest in this event we ensured that these documents were included in the Scheme. They can be accessed via the internet at [www.foi.mod.uk](http://www.foi.mod.uk). A search for "Rendlesham Forest" will lead to the relevant documents or alternatively a search for "UFO" will show all the classes of information on UFOs in the Scheme. We are currently conducting a review of all the UFO related documents the MOD holds with a view to making further material available via the Publication Scheme in the near future.

Finally, with regard to your comment that it would be wrong for the MOD to deny the existence of 'unexplained phenomena' if we hold information to the contrary. You may wish to be aware that the MOD does not have any expertise or role in respect of 'UFO/flying saucer' matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains totally open-minded. I should add that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

Just put  
P & En



ufos

/E-MAIL

**TREAT OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE**

To DAS(LA) P.P  
cc.

TO Ref No 1489 /2004

Date 19 FEB 04

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

The Prime Minister/SofS/Min(AF)/Min(DP)/USofS/MOD\* has received the attached correspondence from a member of the public, which this office has neither retained nor acknowledged. Please send a reply on behalf of the PM/Minister/Department\*.

Ministers attach great importance to correspondence being answered promptly, and your reply should be sent **within 15 working days of the above date**. If, exceptionally, this should prove impossible, an interim reply should be sent within the same timescale. You should be aware that No 10 periodically calls for a sample of letters sent by officials on the PM's behalf for his perusal.

An 'Open Government Code of Practice on Access to Government Information' came into force in 1997. All replies to members of the public must be in accordance with the procedures set out in the Code. In particular, information can only be withheld if it falls within the scope of a particular exemption. However, some exemptions are subject to a 'public interest test', whereby the harm associated with disclosure must be weighed against the public interest in release. Applicants must be informed of any decision to apply an exemption and of their right to appeal against this decision by writing to D Info(Exp). A full explanation is contained in DCI(Gen) 232/01; further information is available from DG Info on **Section 40**.

It is vital that branches ensure they have simple systems to record and track correspondence received from members of the public. This information should be regularly monitored and reviewed against the targets for answering correspondence published in the Spending Review 2000 Service Delivery Agreement for the Ministry of Defence. In addition, we are required to keep information on the number of **requests for information that specifically refer to the Code of Practice**.

**As part of our monitoring procedure, random spot checks on the accuracy of your branch records on correspondence will be performed throughout the year.**

**Ministerial Correspondence Unit**

Room 222, Old War Office Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2EU

t: **Section 40** or **Section 40**

f: **Section 40** CHOTs: Ministerial Correspondence; e: [ministers@defence.mod.uk](mailto:ministers@defence.mod.uk).

Detailed guidance on handling TO Correspondence can be found on dNet at [http://main.chots.mod.uk/min\\_parl/ParlBrch/TOGuid.htm](http://main.chots.mod.uk/min_parl/ParlBrch/TOGuid.htm) If you do not have access to dNet, please inform the Ministerial Correspondence Unit.

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

\* Delete as appropriate.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

**Ministers**

---

**From:** Section 40  
**Sent:** 17 February 2004 21:45  
**To:** public@ministers.mod.uk  
**Subject:** Matters of national security  
To whom it may concern,

This e-mail is a brief enquiry into why the MOD chooses/or is forced to suppress information concerning unexplained phenomena?

People of reasonable intelligence greet extraordinary claims with scepticism, requiring more than mere anecdotal 'pseudo-evidence' to convince them of the claims' reliability. Paranormal conspirators undermine the integrity of organisations like the MOD. By creating a veil of secrecy on matters of unexplained phenomena and by refusing to even consider the possibility of the prevalence of such phenomena the MOD instils a sense of distrust even within sceptics. Would it not be simpler to grant unlimited, full access to government files concerning unexplained events, e.g. the Rendlesham forest incident to respected, multi-disciplinary research scientists? These scientists would need to be as impartial as possible (i.e. limited involvement or allegiance to the government) as to prevent the potential for corruption and/or misinformation. Such a scheme would finally settle the matter once and for all. If the result negatively impacted on the audacious claims of conspirators then at least a degree of resolution would be achieved and our right to freedom of information would be ratified.

Denying the existence of unexplained phenomena is inherently wrong if the MOD has information to the contrary; to deny people knowledge of momentous discoveries would be a heinous crime.

Regards,

Section 40

Abergele,  
Conwy.

Section 40

---

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From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3a



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue,  
London WC2N 3BP

Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**

---

**Section 40**

Folkestone  
Kent

**Section 40**

Your Reference:

Our Reference:  
D/DAS/64/3

Date:  
23 February 2004

---

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letter dated 27 January in which you requested a listing of all UFO reports for 2004. Please find attached a list as requested.

I hope this will be of help.

Yours sincerely

**Section 40**



DATE	TIME	PLACE	DETAILS OF SIGHTING
02/01/04	04.30	Ayr	Square red object, pinkish at front, at a low angle and as fast as a fighter jet.
09/01/04	18.00	Market Harborough, Leicestershire	One large black triangular aircraft with three bright lights in triangle formation. A rumbling sound.
09/01/04	10.30	Thaxted, Essex	Saw a strange light for one and a half hours.
12/01/04	16.30	Huddersfield	Round object with white lights all round it over Huddersfield, area, in S W direction.
27/01/04	21.00	Bretton, Peterborough	Four dull red lights above the house.
28/01/04	18.30	Peterborough, Cambridgeshire	Saw flashing green lights – 1000 – 5000 ft, over Fylingdales towards Pickering.
28/01/04	20.00	Kidderminster, Shropshire	Five unidentified lights flying in formation.
04/02/04	06.15	Grosmont, Yorkshire	Object – soundless pair of lights. One white and one yellow.
08/02/04	23.00	Ely, Cambridgeshire	Four lights, one brighter than the others. Sometimes fading.
11/02/04	21.05	Holbeach, Lincs.	Two objects described as a fast pair of speeding lights with no noise.



✓

UFOMEK  
UFO MONITORS EAST KENT

Section 40 [REDACTED] Folkestone, Kent Section 40 [REDACTED]

Tel: Section 40 [REDACTED]

e-mail: Section 40 [REDACTED]

Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE,  
Romm 6/73,  
Metropole Building,  
Northumberland Avenue,  
London,  
SW2N 5BP.

27 January, 2004.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you to request if it would be possible for you to forward me a listing of all reports of UFO sightings, that were reported to your Department during the year 2004?

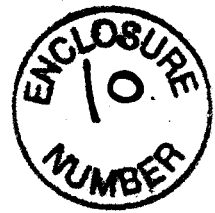
Many thanks for your cooperation with regard to this matter.

Section 40 [REDACTED]

Director of Research / Investigations UFOMEK.



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3a



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue,  
London WC2N 3BP

Telephone (Direct dial) 0171 218 2140  
(Switchboard) 0171 218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**

**Section 40**

Newmarket  
Suffolk

**Section 40**

Your Reference:

Our Reference:  
D/DAS/64/3

Date:  
16 February 2004

Dear **Section 40**

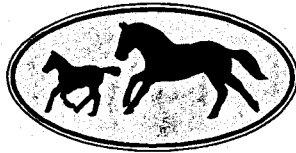
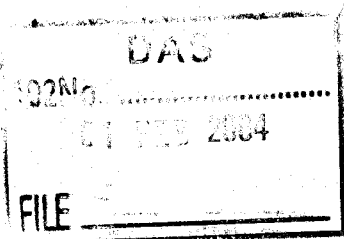
Thank you for your letter dated 5 February concerning 'unidentified flying objects'.

You will be aware from our previous correspondence that the MOD examines the UFO reports, sent to us solely to establish whether they present any evidence of a breach of UK airspace by unauthorised aircraft. Once it is established that this is not the case, we do not attempt to identify what the public has seen. We do not have any expertise or role in respect of 'UFO/flying saucer' matters to the question or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which we remain totally open minded. I should add that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena. I therefore have nothing to add to our previous correspondence.

As requested I have sent back your original reports, and your letter has, been placed on our files.

Yours sincerely

**Section 40**



Section 40  
Newmarket,  
Suffolk Section 40

From Section 40  
Tel [REDACTED]

5.2.04.

