

# A strange story of the goings-on in the skies above a country town

## THE THING



This is the picture Gordon Faulkner took over Warminster outside his house on a quiet Sunday evening in Wiltshire an eerie, silvery object flying low and soundlessly

by ARTHUR SHUTTLEWOOD, Editor of the **Warminster Journal** Vol. 1014 (CIRCULATION 4,000) AND WILTS COUNTY ADVERTISER writing for the Daily Mirror (circulation 5,000,000)

**W**ITH thirty years as a journalist behind me, I am chief reporter and Editor of the Warminster Journal, selling about 4,000 copies each Friday, yet avidly read by more than the town's population of 11,000.

Frankly, I'm a very tired editor at present after eight of the most hectic months imaginable in a country town. Used to a working week of 60 hours, this has soared to an average of over 85 during the past month alone.

Why? Because of the Incredible, Sensational, Stupendous and Fantastic **THING!** And I use these glowing terms deliberately. I've been itching to do so ever since the first Thing story broke on Christmas Day.

### Weird

Look at this picture. It was taken by Warminster factory worker Gordon Faulkner last Sunday week. I think it is the only photograph of The Thing.

But the story really began months ago. . . . Weird crackling noises in the early morning sky turned a normal and pleasant mother into a frightened human.

They came overhead, a peculiar droning accompanying them, then seemed to descend on her savagely, pushing her back against a wall, leaving her jelly-legged.

**T**HE same morning Warminster's head postmaster, level-headed Mr. Roger Rump, heard the same noises. "Just as though our rooftop was being roughly battered—as if the 5,000 tiles were being ripped off and loudly slammed back into place again," was how he described it.

### Pace

Among the dozens of early pieces of evidence came reports that dead mice had been found in gardens of affected houses—bodies burnt and riddled with holes.

The pace was hotting up and I frequently worked long into the night, some reports pouring into my phone receiver at between 2.30 and 3 a.m.

**A** VILLAGE vicar and his family, plus a hospital physio-therapist, reported "a glowing cigar shaped thing having a black circular patch or aperture at the bottom."

A retired factory security man and his wife saw "twin hot

pokers hanging downwards, a black space between."

A good 70 per cent of all visual reports since then have particularly stressed "huge eyes in the sky" or "car headlights glaring down."

Having seen Mr. Faulkner's remarkable, almost awe-inspiring photo upside-down, I now see what these people meant.

**A**LTOGETHER I've dealt with 190 pieces of evidence in less than nine months.

Mr. Emyln Rees, UDC chairman, my wife and I dealt with thousands of questions hurled at us about The Thing.

### Soared

These came from hundreds of surprise visitors from the States, Italy, Germany, France and Britain.

The town's population of 11,000 soared overnight to over 18,000, hundreds of cars parked in the country lay-bys for miles around, hotels, restaurants, pubs and clubs choc-a-bloc with guests or callers in search of The Thing or new knowledge.

**W**ARMINSTER is near Salisbury Plain, with its Army training centres. And there are several airfields—as well as the aero-

research station at Boscombe Down.

But all the military authorities deny any responsibility for the strange phenomena.

A random spot-check of public opinion I carried out among 100 people told me that 15 per cent think it feasible we are under aerial survey from another planet.

Most of the others feel this "absolute rot."

### Truth

Often battered, bothered and bewildered by the longest, most baffling, most persistent and bizarre news story ever to hit Warminster headlines, I can only now record that some sections of the populace are frightened, very worried over The Thing's visits.

And they want to know the truth about it.

**O**PEN MINDED at the start, completely unbiased one way or the other in "flying saucer" contentions and denials, writing objectively throughout as a reporter is trained to do to inform his public correctly, what do I think about The Thing?

So far as I'm concerned, it really is **OUT OF THIS WORLD!**

It's an effort to admit that, too.

## The man who took it

**Y**OUNG Gordon Faulkner stepped out of the back door of his home. It was the evening of Sunday, August 29. He was going to see his mother. And he was taking his camera because his sister had asked to borrow it.

He shut the door behind him. . . . And suddenly he saw "The Thing."

This is how 23-year-old Gordon, a factory worker, described what happened:

As it flew fast and low over the south of the town I could just make out the unusual shape. It made no noise.



GORDON FAULKNER

Hurriedly I got my camera free and aimed. The line of flight was too fast to follow.

So I held the camera well in front of it and pressed the trigger as it entered the view-finder.

I didn't dream I'd get anything on film at all. It shook me rigid when I saw what came out of it all.

Gordon sent the picture to the Warminster Journal. He thought the editor would scoff.

But he didn't scoff. **THIS WAS A SCOOP.** And the camera? It's a Halina 35 mm., which cost less than £10.

It was focused on infinity at 1/50th sec.

## Last (expert) words..

**A** RTHUR SMITH, the Mirror Science Reporter, writes: "It is one of the best photographs of a 'saucer' ever taken, but the lack of any knowledge of the size or distance reduces its scientific value to nil. Many pictures like it have appeared in the United States—most of them faked. The Warminster picture is in a different category—but there is no way of solving its mystery."

And Air Reporter Peter Harris comments: Sorry, but this picture is just too good to be true. I don't say flying saucers—or "things"—CAN'T exist. Just that this picture does not convince me.