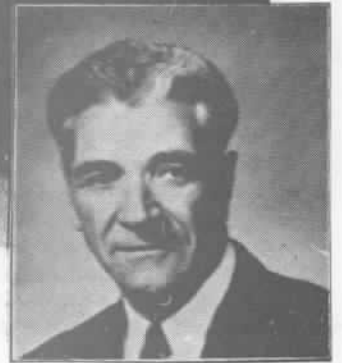
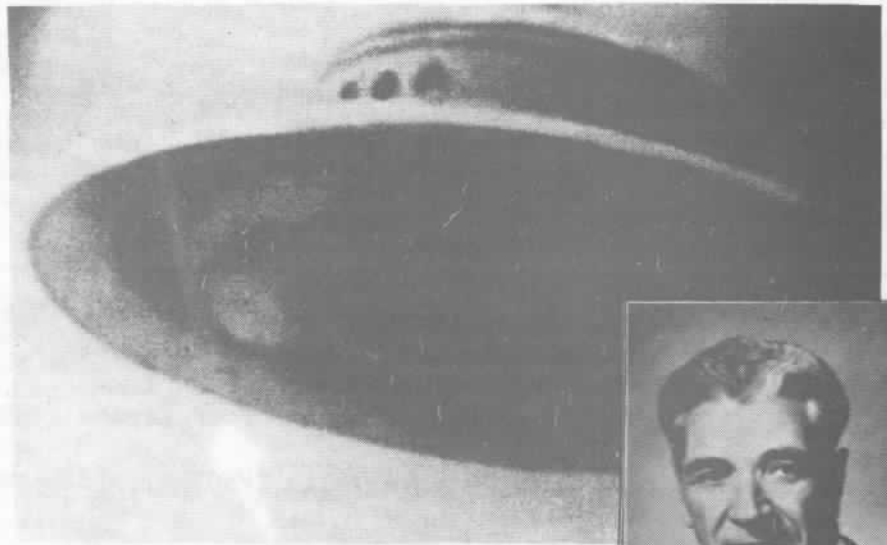


# THE **PROBE** **REPORT**

**JOURNAL OF UFO INVESTIGATION**

**GEORGE  
ADAMSKI :**



**"THE BIRTH OF THE UFO MYTH"**

**ALSO**

**RENDLESHAM FOREST MYSTERY**

**SCUFORI**

**REPORT**

# RENDLESHAM REVISITED

IAN MRZYGLOD & MARTIN SHIPP

As recent articles and rumours portray, there is a firm belief by many that something unknown crashed into Rendlesham Forest, near Woodbridge, Suffolk. Woodbridge is a small village nine miles north-east of Ipswich. The stories reveal how several people in the vicinity witnessed strange lights between 27th and 30th December 1980, and from these reports emerged gradually an account of how something came down into the woods. The nature of this alleged object has been a topic of major controversy since the very first snippets of information became available, and this is due to the small pieces of inside information that have been leaked from various personnel right from the beginning.

It seems that on one hand, there is the story that an aircraft crashed (and the possibility of this aircraft being armed with nuclear weapons has been made ripe), and the story of a UFO landing or crashing was 'leaked' to cover up the real horror of a near nuclear disaster. Another faction seem to think that the 'nuclear aircraft' story (which has also been 'leaked') was put out to take the attention off of a real UFO landing. Since this mystery began to unfold at the beginning of 1981, nothing has been made clear whatsoever by the authorities involved or by the investigators involved.

Dot Street and Brenda Butler, the two main investigators into this case, have provided a great number of summaries and interim reports, and from these have emerged several articles:

- 1) BUFORA BULLETIN No 004, Dot Street, p20-21.
- 2) NORTHERN UFO NETWORK - CASE HISTORIES, Jenny Randles.
- 3) FLYING SAUCER REVIEW Vol 27, No 6, Jenny Randles, p4-8.
- 4) THE UNEXPLAINED, Volume 9, Jenny Randles, p2101-2105.

Appreciating that this case could have extreme importance, it was necessary to visit the area and conduct an on-site survey to try and establish if the case did have some substance. With the agreement of Jenny Randles, a couple of SCUFORI (Swindon Centre for UFO Research and Investigation) investigators went to Rendlesham Forest. The two team members went to establish whether or not there was a case to answer, and that it was not just a hoax or something that had grown out of proportion from just a few rumours.

Here follows the SCUFORI report:-

Two members of SCUFORI visited Rendlesham Forest for a three-day period in late September 1982. During this stay, with the assistance of BUFORA investigator Dot Street and private UFO researcher Brenda Butler, both Martin

Shipp and Charles Affleck were able to ascertain the sequence of events which were alleged to have occurred during the last few days of December 1980.