REF D/DAS/64/3

Dear Sir/Madam

Section 40

Thank you for replying to my letter, my sighting which was as clear as looking at any other object it was not The Russian Space Station.

I have enclosed my original brief copy of notes and what I sketched of the craft with brief details of the people I contacted.

On this original copy, from 1995 is my old address, also I was sketching the outline of the craft, and the rear engines did not seem important. The craft was also glowing a beautiful bluish white.

The technology and beautifulness of the craft was far in advance of the Shuttle. My brain rattles every time I think of it, and my head feels as though it can't cope with what I witnessed.

Please return my original copy, although I have now photo copied it.

I am not some kind of nut, but just a level headed person who knows what he saw, and the explanations I am given just do not add up to the actual sighting.

Yours faithfully

Section 40

P.S. I HOPE I AM NOT BEING A NUISANCE.

every body reads about little green men and flashing lights but what I encountered was something 100% reality.

In mid October 1995 I had just put my car away in the garage, when I looked up into the night sky, with it being such a clear night with a lot of visible stars, I spent a few seconds star gazing.

Looking into the sky in a western direction, I was looking at what I thought was a bright star, but it was moving towards me in an easterly direction about the height of a satellite, I often gaze into the night sky trying to pick out satellite's in orbit and have seen quite a few over the years.

Tracking this bright light until it was directly overhead I was taken aback in shock and said to myself, oh my God what am I looking at, a space craft glowing illuminous blue white, with every detail possible, the whole craft was this beautiful luminous colour, the technology was far in excess of anything that we are able to comprehend. No flashing lights, no navigational lights, no windows, a space craft of unbelievable dimensions. After a few seconds when it had gone out of sight, I went into the bungalow and said to my wife I have just seen a space ship. For the next few days everytime I thought about what I had seen, my heart beat quickened and raced away.

I am 54 years old and very level headed, I contacted NASA in Florida to see if the Shuttle was in orbit over England the reply was - no. I also contacted RAPCON at the American base near Newmarket, they had had nothing on radar, I also contacted the MOD, and received a letter saying that there are sightings that can not be explained.

I also contacted the UFO society and one of the persons suggested that I may have been looking at something from a different dimension.

I wish it had of been the shuttle, and it would have put my mind at rest, and I know as long as I live I will never see another sight like it. I have been to Florida and seen a Shuttle, so how do you explain to people when there are so many doubters, as to what you have actually seen is something so far ahead of us in technology, a truly awe inspiring sight, something from a different dimension.

WRITED IN 1996 TO AN ADVERT ON UFO.

NO REPLY RECEIVED.

24<sup>th</sup> OCT

6.30 PM.

✓✓

SIGHTING

Section 40

Section 40

Section 40

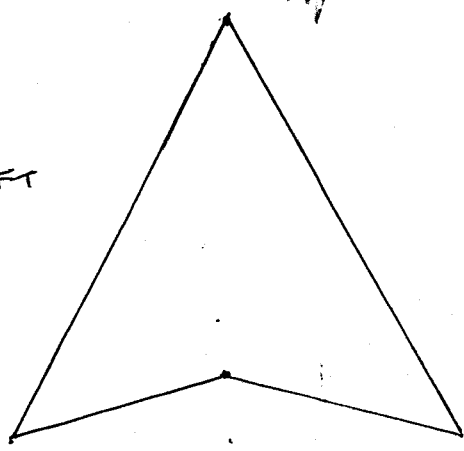
HOME OFFICE

NEWMARKET, SUFFOLK.

FAX  
Section 40

PARKING MY CAR IN THE GARAGE BLOCK AND LOOKING UP INTO THE NIGHT SKY WHICH WAS VERY CLEAR I NOTICED A BRIGHT OBJECT, FAR TOO HIGH FOR AN AIRCRAFT TRAVELLING FROM A WESTERN DIRECTION TO THE EAST. I PRESUMED IT WAS A SATALITE. KEEPING THE BRIGHT OBJECT IN MY SIGHT UNTIL IT WAS DIRECTLY OVERHEAD, THEN IT WAS A DEFINATE PROMINENT SHAPE OF A CRAFT GLOWING LUMINOUS WHITE THE ENTIRE CRAFT WAS LUMINOUS WHITE, THERE WERE NO N I GATIONAL LIGHTS AS ON AN AIRCRAFT. AFTER OBSERVING THE CRAFT FOR A FEW SECONDS, IT DISSAPEARED OUT OF SIGHT. MY EYESIGHT FOR DISTANT OBJECTS IS FIRST CLASS. I AM 54 YEARS OF AGE.

SHAPE OF CRAFT FROM UNDERNEATH ENTIRE AREA OF CRAFT GLOWING, WAS IT A SHUTTLE?



NORFOLK

REPORTED TO

Section 40

? BRITISH U.F.O. SOCIETY

FAX NO

Section 40

BOFFIN REPORT NEWMARKET

SOMETHING FROM A DIFFERENT DIMENSION.

Regards.

Section 40

N.A.S.A. REPORTED BACK TO ME NO SHUTTLE IN ORBIT OVER U.K.  
 R.A.P.C.O.N. NO SIGHTING.  
 M.O.D. " "



Royal Mail  
Cambridge

Please



M.O.D.

ROOM 6/73

METROPOLE BUILDING

NORTHUMBRELAND AVE

LONDON

WC2N 5BP

(P.O. Box 701)

WC2N 8BG





From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone

(Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)  
(GTN)

020 7218 2140  
020 7218 9000

**Section 40**

**Section 40**

Brighton  
East Sussex

**Section 40**

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3

Date  
19 February 2004

Dear **Section 40**

I am writing concerning your e-mail message to the MOD press office of 6 February, regarding reports of 'unidentified flying objects'. Your questions have been passed to me as this department is the focal point within the MOD for correspondence regarding UFO matters. First, let me assure you the MOD takes all enquiries from members of the public on this subject seriously. I will now answer your questions in the same order as your letter.

**Who reports and by what method?.**

Most UFO reports are made by members of the public, with occasional reports from Policemen, civilian aircrew, military personnel and air traffic controllers. These reports arrive by letter, e-mail, fax message and telephone.

**Are reports by service personnel and civilians?**

Yes. See above.

**Are all reports available to the public?**

Information over 30 years old is available for public inspection at The National Archive (formerly the Public Record Office). Reports less than 30 years old are not fully open to the public, but the MOD operates in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (the Code). This means that information can be requested and is supplied wherever possible providing it does not fall under one of the exemptions in the Code. These exemptions refer to information whose disclosure would for example, cause harm to defence, invade an individual's privacy, or if it would take an unreasonable diversion of resources to respond to a request.

**Do they have classifications, i.e. by type, location, range etc?**

UFO reports are filed in the order in which they are received and are not given classifications.

**Are objects seen close to, or resting upon the ground, included?**

We receive reports of sightings of various phenomena such as lights in the sky, cigar shaped or triangular objects etc. Various movements are reported from flying at fast speeds to landing.

**Unauthorised air activity. How is this categorised, specifically?**

This term refers to aircraft that have not been authorised or have no legitimate reason to be operating in UK airspace.

**Reports – Supply typical date / number / classification.**

Reports are not categorised in this way. I am sorry that the press office may have misled you by saying that reports are given a date / number. I am afraid this is not the case.

**Does the MOD investigate any at all, if so by which service?**

As part of our assessment of reports this office contacts, as required, the appropriate Departmental air defence experts.

**What factors determine ‘evidence of a potential threat’?**

The integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous surveillance of the UK Air Policing Area by the Royal Air Force. This is achieved by using a combination of civil and military radar installations, which provide a continuous real-time “picture” of the UK airspace. Any threat to the UK Air Defence Region (such as from hostile aircraft or weapons) would be handled in the light of the particular circumstances at the time and it might if deemed appropriate, involve the scrambling or diversion of air defence aircraft.

**Rendlesham – Why is the word ‘alleged’ used in relation to these events?**

This term does not suggest that we believe Lieutenant Colonel Halt or any others serving at RAF Bentwaters or RAF Woodbridge at the time were being untruthful about their experiences, but neither can we explain exactly what these people saw. Many people over the past 23 years have claimed to have been involved with this event and many different accounts have emerged. We therefore use the word ‘alleged’ to reflect this.

