

# **RAF/USAF Woodbridge/Rendlesham Forest**

## ***the "British Roswell"***

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### **Chapter 4 -- December 1980**

#### **RAF/USAF Woodbridge**

Only 2 weeks after the London sighting, one of the most sensational UFO events ever reported by military personnel is alleged to have occurred in Rendlesham Forest, just outside the perimeter of RAF/USAF Woodbridge near Ipswich, Suffolk. Leaving aside later inconsistencies, the most impressive evidence has been provided by Lieutenant Colonel (now Colonel) Charles Halt, U.S. Air Force Deputy Base Commander at Woodbridge at the time. His official report (see *Appendix*, p. 456) was sent to the Ministry of Defense on January 13, 1981:

Subject: Unexplained Lights  
To: RAF/CC

1. Early in the morning of Dec. 27, 1980 (approximately 0300L), 2 USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge. Thinking an aircraft might have crashed or been forced down, they called for permission to go outside the gate to investigate. The on-duty flight chief responded and allowed 3 patrolmen to proceed on foot.

The individuals reported seeing a strange glowing object in the forest. The object was described as being metallic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately 2-to-3 meters across the base and approximately 2 meters high. It illuminated the entire forest with a white light. The object itself had a pulsing red light on top and a bank(s) of blue lights underneath. The object was hovering or on legs. As the patrolmen approached the object, it maneuvered through the trees and disappeared. At this time, the animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy. The object was briefly sighted approximately an hour later near the back gate.

2. The next day, 3 depressions 1½" deep and 7" in diameter were found where the object had been sighted on the ground. The following night (Dec. 29, 1980), the area was checked for radiation. Beta/Gamma readings of 0.1 milliroentgens were recorded with peak readings in the 3 depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the

depressions. Nearby tree had moderate (0.05-0.07) readings on the side of the tree toward the depressions.

3. Later in the night, a red Sun-like light was seen through the trees. It moved about and pulsed. At one point, it appeared to throw off glowing particles and then broke into 5 separate white objects and then disappeared. Immediately thereafter, 3 star-like objects were noticed in the sky -- 2 objects to the North and one to the South, all of which were about 10° off the horizon.

The objects moved rapidly in sharp angular movements and displayed red, green, and blue lights. The objects to the North appeared to be elliptical through an 8-12 power lens. They then turned to full circles. The objects to the North remained in the sky for an hour-or-more. The object to the South was visible for 2-or-3 times and beamed down a stream of light from time-to-time. Numerous individuals -- including the undersigned -- witnessed the activities in paragraphs 2 and 3.

The document was released to Robert Todd of the Citizens Against UFO Secrecy (CAUS) group in the United States under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. According to the letter of release (June 1983), "... the Air Force file copy has been properly disposed of in accordance with Air Force regulations. Fortunately, through diligent inquiry and the gracious consent of Her Majesty's Government, the British Ministry of Defense, and the Royal Air Force, the US Air Force has proved a copy for you."<sup>4</sup>

Squadron Leader Donald Moreland -- British Commander at the adjoining RAF/USAF base at Bentwaters -- had been responsible for securing the document from Colonel Halt and sent it to the Ministry of Defense. Yet in February 1981, Dot Street and Brenda Butler (co-authors with Jenny Randles of *Sky Crash* -- a book which deals with the case) were told during a private meeting with Moreland that he knew nothing about the alleged incident<sup>5</sup>. And the MoD refused to be drawn until 2 years later when Mrs. Titchmarsh of DS8 wrote to Jenny Randles: "... turning now to your interest in the sighting at RAF Woodbridge in December 1980. I can now confirm that USAF personnel did see unusual lights outside the boundary fence early in the morning of December 27, 1980. No explanation for the occurrence was ever forthcoming."<sup>6</sup>

Curiously, every copy of this letter -- made for investigators and journalists -- vanished, Jenny reports<sup>7</sup>, including the original which in October 1983 when had left with Thames Television's "TV Eye" team for photocopying -- witnessed by Detective Inspector Norman Collinson, a colleague of Jenny's. When Jenny tried to recover the letter with Collinson's help, Thames Television insisted that they did not have it nor had they photocopied it. They agreed to send a courier to the MoD to collect a file copy.

Colonel Halt's report -- it should be noted -- mentions a good deal more than "unexplained lights" being seen outside the base. So Jenny subsequently wrote several more letters to the MoD requesting further information about the case. But these were never answered. Neither could Martin Bailey of the *Observer* elicit any more details from the MoD. He was told that they had not received permission to release their files on the case.

