

From the book

UFOs and Nukes: Extraordinary Encounters at Nuclear Weapons Sites

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Beams of Light

One of the most spectacular UFO cases of all time involved a series of incidents at two neighboring Anglo/American air bases in Suffolk, England, in December 1980. The bases, RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge, were separated by a small forest. Consequently, the multiple UFO events which occurred there are collectively known as the Bentwaters-Woodbridge-Rendlesham Forest Case. However, most people nowadays simply refer to it as the Bentwaters case.

With the exception of the alleged recovery of a crashed alien spaceship at Roswell, New Mexico, in 1947, the intriguing events at Bentwaters have arguably received more media coverage in recent years than any other UFO incidents. While most of the publicity has focused on reports of a landed UFO in Rendlesham Forest, an equally important aspect of the story has usually been downplayed: another UFO was apparently observed hovering above the Bentwaters Weapons Storage Area, where tactical nukes were kept, and reportedly directed laser-like beams of light down into it!

This dramatic incident has been discussed on occasion over the years, somewhat reluctantly, by RAF Bentwaters' Deputy Base Commander at the time, now retired USAF Colonel Charles I. Halt. Although Halt himself observed the UFO sending down beams of light into various areas of the base, he was at the time some miles away, in Rendlesham Forest, and only heard radio chatter about the incident at the WSA. Nevertheless, I believe that Halt's remarks regarding the event are important and warrant further examination. First, however, they must be placed in context.

Because the Bentwaters UFO sightings have been thoroughly reported upon and analyzed elsewhere, I will summarize them here only briefly. On January 13, 1981—some two

weeks after the incidents—Lt. Col. Halt wrote a brief memorandum about them titled, “Unexplained Lights.” It reads:

1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0300L), two 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 three 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 two to three meters across the base and approximately two 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, three depressions 1 1/2” deep and 7” in diameter were found where the object had been sighted on the ground. The following night (29 Dec 80) the area was checked for radiation. Beta/gamma readings of 0.1 milliroentgens were recorded with peak readings in the three depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the three depressions. A nearby tree had moderate (.05-.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 five separate white objects and then disappeared. Immediately thereafter, three star-like objects were noticed in the sky, two objects to the north and one to the south, all of which were about 10-degrees 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 in the north remained in the sky for an hour or more. The object to the south was visible for two to three hours and beamed down a stream of light from time to time. Numerous individuals, including the undersigned, witnessed the activities in paragraphs 2 and 3.¹

(Signed)

Charles I. Halt, Lt.Col. USAF
Deputy Base Commander

Halt reconstructed the UFO incidents from memory, and inadvertently misstated the dates they had occurred. The first incident in the forest actually took place around 3 a.m. on December 26th; the second incident began late on the evening of December 27th and continued into the early morning hours of the 28th.

When this memo was declassified via the Freedom of Information Act, in 1983, it sparked widespread media interest and public excitement about the Bentwaters sightings. UFO debunkers, most notably James McGaha, dismissed the mysterious light in the woods as the periodic flashing of a nearby lighthouse. Colonel Halt strenuously objected to this explanation, saying in one interview, “The lighthouse was visible the whole time...it was readily apparent, and it was 30 to 40 degrees off to our right...”²

In other words, both the lighthouse and the unidentified light in the woods were observed simultaneously and were clearly distinguishable as two, widely-separated sources of light. McGaha, apparently not willing to be confused by the facts, continues to insist, even now, that the lighthouse beam caused the all the furor. Unfortunately, a great many people, scientists and laypersons alike, who are unfamiliar with Colonel Halt’s extensive testimony about the incident have unwittingly accepted McGaha’s untenable “explanation” as the solution to the mystery.

Significantly, it will be noted that Halt said nothing about the UFO incident at the Bentwaters WSA in his first official statement on the matter. Whatever he may have discussed with his superiors at the time remains unclear. As far as I am aware, Halt’s first public statement about the incident at the WSA did not occur until 1991.

Understandably, the WSA was the most sensitive and heavily-guarded section of the base. It consisted of a series of closely-spaced, reinforced concrete bunkers—informally known as “hot row”—in which lower-yield tactical nuclear bombs were believed to be stored. Although that fact has never been officially confirmed by the Pentagon, three of my ex-Air Force sources—one a retired colonel—say it was so.

During that era, Soviet troops based in Eastern Europe greatly outnumbered the combined allied armed forces stationed on the continent. Consequently, in the event of a Soviet invasion of West Germany, U.S. war plans called for the extensive use of tactical nuclear weapons to thwart the attack. If war had indeed erupted in Europe in the early 1980s, the weapons at the Bentwaters WSA would have undoubtedly been loaded onto nuclear-capable USAF F-16 fighter-bombers and flown to the front.

During the UFO sighting at the WSA, still-unidentified security personnel reported observing a luminous object briefly hovering above the site. Although published reports vary, the UFO apparently sent laser-like beams of light down near—or directly onto—the tightly-spaced weapons bunkers! Shortly thereafter, it reportedly left the vicinity at high velocity.

When Colonel Halt briefly alluded to this startling incident during a 1991 *Unsolved Mysteries* television program, he stated, “We could very clearly see [the UFO]...I noticed

other beams of light coming down from the same object, falling on different places on the base. My boss was standing in his front yard in Woodbridge and he could see the beams of light falling down, and the people in the [Bentwaters] Weapons Storage Area and other places on the base also reported the lights.”

Some six years later, during a May 13, 1997 interview with journalist A.J.S. Rayl, Halt again spoke of the events at Bentwaters/Woodbridge, including the incident at the WSA. At the time of his own sighting, Halt had been trudging through Rendlesham Forest, leading a team of Air Force Security Police who were investigating reports of strange lights in the woods. He described the remarkable anomalous activity witnessed by the team in his now-famous January 13, 1981 memorandum, but only briefly. During the much longer interview with Rayl, Halt said:

[After leaving the woods, our search team] crossed the farmer's field past his house and across the road, stumbled through a small stream, and went out into a large plowed field. Somebody noticed several objects in the sky to the north—three objects clearly visible with multiple-colored lights on them. The objects appeared elliptical and then they turned full round, which I thought was quite interesting. All three doing that. They were stationary for awhile and then they started to move at high speed in sharp angular patterns as though they were doing a grid search. About that same time, somebody noticed a similar object [in the southern sky]. It was round—did not change shape—and at one point it appeared to come toward us at a very high speed. It stopped overhead and sent down a small pencil-like beam, sort of like a laser beam. It was an interesting beam in that it stayed—it was the same size all the way down the beam. It illuminated the ground about ten feet from us and we just stood there in awe wondering whether it was a signal, a warning, or what it was. We really didn't know. It clicked-off as though someone threw a switch, and the object receded, back up into the sky.

Then it moved back toward Bentwaters, and continued to send down beams of light, at one point near the weapons storage facility. We knew that because we could hear the chatter on the [two-way] radio.³

Halt further discussed the incident at the WSA during a Sci Fi Channel television program, *UFO Invasion at Rendlesham*, which first aired in December 2003. After some prodding by the show's host, Bryant Gumble, a reluctant Halt stated, “The object to the south [of my position in the forest] was actually sending some beams down near, or into, the Weapons Storage Area. That caused me a great deal of concern. You know, what was it doing there? Was it searching for something, was it trying to—who knows what it was trying to do?”⁴ For a split second, it seemed as if Halt would say something like, “Was it trying to zap the nukes?” but caught himself before the words left his lips.

Given these public statements, I decided to approach Halt, in the hope that he would elaborate on the nuclear weapons aspect of the sightings at Bentwaters. Eventually, with

the assistance of a friend who is a retired USAF officer, I was able to contact him. After sending me a couple of cautious, non-committal e-mails, Halt finally wrote, "I am agreeable to an interview provided anything used be cleared with me first. There are some subjects that I am not able to discuss, especially issues that relate to [nuclear] weapons."

I quickly responded to Halt, and agreed to his condition of editorial control. However, I also pointed out, regarding the incident at the WSA, I would simply be asking him to elaborate on statements he had already made to others. I further promised that I would understand and accept a string of "no comment" responses, if that were the outcome, as long as I could at least ask my questions.