**Does ‘all available substantiated evidence’ include radar returns?**

Yes. RAF Neatishead and Eastern Radar were asked to check radar observations for the relevant time. Neither had anything unusual to report.

**The phrase ‘no indication that a breach of the UK’s air defences had occurred’ is misleading, since it ignores visual sighting evidence by military personnel.**

Visual sightings of unidentified aerial activity, even when observed by military personnel, does not mean that UK air defences have been compromised. As mentioned above the RAF continually police UK airspace and respond to any threats as appropriate. Lieutenant Colonel Halt’s memorandum was passed to the military authorities with responsibility for air defence matters at the time and they concluded that there was nothing of defence interest.

**Have any UK military personnel submitted reports on these events?**

No. The RAF Commander of RAF Bentwaters forwarded Lieutenant Colonel Halt’s memorandum to the Ministry of Defence with a covering letter. He did not, however, make a report himself.

With regard to your interest in the Rendlesham Forest incident, you may wish to be aware that the papers the MOD holds, have been included in the MOD Freedom of Information Publication Scheme and can be found at [www.foi.mod.uk](http://www.foi.mod.uk).

Also, I understand that you have recently sent the press office a further e-mail asking whether UFO reports have been copied to electronic storage. Current records are still held in paper form but we are moving towards electronic storage later this year, so future records will be kept in this way.

Finally, I am experiencing some problems with my e-mail address at present, but if required, I can be contacted at the address at the head of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

To: D News RAF  
Subject: RE: Section 40 & UFOs

Section 40

Section 40 has written to his MP and I have just drafted a reply. I am working my way through the questions he sent you in his last e-mail, so I will add this to it. I am having problems with my external e-mail at the moment, but when he receives my letter he might start corresponding with me instead of you.

Section 40

-----Original Message-----

From: D News RAF  
Sent: 17 February 2004 11:46  
To: DAS-Sec3  
Subject: RE: Mr Deacon & UFOs

Section 40

Many thanks for letting me know. It came straight from the lines that I was given when I took over, so I will amend them appropriately.  
Received another e-mail from Section 40 yesterday, asking if the files held on UFO reports have been copied to electronic storage - grateful if you could answer.  
Many thanks.

Section 40

-----Original Message-----

From: DAS-Sec3  
Sent: 17 February 2004 11:38  
To: D News RAF  
Subject: Section 40 & UFOs

Section 40

I see in para 3 of your previous e-mail to Section 40 about UFOs you have said "each report is given a date/number". I do not know where this has come from because they are not given a unique number of any sort but are filed purely in the order in which we receive them. Section 40 has now asked for an example of this numbering system, so I will have to admit to him that that was a mistake. Just so you know not to say that to anyone else.

Section 40

DAS-Sec3

Section 40

D News AF

**From:** Section 40  
**Sent:** 06 February 2004 11:52  
**To:** press@dgics.mod.uk  
**Subject:** Queries arising from MOD response of 29/01/04

Sir,

Thank you for your e-mail in reply to my enquiry. I now find that I have more questions, since it is obvious that the MOD does not take this subject very seriously.

There are queries arising from each paragraph of your response, as follows;

Para.2. Reports. Who reports and by what method.

Are reports by service personnel and civilians

Are all reports available to the public

Do they have classifications, i.e. by type, location, range etc.

Are objects seen close to, or resting upon the ground, included.

Unauthorised air activity: How is this categorised, specifically.

Para.3. Reports. Supply typical date/number/ classification.

Does MOD investigate any at all, if so by which service.

What factors determine 'evidence of a potential threat'.

Para.4. Rendlesham.

Why is the word 'alleged' used in relation to the events.

Does 'all available substantiated evidence' include radar returns.

The phrase '- no indication that a breach of the UK's air defences had occurred' is misleading, since it ignores visual sighting evidence by military personnel.

Have any UK military personnel submitted reports on these events.

I realise that these questions may be difficult to answer, but the MOD must have some staff engaged in the investigation of these events.

Thank you

Section 40

Section 40

Brighton,  
 East Sussex.

Section 40

06/02/2004

## D News AF

---

**From:** D News AF [press@dgics.mod.uk]  
**Sent:** 29 January 2004 09:51  
**To:** Section 40  
**Subject:** MOD Response

Dear Section 40

Thank you for your e-mail of 10 January 2004 following the BBC Documentary 'Britain's X-Files' broadcast on January 9 2004. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

The MOD examines any reports of 'unexplained' aerial sightings it receives solely to establish whether what was seen could have defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the UK's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity.

Each 'UFO' report is given a date/number, however, unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the UK from an external military source the MOD does not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. It is possible that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for these sightings but it is not for the MOD to provide this kind of aerial investigation service. We could not justify expenditure of public funds on investigations which go beyond our specific defence remit.

When the MOD was informed of the events which are alleged to have occurred at Rendlesham Forest in December 1980, all available substantiated evidence would have been looked at in the usual manner by those within the MOD responsible for air defence matters. It was judged that there was no indication that a breach of the UK's air defences had occurred on the nights in question and no further investigation into the matter was deemed necessary. Although a number of allegations have subsequently been made about these reported events, nothing has emerged which has given us reason to believe that the original assessment was incorrect. All the known documents held by the MOD concerning this matter have now been released to the public in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Yours sincerely,

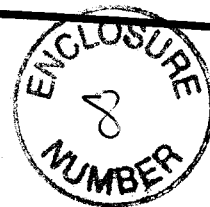
Section 40  
Squadron Leader  
D News RAF

Section 40

DAS-Sec3

Subject:

D News RAF  
Press Enquiries on UFOs



Section 40

I have received two enquiries on UFO matters direct from the press. One left a message on our answerphone and one called the public low flying complaints line. I do not normally deal direct with the press so would be grateful if someone in the press office could contact the following. I attach a few lines which can be given to both of them.



1) Section 40

Editor  
Thame News  
Jordan's Courtyard  
8 Upper High Street  
Thame  
Oxfordshire  
OX9 3ER  
Tel: Section 40  
e-mail: editor@thamenews.net

Note:  
The Press Office left a message on Section 40 answerphone. There have been no further calls. 12/2/2004

She left a message on the DAS UFO answerphone concerning a loud noise, like an air balloon heard in the area in the early hours of 2 December.

2) Section 40  
Flame TV Company  
Section 40

Note: Press Office called Section 40. Resolved over the phone using lines to take provided. NFA. 12/2/2004

Telephoned our Low Flying complaints line and said his company are making a programme about UFOs. No further details given. Please inform him that if he needs any further information, we would be happy to answer his questions if he would like to send them by fax or e-mail via yourselves.

Thanks for your help.

Section 40  
DAS-Sec3  
MT6/73 Section 40



**Call to DAS Low Flying Complaints and enquiry line from  
the following who are making a programme about UFOs.  
No other details given. Would like someone to call him back.**

Section 40

**Flame TV Company**

Section 40



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone (Direct dial) 020 7218 2140  
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**  
(GTN)

**Section 40**

Newmarket  
Suffolk

**Section 40**

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3

Date  
2 February 2004

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letter of 13<sup>th</sup> January concerning your UFO sighting in October 1995.

As you may be aware from our previous correspondence, the Ministry of Defence does not have any expertise or role in respect of 'UFO/flying saucer' matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains totally open-minded. I should add that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

The sole reason the MOD examines the UFO reports it receives is to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source, and to date no 'UFO' report has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. We believe it is possible that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them, but it is not the function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. We could not justify expenditure of public funds on investigations which go beyond our specific defence remit

With regard to your comments concerning the possibility that you may have seen a Space Shuttle, I have made enquiries with RAF Fylingdales who are responsible for tracking Space objects, such as Satellites and Space debris. They have informed us that although there was a Shuttle in orbit on 24 October 1995, the orbital inclination means that it would not have been visible from Newmarket. The largest object in low Earth orbit that day was the Russian Space Station MIR which would have been visible from Newmarket on at least one pass per day at very high elevation and it is therefore possible that this could have been what you observed.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**

## DAS-Sec3

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**From:** D UK-SO1 AIR OPS 2  
**Sent:** 30 January 2004 16:15  
**To:** DAS-Sec3  
**Subject:** FW: Internet-authorized: RE: Space Craft

### Section 40

You may release all the information in the e-mail below from Fylingdales.