Squadron Leader Moreland eventually admitted that there had been a "minor incident" outside the Woodbridge base. But this only involved "a few lights flipping among the trees".<sup>8</sup> He was more forthcoming in an interview with journalist Keith Beabey in September 1983: "I put the events the Colonel related to me down to an inexplicable phenomenon. Whatever it is, it was able



to perform feats in the air which no known aircraft is capable of doing."<sup>9</sup> These feats included **the ability of the object to split into 5 sections** as witnessed by Colonel Halt on December 29. It is worth recalling that the UFO seen over London also divided into at least 3 separate parts on occasions.

News of the Woodbridge incident first leaked out in January 1981 when Brenda Butler was approached by a U.S. Air Force security officer who had proven to be a reliable source of information in the past. Given pseudonym of "Steve Roberts" by the authors of *Sky Crash*, he confided that a UFO had crash-landed in Rendlesham Forest on the night of December 27. And that he himself witnessed its 3 small silver-suited occupants carrying out repairs on the ground for several hours, he claimed, during which time General Gordon Williams -- overall Base Commander at the time -- had communicated with the "aliens!" Many military personnel were present. And films and photos were taken which were immediately confiscated by senior officers when the craft had taken off.<sup>10</sup>

The story seems preposterous. And yet a few weeks later, another investigator -- Paul Begg -- was told quite independently by a radar operator at RAF Watton in Norfolk that an "uncorrelated target" was picked up on their radar sets on the night of December 27. But it had been lost about 50 miles south in the vicinity of Rendlesham Forest. The Air Defense Radar Center at West Drayton, Middlesex was advised of the incident. And it was learned that the object had been tracked elsewhere including RAF/USAF Bentwaters which adjoins the Woodbridge base. A few days later, USAF intelligence officers (probably from the Air Force Office of Special Investigations) turned up at Watton and told the radar men that it was possible that they had tracked an unknown structured object that had crash-landed in a forest near Ipswich. Military personnel who went to investigate found the engine and lights of their jeep failing as they approached the landing side. They had to proceed on foot. They allegedly encountered an unidentified object on the ground, and General Williams was said to have communicated with its occupants.<sup>11</sup>

Regardless of whether the latter part of the story is a fabrication, this was the reason given by the USAF intelligence officers for confiscating RAF Watton's radar tapes! The claim of aliens being present has been refuted by General Williams. But he does confirm that the details in Colonel Halt's memorandum are essentially correct. If this is so, then *something must* have landed at Woodbridge in the small hours of December 27.

## **James Archer's Story**

Both Brenda Butler and Dot Street later spoke with another security officer who claimed to have been present on the night of the landing. And although his account differs drastically from that of "Steve Roberts", it corroborates some of Halt's report. The informant -- given the pseudonym of "James Archer" -- claims that at about 2:00 am, guards at the Woodbridge gate had seen lights apparently descending out-of-sight into Rendlesham Forest. The guards radioed for permission to investigate, but they were told to wait until relief guards could be sent or replace them. Thus Archer and another security officer -- Airman John Burroughs (real name) -- were ordered to drive out to the gate in a jeep, leaving their guns behind. Since the lane from the gate was full of ruts and potholes, the 2 men were obliged to proceed on foot. After a short while, their radios suddenly went dead. Then they came across the object.

Archer described it as triangular in shape with 3 landing legs. It was about 10-to-12 feet in diameter and 8 feet high with a blue light on top, red lights and a white light in the middle, and a brighter white light

emanating from the underside. With the exception of the configuration of lights and the number of security policemen involved, Archer's description conforms in some respects to Halt's report. This is important because Archer's story was given to Brenda and Dot in October 1981. And Halt's memorandum was not released until June 1983.

Archer was emphatic that no alien occupants were involved, although he was sure that something was inside the object. "I don't know what," he told the girls, "but the shapes did not look human. Maybe they were like robots." The 2 men followed the object as it maneuvered soundlessly around the forest, and at one stage got to within a few feet of it. They followed the craft as it moved into a small field where it caused panic among the cows. Finally the object emitted an intense burst of white light, rose to about 200 feet, and then shot off at high speed.<sup>12</sup>

## Sergeant Warren's Story

Yet another USAF security officer later came forward with a story of having witnessed the landed UFO. Given the pseudonym "Art Wallace" in *Sky Crash*, he was subsequently revealed as Sergeant Larry Warren, who was stationed at Bentwaters at the time. Although initially expressing fears for his life, Warren began to give interviews to the media including BBC TV, Nippon TV, and Cable News Network (CNN) of Washington, DC. Larry Warren's story differs in many respects from that of Archer, Roberts, and Halt. But since we do not as yet know what precisely did occur in Rendlesham Forest between December 27 and 30, we cannot dismiss his account out-of-hand. Colonel Halt's document -- although written as an official memorandum to the Ministry of Defense -- may not be definitive, but it seems sensible to regard it for the moment as being essentially true [albeit] if lacking in certain crucial details.