The telephone interview took place on February 7, 2006. I began by asking Halt why he continued to grant interviews to researchers and journalists, some 25 years after the incidents at Bentwaters. He replied, "Well, I guess the best way to put it is to get the truth out there. Initially, I wasn't too excited about talking to anybody about it. If my memo had not been made public, I would have remained silent. There was never any attempt to influence what I said [but] at that time, I had no intention of talking to anybody I didn't have to. It wasn't exactly a career-enhancing, uh, opportunity when I stumbled into it. If I had it to do over again, I would have sent somebody else into the woods."

He emphasized, "I have never been warned not to talk about my experience. In fact, no one has officially said anything to me about it, which I find quite interesting. When I left the Air Force I was debriefed because of my security clearances, but that particular issue was never brought up. I don't even think that the people who did the debriefing even knew about it."

I then asked Halt to discuss the incident at the Bentwaters WSA. He replied, "[While we were in the forest] we heard radio conversations on the Law Enforcement frequency, the Security Police frequency, and the Command Network. Now, we were having a lot of problems with the radio. They were really acting up. We were getting a lot of interference and static, but we could hear talk about one of the objects [being] in the vicinity of the Bentwaters WSA. I heard that some of the beams, or whatever they were, came down into the WSA. As I recall, the guard in the [watch]tower at the WSA made that report."

Following the telephone interview, Halt expanded upon these remarks via email. He wrote, "I never told [*Left at East Gate* author] Peter Robbins any structure was penetrated by beams. I was several miles away. From my view, a beam or more came down near the WSA. I don't know for a fact that the beams landed there. I know they were in the area. I was too far away but relied on the radio chatter which indicated the beams landed there. The objects in the sky came from the east and moved west, skirting Woodbridge and approaching Bentwaters. When beams came down, the objects were closer to the Bentwaters WSA—just to the north of the facility. Only one object came overhead and briefly sent down a beam at our feet. The other three objects stayed just west of us and one or more of them sent down the beams to the WSA. They were far enough away that we couldn't tell which one or how many sent down beams. We could see several beams

and members in the WSA went on the radio to report them. Several airmen present later told me they saw the beams. I don't remember any names at this point.”

During the telephone interview, I asked Halt, “Were you ever concerned that the UFO was attempting to disable or otherwise compromise the integrity of the nuclear weapons?” He replied, “I can't comment on that, the way you worded it.” He then paused a moment and said, “I did have great concern about the purpose of the beams.” I then said, “So you wouldn't rule out the possibility that the object was trying to disable some of the weapons?” After another pause, Halt replied softly, “I can't comment about the weapons.” Pressing on, I asked a follow-up question, “Did you ever hear any rumors about some of the weapons being removed from the WSA and being shipped back to the United States for inspection?” Halt replied, “I have no comment on that.”

Sensing that Halt would not comment further regarding the UFO above the WSA, I changed the subject somewhat and asked if he had ever heard reports of nuclear weapons-related UFO incidents at other bases. Halt replied that he had been approached over the years by several former and retired USAF personnel, who alleged that such incidents had indeed occurred.

“I've had people come forward and tell me about different cases,” he said, “you know, this happened at Malmstrom, this happened here, this happened there. They told me [warhead] targeting was changed, weapons were rendered neutral, on and on.” Halt said that while he could not personally verify these accounts, he found them very interesting.

At this point, I left the subject of nukes altogether, and asked Halt why he had been somewhat wary of my first contact with him. He said that after he had spoken publicly about his experiences, he had been contacted by some “unusual” individuals. “I've gotten correspondence, occasionally telephone calls—now it's e-mails—from persons accusing me of everything from participating in the Second Coming of Christ, to being involved with the Devil. As you well know, there are a lot of fringe people out there with vivid imaginations and bizarre thoughts.”

Finally, I asked Halt to briefly summarize his experience. He replied, “We saw objects that were under intelligent control.” He paused, so I asked, “What was the source of the intelligence?” He replied, “I don't know. It had to be something beyond [human technology] because of the way the objects moved—the speeds, the angles they turned, and the things they did. Could the objects have been remotely-controlled? Certainly.” I asked Halt, “So you're saying that it was a technology beyond anything any country on Earth would have?” Halt replied, “I never saw any little green men, but it's possible it was alien technology. I sure would like to have the answers but don't think I'll ever get them.”

In 1994, well before my interview with Halt, another retired U.S. Air Force officer told me that following the UFO incident at the Bentwaters WSA, two of the weapons had been removed from one of the bunkers for inspection. That individual once worked for

NATO's nuclear weapons security program. I had been introduced to him by a mutual friend who knew of my longstanding interest in nukes-related UFO incidents.

I was aware of the retired officer's background, so I hesitantly asked him if he had ever heard about the Bentwaters/Woodbridge UFO incidents. After warily staring at me for a few seconds, he acknowledged that he was familiar with them. Figuring that I had nothing to lose, I plunged ahead and asked him if he had heard the rumors about the UFO sighting at the Bentwaters Weapons Storage Area. Much to my surprise, he confirmed the presence of a UFO near the WSA, confirmed that it had directed a beam or beams of light downward into the bunker complex, and—without any prompting from me—said that he had once read a report stating that two tactical nuclear bombs had been removed from one of the bunkers shortly after the incident and shipped by the Air Force to the U.S. for inspection.

I must admit that I was somewhat taken aback by this individual's candor. He concluded his remarks by saying that he was unaware of the findings of this inspection because it had taken place several years before his tenure with NATO. Regardless, in light of these comments, it appears that the U.S. Air Force was sufficiently concerned about the condition of the two bombs after the UFO incident to remove them from their bunker for inspection.

Unfortunately, I am not at liberty to reveal the retired officer's identity. However, his credentials relating to his previous involvement with the U.S. military's nuclear weapons security program are a matter of record, and I consider his statements to be highly credible.

Witnesses at the Weapons Storage Area

Shortly after I spoke with Colonel Halt, he forwarded two emails he had received from a former radio communications specialist at Bentwaters, Carl Thompson Jr., who told Halt he had indirect knowledge of the UFO incidents at the base's Weapons Storage Area. Yes, *incidents*, plural. That there had been more than one sighting at the WSA was news to me so I quickly called Thompson. He told me,

At the time, I was a Senior Airman with the 2164th Communications Squadron. I was a Radio Relay Repairman. On the first night, Christmas night if I'm not mistaken, I was at the Weapons Storage Area working on a piece of equipment in the [security] tower, trouble-shooting it. I think it was a motion-detection component, used for the security of the weapons. At midnight, the guy who was going to relieve me, ---- -----, called and said that he would come out to the area. So, I went back to the wide-band radio shop and finished up some paperwork.

Now, I don't remember how much later it was, but he called me at the shop and said, 'We just saw a UFO!' He meant himself and the security guards. He was in the security tower cab at the time he called. You could

plainly tell he was excited and maybe kind of anxious. He sounded matter-of-fact but also kind of half-scared. I asked, 'What did it look like?' He said, 'It was so bright that you couldn't look directly at it.' So I didn't get any details about its shape, how large it was, any of that. It was just a really bright light. He said it was hovering there for just a few seconds, then it went toward Woodbridge so, maybe, that would be in a southwesterly direction.

So, then I asked him, 'Did everybody see it?' He said that everyone had. Then he asked me, 'How am I going to report this?' I said, 'Is anyone else going to report it?' He said, 'No, they're not going to report it.' So, I said, 'How are you going to look, if the others who were right there in the area aren't going to report it? You're going to be on your own. If it were me, I would let it go.' I was the ranking person on that night, so I told him, 'I would advise against it, but it's up to you.'

When I saw ---- later that night—he had to order a part for the tower, so we crossed paths—he told me that he'd decided not to report the incident. At the time, we didn't know that the other base was involved. We had no idea that there had been some security police hunting it down, or whatever, in the woods.

I guess it was two nights later, the part for the equipment in the tower came in. We got notified about that just as ---- was coming on shift, at midnight, so he said he would go out and install it. I stayed at the radio shop. A little while later, it had to past 12:30 [a.m.] since he had to pick up the part first, he called, really excited, and told me that he had just seen another UFO. It had followed the runway, which runs more or less east and west, then it turned, uh, then it turned again and flew directly over the Weapons Storage Area. He said it came right at the tower and was so low that he and the guard hit the deck! He said it had hovered [nearby] for a few seconds, he couldn't say how long, then it slowly moved off, over the trees. He said it was just above them, but then it dropped down into the trees. He didn't see it come back up, so that's when he called me on the land line. He said he heard a bunch of chatter on the radio in the tower—the guard there was talking to someone—and said [the Security Police] were going to have to report it this time because it went down into the woods.