I also spoke to OC Ops at Fylingdales and he would be more than happy to host a visit to the Station of yourself and/or the people behind the questions. If you'd like to go...just let me know, or just add Squadron Leader [Section 40] [Section 40] as Officer Commanding Operations at RAF Fylingdales [Section 40] to your reply.

### Section 40

D UK, SO1 Air Ops 2  
MT 466  
Ext [Section 40]

-----Original Message-----

**From:** FYL-Ops-OC  
**Sent:** 30 January 2004 14:10  
**To:** 'D UK-SO1 AIR OPS 2'  
**Subject:** Internet-authorized: RE: Space Craft

### Section 40

As far as tracking the Space Shuttle is concerned, the answer has to be "it depends on the orbital inclination". Shuttle missions have used 28, 39, 51.6 and 57 Degree inclinations. Fylingdales cannot normally track objects (at normal Shuttle operating height) lower than 40 Degree inclination. When the shuttles are launched into an orbit that we can see, we are used by the Launch Controller to confirm that they have safely entered orbit, as we are the first radar that they fly past as they launch from Florida over the Atlantic.

Turning to the second part of the question; there was a Shuttle in orbit on 24 October 1995, but this was in a 39 Degree inclination orbit and would theoretically only be visible from Newmarket at very low elevation (1 or 2 Degrees), and long range (1700 KM). In other words the chances of visibility from the ground are virtually nil.

No satellites decayed in the Earth's atmosphere on 24 October 1995.

The largest object in low Earth orbit that day would have been the Russian Space Station MIR (object 16609). This was in a 51.6 Degree inclination orbit (which would take it up to 51.6 North latitude) and would have been visible from Newmarket on at least one pass per day at very high elevation (say, 50 to 80 degrees). We could calculate the times of the passes by going back over the Orbital Element Sets, but it would be a bit of a long winded and time consuming job.

Otherwise we have no log book (or human recollection) events for that time and place.

Hope this info is of some use,

### Section 40

Sqn Ldr  
OC Ops

-----Original Message-----

**From:** D UK-SO1 AIR OPS 2  
**Sent:** 29 January 2004 17:38  
**To:** FYL-Ops-OC  
**Cc:** DAS-Sec3; 3GP-C2SPT DACCS  
**Subject:** FW: Space Craft

**Importance:** High

Section 40

Please could you work your magic on the questions below?

Thanks in anticipation.

Section 40

D UK, SO1 Air Ops 2

MT 466

Ext Section 40

-----Original Message-----

**From:** DAS-Sec3  
**Sent:** 29 January 2004 16:40  
**To:** D UK-SO1 AIR OPS 2  
**Subject:** Space Craft

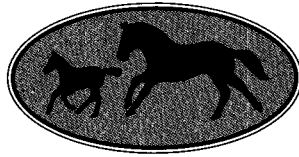
Section 40

Could you let me know if Fylingdales can track the Space Shuttle?. Also is it possible for them to check their records for anything over Newmarket, Suffolk on 24 October 1995.

Sorry to ask daft questions, but thats the public for you!

Section 40

DAS-Sec3a



Section 40  
Newmarket,  
Suffolk Section 40

Your Ref D/Sec<AS>/64/3 - 30th Oct 95

Section 40

13th Jan 04.

Dear Sir/Madam

Last week I watched a programme regarding UFO's with appropriate sightings from level headed people, and I was at a loss, as to why my sighting was not given a good enough explanation or follow up from who ever it is that deals in these matters.

My sighting as previously explained, which is still implanted into my brain on nearly a daily basis was as follows - No flashing lights - No little green men - No Flying Saucer but an incredulous technologically built SPACE SHIP built on similar lines to the Shuttle but far more advanced glowing a beautiful Blue/Grey with no Navigational lights in Total Orbit travelling West to East in Orbit. - NO - engine noise No vapour trail.

Just a beautiful Space Ship in Orbit on a dark Crystal Clear October night in 1995.

This is exactly what I saw lasting a total of four to five minutes.

I had just put my car away in the garage block, about fifty yards away from the bungalow we were then living in, it was a dark crystal clear night with clear visibility, and the night sky a mass of stars in vision.

As I very often gaze into the night sky looking for Sattelites in orbit, which nearly always come from a different direction, I was taken aback by this bright light shining amongst the Stars it was obvious, that it was not a Star, but this bright light was moving towards me in an easterly direction from the west.

As I was walking towards my bungalow, but never taking my eyes of this bright light, until it was directly above my head, I was taken aback in shock and said to myself Oh' my God what am I looking at, A Space Craft glowing a beautiful Blue/Grey/White luminous colour built by technology far ahead of any Shuttle. - I have seen the Shuttle in Florida and also been to Kennedy Space Centre so I do not know what a Shuttle looks like, and living in close proximity to the American Air Bases and having been in the RAF I do not know what Aircraft look like.

The Object I saw was a SPACE SHIP.

I stood watching the Space Ship in Orbit until it went out of sight in an easterly direction.

The engines were mounted at the rear of the craft. What a beautiful sight implanted into my brain.

Who do I see to get regressed back to the day of sighting.

When I went into the bungalow I said to my wife, I have just seen a Space ship, of course she did not believe me, but for the next few days and even to this day when I think of what I saw my heart races away beating very fast.

I am a none drinker, none smoker so it takes a lot for my heart beat to race.

Being of level head and sound mind I contacted NASA in Florida to see if the Shuttle was in Orbit over England the answer was no.

I then contacted RAPCON at Lakenheath, they had nothing on Radar.

If it had been the Shuttle I could have accepted it, writing this letter my heart is racing away at a fast beat of knots because I am remembering the exact sighting from 1995 all brought on again because of last weeks TV programme.

I could certainly do with an intelligent explanation, the explanation I got from the UFO society was that I may have been looking at something from a different dimension, is it possible.

The letter I recieved from your department in 1995 tried to fob me off with an explanation of weather ballons - search lights - lazars refecting- do my intellgence with a little bit better of an explanation.

I know it is difficult for those who have not witnessed a sighting, to try and dismiss sightings with simple explanatary terms.

But what I saw was a SPACE SHIP - NOT a FLYING SAUCER - WITH LITTLE GREEN MEN or FLASHING LIGHTS.

Please get somebody to regress me.

Yours faithfully

Section 40





From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone	(Direct dial)	020 7218 2140
	(Switchboard)	020 7218 9000
	(Fax)	<b>Section 40</b>
	(GTN)	

**Section 40**  
DGP Productions  
Portland House  
12-13 Greek Street  
London  
W1V 4DL

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3  
Date  
28 January 2004

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> December 2003 concerning Ministry of Defence procedures for dealing with the possibility of extra-terrestrial lifeforms visiting earth. I apologise for the delay in replying.

First, it might be helpful if I explain that the Ministry of Defence does not have any expertise or role in respect of 'UFO/flying saucer' matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains totally open-minded. I should add that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena.

With regard to the integrity of the United Kingdom's airspace in peacetime, this is maintained through continuous surveillance of the UK Air Policing Area by the Royal Air Force and is achieved by using a combination of civil and military radar installations, which provide a continuous real-time "picture" of the UK airspace. Any threat to the UK Air Policing Area would be handled in the light of the particular circumstances at the time (it might if deemed appropriate, involve the scrambling or diversion of air defence aircraft). From that perspective, any reports of 'unidentified flying objects' received by the MOD are examined solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source, and to date no 'UFO' report has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. We believe it is possible that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them, but it is not the function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. We could not justify expenditure of public funds on investigations which go beyond our specific defence remit.



As for your comments concerning reports of the discovery of extraterrestrial artefacts, to date, we have not received any such reports. However, in the event of such an occurrence, the MOD might ask the local Police force to make initial enquiries and if necessary, may arrange for the object to be removed for further examination.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Section 40

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***



LOW FLYING UPOS / E-MAIL ✓

(E-MAIL)

**TREAT OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE**

To DAS(LA)P+P

TO Ref No 10987 /2003

cc.

Date 12<sup>th</sup> Dec 2003

The Prime Minister/SofS/Min(AF)/Min(DP)/USofS/MOD\* has received the attached correspondence from a member of the public, which this office has neither retained nor acknowledged. Please send a reply on behalf of the PM/Minister/Department\*.