Warren claims that the date of the actual landing was the 30<sup>th</sup>, not December 27. **[StealthSkater note: subsequent video documentaries say there were actually 2 UFO incidents. See [References to download these files.](#)] He says that the jeep in which he and the other security officers were riding in en route to the landing site kept failing. But the greatest discrepancies lie in his description of the landed craft and the events that subsequently unfolded.**

On arrival at a clearing in the forest, he encountered other groups of military personnel including RAF officers. He could hear helicopters overhead. A movie camera was pointing toward something which looked like a "transparent aspirin tablet" hovering just about the ground, about 50 feet in diameter and surrounded by security officers. A bright red light approached from behind the trees, descended silently over the "aspirin", and then exploded in a multi-colored burst of light. Both the "aspirin" and light vanished, leaving in their place a large domed disk with intricate patterns on its surface. Warren and a couple of colleagues approached it. But the next thing he recalls is being back in bed at the Bentwaters base. **[StealthSkater note: This is also mentioned in an alternative account. See "[Clear Intent](#)" in [References](#) to download that document.]**

Together with other witnesses, he was ordered to see the Base Commander who told them that they must not discuss what had happened as it had a "high security level". Warren also claims that his clothes were checked for radioactivity. He learned from other witnesses that those who had been on the far side of the object (i.e., opposite his position) had seen small alien beings. He was also told that false trails had been laid in the forest and that stories of alien contact were invented in order to discredit the entire story.

Warren -- 19 years old at the time -- later told his family about the incident, as a result of which -- he claims -- he was given an honorable discharge from the Air Force. In view of the fact that he had



broken the "high security level", I find this hard to believe. Although the authors of *Sky Crash* contend that the basic details of his story have been consistent<sup>13</sup>, Warren seems to have elaborated on occasions. And Jenny and Dot have told me that they are far from satisfied with his version of events.

## Sergeant Bustinza's Story

Since publication of the first edition of *Sky Crash*, further witnesses have come forward. The most important of whom is undoubtedly Sergeant Adrian Bustinza -- the Security Police Acting Commander at Woodbridge. He related his version of events to the investigators Ray Boeche and Scott Colborn on April 15, 1984. Ray has kindly provided me with a copy of the interview.

Ray began by reading Colonel Halt's memorandum to Bustinza, asking him if it was accurate: "That's about right because I remember the animals very clearly because I bumped into the animals myself. ... For a while there, we sort of tried to forget everything and joked around about the animals. ... But I was kind of glad I bumped into the animals!"

When asked whether he had been picked up in a truck and later met a convoy -- as claimed by Larry Warren -- Bustinza denied it. But his valuable testimony provides some corroboration for Warren's story:

We were in the alert area, and I was on my way over to RAF Woodbridge base [at around] midnight [date not provided]. While we were over there, one of my patrols sighted an object of some sort. He didn't describe it, he just said it was like a fire in the forest area. I notified my acting commander -- which was Lieutenant Englund -- and he went ahead and called the Commander that night -- which was Colonel Halt -- and he told Lieutenant Englund to check out the situation. We proceeded to check out the situation -- myself, Lt. Englund, and Sergeant Ball.

What I remember clearly was that when we got there, [Col. Halt] pointed to the individuals that he wanted to go with him. So we went back to Bentwaters base; grabbed 2 "light-alls" and had a patrol refuel them; and once we refueled them, we took them out there to see if we could light up the area to see if there was anything out there. In the process of trying to check the light-alls, everything was malfunctioning. When we got to "Point A" -- the sighting of the object -- we had trouble turning the light-alls 'on'. Our truck wouldn't run either. It was kind of like all the energy had been drained out of both light-all units...

We started to search. ... One individual had said that he had spotted the object -- like sitting on the ground. We proceeded to look and in the process found kind of like triangular tripods ... burned into the [ground] at 3 different standpoints. ... They were like it was a heavy object. They took radiation readings of the holes. And they got a radiation reading as I recall. Then I recall that we were walking through the woods and came upon the lights again. And that's when I first saw the object ...

We got -- I think it was the flight chief [Sergeant Ball] and I believe another individual officer. We kept searching the area -- kind of like trying to follow the object. And it was moving through the trees. And in the process, we came upon a yellow mist about 2-or-3 feet off the ground. It was like dew, but it was yellow ... like nothing I've ever seen before. ... We kind of like ignored it. We were worried about the [other] object ... to see if we could locate it again or catch up to it again ...

We did see the object again. It was hovering low, like moving up-and-down anywhere from 10-to-20 feet -- back up, back down, back up. There was a red light on top and there were several blue lights on the bottom. But there was also like [a prism] ... rainbow lights on top [and] several other colors of light. ... It was a tremendous size. It even surprised me that it was able to fit into the clearing. A tremendous size -- and I use the word 'tremendous' carefully. It was a round, circular shape. I hate to say like a "plate", but it was thicker at the center than it was at the edge.