The next time I saw ----, he told me that he had to file a report along with the Security Police, at their headquarters. It was only, maybe, 300 yards from the Weapons Storage Area. Later on, it seems like it was a week or so later, he had been called by our squadron commander, Major Cossa, and told to report for a briefing. He was gone most of an afternoon but when he came back he was really agitated. I asked him, 'What's up?' He said,

'We're not to speak about the UFO.' Then he said, really angry, 'I know what I saw!'

He said that during the briefing, someone—he assumed it was the Office of Special Investigations—told everyone there that night they hadn't seen anything. I think that upset ---- more than anything. They called all the police liars, and all that. He said, 'They told us that we did not see it, and were never to speak of it.' He was really upset. He said [the OSI agents] had talked to them as a group and then talked to them individually. You know, went over their statements with them. He said they told him he was a liar, that he would never have a career, and all that. You know, threatening him. But he told me that he couldn't get into the details. We never talked about it again.

A while later, I tried to ask some of the Security Police about the incident, when I saw them at the Weapons Storage Area, but they were fairly tight-lipped about it. They just told me that when they went into the forest [on the night of December 27/28] they took Light-Alls with them. They said all of a sudden, the lights quit working, the vehicle engines quit, and the radios had a lot of static on them. Then, after a few minutes, everything just started up again. I didn't know much more than that until I saw all of the reports from Colonel Halt and the others on TV. That's about all I can think to tell you.

I asked Thompson, "How do you know the first incident happened on Christmas night?" He replied, "Well, I'm not positive it did, but it was definitely during the holidays, the 25th, the 26th, because ---- and I were working a longer shift on both of those nights. We were single and [our sergeant] asked us to volunteer for that, so the married guys could be with their families during Christmas. In return, we got some days off in January."

I then asked Thompson if ----- had described seeing one or more beams of light coming from the UFO, down into the WSA, on either night. He replied, "No, he didn't say anything about that."

Given this testimony, it appears that a UFO was sighted at the Bentwaters Weapons Storage Area on at least two different nights in December 1980, instead of one as previously believed. I have attempted, unsuccessfully, to locate ----- . If he happens to read this, I would greatly appreciate an email from him, sent to the address listed in Appendix A.

As mentioned earlier, Colonel Halt told me that he had eventually spoken with some of the security personnel who had been at the Weapons Storage Area the night the UFO directed beams of light into it. "Several airmen present later told me they saw the beams," he said, "I don't remember any names at this point." Given this statement, I attempted to locate some of those individuals, with interesting if not necessarily confirmatory results.

Using an online roster of former members of the 81st Security Police Squadron, which included their dates of service with the unit, I sent out several emails to persons who would have been at Bentwaters or Woodbridge in December 1980. In each one, I explained who I was and the purpose of my inquiry. I wrote that while I was interested in any information relating to the multiple UFO incidents during that time-frame, I was especially interested in the reported events at the Weapons Storage Area.

The responses I received ran the entire gamut: A few former Security Policemen (SPs) told me that they only had second or third-hand information to offer but wished me well in my research nonetheless. Others recommended that I contact certain individuals who had purportedly been on duty at the WSA and elsewhere on the nights in question, so I emailed all of them. Interestingly, most of those persons never responded so, a week later, I sent a second message to each one, asking whether he had received my earlier inquiry. This flurry of follow-up emails also failed to generate any type of acknowledgment, with two exceptions. One individual finally responded, "I was assigned to the 81st SPS at RAF Bentwaters/Woodbridge. I was a Law Enforcement Specialist. I will not give anyone information about my details or activities from this assignment unless demanded by an authorized legal authority. Any further inquiry will be considered 'harassment' Please stop emailing me."

Had this wary individual told me that the first time around, I never would have mailed him a second time. Still, I had to wonder what was so important about his "activities" that would cause him to respond so forcefully. I had merely asked whether he had any knowledge of the now widely-publicized UFO activity at the twin bases, which had already been confirmed by many other security personnel, including the deputy base commander. Oh well, to each his own. While I would have preferred some relevant input from this person, I still respect his decision not to talk to me.

In any case, the second individual who answered my follow-up email, Tim Egercic, had been a Security Policemen on D Flight at Bentwaters. He told me, "The night Colonel Halt said he saw a UFO beam lights down into the Weapons Storage Area, I was on duty at the alarm monitor's building, which was located between the double fence that surrounded the WSA. I never saw or heard about a UFO at the WSA, or beams of light, or anything like that."

I responded by telling Egercic that Col. Halt had already acknowledged, during several different interviews he had given over the years, that he had seen more than one UFO moving over the base, and at least one of them had directed beams of light down to the ground. At the same time, he had heard chatter on his radio to indicate that one or more of those beams had fallen within the WSA.

At this, Egercic responded, "Well, I had control of the net. All security transmissions were going through me. Primary Central Security Control (CSC) had passed responsibility over to me, which they would usually do for several hours early in the 2300hrs - 0700hrs shift. I had the radio right next to me, and I never heard that a UFO was at the WSA. I do remember hearing [someone at the alternate CSC in Building 679] talking with other SPs

and dealing with the strange lights on a different channel. So they were over the forest, yes, but not at the Weapons Storage Area. Believe me, I would have known about that, if it had happened. My responsibility as alarm monitor and [temporary] primary CSC would have been to up-channel a 'Helping Hand'—a possible security violation of a priority resource—to the Wing Command Post had our WSA been breached. Any beams of lights from an unidentified craft onto our Hot Row might have constituted a 'Covered Wagon—a definite breach of a priority resource."

To make his point, Egercic later sent me an email in which he said that the SP positioned in the WSA's watchtower that night was named Rick Bobo, who had once referred to the phenomenon he witnessed as "The big light show." Egercic then mentioned that Bobo had also told the late Georgina Bruni, who wrote, *You Can't Tell the People*, what he had seen from his vantage point fifty feet above the ground. Upon reviewing the pertinent pages from the book, I found Bruni's interview:

R. Bobo: "I think I was the first to report the sighting that night. I was on the tower at Bentwaters; you get a good view from up there. There were several lights and there was this huge ship over the forest."

G. Bruni: "Can you describe the object?"

R. Bobo: "I'd say it looked circular but, remember, I was over at Bentwaters and this was happening over at Woodbridge. I was instructed to watch it and can tell you that it was up there for about five hours, just hovering. I would say it was quite low in the sky."

G. Bruni: "Were you alone in the tower?"

R. Bobo: "Someone came to the tower and watched it through a scope. I don't know who he was, he was from a different department. I wasn't told anything and I didn't get to look through the scope."

G. Bruni: "Could you hear the radio transmissions from your location in the Bentwaters tower?"

R. Bobo: "I heard some of the radio transmissions, not all of them, you understand, because there were different frequencies. I heard over the radio that London had spotted something on their radar. I heard some of the radio transmissions from some of the men who were out there. They were reporting a light going through the woods, it had bumped into a tree and they were getting radioactive readings from the area. They were discussing three impressions and stuff moving through the woods toward Woodbridge. They kept switching to different frequencies so I couldn't hear everything. I know there was a colonel with them."⁵

Given this exchange, it appears that although Bobo did admit to seeing a “huge ship” and “several lights”, he described all the action as having occurred over the woods, and much nearer to RAF Woodbridge than the Bentwaters WSA.

A few days later, Egercic found Bobo’s phone number and, after getting his approval, forwarded it to me. In the course of a 40-minute conversation, Bobo confirmed the information he had given to Bruni and provided many more details, some of which appear here. He told me: “As you probably know, the night I saw [the UFOs] I was in the tower at the Bentwaters Weapons Storage Area. The main object hovered out there for a long, long time. It never really moved anywhere else. It was kind of hard to see, but it was slightly oblong, I guess, and I seem to recall it had bluish and reddish lights on it. Not really lights, like aircraft lights, just a tint. It wasn’t a star or planet, and it wasn’t a lighthouse, as some people claim.” I then asked Bobo, “If you held a dime at arm’s length, was it larger than that?” He quickly said, “Oh yeah, it was larger than that! I would say it was, maybe, as large as a half-dollar coin held out at arm’s length. But I don’t know how far away it was, it was so dark that night, I could just make out the forest.”