SCUFORI's objective was not to investigate the sighting itself, but to try and determine whether the case would warrant an in-depth investigation at a later date. They managed to visit the area where the object was reported to have come down, but despite much travelling, were unable to interview a single witness who had claimed to have seen the object. Shipp and Affleck did, however, talk to several people in the immediate area in a hope that they might yield some information.

The investigators were somewhat handicapped by Dot Street (with whom they stayed) because, although she had boundless enthusiasm, she was very disorganised. Her account of the event was extremely difficult to follow and the two SCUFORI investigators had to keep requestioning her to make certain that the right information was being obtained. Brenda, however, gave clear answers to any questions posed, with the exception of those which concerned the airbase personnel. Therefore, with a limited amount of time, Shipp and Affleck set about looking into what had been prematurely termed as 'The Rendlesham Forest Mystery'. They did not expect to solve the mystery in one visit but felt that one or two 'grey areas' needed clearing up. The investigations, in their opinion, did reveal inconsistencies with the accounts given by Dot and Brenda. These need to be dealt with here as they are crucial to the credibility of the entire report. They are:

## 1) The 'Landing Site'.

The area in Rendlesham Forest where the object was supposed to have landed/crashed (OS map reference: Sheet 169, 362488) was visited with the intention of determining the exact spot of the incident, and to see if there were any residue effects. Dot had telephoned Affleck earlier in the week and told him that when she had visited the area recently, nothing was growing there. This was nearly two years after the event had initially taken place.

From the point where they left the car, Dot, Shipp and Affleck walked approximately half a mile to the site. This walk gave the SCUFORI members a good overall picture of the forest's make up, which consisted mainly of large areas of pinetrees planted very close to each other. These had been put there under the guidance of the Forestry Commission as a commercial venture. Between these areas were rough tracks and the occasional small opening. Arriving at the site, they were amazed to see a huge area where there were no trees or any plant life. The ground was very dry and covered in pieces of branch and dead leaves. The location was directly in line with the end of the runway at RAF Woodbridge airbase.

Using a Geiger-counter, the area was tested for signs of possible radiation, but as expected, none registered. This result was inconclusive as either there had been no radiation there at anytime, or it had been and had since washed away. The ground was then examined very closely and several examples of plant life sprouting through the dead leaves were found. The branches were also looked at and they were found to be dry and very brittle. They also had the colour of silvery-white.

Moving out from the centre of the area to the edges, the plant life, mainly ferns, was more abundant and very dense by the time the trees were reached.

The question to ask was: what could have caused such a huge area to be almost devoid of life? Dot Street was certain that this area had been subjected to radiation given off by the object as it came down, thus killing off all the life in the immediate vicinity. SCUFORI had other ideas. Firstly, it was noticed that buried beneath all the debris of leaves and branches were stumps of tree trunks. A closer look at these revealed that a saw had been the responsible instrument. The forest had obviously been developed to provide wood and therefore the trees had been cultivated in a certain way. It seemed probable that trees that once stood in the area had been cut down and taken away. Furthermore, the dead branches which were scattered about had obviously been stripped off the main trunk and discarded as they were of little use.

The two investigators decided that it would be worthwhile checking the forest to see if similar areas could be found. This had not been done by either Dot or Brenda. After searching for just a short while, a spot was found that appeared to be identical to the alleged crash/landing site. The ground was again littered with treestumps, dead leaves and branches, and the entire area was barren. However, two factors present gave this location an entirely different look. Firstly, there were several rows of tree trunks stocked into piles. They were stripped of their branches and cut to similar lengths, and looked ready for shipping out. Secondly, the ground was inundated with tyre marks from a very large vehicle. It was obvious that this area and the previous one had been subjected to the same process - tree felling - and not due to the landing of some type of craft, as claimed by Dot. Naturally, this area had only recently been worked on whereas the 'landing' site's tree felling took place some time ago. The actual felling and moving of the trees using the large machinery kills off all the flora in the immediate area, and then when the branches are cut away, they are just left on the ground and for some reason turn silver-white in colour. To find out how this felling procedure is carried out, and why the branches discolour, Shipp, Affleck and Dot set about locating the offices of the Forestry Commission. At this time, Dot was not very happy at SCUFORI's findings but agreed with them that the site was cleared through tree felling.



Example of the flora sporadically growing in the 'landing area'.