Bustinza and the other witnesses were ordered to form a perimeter around the object at about 15-foot intervals. After observing the object for about 30 minutes, Bustinza says it took off suddenly. "It was gone in a flash," he said, "almost like it just *disappeared*. When it left, we were hit by a cold blast of wind which blew toward us for 5-or-10 seconds. ... It was a really scary feeling. ... I was just frozen in place at first ... my life actually passed in front of my eyes." **[StealthSkater note: the multi-colored lights remind me of UNITEL's "Flying Colors" sighting. And the instant disappearing/reappearing also was witnessed by Maurer and Miller (Macroscopic quantum tunneling?). See "UNITEL" in [References](#) to download the document.]**

Bustinza neither denies nor confirms the alleged presence of alien beings. But he does confirm that at some stage, Base Commander Gordon Williams arrived at the site. He also claims that photographs and film were taken by both American and British personnel:

There were 2 bobbies there. ... Colonel Halt approached myself and Larry [Warren] ... Was it Larry? I'm trying to remember -- I'm not to sure of the other guy's name. [Halt] told us to approach the individuals who at that time were standing in the grass area. ... They had some very sophisticated camera equipment, which wasn't unusual for the British. ... [Halt] told us to confiscate the material from the British nationals. Well, we confiscated the film and turned it over to Colonel Halt and [he] put it into a plastic bag. Colonel Halt said it would be dealt with at a higher level of command. He didn't say exactly at what level or anything. I would assume it went to the photography department on base at the time. It could easily have been the intelligence department as well.

Bustinza claims that 2 American law-enforcement officers had also taken photographs. But he cannot recall their names. In support of this claim, Ray Boeche was told by a highly-placed USAF records management official at the Pentagon in March 1985 that photos were taken "and that some of them -- but not all -- were fogged. However, our records do not show the existence of any photographs at all." In addition, Colonel Halt has confirmed to Ray Boeche that a movie film was taken which was immediately flown to the USAF European Headquarters at Ramstein AFB, West Germany.

## Official and Unofficial Denials

The Woodbridge or Rendlesham Forest story was first briefly publicized in *Flying Saucer Review* in 1981<sup>14</sup>. An expanded account appeared in the same journal the following year<sup>15</sup>. But negligible interest was shown by the media. Then in October 1983 -- following release of the Halt memorandum -- the story made headline news in an article by Keith Beabey in the *News of the World*.<sup>16</sup>

Partly because the story appeared in a newspaper with a reputation for publishing sensational (and salacious) items, the more serious papers -- such as *The Times* -- lost no time in debunking it. Adrian Berry -- science correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* -- commented: "All that had happened was that a



United States Air Force colonel at RAF Woodbridge had seen an unexplained light in the surrounding woods. That was all. The newspaper ran its ridiculous story, and 2 days later a ranger from the Forestry Commission showed how the strange light could only have been the rotating beam of the Orford Ness Lighthouse 5 miles away."<sup>17</sup> Adrian Berry had evidently decided that the story should be debunked at all costs, ignoring practically every statement contained in Halt's memorandum -- in particular the description of a landed, metallic, triangular-shaped object. My letter to Berry -- pointing out this disgraceful misrepresentation -- went unacknowledged.

On October 24, 1983, Major Sir Patrick Wall, MP, addressed some questions on the incident to Defense minister John Stanley in the House of Commons, asking "if he has seen the United States Air Force memo dated January 13, 1981 concerning unexplained lights near RAF Woodbridge"; and "whether in view of the fact that the [memo] on the incident ... has been released under the Freedom of Information Act, he will now release reports and documents concerning similar unexplained incidents in the United Kingdom"; and finally, "how many unexplained sightings or radar intercepts have taken place since 1980." Replied the Defense Minister:

I have seen the memorandum of January 13, 1981 to which my honorable friend refers. Since 1980, the Department has received 1400 reports of sightings of flying objects to which the observers have been unable to identify. There were no corresponding radar contacts. Subject to normal security restraints, I am ready to give information about any such reported sightings that are found to be a matter of concern from a defense standpoint. But there have been none to date."<sup>18</sup>

The Woodbridge case is thus dismissed in one sentence. It is regrettable that Sir Patrick failed to press further questions. But MPs are understandably loath to become too involved in such a controversial and ridicule-prone subject, especially without a mandate from the electorate. Only about 100 people have ever written to their MP about UFOs. The subject is of little or no relevance to the vast majority of citizens. And until such time as those who are interested or have had sightings start lobbying their MPs, little progress will be made. And the UFO movement -- lacking as it does any effectively coordinated lobby in Britain -- has not helped matters.