Bobo continued, “Anyway, at the same time, I was listening to all of the radio communications coming from our sister base, Woodbridge. There was lots of chatter on the radio. I think I heard that Heathrow [Airport] had it on radar. I’m surprised no one scrambled a fighter. And, of course, I talked to people too, at our CSC (Central Security Control). It was my job to keep an eye on [the UFO] and to report it if anything happened. Tim [Egercic] had taken [CSC] over before all this started happening, so I was talking to him. And he let me hear some of the chatter from Halt’s team in the woods. I couldn’t switch my radio frequency over to that, but when I called Tim, I could hear some of that on the phone. And I think I talked to Charlie Waters, but I’m not sure about that, but I did talk to our area supervisor. That was either Sgt. [“Willie”] Williams or Sgt. [Clarence] George that night. He told me to keep a close watch on the object.”

Bobo continued, “When the object first caught my eye, it was already stationary, I didn’t see it move to where it was and I didn’t see it leave. I never left the tower and I kept a close eye on the object most of the time, you know, trying to figure out what it was and what it might do next.”

I asked Bobo if he had observed anything resembling beams of light coming down from the object at any time. He paused a moment, then said, “No, not beams of light. But after it was hanging there a long while, I saw things shooting off it, really, really fast, like little sparks or something. Maybe four or five of them. Little pieces of light, all leaving within a minute [of one another] like they were getting out of there. I hate to say it, but they looked like little ships, like drones maybe, but I don’t know. They were shooting off in all directions, but up into the sky, not down to the ground. Right after that, the big object just disappeared. I was watching it, at least I thought I was, but it was just gone. I don’t know what happened to it.”

This description of the UFO breaking up into smaller ones is almost identical to the one provided by Lt. Col. Halt in his memorandum of 13 January 1981, when he reported the object he and his team saw hovering over the farmer's field. It will be remembered that Halt also told various interviewers that three of the smaller objects had then flown away, two to the north and three to the south. The latter group first moved in the direction of Woodbridge and then on to Bentwaters where, according to Halt, one or more of the UFOs sent down beams of light near or into the WSA, based on the radio chatter he heard at the time.

Given Halt's account, I asked Bobo if he thought it was possible that he may have been looking in another direction at the moment one or more beams fell nearby. He said, "I suppose so, but I would have heard something on the radio, unless those reports were on another frequency. I had no indication of anything like that, from what I saw or heard at the WSA."

I asked Bobo how many nights he had been in the WSA tower that week. He replied, "Only one. When we were on at nights, it ran from 11 [p.m.] to seven [a.m.]. The night prior to that, we, D-Flight, were off-duty, on a 24-hour break, and before that, uh, we were on afternoons earlier that week." [The afternoon or swing shift was from 4 p.m. to midnight.] I asked Bobo who would have been in the tower the other nights that week but he said he didn't know. I then mentioned the statements made to me by Carl Thompson, of the 2164th Communications Squadron, who reported his co-worker's frantic calls from the tower at the WSA—on two different nights, perhaps two days apart—as he excitedly reported a UFO very near the WSA. In fact, according to Thompson, on the second night, the UFO reportedly buzzed the tower, causing ----- and the guard to "hit the deck."

When I mentioned this, Bobo said, laughing, "That sure wasn't me! There was someone up there with me that night, at least for awhile. But I never saw the UFO that close, uh, coming over the tower or anything like that. I had a 360-degree view. I was looking straight down the row of bunkers when I was looking at the object over the forest."

I asked Bobo whether he had been debriefed after the incident, or threatened by OSI agents, and told to keep quiet about the sighting. He replied, "No one talked to me."

In an effort to obtain more information for me, Tim Egercic also emailed another former SP on D Flight, Robert "Charlie" Waters, who had been on duty at the WSA during the week of the UFO activity. Among other things, Egercic asked Waters if he had seen the UFO and, if so, whether he remembered how far away it was from the WSA. Egercic then combined the two emails and forwarded them to me:

TE: Do remember any such claims of a UFO hovering low or high over the WSA?

CW: It wasn't hovering over the WSA. It was moving straight down into the forest.

TE: If so, did you witness any lights being beamed down?

CW: No lights beaming down...

TE: Could you estimate how many miles away the light in the sky was from the WSA?

CW: Based on the what I have heard about the size of the craft, it was maybe half-a-mile.

At the conclusion of this email, Egercic wrote, "It does surprise me that [Charlie] thinks it was a half-mile away. That would verify Halt's claim of hearing chatter on the radio of strange lights near the WSA, but it doesn't verify anyone's claim yet of a UFO beaming lights down [onto] the WSA structures."

A couple of days later, Egercic sent me Waters' contact information and I called him. He told me, "There was some commotion in the WSA that night. Someone saw this object, I don't remember who, and called out to us. I think my ART partner was Rob Isbell, but I'm not certain. But we looked and saw this spinning light—a multicolored light, I can't really remember the colors—anyway, this craft was hovering and then slowly descended toward the forest. We ran up on one of the berms to get a better view of it. Then we reported it [to Central Security Control]. I remember I used a couple of expletives and was warned not to use profanity on the radio. I think I was talking to a guy named [Alfred] Coakley, anyway, he's the one I remember talking to most of the time that night. The next morning, I talked to one of the operations officers who told me that [a small group of SPs] had gone out to the woods and had seen some burn marks on trees, about three feet off the ground. He said it looked like, whatever it was, had bounced from tree to tree coming down. The person who told me that wasn't our flight's shift commander. He was another officer, but I don't remember his name."

I asked Waters if he could remember the timing of his sighting, relative to the widely-reported events in late December 1980. He said, "It was definitely that same week, and I think it was a midnight shift, maybe our last midnight shift [in that group of three]. Anyway, I never heard about any other UFO sightings that week. When Tim [Egercic] mentioned that there had been sightings on four nights that week, that was news to me. I didn't see anything about all of that until many years later, on TV. But what struck me most was that the way [Penniston and Burroughs] described what they saw—the shape of the craft, which they said was triangular—was nothing like what we saw at the Weapons Storage Area. Also, I think Colonel Halt said they saw [on another night] a big round object that broke into smaller objects. We didn't see that."

I asked Waters to describe the UFO he and his ART partner saw, using my standard question, "If you held a dime at arm's length, was it larger than that?" Waters immediately said, "Yes! I would say it was, when I first saw it, as large as a, uh, cantaloupe held at arm's length! It was big! It was spinning and, I think, had a light on the bottom of it, but I'm not sure. I also think I saw something sticking out on the bottom, uh, like a rod or something like that." I quickly asked Waters if he ever saw anything resembling a beam of light coming out of the UFO. "No, nothing like that, at least what I saw. Nothing coming out and going down to the ground, or anywhere else."

I asked Waters if the UFO had ever been over the Weapons Storage Area itself. He replied, “Not that I saw. It never came directly over our heads. It stayed just over the trees and moved [from our vantage point] slowly from right to left until it, I think, disappeared behind them. To be honest, I don’t remember where it went, but it was descending when I saw it. It was pretty amazing. I didn’t immediately think “alien”, you know, I was just perplexed. Also, I remember the animals were going crazy. There were cows mooing and, uh, farm animal noises in the distance. It was almost like they were screaming!”

I asked Waters if he could remember who had been in the WSA’s tower that night. He replied, “Not really, it might have been Rick Bobo but I’m not sure...It could have been Dennis Karnatz.” [When Tim Egercic later called Karnatz, on my behalf, he denied being in the WSA tower that week, denied witnessing a UFO, but declined to talk to me.]

Because Bobo said the UFO he had seen from the tower lingered in the vicinity of the woods for several, perhaps five, hours, I asked Waters whether he recalled the commotion he saw in the WSA lasting that long, or whether it had settled down soon after he saw the UFO leaving the area. He replied, “I don’t recall. After I made my report, I went back to patrolling my area. I figured other people were handling it. I didn’t hear much radio chatter after it left, but if [the incident] became a law enforcement [issue, not involving the security police] they would have discussed it on another channel and I wouldn’t have heard that.”