Dot thought she knew of the Forestry Commission offices whereabouts, as she had spoken to several of the forestry workers concerning the scorched tree-tops. This was another reason why SCUFORI wanted to see them. The journey to the offices took them directly past the end of the runway of RAF Woodbridge. There were notices stating 'Prohibited Place' and 'Private' so the airbase was observed from a distance. Arriving at the Forestry Commission offices, it was found that they were closed. However, Shipp and Affleck did see the large tractors and pulling vehicles parked at the rear. These were no doubt used in the felling and their size clearly indicated why the areas were so devastated. Nevertheless, it was the opinion of the two investigators that the alleged landing/crash site was devoid of life due to tree felling and not because of an object coming down.

2) The Farmer Visited by Men-In-Black (MIBs)  
In Jenny Randles' reports in the aforementioned publications (previous page), it was stated that a farmer and his wife, who lived very near the airbase, were paid a visit by two 'men in black'. To quote from THE UNEXPLAINED (p 2104) "... another farmer and his wife told of being visited a couple of days after the 'crash' by two 'officials'- men in black, in the classic tradition!"

It is interesting to note that in Brenda Butler's written report there is no mention of the two gentlemen's attire, let alone its colour. She merely says, "The farmer said two men had been there asking questions about the farmer who reported the UFO." As this farmer only lived about half a mile from the airbase, it was felt that it would be useful to visit him and his wife to try and clear up this man in black situation.

After parking a distance from the farmhouse, Dot was asked to remain in the car as it was agreed that if they saw her they might not

wish to co-operate as she had seen them previously. Only the farmer was available and he said that he had not seen anything, but heard stories from other farmers in the local inn. However, he does remember two people coming to see him and asking questions about the alleged landing. The visitors were a man and a woman, and he recalls the woman wearing a blue and white scarf. He had no recollection of two men - dressed in black or otherwise - calling on him. When shown a reference to this from Flying Saucer Review, he did not know what to make of it, but was adamant that two men had not visited - it was definitely a man and a woman.

Returning to the car, Shipp and Affleck questioned Dot about this, and it transpired that it was her and a male companion that the farmer was referring to. It appeared that yet another part of the story did not fit. The farmer did mention that a farm further up the road had livestock (cattle) and it was reported that these had played-up on the night of the alleged UFO landing. This was to be the investigators' port of call.

### 3) Animal Disturbances

In Brenda Butler's written report it says, on the night in question, "... the farmer phoned the Base (RAF Woodbridge) again two weeks later after the first landing complaining about his cattle playing up ... he was told it was an aircraft but there was no aircraft flying on that night." This was the same farmer the investigators were destined for, and the farm was about one mile from their previous call. Unfortunately, the head farmer was out on business, but the two SCUFORI investigators were able to speak to a farm-hand. He said that aircraft pass very low over the farm all the time and the cattle were used to it. But, sometimes, cattle new to the area might have occasion to be disturbed. If some of the cattle had been affected by something in the sky, it is possible that these were indeed cattle which were not accustomed to the aircraft and were naturally scared. Without being able to discuss the matter with the head farmer, it was not possible to formulate any conclusions, but it is worth mentioning that even if the cattle were disturbed, there is no reason to connect this with the incident that was reported to have occurred at the airbase.

### 4) Effects on the Car

It was stated in Brenda's report that as she and Dot Street drove along a track in Rendlesham Forest on their way to see witnesses, the car (Ford Cortina Estate Mark 1) Brenda was driving appeared to act in a very strange manner. Brenda says, "It was getting late by the time we got to the forest, we entered a track which lead through the forest. ... we came to a clearing, then my car started playing up, it started vibrating like mad. I carried on further along the track and my dog who was in the back started jumping and going round and round. The car was still vibrating and picking up speed, I was telling the dog to sit down and be quiet, as she was whimpering,

but she still jumped about. The car was still going very fast, I should say about 60/70 mph. I was very worried, Dot was telling me to slow down. I told her I could not as I was not doing it, she was getting worried as she thought I was doing it to scare her, but I was not. After about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile the car stopped, I was trembling. Dot looked at me and said I looked as though I had seen a ghost, she had never seen anyone look so scared. The dog had quietened down by this time, but there were lumps of fur all over the back of the car. The dog is an alsation. When I had recovered a bit from that experience, I got out to check the car engine, I could find nothing wrong with it."



The SCUFORI investigators driving the LADA to test the conditions of the track.