Ministers attach great importance to correspondence being answered promptly, and your reply should be sent **within 15 working days of the above date**. If, exceptionally, this should prove impossible, an interim reply should be sent within the same timescale. You should be aware that No 10 periodically calls for a sample of letters sent by officials on the PM's behalf for his perusal.

An 'Open Government Code of Practice on Access to Government Information' came into force in 1997. All replies to members of the public must be in accordance with the procedures set out in the Code. In particular, information can only be withheld if it falls within the scope of a particular exemption. However, some exemptions are subject to a 'public interest test', whereby the harm associated with disclosure must be weighed against the public interest in release. Applicants must be informed of any decision to apply an exemption and of their right to appeal against this decision by writing to D Info(Exp). A full explanation is contained in DCI(Gen) 232/01; further information is available from DG Info on **Section 40**.

It is vital that branches ensure they have simple systems to record and track correspondence received from members of the public. This information should be regularly monitored and reviewed against the targets for answering correspondence published in the Spending Review 2000 Service Delivery Agreement for the Ministry of Defence. In addition, we are required to keep information on the number of **requests for information that specifically refer to the Code of Practice**.

**As part of our monitoring procedure, random spot checks on the accuracy of your branch records on correspondence will be performed throughout the year.**

**Ministerial Correspondence Unit**

Room 222, Old War Office Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2EU

t: **Section 40** or **Section 40**

f: **Section 40**; CHOtS: Ministerial Correspondence; e: [ministers@defence.mod.uk](mailto:ministers@defence.mod.uk).

Detailed guidance on handling TO Correspondence can be found on dNet at [http://main.chots.mod.uk/min\\_parl/ParlBrch/TOGuid.htm](http://main.chots.mod.uk/min_parl/ParlBrch/TOGuid.htm) If you do not have access to dNet, please inform the Ministerial Correspondence Unit.

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

\* Delete as appropriate.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

12<sup>th</sup> December 2003

Dear Sirs,

We are a TV production company and hope you may be able to assist our research for a proposed documentary film.

Since the early 1960s, the Search for ExtraTerrestrial Intelligence (SETI) has become a legitimate scientific pursuit endorsed by the IAU (International Astronomical Union). Britain's Jodrell Bank telescope plays a key role in search activities. Such work has led to speculation as to the various potential detection/contact scenarios and the implications of such a discovery.

Scientists no longer discount the possibility of an extraterrestrial artifact or spaceship visiting Earth (there is no suggestion this has already happened, contrary to the wild speculations of UFO proponents). Since the arrival of an extraterrestrial artifact would have profound implications, especially for the country it arrived in, what thinking or protocols have the Ministry of Defence (or its contractors and think-tanks) developed for such a scenario? If absolutely no work has been done in this area, why not? And in the eventuality of such an encounter, who would ultimately be responsible for co-ordinating an appropriate response?

Remarkably there is a precedent for this. On September 4th 1967, apprentices of the RAE (Royal Aircraft Establishment) staged an elaborate rag-stunt, building six small 'flying saucers' and depositing them at various locations across Southern England (all along the 51.5 degree line of latitude).

Immediate response and investigations involved large numbers of officers from five county police forces (including the Met'), Scotland Yard's bomb squad, the RAF (who dispatched personnel to at least three of the sites including a SAR helicopter scramble), USAF personnel, the Army's Southern Command (who opened one of the objects via a controlled explosion), Aldermaston Atomic weapons Facility (who conducted an analysis of the contents of one of the saucers) and Defence Intelligence Staff based at the Metropole Building.

DIS staffers Flt Lt. **Section 40** and Wing Commander **Section 40** have both confirmed to me that initially the possibility the objects may have been extraterrestrial artifacts was considered seriously. Flt Lt. **Section 40** also confirmed that there was 'no manual' to cover such an eventuality. And indeed the response was poorly co-ordinated.

I would appreciate any assistance you can offer regarding this research. Thank you for your kind attention and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,



**Section 40**

DGP Productions  
Portland House  
12-13 Greek St  
London W1V 4DL

**Section 40**

**Ministers**

---

**From:** Section 40  
**Sent:** 12 December 2003 09:37  
**To:** public@ministers.mod.uk  
**Subject:** RESEARCH

Dear Sirs,

Please see attached.

regards,

Section 40



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone

(Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)  
(GTN)

020 7218 2140  
020 7218 9000

**Section 40**

**Section 40**

Brooklyn  
New York  
USA

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3  
Date  
29 January 2004

Dear **Section 40**

I am writing with reference to the messages you left on our answerphone on the 8<sup>th</sup> January concerning the television programme you saw about 'unidentified flying objects'. This office is the focal point within the Ministry of Defence for correspondence relating to 'UFOs.'

First, it may be helpful if I explain that the Ministry of Defence examines any reports of 'unidentified flying objects' it receives solely to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. Unless there is evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom from an external military source, and to date no 'UFO' report has revealed such evidence, we do not attempt to identify the precise nature of each reported sighting. We believe it is possible that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them, but it is not the function of the MOD to provide this kind of aerial identification service. We could not justify expenditure of public funds on investigations which go beyond our specific defence remit.

With regard to the programme you saw, I believe that this was about an alleged UFO incident at Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk in December 1980. When the Ministry of Defence was informed of these events, all available substantiated evidence was looked at in the usual manner by those within the MOD/RAF with responsibility for air defence matters. The judgement was that there was no indication that a breach of the United Kingdom's air defences had occurred on the nights in question. As there was no evidence to substantiate an event of defence concern no further investigation into the matter was necessary. Although a number of allegations have subsequently been made about these reported events, nothing has emerged over the last 23 years which has given us reason to believe that the original assessment made by this Department was incorrect. The official MOD papers on this incident were released as part of our Freedom of Information Publication Scheme and can be found on the internet at [www.foi.mod.uk](http://www.foi.mod.uk). A search under *Rendlesham Forest* will take you to them, or alternatively, if you would like to see all the classes of information about UFOs in the Scheme, please search under *UFO*.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**

## REPORT OF AN UNEXPLAINED AERIAL SIGHTING

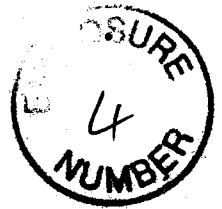
1.	<b>Date and time of sighting.</b> (Duration of sighting.)	6 November 1977
2.	<b>Description of object.</b> (No of objects, size, shape, colour, brightness, noise.)	Similar to that described on recent Sci-fi TV channel programme about Rendlesham Forrest incident in 1980.
3.	<b>Exact position of observer.</b> <b>Geographical location.</b> (Indoors/outdoors, stationary/moving.)	Hovering, but was agile and mobile. Jiggled about, traced a doodle pattern then shot off.
4.	<b>How object was observed.</b> (Naked eye, binoculars, other optical device, camera or camcorder.)	Naked eye, but was also filmed by his brother.
5.	<b>Direction in which object was first seen.</b> (A landmark may be more helpful than a roughly estimated bearing.)	Not given
6.	<b>Approximate distance.</b>	Not given
7.	<b>Movements and speed.</b> (side to side, up or down, constant, moving fast, slow)	Hovering
8.	<b>Weather conditions during observation.</b> (cloudy, haze, mist, clear)	Not given

9.	<b>To whom reported.</b> (Police, military, press etc)	Message left on DAS answerphone on 8 January 2004. At time of sighting he reported it to the Leicester Mercury newspaper who published an article on their front page on 7 November 1977 showing his brother who filmed it.
10.	<b>Name, address and telephone no of informant.</b>	<p>Section 40</p> <p>Brooklyn New York USA</p> <p>Tel: Section 40</p>
11.	<b>Other witnesses.</b>	His three brothers, mother and a friend
12.	<b>Remarks.</b>	<p>Section 40 made this call after seeing a programme on a cable Sci-fi channel in the US about the Rendlesham Forest incident. This was possibly a programme called "UFO encounter at Rendlesham" which was shown on the Sky One channel in the UK on the 5 January 2004.</p>
13.	<b>Date and time of receipt.</b>	8 January 2004 11.18L





From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone (Direct dial) 020 7218 2140  
(Switchboard) 020 7218 9000  
(Fax) **Section 40**  
(GTN)

**Section 40**

Stanhope  
New Jersey 07874  
U.S.A

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3  
Date  
29 January 2004

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letter of 19<sup>th</sup> December concerning the release of information under the forthcoming United Kingdom Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The papers which you refer to concern an alleged 'unidentified flying object' incident which occurred at Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk in December 1980. The forest lies between two, now disused, RAF Stations (RAF Woodbridge and RAF Bentwaters) which at the time were occupied by United States personnel.