Ralph Noyes -- former head of Defense Secretariat 8 -- wrote in November 1983 to the then-head of DS\* (Brian Webster), requesting further information about the case. Nearly 4 months later -- following several reminders -- he received a reply that stated in part:

The Department satisfied itself at the time that there was no reason to consider that the alleged sighting had any defense significance. That is not to say, however, that Colonel Halt and the other personnel mentioned in the report were -- as you suggest -- suffering from hallucinations. ... What the true explanation is, I do not know. ... I can assure you, however, that there is no evidence of anything having intruded into British airspace and "landing" near RAF Woodbridge.<sup>19</sup>

So what was Colonel Halt referring to when he wrote about an apparently landed, metallic, unidentified flying object which had evidently intruded into British airspace? The Ministry simply avoided answering this question directly. In February 1983, Ralph Noyes wrote to Brian Webster again, asking 7 specific questions relating to the incident of which I quote 3 of them here:

- Is the MoD aware of the tape recording which Col. Halt claims to have made on December 29, 1980 (and of which alleged copies are now in the hands of several members of the public)?

- Is the MoD aware of the cine film allegedly made on site on December 29?
- In the light of the answers to these questions, does the MoD adhere to its view that nothing unknown-or-untoward ventured into British airspace?

A reply was received nearly 3 months later from Mr. Peter M. Hucker of the newly-formed Defense Secretariat (Air Staff) 2a -- which replaced DS8 in January 1985 -- pointing out that Brian Webster was no longer its head. The questions posed by Noyes were answered as follows:

"I can assure you that no unidentified flying object was seen on any radar recordings during the period in question. And that the MoD has no knowledge of the tape recording or cine-film you mention. ... There has been nothing to alter the view that there was no defense significance to the incident."<sup>20</sup>

## **The Halt Tape**

In spite of the Ministry's denial of knowledge regarding a tape-recording made by Colonel Halt, an edited copy was released to solicitor Harry Harris in 1984 by Colonel Sam Morgan, former Base Commander at Woodbridge. The tape describes some of the events that occurred on the night of December 29/30 when Halt and others were investigating the landing area and taking radiation readings. A transcript has been made by scientific journalist Ian Ridpath and Harry Harris, from which I quote the relevant passages:

voice: ... 1:48. We're hearing very strange sounds out of the farmer's barnyard animals. They're very, very active, making an awful lot of noise. ... You just saw a light? [garbled] Slow down. Where?

voice: Right on this position. Here, straight ahead in between the trees ... There it is again. Watch ... straight ahead off my flashlight, Sir. There it is.

Halt: I see it too. What is it?

voice: We don't know, Sir.

Halt: It's a strange, small red light. Looks to be maybe a quarter- to a half-mile, maybe further out. I'm going to switch off. The light is gone now. It was approximately 120 degrees from our site. Is it back again?

voice: Yes, Sir.

voice: Well, douse flashlights then. Let's go back to the edge of the clearing so we can get a better look at it. See if you can get the starscope on it. The light's still there, and all the barnyard animals have gone quiet now. We're heading about 110, 120 degrees from the site out through to the clearing now, still getting a reading on the meter ... We're about 150-or-200 yards from the site. Everywhere else is just deathly calm. There is no doubt about it -- there's some type of strange flashing red light ahead.

voice: Sir, it's yellow.



Halt: I saw a yellow tinge in it, too. Weird. It appears to be maybe moving a little bit this way? It's brighter than it has been. It's coming this way. It is definitely coming this way! Pieces of it are shooting off. There is no doubt about it! This is weird!

voice: 2 lights! One to the right and one light to the left!

Halt: Keep your flashlights off. There's something very, very strange. Keep the headset on. See if it gets any ... Pieces are falling off it again!

voice: It just moved to the right.

voice: Yeah! ... Strange! ... Let's approach to the edge of the woods up there... Okay, we're looking at the thing. We're probably about 200-to-300 yards away. It looks like an eye winking at you. Still moving from side-to-side. And when you put the starscope on it, it's like this thing has a hollow center -- a dark center like the pupil of an eye looking at you, winking. And it flashes so bright in the starscope that it almost burns your eye. ... We've passed the farmer's house and across into the next field. And now we have multiple sightings of up to 5 lights with a similar shape and all but they seem to be steady now rather than a pulsating or glow with a red flash. We've just crossed a creek and we're getting what kind of readings now? We're getting 3 good <clicks> on the meter, and we're seeing strange lights in the sky.