When one attempts to collate the accounts by the former SPs who were on duty at the WSA that holiday week, in an effort to create some kind of time-line, it quickly becomes obvious that several key facts are missing, and a number of the available reports do not mesh.

For example, Charlie Waters cannot recall whether Rick Bobo was in the tower on the night of his sighting and, further, seems to remember speaking to an individual at Central Security Control named Coakley, not Tim Egercic—who Bobo said was working there the night he reported his own sighting to CSC. Consequently, it seems unclear whether the incident reported by Waters occurred on the same night as the one reported by Bobo—especially in view of the independent report, indirectly provided by Carl Thompson, of at least two separate sightings at the WSA, on two different nights that week. Bobo recalls hearing some of Col. Halt’s radio communications from the woods, relayed to him by Egercic, the night he was in the tower. If so, that convincingly places him at the WSA on the last night of UFO activity during that week.

For his part, Waters recalls talking to an officer on the morning following his own sighting, who told him that burn damage had been found on some of the trees in the woods, apparently the result of the UFO “bouncing” between them as it landed. But exactly when did that damage occur? As of now, there are two possible dates: Either during the early morning hours of December 26th, when Jim Penniston and Jim Burroughs reported finding a landed, triangular-shaped UFO in the forest or, on the other hand, some 48-hours later, when Lt.Col. Halt’s team saw a UFO that looked like “a big

eye” moving through the woods. Neither Bobo nor Waters reports seeing a triangular-shaped UFO, suggesting that the object each one saw was not the landed craft reported by Penniston and Burroughs. (One person I interviewed speculated that the hovering, round UFO may have dropped a triangular-shape probe into the woods, but we have no eyewitness reports for such an event.)

However, if both Bobo’s and Waters’ sightings occurred on the same night—when Halt was in the forest—why does Bobo remember speaking to Tim Egercic at CSC, while Waters recalls speaking “most of the time” to someone there named Coakley, during his own sighting? Furthermore, if Rick Bobo had a 360-degree view of the area from the tower, why did he not see the UFO when it was much closer to the WSA, at which time, according to Waters, its apparent size was that of a cantaloupe held at arm’s length? Waters said the UFO was moving slowly over the forest, and visible to him for several seconds, from his much lower position on the berm. One would think that an object in the sky that large, moving rather slowly, would have been hard to miss, especially by someone in the tower!

Considering all of these facts, is it possible that Waters’ sighting occurred on a different night than Bobo’s? If so, had the UFO that Waters saw just buzzed the WSA’s tower, seconds before it caught his eye—as reported by a member of the 2164th Communications Squadron, who was doing repair work in the tower? At this point, I simply don’t know the answers to these questions and am obviously speculating.

Having spoken at length with Carl Thompson—the source of the “tower buzzing” story—I consider him to be a credible source. Col. Halt reviewed Thompson’s verbatim comments to me, and agrees with my assessment. So how do we reconcile the dramatic telephone calls Thompson reportedly received from his frightened co-worker, while he was in the tower at the WSA, with the statements of Bobo and Waters? Both say that the UFO they saw was never over the WSA, certainly not buzzing the tower. Before this particular mystery can be solved it will be necessary to find out who was manning the tower each night that week, to get their input on the matter.

Finally, I asked Waters whether he had been debriefed after the incident, or threatened by anyone, perhaps OSI, to keep quiet about the sighting. He said simply, “No, nothing like that.” It will be remembered that Rick Bobo had told me the same thing. So, assuming that there had in fact been a debriefing of Security Policemen, as reported to Carl Thompson by his very angry coworker in the 2164th Communications Squadron—during which he and a number of SPs were allegedly harassed and threatened—then who were those other individuals? According to Egercic, Bobo and Waters, they were not debriefed at all. Were there other SPs on duty at the WSA, or working elsewhere on either base that week, who were later singled out for an interrogation and, if so, why was not everyone present for the various reported sightings debriefed?

And then there is Halt’s crucial report of the beams of light seen falling from a UFO into or near the WSA. If that actually occurred, as radio chatter seemed to indicate, why did no one in the WSA, at least the former Security Policemen whom I’ve interviewed thus

far, actually see any of those beams, or remember any chatter about them on the radio? As Tim Egercic correctly noted, beams of light falling on one or more of the weapons bunkers would have been considered a breach of security and, presumably, all hell would have broken loose at the WSA. And yet, according to the three former Security Policemen I've interviewed, nothing like that ever happened.

That said, however, an obviously credible source, then Lt.Col. Halt, reports seeing those beams with his own eyes, as well as hearing on the radio that they had fallen "into or near" the Weapons Storage Area. Halt even told me that "several airmen" on duty at the WSA that night had later mentioned seeing the beams. So who were those individuals, and why didn't Rick Bobo or Tim Egercic see the beams themselves, or at least hear about them over the radio, from others who were on duty that night?

In the same vein, another highly credible source, my retired USAF officer and ex-NATO weapons security specialist, spoke of reading a report which confirmed that a beam or beams of light had indeed fallen into the weapons bunker complex, apparently generating enough concern for, well, someone with command authority, to order that two of the tactical nukes be removed from one of the bunkers and flown to Kirtland AFB for inspection. (As I will mention shortly, another former SP I've interviewed may have actually witnessed that particular weapons transfer.)

In any case, I find all of these apparent discrepancies quite perplexing. Egercic notes that 12 Security Police guarded the WSA on each shift. I am attempting to identify the others who would have been present on the night Halt was in the forest, to attempt to learn if any of them saw anything resembling beams of light falling onto the nuclear weapons bunkers. Needless to say, I would also like to hear from any of the other witnesses to the UFO-related events at the WSA, regardless of the date they occurred. Once vetted, all information will be kept confidential, unless I am given permission to publish it.

My own research aside, some of those involved—or, in certain cases, not involved—with the UFO incidents at Bentwaters and Woodbridge are themselves concerned that the facts be published and the false reports be squelched. For example, when I thanked Tim Egercic for all of his assistance in tracking down others who had been at the Bentwaters Weapons Storage Area during the period of UFO activity at the twin bases, he responded, "[Former SP] Michael Christian has encouraged me throughout the years to cooperate with researchers to help ensure the truth gets out there. As I mentioned in a previous email, Michael was identified on one website as one of the airmen in the WSA tower observing the UFOs. Since he departed RAF Bentwaters before the Rendlesham UFO incidents, it goes to show how false rumors can distort the facts."

Regarding the events in Rendlesham Forest itself, another former Air Force source, David Winget, told me, "I arrived at Bentwaters/Woodbridge on the 13th of January 1981 [the same day Halt wrote his memo about the UFO incidents in the forest]. At that time, I was an Airman attached to the 81st AGS, Aircraft Weapons Squadron. My job was Aircraft Weapons Specialist (bomb loader). Basically, I was responsible for the maintenance and loading/unloading of the weapons systems on the A-10s. During my commander's

briefing we were all told not venture into those woods or to ask any questions regarding [what had happened there] otherwise court martial. The reason was for 'national security'..."

The highly sensitive nature of whatever happened in the woods has also been confirmed by another source. Shortly before this book was published, I located and interviewed former Air Force Security Policeman James "J.D." Burris, who had been briefed on the events of the second encounter. Burris told me,

At the time, December 1980, I was a Senior Airman assigned to the 81st Security Police Squadron. That particular day, I was working the day-shift at Central Security Control (CSC). My flight chief that day was Master Sgt. Raymond Gulyas; the shift commander was Captain Michael Verano. The day began normally, but then we got briefed on what went on the night before. We were told what happened, what they saw, and so on. It definitely became clear that it was not going to be a normal day.

At first, I thought that [the briefers] were having fun, you know, their own version of a joke. But it got real clear, real fast, that it was no joke! The first thing I was told was that the incident had been left out of the desk blotter and that Lt.Col. Halt wanted it included, so that had to be done on my shift. So I was involved in preparing that, which is the only reason I know anything about the incident. That's when I found out about the impressions in the ground and, uh, tree branches were supposed to have been broken, I guess when the object landed. I never would have known about any of that if I hadn't been posted at CSC that day.