Shipp drove down that very same lane in a LADA Saloon 1200 and found it extremely difficult to keep control of the car at 40 mph, although it felt as though the car was going much faster due to close proximity of the trees bordering the track. The lane was in a very bad state, with potholes everywhere. There were very few straight open sections, but numerous blind bends where it was impossible to see what was coming and even more difficult to drive round fast. Shipp had to constantly slow down and change gears.

What is interesting is, as they drove along at 40 mph, Dot (who was in the back seat and could not see the speedometer) shouted out that this felt like the speed that she and Brenda had been travelling at. She also had theories that it was something to do with water running along the track and power cables overhead affecting the electrical system of the car. For some reason, it was not affecting the Lada. That evening, Shipp and Affleck questioned Brenda about her speed and told her that the Lada could only manage 40 mph. She replied that the car's speed was definitely between 60 and 70 mph, although as stated in her report, "... the car was still going very fast, I should say about 60/70 mph." Brenda did not look at the speedometer, but Dot did and it was she who thought she could see the needle touching that speed. However, from a passenger's position, it is always difficult

to read dashboard instruments due to the angle of view. Therefore, Dot's statement cannot be taken as being too accurate. It is possible that she was actually looking at the rev-counter as this was present in Brenda's car. Depending on which gear is engaged, the rev-counter can give confusingly high readings, especially if in a lower gear, which would have been necessary at some stage on the track. Furthermore, Brenda's car is old and shaky. She said that the car could stop while in fourth gear without disengaging the clutch, although the clutch plates were not worn. It could be possible that the accelerator stuck and the vibration was simply a combination of a very bumpy road and an old car rattling under the poor conditions.

As for the dog, it does have a heart condition and this can cause convulsions during a heart attack. The excitement of the two women and being thrown about in the car may have brought on such an attack.

One will never know what really happened with Brenda's car that evening, but from the SCUFORI investigators' own experience of driving along that track, they felt that the two women's account may contain a degree of exaggeration. The lane eventually led to the house of further witnesses and it was here that they next called.

#### 5) Television/Electrical Interference.

Two old brothers who lived in the heart of Rendlesham Forest and near the airbase of RAF Woodbridge were visited by Dot and Brenda as part of their investigations in the immediate area. The two men did not actually see anything, but said that the television and lights kept flickering during January 1981. In addition to this, they had noticed an increase in military activity during this time.

After an uneventful journey along the track, the three investigators arrived at the house. It was indeed isolated. Only one of the gentlemen was there; the other was in hospital recovering from a road accident. Their garden was full of all kinds of junk; broken-down shacks, old cards etc, and a huge aerial swaying in the wind. (It extended above the rooftop). They questioned the man and he told the investigators that the aerial was needed to receive the television signal due to the poor reception. The trees make a natural 'wall' to interfere with the signal. Apparently, television and electrical disturbances are a common event for the two gentlemen and they accept it as a price for living in the forest. That January was not really an exceptional month, although in winter, the reception is made worse as a result of the bad weather. It is the opinion of Shipp and Affleck that the interference was caused (and is still being caused) by the house being located in a dense forest. Bad weather would have accounted for the electrical disturbances.

The rest of the weekend was occupied trying to see witnesses to the actual event, but the attempts came to a dead-end.

#### Conclusions.

As previously stated, it was not SCUFORI's intention to investigate the sighting; only to attempt to determine if the case was worthy of a detailed follow up. The findings over the three days left a feeling of confusion, as previous readings in the other publications, Flying Saucer Review, BUFORA BULLETIN etc, all gave the impression that these events actually occurred as described.

Naturally, due to the fact that key witnesses were not interviewed, any assessment of the whole case was made worse. Nevertheless, in three days, the two SCUFORI investigators had uncovered five instances where things did not appear quite as reported. Based on this, it is quite possible that further research would locate even more discrepancies. All of the five events investigated may have occurred: the car may have reached the speed claimed, the cattle could have been disturbed and the television/electrical interference been worse than usual. But there is absolutely no evidence that these events were remotely connected to an alleged UFO.

In addition to this, the entire report hinges on one thing, and the other events are just superfluous. Brenda Butler was the only person told of the events that occurred at the airbase. The airforce personnel had confided in her, and in her alone. Brenda swore not to reveal the identities of the informants to anyone. Apparently, this was not the first time that UFOs had visited RAF Woodbridge. According to Brenda's contacts, they had been there twice before, and many other military airbases in the country had received such visitations.

Therefore, the Rendlesham Forest case relies on only the information obtained by Brenda. It does seem unusual that these airforce men should inform her of these events, knowing that she would not keep this knowledge to herself (which she obviously never). Why did they not anonymously contact the national newspapers with this sensational story instead of just telling an enthusiastic amateur UFO investigator? It must be said that Shipp and Affleck were not happy with the way that Brenda received the knowledge of the event, and believe that it may be suspect. Further research in that area could be interesting.