Halt: 2:44. We're at the far side of the second farmer's field and made sighting again about 110 degrees. This looks like it's clear off to the coast. It's right on the horizon. Moves about a bit and flashes from time-to-time. Still steady or red in color. Also after negative readings in the center of the field, we're picking up slight readings -- 4 or 5 <clicks> now on the meter.

Halt: 3:05. We see strange strobe-like flashes to the ... er, well they're sporadic, but there's definitely some kind of phenomenon. 3:05. At about 10 degrees, horizon, directly North, we've got 2 strange objects ... er, half-moon shape -- dancing about with colored lights on 'em. That, er, guess to be about 5-to-10 miles out. Maybe less. The half-moons are now turning to full circles. It's though there was an eclipse or something there for a minute or two. ... 0315. No we've got an object about 10 degrees directly South, 10 degrees off the horizon. And the ones to the North are moving. One's moving away from us.

voice: It's moving out fast!

voice: They're both heading North. Okay, here he comes from the South. He's coming toward us now. Now we're observing what appears to be a beam coming down to the ground. This is unreal!

Halt: 0330. And the objects are still in the sky, although the one to the South looks like it's losing a little bit of altitude. We're going around and heading back toward the house. The object to the South is still beaming down lights to the ground.

Halt: 0400 hours. One object still hovering over Woodbridge base at about 5-to-10 degrees off the horizon. Still moving erratic, and similar lights and beaming down as earlier ... "21

The duration of the complete tape is nearly 18 minutes, although it is evident from the extracts quoted that over 2 hours had elapsed. I have omitted the first half of the tape which relates to the radiation readings taken at the landing site. Several voices share the commentary including Lieutenant (now Captain) Bruce Englund, already mentioned in connection with Sergeant Bustinza; Major Malcom Zickler (or Ziegler), Chief of Base Security; and Sergeant Nevells, a non-commissioned officer assigned to the Disaster Preparedness Operations who was -- according to Colonel Morgan -- handling the Geiger counter.

But is the tape a fake? Journalist John Grant traced Colonel Morgan to the Space Command Headquarters linked to Peterson USAF base in Colorado and asked him this question via telephone. The Colonel replied:

I do not think it is a hoax. I think the men really were out there that night and they saw something which frightened them. You can hear their excited conversations and references to frightening strange lights. The only opinion I have is that -- based on the evidence available -- those guys definitely saw something which cannot be explained. As for them fabricating it all and putting on an act, I do not think they could have pulled it off.<sup>22</sup>

**[StealthSkater note: UNITEL's Larry Maurer told me in e-mails that he and Mike Miller became so unnerved by their 1981 sighting (that spawned UNITEL, NW Inc.) that they quit signaling what they thought were search helicopters. The tear-drop shaped craft with their strange colors caused Maurer's 11-y/o son (Jason) to begin sobbing hysterically. See [References](#).]**

The witness -- "James Archer" -- says that the Halt tape was an edited version "designed to create a certain impression". Ian Ridpath has pointed out that the reference to a flashing red light seen at a bearing of 110° on the horizon would place it in the direction of the Orford Ness lighthouse. So perhaps this was the intended impression. Yet it is only one of many other references to UFOs on the tape, and therefore hardly likely to discredit the complete recording even if the USAF officers did momentarily mistake the lighthouse for a UFO in their excitement.

## Confusion of Dates

Not the least confusing aspect of the Woodbridge affair is the fact that witnesses come out with different dates. To add to the confusion, Chuck de Caro of CNN was shown the logbook at Woodbridge police station. It shows that on the night of December 25,26, Airman Armald from the Woodbridge base law-enforcement desk called the Woodbridge police concerning "lights in the woods". On the morning of December 25, the police apparently returned to the site and were shown "landing marks" by Air Force personnel, who told them how an object had landed there.

So was this the actual date of the main event? We simply do not know. The British police may have entered an incorrect date in their notebook. Or the witnesses -- to what seem to have been at least 2 separate incidents -- may have become confused about the dates. There is also the distinct possibility that false dates may have been given in order to sow disinformation among the ranks of the investigation. It would be a mistake -- in my view -- to dismiss the entire episode on these grounds alone.



## **The Pentagon's Response**

In 1984, Chuck de Caro presented the U.S. Air Force at the Pentagon with a list of questions relating to the Woodbridge/Bentwaters incidents. From which I quote -- together with the written answers:

Q: How many USAF personnel witnessed the sightings?

A: The number of people witnessing the alleged sightings is unknown.

Q: Did Security Police Major Zeigler [sic] witness the incident?

A: Unknown.

Q: Did Sgt. Burroughs witness the incident?

A: Unknown.

Q: Was there a Lt. England [sic] in the Security Police unit at Bentwaters? Did he witness the incident?

A: Unknown.

Q: What are the current units and duty stations of Williams, Halt, Burroughs, Zeigler, and England?