The Ministry of Defence papers which refer to this incident were released to a member of the public in May 2001 and were later included in our Freedom of Information Publication Scheme which was launched in November 2002. These can be found on the internet at [www.foi.mod.uk](http://www.foi.mod.uk) by searching under *Rendlesham Forest*. Alternatively, search under *UFO* to find all the classes of information on UFOs included in the Scheme.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**



With The Compliments of

Section 40

**Air Historical Branch (RAF)**

**Building 266, Royal Air Force Bentley Priory**

**Stanmore. Middlesex. HA7 3HH**

**Tel: 020 8838 7413 (95271 7413 Mil)**

Section 40

*one for you I think.*

Section 40



Information

JAS 52

**TREAT OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE**

To AHB

TO Ref No 031 /2004

cc.

Date 5<sup>th</sup> Jan 2004

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

**\*\* TO BE GIVEN A HIGH PRIORITY \*\***

The Prime Minister/SofS/Min(AF)/Min(DP)/USofS/MOD\* has received the attached correspondence from a member of the public, which this office has neither retained nor acknowledged. Please send a reply on behalf of the PM/Minister/Department\*.

Ministers attach great importance to correspondence being answered promptly, and your reply should be sent **within 15 working days of the above date**. If, exceptionally, this should prove impossible, an interim reply should be sent within the same timescale. You should be aware that No 10 periodically calls for a sample of letters sent by officials on the PM's behalf for his perusal.

An 'Open Government Code of Practice on Access to Government Information' came into force in 1997. All replies to members of the public must be in accordance with the procedures set out in the Code. In particular, information can only be withheld if it falls within the scope of a particular exemption. However, some exemptions are subject to a 'public interest test', whereby the harm associated with disclosure must be weighed against the public interest in release. Applicants must be informed of any decision to apply an exemption and of their right to appeal against this decision by writing to D Info(Exp). A full explanation is contained in DCI(Gen) 232/01; further information is available from DG Info on **Section 40**

It is vital that branches ensure they have simple systems to record and track correspondence received from members of the public. This information should be regularly monitored and reviewed against the targets for answering correspondence published in the Spending Review 2000 Service Delivery Agreement for the Ministry of Defence. In addition, we are required to keep information on the number of **requests for information that specifically refer to the Code of Practice**.

**As part of our monitoring procedure, random spot checks on the accuracy of your branch records on correspondence will be performed throughout the year.**

**Ministerial Correspondence Unit**

Room 222, Old War Office Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2EU

t: **Section 40** or **Section 40**

f: **Section 40**; CHOTs: Ministerial Correspondence; e: [ministers@defence.mod.uk](mailto:ministers@defence.mod.uk).

Detailed guidance on handling TO Correspondence can be found on dNet at [http://main.chots.mod.uk/min\\_parl/ParlBrch/TOGuid.htm](http://main.chots.mod.uk/min_parl/ParlBrch/TOGuid.htm) If you do not have access to dNet, please inform the Ministerial Correspondence Unit.

\* Delete as appropriate.



**M.O.D. Ministerial Correspondence Unit  
Room 222, Old War Office Building  
Whitchall, London SW 1A 2EU  
England**

December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2004

Ladies/ Gentlemen!

It is my understanding that one hundred documents pertaining to the "Rendlesham Air Force Base" incident was released recently under the provisions of the "Freedom of Information Act". I would like to know if I would be eligible to receive same, being retired now for sixteen years; I find that by keeping busy both physically and mentally ... certainly can be very rewarding!  
Thank you very much!

Section 40



Stanhope, New Jersey 07874  
U.S.A.



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone

(Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)  
(GTN)

020 7218 2140  
020 7218 9000  
**Section 40**

**Section 40**

Blackheath  
London

**Section 40**

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3

Date  
16 January 2004

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your letters dated 30 December 2003 and 13 January 2004, regarding your views on contact with extraterrestrial beings.

As you will be aware from our previous correspondence, the MOD's interest in 'UFO' reports is limited to whether there is any evidence of a threat to UK airspace by unauthorised or hostile air activity. The Ministry of Defence does not have any expertise or role in respect of 'UFO/flying saucer' matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains totally open-minded. I should add that to date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena. Your letters have, however, been placed on our files.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, (M.O.D)  
ROOM 8245, MAIN BUILDING,  
WHITE HALL  
LONDON SW1A 2HB.



Section 40  
LONDON  
Section 40



Dear Sir or Madam,  
Please find enclosed  
a Report of what has been  
going through my mind regarding  
the IRRI-SHELLI-AKE, PROCYONS/  
ANDROMEDONS, As to a possible  
situation at a place called  
"White Heath". Also find enclosed  
drawing of what I believe could  
be the Home World of the PROCYONS/  
ANDROMEDONS. So you can get some  
idea of what my previous letters  
are all about.

Destroyed  
Possible  
ere  
Are  
Will  
ROY,  
am i,e,  
, As This  
SHIP.

Thanking you for your  
Kind attention.

Yours Faithfully

Section 40

London,  
S E 3, 8 E T.

Is This Fact

If The Procyons / Andromedons Are To Be Destroyed  
At White Heath Possibly In Wales .Its Possible  
That The Irri - Shelli - Ake Will Use There  
Weapons Of Mass Destruction On London .

In My Mauve Book The Irri - Shelli - Ake Are  
The Military Of Andromedons / Procyons .

Is This Fact Or Fiction .

Possibly Within The Next 3 weeks We Will  
Know As From 5 th January 2004 .

I Would Suggest That We Do NOT DESTROY ,  
The Procyons / Andromedons .

Or Make any Aggressive Act Against Them i,e ,  
The Irri - Shelli - Ake .

Procyons / Andromedons .

Even After THE 3 Week Period Is Up

Do Not Attack The Procyons / andromedons , As This  
Could Cause An Ecological Disaster .

THERE COULD BE A CRYSTAL SHIP.

DO NOT DESTROY.

End Of Report .

From **Section 40**

Federation Officer .

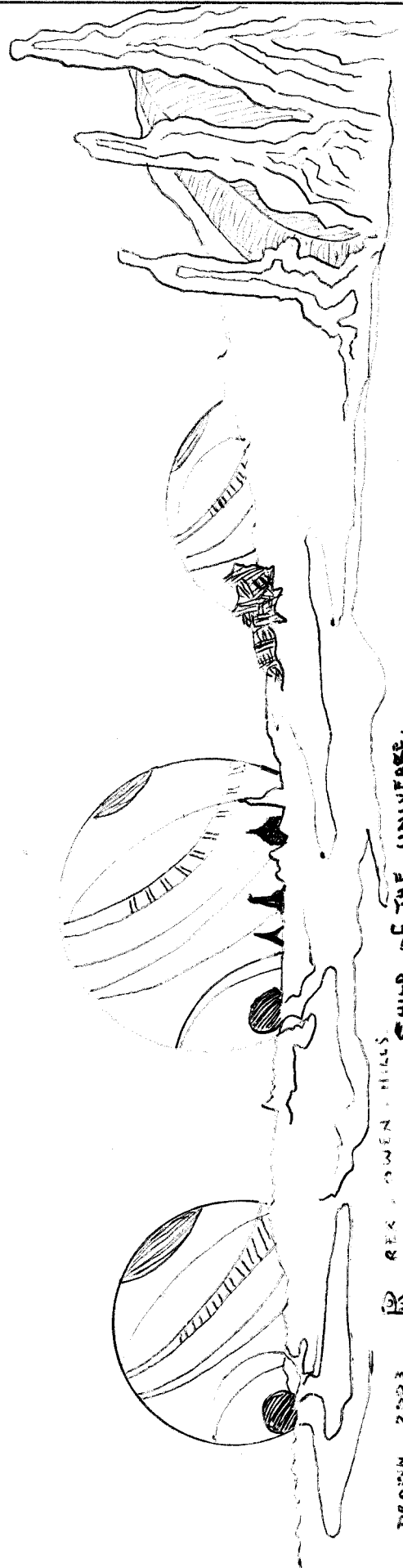
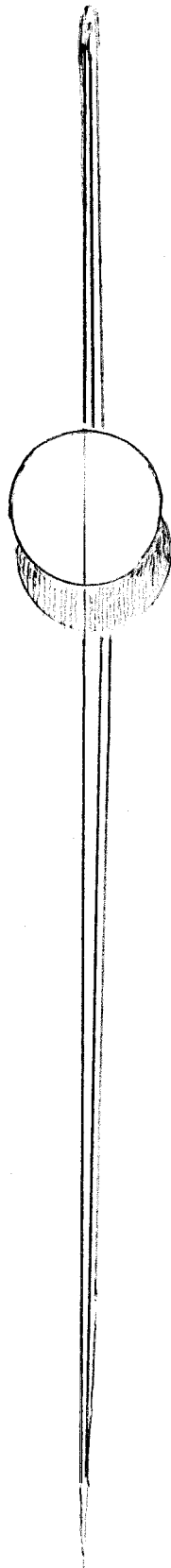
**Section 40**