In summing up, it is questionable as to whether something unusual did occur at RAF Woodbridge air base. in late December 1980. However, one thing is certain, and that is that the discrepancies unearthed must cast doubts on the entire case, and in SCUFORI's opinion the case does not warrant further investigation.

- So concludes the SCUFORI report on their visit to Rendlesham Forest. They conclude that this case is suspect in that the whole concept of a crashed UFO is based on the information obtained by one person. It is true that airbase officials, one would think, would not

reveal classified information to one who was so enthusiastically involved in ufology. It must have been apparent to these informers that Brenda Butler would not (could not?) keep such an account secret, and therefore it must be surmised that the story was conceived in the knowledge that it would shortly become public.

Yet it appears that it was not only Brenda Butler who was given information. Paul Begg (author of INTO THIN AIR) also received a story that a UFO had been tracked on radar that was headed for Suffolk. The tracking station was a civil radar establishment, and a couple of days later the military arrived at the base and took away the radar tapes of the incident. Needless to say, this all happened at the time of the Rendlesham mystery.

Secondly, Norman Oliver (Director of Investigations for BUFOs) was at the time editor of BUFORA's BUFORA JOURNAL, and he received a message from America from a serviceman who had returned after a stint in the UK. He told Oliver that something big had happened at Woodbridge at the turn of the year (1980/81). In the meantime, Dot and Brenda were working on their aspect of the case and were making the enquiries which led to the publication of the Rendlesham Forest articles.

So Brenda Butler wasn't the only one who heard snippets of stories. But of course, this does not validate the story or give it any credence.

SCUFORI found other similar areas to Dot and Brenda's "Landing site", and this does pose the possibility that they happened to stumble upon just one of many areas that had been cleared by felling at an earlier date. They found out that the 'peripheral' events to the case had been exaggerated out of proportion and possibly even non-existent.

What they did not check was the main event; whether or not an object descended into the forest in late December 1980. They never had the time to do so, and it would have been extremely difficult to uncover information that was somewhat well-concealed two years prior to their visit. But overall they are not convinced anything did happen.

As with many cases that have been promising in their original presentation, much of the additional mystery is only added to give the



Martin Shipp (SCUFORI) checks for radiation traces with a Geigercounter. Dot Street is to the extreme left.

story more intrigue and interest. The famous Dyfed flap of a few years back was found to be coated in a wealth of imaginative gloss, and underneath there was found to be little foundation. It is not clear what the position is with the Rendlesham Forest case, but as one of the few investigation groups who have actually ventured into the forest itself, it is only just that SCUFORI's opinions are treated with respect. After all, they had nothing to gain or lose by their efforts; only the reward of determining as to whether or not others should spend further time and money on investigations. They feel that others would only waste that time and money on this case.

As with most UFO events that involve the military at some level or another, very little information of any satisfactory level is ever released to those interested. Rendlesham will go the way of many others in the past and it will be recorded as another great enigma of the 1980s. It has received immortal coverage in THE UNEXPLAINED (which I understand is on its third run). It has been reported in Flying Saucer Review (still the world's most famous and respected UFO periodical) and it has also been featured in other publications as well as the ones mentioned at the beginning of this article.

SCUFORI did not find out whether or not anything came down in the forest, be it an aircraft or a UFO, but as nothing is ever likely to emerge from this case, does it really matter?

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SS&S Publications have produced their 1983 catalogue of books and special items. This catalogue is free to anyone who writes for a copy, to Gene Duplantier, 17 Shetland Street, Willowdale, Ontario, Canada, M2N 1X5. Well worth obtaining a copy.

Bonnie Wheeler of the Cambridge UFO Research Group, 2 Augusta Street, Cambridge, Ontario, Canada, N1R 1G1, publishes a huge quarterly newsletter packed with information of all sorts. Approximately 50 pages which should last a good week. Write for subscription details to above.

JOURNAL FÜR UFO-FORSCHUNG. The official journal of Gemeinschaft zur Erforschung unbekannter Phänomene (GEP) is highly recommended for those who can read German and take ufology seriously. For details of subscription rates, write to Hans-Werner Peiniger, GFP, Postfach 23 61, D-5880 Lüdenscheid 1, West Germany.

SPECIAL NOTICE: Many thanks must go to Tommy Dunford, a longstanding subscriber to THE PROBE REPORT, for his donation to the funds which is helping us keep afloat. Many thanks.