All I recall during the briefing was being told that something unexplained happened. Something descended and landed in the forest. Sgt. Gulyas told me about the photos he tried to take. He told me about the [landing gear] pod castings that they took. He told me about the radiation readings, not specifically what they were, but that they were not normal [background] readings. About a week later, he told me that the pictures didn't come out. Gulyas never speculated to me about the object. He just said that it was an unexplained thing on the ground. He really didn't want to say a lot.

In fact, it was years later before I knew that there had been another incident [involving Penniston and Burroughs on December 26th]. I saw that on TV, on Unsolved Mysteries. That's also when I learned about the lights coming down into the Weapons Storage Area. As far as I knew, all of the activity took place in the woods, off the end of the Woodbridge runway. There was never any mention of [the UFO] passing over Bentwaters, or over the WSA. If that had come out at the time, Oh, Jesus!

Now, the document that was typed up at CSC that day was classified, but at a very low level: For Official Use Only. The base telephone book had

the same classification. There were, uh, six copies of that: the wing commander got one, the deputy wing commander, the base commander, the deputy base commander, the chief of Security Police, and one stayed at CSC.

Later that day, we got word that the 'head shed' had said [that we were] not to discuss the incident. The head shed was what we called the wing commander's office. So, we understood [there were to be] no questions asked, and that we were supposed to keep our mouths shut. In fact, even before we were told that, unlike any other situation, there was no chatter, no scuttlebutt. That in itself was unusual.

Master Sgt. [Robert] Ball was still at CSC when I went on shift. He was supervisor of Delta Flight. I think they were at the Weapons Storage Area that night, when it happened. The on-duty flight was responsible for the security of both bases, and that included the Weapons Storage Area. Anyway, I saw him at Battle Staff later that day and he wasn't saying anything. Usually, he had some comment for someone, [because] nothing ever got by him, but that day he, well, he seemed to have something on his mind.

At this point in the interview, Burris asked me what I knew about the weapons kept at the Weapons Storage Area. In response, I summarized what I had been told by various sources over the years: the bunkers held tactical nuclear bombs; two had allegedly been removed after the UFO incident and shipped back to the U.S. for inspection. At that point, Burris interrupted me and finished my sentence: "...on a C-5A Galaxy [cargo aircraft]." He then confirmed that he knew about weapons being flown to the states shortly after the UFO-related events at the twin bases.

Burris said, "About a week, maybe two, after the [second] incident in the woods, a C-5A flew in. It...got special security—top echelon security. Various procedures were implemented that were only put in place for that one aircraft." I asked Burris, "So, the only time those procedures were put in place was during the transfer of nuclear weapons?" He heaved a sigh and said, "I don't really want to answer that but, uh, yes, the answer is yes."

Burris continued, "We knew [the aircraft] was coming and before it arrived we established a security perimeter around the area [where it would park], posted two guards, and they were there until the aircraft left the next day. The morning after it arrived, there was a weapons movement from the Weapons Storage Area to the aircraft, after which it took off. When we were briefed about it, we were told it was a 'routine' transfer back to the states. Well, maybe so, but it was the only weapons transfer I saw during my three years at the base." (When I sent Burris' comments to Col. Halt, he responded, "I was not surprised to hear weapons were sent back to Kirtland AFB for testing. At the time I couldn't understand why it wasn't done. It must have been done so

low-key that few noticed. We regularly had C-5s and C-141s moving them so it would probably thought of as routine.”)

Given Burris’ statements about the approximate date of the weapons transfer, relative to the period of UFO activity at the WSA, it appears as if the information I was given years earlier, relating to such a transfer, was indeed correct. It will be recalled that my retired NATO weapons security specialist told me about that event in 1994. While it’s conceivable that the weapons transfer observed by Burris was indeed routine and had nothing to do with the reported UFO incident at the Weapons Storage Area, in my view, its timing suggests a possible link.

I then asked Burris if he had ever attempted to learn more about the incident later on, by asking others on base about it. He said, “No, I was trying to forget what I already knew, to tell you the truth. For me it was, ‘Okay, if you say so.’ At that time, I didn’t believe in UFOs or anything like that.”

As the interview was winding down, Burris unexpectedly said,

Later on, around November 1982, at Woodbridge, I had [a UFO sighting] experience myself. I had been switched over to the night crews [earlier that year] because I had been promoted to Staff Sergeant. It was one of those rare occasions when I had ‘base patrol’ instead of being 50-feet off the ground [in the tower] at the Weapons Storage Area. Bobby [Burgeron] and I were headed down to the East Gate—the back gate of Woodbridge—and we saw three sets of what appeared to be ball park lights, hanging over Rendlesham Forest. The three groups were in a straight line, all at the same altitude, just above the trees. We weren’t scared when we saw that, just curious.

So we decided to pick up SSgt ----- and then hit the Prairie Track road, on the base perimeter, to make sure that nothing was next to the fence. Just as we turned off the hard pavement, the truck shut down. It wouldn’t restart—it wouldn’t even ‘click.’ So SSgt ----- and I walked back to the supervisor’s shack to call and have a new truck sent out to us. As he and I started walking we could see that the lights were still there. We were closer to them by then and could see that each group of lights appeared to curve around the middle of what seemed like a, uh, football-shaped object—not laying on its side, but set on-end. There were three of those side by side.

Before we got to the shack, Bobby had gotten the truck started and came up to us. I asked him, ‘How did you get the truck started?’ He said he had just turned the key. At that point, we both looked over at the woods and saw that the lights over the trees were gone. We didn’t report it.

When I sent Burris' sighting report to Col. Halt, more unexpected information emerged. He responded, "I know of another sighting at Woodbridge on Guy Fawkes Night (November 5th) in 1981. Two independent [security] police patrols saw a large cigar-shaped object float in from the sea and silently loop around the Woodbridge tower. Neither reported it and I only found out by chance as they were leaving for a new assignment."

I must admit I was surprised by Halt's disclosure, as well as by Burris' sighting report. Over the last 25 years, I had only heard about the UFO activity at Bentwaters and Woodbridge occurring in December 1980. Now I was suddenly presented with two new, unrelated reports in rapid succession. This unexpected turn of events made me wonder whether even more sightings had occurred at the twin bases around that time. Searching the Internet, I quickly discovered three additional accounts by former members of the 81st Security Police Squadron—all unrelated to the now-famous UFO incursions in December 1980. Lori Rehfeldt, who was an Airman First Class at the time, wrote,

In February 1980, while on D Flight, I was on patrol with A1C Keith Duffield. At that time, [Woodbridge's] East Gate was closed but we had to make checks to ensure [it] was locked. My patrol pick-up was [behind the East Gate shack] positioned looking off base...I just finished reviewing the check sheet and we weren't in any rush. Then we saw a bright white light coming in from the North Sea (from east to west) in the direction of the runway.

At first we thought it was a regular aircraft. I kept looking at the runway to see if the [landing] lights would go on...they didn't. Then the light stopped about two football field lengths away from us and just stayed suspended in the sky. Then it made some geometric movements, going sharply straight up, straight down, then left (north), then right (south) and then broke into three pieces [which] sped off across the runway then straight up into the night sky at an incredibly fast speed. The entire time the object did not make any noise or mechanical sound. We didn't see a shape to the UFO.

Well, I did report it to the Desk Sergeant...The guys on the radio gave me a lot of grief and teasing over it, so much so that I felt pressured to drop the issue. I told Duffield that I wasn't going to pursue it unless told by my supervisor to do so, and I strongly sensed that my supervisor was relieved that I didn't pursue it.⁶

Another former security policeman, Ken Kern, reported two separate sighting incidents. He prefaced the first by saying, 'As I write this, I am looking at two 3x5 index cards, part of a larger group of index cards which comprised my diary while at RAFs Bentwaters and Woodbridge. [Here is] what I wrote back in June 1980...a half a year before the now famous UFO incidents...

15 June 80—Interesting nite—it’s our second mid[night shift] and Wagner and Campbell have A-2. They sighted a UFO [on] five different occasions...Described as a red globe 20ft. in diameter. It hovered at times over aircraft pads/structures. Labrucherie also sighted this UFO; he had A-1. At one time they said the UFO glided over the trees to a meadow where it suddenly disappeared [in] a white flash (poof!) and then nothing...I believe this story to be authentic.⁷

Kern added, “A-2 was the area security patrol and A-1 was the entry control post to the to the Alpha aircraft parking area at RAF Bentwaters.”