A: Williams is currently assigned with Air Force Inspection and Safety Center at Norton AFB, California. Col. Halt is currently assigned with the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma. Sgt. Burroughs is currently assigned to Luke AFB [Arizona]. The location of the others is unknown.

Q: What unit or personnel took the radioactivity readings referred to in Col. Halt's report? What unit or personnel established the geometry and the indentations on the ground? Where are the official measurements and reports?

A: Unknown.

Q: Were USAF OSI [Office of Special Investigations]<sup>21</sup> personnel dispatched to the incident site? Did OSI personnel interview Lt. Col. Halt, Sgt. Larry Warren, Airman Steven LaPlume, Gen. Williams, Maj. Zeigler, Lt. England, or Sgt. Burroughs?

A: The British MoD would have jurisdiction for any such investigation. OSI was not informed of the alleged incident and did not investigate or compile a report.

Q: Will the USAF provide a list of USAF personnel who witnessed the incident(s)?

A: No, because it is unknown who witnessed the alleged incident.

Q: What are the reasons that Gen. Williams, Col. Halt, and Sgt. Burroughs gave for not granting official interviews?

A: The individuals have declined interviews for personal reasons.

Q: Are there any photographs, tape recordings, videotapes, drawings, or agencies of any kind in USAF files? If not, to what agency or agencies have the files been transferred?

A: There was no audio-visual documentation done.

## Cover-Up

It is evident from the responses to CNN's questions that the U.S. Air Force is guilty of prevarication regarding the Woodbridge affair. In October 1985, I met with the American investigator Ray Boeche who has done more research into the case in the United States than anyone else. He told me that he has had many discussions on the matter with Senator Exon (D-Nebraska), who is a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee and who according to Ray -- has spent much time looking the Woodbridge case. The results suggest a cover-up.

Ray telephoned Colonel Halt to ask him if he would agree to discuss the Rendlesham incidents with the Senator and provide corroborative evidence. Halt agreed, saying: "I've got a soil sample right here. And I can put my hands on plaster casts." Halt also stated that he would be prepared to confirm that a certain captain drove General Gordon Williams -- overall Base Commander at the time -- from the Rendlesham landing site to a fighter plane at Bentwaters with what Williams told the captain was a motion picture canister of the UFO. The film was quickly flown to the USAF European Headquarters at Ramstein AFB, West Germany and has not been heard of since. The Air Force specifically denies that any photographs or films were taken of the event.

According to the Senator's defense aids, Exon did speak with Halt. But Ray has been unable to obtain any information whatsoever about the meeting other than "no comment". And when he eventually managed to speak directly with the Senator, he was given extremely evasive answers. "Has he found out something that's disturbed him?" Ray said to me. "Or has he been told to back off?"

During the course of many conversations and letters about the Woodbridge case, ex-Ministry of Defense official Ralph Noyes has left me in no doubt that there has been an **official cover-up**. In view of his long career with the MoD -- which he joined after World War II service as a navigator on operational missions in Beaufighter aircraft in the Middle East and Southeast Asia -- his opinion cannot be lightly dismissed. Since his retirement in 1977, he has pursued a career as a novelist. And in the afterword of his science fiction book on UFOs, he sums up his feelings about the Woodbridge case:

The Ministry of Defense may well have good reasons for withholding information about the Rendlesham incidents. As a former Defense official, I would not wish to press questions on any matter touching national security. And in those circumstances, I would not be surprised if questions pressed by others were met with a refusal to reply. But I cannot help feeling that it is something of a lapse from the usual standards of a government department to issue a direct misstatement. Concealment is one thing (and is often justified). False denial is another.

The RAF Woodbridge case of December 1980 strikes me as one of the most interesting and important of recent years, anyway in this country.<sup>24</sup>

Admiral of the Fleet Lord Hill-Norton -- former Chief of the Defense Staff from 1971 to 1973 -- has also personally affirmed to me that there has been a cover-up on this extraordinary case. In May 1985, he wrote to the Secretary of State for Defense (then Michael Heseltine), asking pertinent questions. Nearly 2 months went by before he received a reply from Lord Trefgarne on behalf of the Minister of Defense:

You wrote to Michael Heseltine on May 1, 1985 about the sighting of an unidentified flying object near RAF Woodbridge in December 1980. Michael has asked me to reply as UFO questions fall within my responsibilities.



I do understand your concern and I am grateful to you for having taken the trouble to write. I do not believe, however, that there are any grounds for changing our view -- formed at the time -- that the events to which you refer were of no defense significance.<sup>25</sup>

Lord Trefgarne was Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the armed forces at the time, and Lord Hill-Norton responded to his letter as follows:

... I am astounded that a serious letter to a Minister from a member of the House of Lords was allowed to remain unanswered for 7 weeks.