Blackheath ,

London ,

**Section 40**





DRAWN 2503

REG. OWEN HILLS

CHILD OF THE UNIVERSE.

PROCYON / ANDROMEDA

CITIES USUALLY OF 2 TO 3 DOMES VERY LARGE IN SIZE

HOUSING 1 MILLION CITIZENS IN EACH THE DOMES RISE

AND BEFORE ARIWAY THEY DESCEND INTO THE PLANET.

THEY LIKE ARTING AND USING DIFFERENT LANGUAGES WITH

RESPECT TO EACH OTHER. THEY ARE TELEPATHIC. NOT VERY

TALL BEINGS.



Section 40

LONDON

Section 40

30/12/03.

Dear Sir or Madam,  
Please find enclosed letter or report with two photos of Alien beings, possibly related to the report.

If the report is true try to make peace with the Aliens.

Yours Faithfully

Section 40

P.S.

A.4. I have a large PURPLE/MAUVE BOOK WITH Aliens, and Alien scenarios in. Which might help.

DAS  
102No. ....  
- 8 JAN 2004  
FILE

Is This Fact .

What If A Vulcan Ship Or Craft Landed Near  
The Millennim Dome To Try To Negotiate Peace  
Terms With The Irri - Shelli - Ake .  
A Nomadic Alien Race . Who Have Tried To  
Make Peace Before But Have Failed .  
This Could Be Our Last Chance To Negotiate  
With Them .

I Dont Know But It Could Be Possible  
That They Might Have Weapons Of Mass  
Destruction ? .

In My Opinion We Should Try To  
Negotiate With Them .

End Of Report .

From Section 40  
Federation Officer .

Section 40

Blackheath .

London . Section 40



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone

(Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)  
(GTN)

020 7218 2140  
020 7218 9000  
**Section 40**

**Section 40**

Hessle  
East Yorkshire  
**Section 40**

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3  
Date  
19 November 2003

Dear **Section 40**



Thank you for your letter of 8 October concerning a UFO sighting over Iran in September 1976. I apologise for the delay in replying. This was due to your enquiry involving checks with other departments and the recall of files from the National Archive.

The files you mentioned in your letter are currently held in the National Archive awaiting release in 2006. We have recalled and examined them but neither contain any mention of this incident.

We have also made enquiries with the Air Historical Branch who know of no RAF aircraft 'based' in Iran in the 1970s. They have examined the F540 Operational Record Books for all the RAF F4 Squadrons during the period and these have revealed that most of the F4 aircraft spent September 1976 involved in Exercise TEAMWORK, a large annual NATO exercise involving 300 aircraft, 30 submarines and over 200 ships. The exercise took place in Northern Europe and the North Sea.

As HMS ARK ROYAL also carried F4 aircraft we made enquiries with the Naval Historical Branch to see if the ship was in the Middle East during September 1976 and may have been involved with the incident. This revealed that HMS ARK ROYAL was also taking part in Exercise TEAMWORK which concluded on 23 September. The ship then sailed first to the Shetland Islands before refuelling in Plymouth Sound early on the 26 September. On 28 September, HMS ARK ROYAL arrived in Lisbon and remained in port until 2 October 1976.

We can, therefore, find no documentary evidence of UK F4 aircraft involvement with this particular incident. Defence of Iranian airspace is, of course, a matter for the Iranian Government and you may wish to pursue your enquiries with them.

I am sorry that I can not be more helpful.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**

LOOSE MINUTE

D/NHB/23/11

19 November 2003

**DAS-Sec 3**

Copy to: AHB 3 (RAF)(UB)

**UFO ENCOUNTER**

Ref: Your unreferenced Chots of 19 November 2003 (10.16)

According to the ARK ROYAL's Reports of Proceedings she was alongside in Devonport from 17 July to 2 September 1976, having returned from six months Westlant deployment. From 2-10 September she re-embarked her squadrons and undertook a mini-work up prior to Exercise TEAMWORK, a NATO exercise staged in the Atlantic, English Channel, the Baltic and off the coast of Norway. Involving over 200 ships, 30 submarines and 300 aircraft, this may be the exercise referred to by AHB(RAF). The exercise concluded on 23 September and the ship sailed first to the Shetland Islands before refuelling in Plymouth Sound early on the 26th.

2. The ARK ROYAL arrived at Lisbon on 28 September, changing Captain there, and remained in port until 2 October. The ship subsequently went into refit at Devonport on 22 November, having been no further east than Toulon.

[3. That only leaves the Army Air Corps – Hmmmmmm!?!?!?!.]

Section 40

NS(H)HS1

GSY M4 Section 40

To: NHB NS(H)HS1  
Subject: Request for information

I am writing from the Directorate of Air Staff (DAS) and I hope you may be able to assist me with a request for information which we have received.

This department deals with correspondence concerning 'unidentified flying objects' and one of our regular correspondents has referred to an interview he has seen with Ralph Noyes who is a former US of S, and head of DS8 (our predecessor branch). Mr Noyes stated that in 1976 the UK had a defence agreement with Iran and that F4 aircraft were based near Tehran before the Shah was deposed. He says that on 18, 19 and 20th September 1976 these aircraft were scrambled in relation to a 'UFO encounter'.

I have contacted the Air Historical Branch who say there were no RAF aircraft based in Iran in the 1970s. They have checked all the Operational Record Books (F540) for all the RAF F4 Squadrons for September 1976. These revealed that the RAF F4s were taking part in a huge NATO exercise in Northern Europe and over the North Sea and were therefore nowhere near Iran. They did say, however, that HMS Ark Royal operated F4s during this period and it is possible that she was exercising or operating in the Middle East in September 1976. I appreciate that this 'UFO encounter' maybe being confused with a normal exercise, but would be grateful for any assist you may be able to provide with regard to HMS Ark Royal's movements at this time.

**Section 40**

DAS-Sec3 (Chots: DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1)

MT6/73 **Section 40**

**From:** AHB3(RAF)  
**Sent:** 04 November 2003 11:37  
**To:** DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1a  
**Subject:** RE: UC: UFO QUERY

Section 40

I have now checked the F540s for all RAF F4 Squadrons during the period Sept 76. As far as I am able to tell, there were no RAF F4s deployed anywhere near Iran, indeed most of them would appear to have spent Sept 76 involved in Ex Teamwork which was a huge annual exercise involving the majority of NATO forces in Northern Europe and the North Sea.

My only thought on the matter is that the Navy still had its last proper aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal at this time and was operating F4s from her. It seems more feasible that the Ark would have been some where in the region of the Middle East at this time. I can only suggest that you get in contact with the Naval Historical Branch Section 40 or Section 40 and RNAS Yeovilton who may be able to supply you with her movements and flying records, although I dont hold out much hope as the Navy do not have anything near as comprehensive as the RAF F540 and ships log books were routinely destroyed at the end of a commission until very recently.