Kern’s second account was more dramatic, and involved him directly. He prefaced his post by writing that the index card on which it had originally been summarized was currently unavailable, adding, “I still have it somewhere and as soon as I find it I’ll update this webpage with the exact date.” In other words, unlike his first report, written down shortly after the events described in it, the one below is a reconstruction undertaken many years later. In any case, Kern wrote,

This happened during a midnight shift some months before the now famous Rendlesham UFO incidents near RAF Woodbridge. I was assigned to Whiskey [4 or 5] the mobile ART or Area Response Team in the Bentwaters WSA or Weapons Storage Area. The WSA was where they stored the nuclear weapons.

I was with Rick Jenkins in a truck during a usual silent and eventless night. The night’s sky was black and starry. All of a sudden from up high appeared a big green object that came down and crashed into the forest just outside the WSA double fence line perimeter. This all happened in the matter of a second. The object made no noise—absolutely no noise even when it ‘crashed’ in the woods. Nothing.

Anyway, I remained silent for seconds, which seemed like an eternity, looking straight out the truck’s windshield. I finally asked Rick if he saw what I just saw and he replied “Was it big and green and just came flying out of the sky?” That was the first and last time Rick and I ever spoke of this. It did not seem that anyone else saw this object that night. We did not hear of it from anyone else.⁸

Ken Kern is now retired from law enforcement, having been a Special Agent with the Immigration and Naturalization Service and later a Senior Special Agent with the Department of Homeland Security. When I called him, he told me, “The whole incident at the WSA took a split second, maybe not even that long. We were sitting in the ART truck, looking through the windshield. Something caught my eye, high up in the sky, like a flash. Then I saw this big green object, maybe the size of the full moon or larger, come right down at us. But it appeared to land outside the WSA—not very far, maybe a

hundred yards outside the fence line. There was no sound, no explosion when it hit, nothing.”

I asked Kern if he recalled the timing of this incident, relative to the UFO activity of December 1980. He replied, “I wish I still had that particular index card, which had the exact date, but I would say it occurred several months before December, but exactly how long before I couldn’t say. One thing that I do recall, which I found a little strange was that shortly after the green object crashed into the woods, during the same shift, our squadron commander, Major Ziegler, and our operations officer, Major Drury, both came into the WSA. I had never seen the two of them together, making their rounds at night, either before then or after that. They probably had, but I never saw them together like that. They came up to our truck and talked to us, but they didn’t ask us anything about the green object, and we didn’t volunteer anything. I guess we rationalized that since it really did not land in the WSA itself, it was okay not to mention it. But I do find it strange that Rick Jenkins and I never discussed the incident among ourselves after that. I’m not sure why.”

Kern continued, “Back then, lots of people were ‘snapped’—that’s what we called it—people lost their PRP if they showed any indication of strange behavior, or whatever. Most of those cases had to do with other kinds of personal issues, but if you were snapped, you ended up on sandbag duty, a nobody. People didn’t want to end up like that, so they kept their mouths shut a lot.”

Here is yet another example of sighting witnesses who worked at nuclear weapons sites maintaining silence about their UFO experiences for fear of losing their Personnel Reliability Program clearance. As noted elsewhere, several of my former Air Force missile guard sources have told me of their reluctance to discuss their sighting with their superiors at the time. Over the decades, this self-imposed censorship has undoubtedly resulted in a significant number of UFO incursions at ICBM sites and Weapons Storage Areas going unreported.

Of course, in many cases, Security Policemen did indeed report their UFO sightings. Regarding his other posted report, involving SPs guarding aircraft at Bentwaters, Kern told me, “At the end of the shift that night, while we were turning in our weapons at the armory, I heard Wagner talking to our flight chief. He was very, very upset, almost shaking, like he was about to fall apart. Later, I asked Wagner, or maybe it was Campbell, what had happened and that’s when I heard their story. Something very unusual had obviously happened to them.”

Given these reports by former security personnel assigned to the 81st Security Police Squadron, it would seem that UFOs made at least five other appearances at the twin bases in 1980-82, which have until now escaped widespread public attention. In particular, the three posted reports mentioned above—two of them relating to sightings occurring in February and June of 1980; the third occurring during the same general period—suggest a prelude of UFO activity at Bentwaters and Woodbridge several months prior to the big show in December.

The green object sighted at the Weapons Storage Area is particularly interesting to me. It was certainly not a naturally-occurring meteorite, or its impact would have resulted in a deafening noise and huge concussion. If the object sighted by Kern and Jenkins was in fact a bona fide green fireball—of the type sighted over the Los Alamos and Sandia nuclear labs, as well as following various atmospheric atomic tests in Nevada in the late 1940s and 1950s—then its appearance at the Bentwaters Weapons Storage Area is especially noteworthy.

The UFO Radar Tracking at Bentwaters

Aside from persons reporting UFO incursions at the Weapons Storage Area, I have also interviewed the two USAF air traffic controllers who were on duty during the period of the UFO activity. James H. Carey and Ivan “Ike” R. Barker, now belatedly admit to tracking an unidentified target on radar at the Bentwaters Air Traffic Control Tower one night—sometime between December 26, 1980, and January 1, 1981—as they worked an extended holiday schedule.

This is the first time the now-retired controllers’ testimony has been published. Jim Carey told me: “At the time, I was a tech sergeant, an air traffic controller with the 2164th Communications Squadron. The other controller was named Ike Barker. A major named - - ----- was also there. I think the incident happened between 10 and 12 o’clock, if I remember right. Ike and I usually worked 6 p.m. to midnight, but it was during the holidays, when we might have to work eight or nine hours. But as I recall, it happened before midnight.”

Carey continued, “What I remember is seeing was a very fast object on the radar we had in the tower. The scope was variable—it had a zoom as far as its [displayed] range, between five and 60-miles radius, but I think it was at set at a 60-miles when the object appeared. It came in from the east, went straight west across the scope and disappeared off the left side. It took maybe four sweeps—each sweep was two or three seconds—to cross it entirely. So it covered 120-miles in [approximately eight to twelve] seconds. In the 15 years I was an air traffic controller, I’d never seen anything travel across the scope that fast. A few seconds later, it came back on the scope, retracing its course, west to east, at the same speed. Then—I think it was maybe half or three-quarters of the way across—it did an immediate right-angle turn and headed south, off the bottom of the screen. I mean, it turned just like that, instantly. We couldn’t believe it! I told Ike, ‘Okay, that was not one of ours!’”

Carey concluded, “So, that’s all I remember, except for the chatter on the radio. I think it was on the major’s hand-held radio, which was turned to the Command Post Net. That’s who he always talked to [on other occasions]. I wasn’t really listening to it, so I don’t remember any of the details, but I do know that [the radio] was pretty quiet all night then, all of a sudden, they’re just yakking back and forth. They were kind of excited but that’s all I recall. Besides, if they were going to discuss UFOs or security problems, or that kind of stuff, they would have gone to a restricted channel, which they scrambled. But the

chatter did start up a little while after we tracked the object. Anyway, I only saw the unidentified object on radar, but Ike told us that he saw something out the window.”

I asked Carey to explain why Barker was able to observe an aerial object out the window, but he was not. He replied, “It all happened so fast,” he said, “Ike said the object was hovering there for just a moment, then it left really fast. So I guess I was looking the down at the scope at that time. I believe Ike when he says he saw [the UFO] but I just can not remember [seeing] it.”

I asked Carey if he and Barker had logged or otherwise reported the radar tracking and sighting. He replied, “No, we could not say a lot about this because we were air traffic controllers—a very serious job. Our bosses could have removed us at any time if they thought we were acting kind of funny or weird, so to keep our jobs, we never made a big deal of this. We both loved our jobs and something like this could be cause for removal from the career field for good. But [considering the other reports of UFO activity at Bentwaters] we thought it was funny no one ever talked with us about what we saw that night.”

When I interviewed Ike Barker, he said,

Everything I tell you, well, I would be happy to take a lie detector test. I was a master sergeant, with the 2164th Communications Squadron. There were three of us there that night. I was the tower supervisor, Jim Carey was working for me, and the Supervisor of Flying was Major --- ----- . He wasn't a controller, he was there for emergencies in the air and that kind of thing. He assisted the aircraft, if they needed it, but had nothing to do with air traffic control.