I am sorry that you take the view that the sort of uproar which occurred in Suffolk in December 1980 is of "no defense significance" because I have no doubt from my rather longer experience that you are mistaken.

Unless Lt. Col. Halt was out of his mind, there is clear evidence in his report that British airspace -- and probably territory -- were intruded upon by a unidentified flying object in that month, and that no bar to such intrusion was effective. If Halt's report is not believed, there is equally clear evidence of a serious misjudgment of events by members of the USAF at an important base in the UK. Either way, the events can hardly be without defense significance.<sup>26</sup>

Lord Trefgarne's reply was more conciliatory this time, assuring the Admiral that the Ministry "does take the subject seriously". He invited Lord Hill-Norton to a private meeting. A date was arranged in September 1985. But in the meantime, Lord Trefgarne was promoted to the position of Minister of State for Defense, and official duties necessitated a postponement of the meeting to October 9.

Both Ralph Noyes and myself had briefed Lord Hill-Norton about the subject in general and Woodbridge specifically. Trefgarne personally flew down to Hampshire for the meeting in his private plane, together with a representative from the Ministry's Defense Secretariat (Air Staff) w. The Minister was helpful and courteous -- Lord Hill-Norton told us -- but he did not give the impression of having been briefed in great depth about the Woodbridge case. He was aware, he said, that reports had been made of unidentified events in British airspace and that some had remained unexplained. But he was convinced that none of them had ever been shown to have defense significance including 2 reports from defense establishments made that year.

In response to further questions, Lord Trefgarne admitted that traces of unidentified events certainly occurred from time-to-time on radar and were recorded on radar tapes. None had ever been considered to be of defense importance after proper study, and none was retained for long. They were costly, and the practice was to recycle them for operational use after a short while. Similarly, Lord Trefgarne said that he saw no defense significance in the Woodbridge case. And only after sustained questioning by the Admiral did he agree that it might be of defense significance if responsible Americans had had serious misperceptions at an important NATO base on British territory.

## **Conclusion**

I doubt if there will be any further progress toward establishing the truth about the Woodbridge incident until such time as all the principal witnesses testify in public. But military regulations have

evidently intimidated the majority. Ray Boeche believes there should be a subpoena requiring the active U.S. Air Force personnel -- as well as those out of the service -- to testify at an open Senate hearing or -- failing that -- a civil suit against the Air Force. But under military law, Ray explains, they would not be required to respond to a subpoena unless Congress itself ordered them to testify. With little-or-no media interest at the time of writing, I see little chance of this taking place. **[StealthSkater note: The General Accounting Office -- the accounting arm of Congress -- filed a suit in federal court to force the White House -- specifically vice-president Dick Cheney -- to turn over energy-policy relating documents. The White House has consistently refused, in effect defying the U.S. Constitution. Recently the GAO threw its hands in the air and dropped the case. So much for the U.S. Congress ...]**

In October 1986, I spoke with Colonel Charles Halt who is currently based with the 485<sup>th</sup> Tactical Missile Wing. My first question dealt with the authenticity and accuracy of his document to the ministry of Defense. "As far as you're concerned, Colonel Halt, your memorandum is legitimate?" I asked. **"It certainly is,"** he affirmed. He denied that any movie film was taken of the UFO or that he had ordered Adrian Bustinza to confiscate photographs taken by British policemen. "That's not true," he said. "I suspect time has clouded his memory. I confiscated nothing from anyone -- I have no authority to. We were guests in your country. I can tell you that your bobbies wouldn't have probably given them to me if I had asked."

I then asked Colonel Halt if the radar tapes at RAF Watton had been confiscated by USAF intelligence officers. "Well, I don't know that they were confiscated," he answered. "I do know that they were used at a later date because I was questioned specifically on times and areas of the sky and so on. ... It's your government's business, not mine!"

And the story of aliens? Had this been thrown in to confuse the issue? I wanted to know. "There's only one individual who talks about that. And I can't speak for him," said the Colonel. "I can't disprove what he says. But I can't corroborate it either. ... **There are a lot of things that are not in my memo.** But there was no response from the Ministry of Defense, so I didn't go any further with them."<sup>27</sup>

## additional References

1. alternative account from *"The UFO Cover-up (Clear Intent)"*, Fawcett & Greenwood => [doc](#)  
[pdf](#) [URL-doc](#) [URL-pdf](#)
2. video documentary at => [doc](#) [pdf](#) [URL](#)
3. a similar display of multi-colors in a 1981 Oregon UFO sighting spawned UNITEL, NW Inc. ([doc](#) [pdf](#) [URL](#) ). Read *"Flying Colors"* at => [doc](#) [pdf](#) [URL-doc](#) [URL-pdf](#)

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