Hope this is of some use

Section 40

AHB3(RAF)

Section 40

-----Original Message-----

**From:** DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1a  
**Sent:** 28 October 2003 15:05  
**To:** AHB3(RAF)  
**Subject:** UC: UFO QUERY

Dear Section 40

We have received a request from a regular UFO correspondent concerning an alleged UFO encounter with F4 jets over Tehran, Iran. He claims to have seen an interview with the former head of DS 8 who stated that the UK had a defence agreement with Iran prior to the Shah being deposed and that British F4 aircraft were scrambled over Tehran in relation to an alleged UFO incident on 18,19 or 20th September 1976.

I know it may seem a strange request but would you have any historical records of any agreement between the two countries or an incident where our aircraft might have been involved? Any assistance would be gratefully received.

many thanks

Section 40

DAS(LA)Ops & Pol1a

*I checked again with AHB about basing issues. There were no UK bases in Iran in the 1970s. There were bases in Iraq but these had all gone by the end of the 1950's.*



**From:** AHB3(RAF)  
**Sent:** 03 November 2003 09:36  
**To:** DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1a  
**Subject:** RE: UC: UFO QUERY

Section 40

I have only just accessed your e mail, as I was on leave last week. I will look into things relating to F4 Sqns at that time and come back ASAP. We did have a defence agreement with Iran prior to the overthrow.

Section 40

-----Original Message-----

**From:** DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1a  
**Sent:** 28 October 2003 15:05  
**To:** AHB3(RAF)  
**Subject:** UC: UFO QUERY

Dear Section 40

We have received a request from a regular UFO correspondent concerning an alleged UFO encounter with F4 jets over Tehran, Iran. He claims to have seen an interview with the former head of DS 8 who stated that the UK had a defence agreement with Iran prior to the Shah being deposed and that British F4 aircraft were scrambled over Tehran in relation to an alleged UFO incident on 18,19 or 20th September 1976.

I know it may seem a strange request but would you have any historical records of any agreement between the two countries or an incident where our aircraft might have been involved? Any assistance would be gratefully received.

many thanks

Section 40  
DAS(LA)Ops & Pol1a

To Section 40 MoD.

Section 40

Hessle.

East Yorkshire.

Section 40

Section 40

8 October 2003.

Dear Section 40

Thank you very much for your reply regarding the alleged UFO encounter with Humberside Police helicopter on May 30, 2003; your information and Humberside Police's assessment was useful.

I ponder if you can help with another enquiry, in line with MoD's new policy relating to the Code of Practise and implementation of forthcoming Freedom of Information?

Specifically, can you tell me whether the MoD has any paper-work or file about the alleged September 18, 19 and 20<sup>th</sup> 1976 UFO encounter with F4 jets over Tehran, Iran? According to Ralph Noyes (former DS 8 MoD incumbent and former Under Secretary of State) in a video interview with Jenny Randles, November 1995, Ralph stated that the UK had a defence agreement with Iran and that our aircraft were based near Tehran before the Shah was deposed – he stated that aircraft were scrambled in relation to the aforementioned September 1976 UFO encounter and that the MoD were subsequently made aware of this UFO encounter?

It is likely that some Foreign Office, MI 6 and other papers were generated relating to these aforementioned alleged incident/s and details relating to this may be in MoD files AF/7464/72 Pt V (1976) and AF/616 (1 – 30 September 1976); however I am interested in any and all details and official documents that may exist pertaining to this incident?

Is it possible for any file/s relating to the September 18,19 and 20, 1976, Tehran, Iran alleged UFO encounter/s to be released prior to next revision, even if in edited form? (If so, precisely what charges for photocopying, postage and this process will be incurred?)

Looking forward to your reply, I remain,

Yours Sincerely

Section 40



From: **Section 40**  
Directorate of Air Staff (Secretariat)3



**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**  
Room 6/73, Metropole Building, Northumberland Avenue, London,  
WC2N 5BP

Telephone

(Direct dial)  
(Switchboard)  
(Fax)  
(GTN)

020 7218 2140  
020 7218 9000  
**Section 40**

**Section 40**

Hatfield  
Hertfordshire

**Section 40**

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/DAS/64/3  
Date  
17 November 2003

Dear **Section 40**

I am writing concerning your e-mail message of 7<sup>th</sup> November to my colleague, **Section 40** concerning MOD policy on UFOs and alien abduction. It may assist you if I clarify the MOD's position.

The integrity of the UK's airspace in peacetime is maintained through continuous surveillance of the UK Air Policing Area by the Royal Air Force. This is achieved by using a combination of civil and military radar installations, which provide a continuous real-time "picture" of the UK airspace. Any threat to the UK Air Policing Area would be handled in light of the particular circumstances at the time (it might if deemed appropriate, involve the scrambling or diversion of air defence aircraft). From that perspective, reports provided to us of 'UFO' sightings are examined, and may be referred to air defence staff where there is sufficient evidence to suggest a breach of UK airspace. The vast majority of reports we receive are very sketchy and vague. Only a handful of reports in recent years have warranted further investigation and none revealed any evidence of a threat.

With regard to your comments about alien abductions, as **Section 40** explained, the MOD examines UFO reports solely to establish whether they provide any evidence of a threat to the UK from hostile or unauthorised air activity (i.e. foreign nations entering UK airspace without authority). The MOD does not have a role or any expertise as to the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms. Although the MOD remains open minded, to date we know of no evidence which substantiates the existence of extraterrestrial lifeforms and the subject of alleged alien abductions is not therefore investigated by the MOD. With regard to 'kidnap', this is a criminal offence and as such is a matter for the civil police and possibly the Home Office depending on the circumstances.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

**Section 40**

## DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1

---

**From:** DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1a  
**Sent:** 07 November 2003 11:43  
**To:** DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1  
**Subject:** FW: FW:

---

**From:** DAS-LA OpsPol1a  
**Sent:** Friday, November 07, 2003 11:34:02 AM  
**To:** DAS-LA-Ops+Pol1a  
**Subject:** FW: FW:  
**Auto forwarded by a Rule**

---

**From:** Section 40  
**Sent:** Friday, November 07, 2003 11:28:13 AM  
**To:** das-laopspol1a@defence.mod.uk  
**Auto forwarded by a Rule**

Dear Section 40

I have just recieved your letter regarding my email, it was rather late in recieving this letter but i suspect that is contributed to the recent mail strike. However i am rather puzzled at some portions of the letter. Quote: "First, it may be helpful if i explain that the Ministry Of Defence examines any reorts of 'UFOs' it recieves soley to establish whether what was seen might have some defence significance; namely, whether there is any evidence that the United Kingdom's airspace might have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity." This quote is rather strange, explain how UFO activity is not comprimising our airspace. Do they perhaps ask you first, to fly through making it authorised? How does UFO activity not come under unauthorised air activity? If they are indeed unauthorised, does this not make our own air defence inadequate to deal with the phenomenon? One sighting three years ago by me in the steenage area i distinctly saw a black domed sh! ape craft hovering at appox 1 mile away, it stayed for several seconds before shooting off at extreme speed. Presume for a moment that this was a "Alien" craft, how is it that this is no concern of the MOD to investigate? It clearly intruded in our airspace immediately making it a threat to security, its not as if they radio the nearest air control tower to ask permission to enter our airspace. Now suppose it was a craft from a foreign nation, say a hostile nation, would this still constitute as not a matter for the MOD to investigate? You have stated that you do not know the origin of the phenomenon, which i can respect along with some of these sightings can be explained to natural causes. But still it should be a job for the MOD to investigate every aspect of the reports to find out exactly what they are, as some could be of defence significance. As for the abduction aspect of my reports, how is this not the matter of the MOD, as a citizen of this country and a tax payer i! might add, its your duty to make sure that i am safe, or is this not true? Say for example a foreign hostile nation "kidanpped" me, what would be the response to that? And to quote the last part of your letter "Abduction/kidnap in the general sense is, of course, a criminal offence and as such would be a matter for the civil police.", say i was to take a trip to my local police station, how likely is it after telling my story, that my stements are torn up and thrown in the bin as ludicrous? Also how likely is it that i myself would be arrested and charged for wasting police time? I would appreciate your thoughts on the points i have made in this letter.

Section 40

Stay connected whilst on the move. Now you can get Hotmail sent directly to your mobile phone.  
[Click here for details. <http://g.msn.com/8HMBENUK/2743??PS=>](http://g.msn.com/8HMBENUK/2743??PS=>)