Anyway, that night, it was slow at the time, no aircraft in the area. We had a radar scope in the tower we called the “Bright 2” that had a 60-miles radius around the Bentwaters complex itself. I looked down at the scope and saw a bright streak move across it. An aircraft always appears as a series of blips, one blip for each [radar] sweep, moving slowly across the screen. But this thing almost looked like a straight line, with the blip leaving a ghostly trail behind it. That's how fast it was moving. It came in from the northeast, directly over the base, directly over us, stopped for a few seconds, immediately reversed course and went back out the way it came in.

After I told Barker that Carey recalled the UFO coming in from the east—rather than the northeast—he consulted a map of the twin bases, and said, “Jim was almost right about the inbound and departure: the thing came in from the southeast, crossed over Bentwaters to the downward leg—which would have been a mile to a mile-and-a-half from the [radar] antenna—and then went back out to the south, or a little bit southeast, probably over Rendlesham Forest, which was south of Bentwaters. It went completely off the

scope, so it was 60 miles away when we lost it.” However, Barker does not recall the unidentified target performing a right-angle turn on its way out, as Carey contends.

Barker continued,

And there was a visual on it. When it hovered, I saw it out the window. It was basket ball-shaped, and had sort of an orangish glow. Not bright orange, uh, sort of dim, maybe like the full moon would look behind a thin layer of clouds. There seemed to be something across the center of it, lighter-colored shapes like—don’t laugh—like portholes or windows, or even lights, in a row left to right, across its center. Maybe six or eight of them. They were stationary, not moving across the object. But it seemed spherical, not flat like a flying saucer. I couldn’t hear any noise. It wasn’t huge, but I think it was bigger than an airplane. I would say it was maybe twice the size of an F-111. Now, there’s a water tower at Bentwaters. If you were in the air traffic tower, facing the runway, the tower is almost behind you. [From my vantage point] the object was directly over top of the water tower, or just past it. The object [appeared] larger, maybe twice as large, as the tank on the water tower. It stopped in mid-air for a few seconds, probably 500-feet, uh, maybe a 1000-feet above the tower, then it left. I didn’t see it turn, uh, rotate or anything like that before leaving.

But what impressed me most was the speed this thing had. I have never seen anything so fast in my life! It was zoom, gone! I would say the object was slightly higher than traffic pattern altitude. As soon as it left, I had Jim get on the phone to the controllers at the Woodbridge tower. He was patched through by the GCA (Ground Control Approach) radar unit. A British civilian at the tower said, ‘No, we didn’t [track] it. We weren’t manning the scopes. We’re in the break room.’ That tower was manned by Air Force controllers too but, like us, had a British civilian working there. He’s the guy Jim spoke with.

In any case, when I told Barker that Carey had said he did not remember seeing the UFO out the window, Barker replied emphatically,

Oh, he saw it! They both saw it! But we weren’t going to admit that. Just after I saw the object out the window, I turned to Jim and --- and said, ‘I didn’t see that, did you?’ One of them responded, ‘No, I didn’t see it either.’ I don’t remember who answered me, but they both saw it. But we made no log entries on anything, including the fast-moving target. We didn’t really have a discussion about not telling anyone, because that was already understood. You may know that there was a deal with the Air Force—I don’t how familiar you are with their procedures and policies years ago—but if you reported a UFO sighting, you might be woken up at 3 a.m. for an interrogation. I once went through that when I was in Japan, earlier, before I was at Bentwaters. I was in the radar unit there too and we

tracked a UFO on Yokota's long-range radar, short-range radar, and final approach PAR radar—and the Japanese unit there got it with a height-finder [radar].

Plus, there was a visual sighting by three controllers in the tower. [In spite of all those factors] the Air Force said it was the reflection of a car on the highway. The controllers were harassed to the point that they said the object they saw were only aircraft lights. That taught me a lesson: Never go on the record. Never open your mouth. So, at Bentwaters, I think we were all scared to discuss it. I know I was. As I said before, we didn't even record it in the log.

After the object left, uh, maybe an hour later, we could see lights, actually a glow, in the direction of Woodbridge, but the trees blocked our view so we couldn't see what was causing it. Now that I think about it, I'm not sure if --- was still up [in the tower] at that time, but I know Jim was. The glow seemed like it was coming out of the forest; it wasn't like lights in the air. It could have even been vehicles on the ground, but I know one damn thing—it wasn't a lighthouse!

Barker laughed heartily at his own jibe. All of my Bentwaters sources think UFO debunker James McGaha's notorious lighthouse explanation for the UFO sightings is ridiculous, and have gone out of their way to tell me so. Now that I have secured the candid testimony of the two air traffic controllers who were working in the Bentwaters tower every night that week, I'm certain McGaha will come up with a false-radar-return theory to explain away the tracking, as well as some other mumbo jumbo to explain away the spherical, orange-colored object Barker saw out the tower's window.

I then asked Barker about the excited radio chatter that Carey mentioned overhearing that night. He replied,

Yes, the major had a 'brick'—that's what we used to call a hand-held FM radio. There was so much chatter that, at one point, he turned down the volume. Something was going on, that was obvious, but I don't recall hearing what they were saying. A few weeks later, I did hear some scuttlebutt about the UFO sightings during the holidays from an OSI agent named ----, who Jim and I played golf with. I think that was the first time I heard anyone mention that others on base had seen them too. But I didn't let on that we had actually tracked one of them and had seen it over the water tower. ---- was a nice guy, but an OSI agent was the last person I would have told that to.

Barker then speculated that the agent might have been probing him, intentionally mentioning the UFO activity, just to see what kind of response his comments would elicit.

Barker later told me that he or Carey had also called a British radar unit known as Eastern Radar, to report the tracking. British researcher Dr. David Clarke has interviewed the RAF Commander who was at Eastern Radar in 1980-81, Derek Coumbe, who confirms receiving a call from the Bentwaters tower. According to Clarke, “[Coumbe] was on duty when the UFO report was received in the early hours of 28 December. He said he received a direct call patched through from the Bentwaters tower reporting a ‘flashing light’ over Rendlesham Forest.” Coumbe logged the call, noting that although he had the duty controller attempt to verify the track, “nothing was observed.”⁹

This account raises a number of questions about the radar tracking mentioned by Barker and Carey. Both recall it having occurred sometime before midnight, probably on the night of December 27th, however, the British log entry about the call was made on the 28th at 0325 GMT (3:25 a.m.). Further, Coumbe remembers the caller making reference to a flashing light over the woods, however, Barker only recalls seeing a round, non-flashing object near the base water tower, while Carey does not recall a visual on the object at all.

Are Barker and Carey wrong about the timing of the tracking? Barker recalls having Carey call the Woodbridge tower immediately afterward, via a patch from the Ground Control Approach radar unit, to find out whether the controllers there also tracked the UFO. According to Barker, the Woodbridge tower usually closed down each night around midnight, therefore, it would seem that the radar tracking reported to me had to have occurred hours earlier than 3:25 a.m. If that was the case, it appears there was a second tracking at Bentwaters. If so, why do Barker and Carey not remember it, or recall reporting a flashing light over the forest? Both recall seeing a glow coming from the woods, but nothing in the air above them. I asked Barker these questions but he was as puzzled as I.

Another obvious question is why only one or two UFOs left radar signatures when Halt reported seeing at least four of them low in the sky—about “10-degrees” above the horizon—while he was in the farmer’s field. I asked Barker to explain this discrepancy but he told me he didn’t know why there weren’t more anomalous tracks that night, adding, “We would have tracked anything down to 500-feet [in altitude].”

So, as is the case with the other sighting witnesses at the Weapons Storage Area, there are lots of unanswered questions about the events occurring in the Bentwaters Air Traffic Control Tower during the holiday week of December 1980. I finally asked Barker for his opinion about the object he tracked. He replied, “I can tell you that this was no manmade technology. I was very familiar with all types of aircraft, obviously, and I can tell you that what I saw was not from any country on Earth. I will never forget it!”

In summary, the December 1980 incidents at RAF Bentwaters, RAF Woodbridge and Rendlesham Forest are self-evidently important. While it may be many more years before all of the facts are known, they already rank among the most significant of the UFO cases. Meanwhile, back in the United States, other U.S. Air Force base commanders had their own nuclear weapons-related UFO incidents to contend with, as I will now discuss

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