

UFO'S: A History
1949:
July – December

UFOs: A HISTORY

JULY - DECEMBER 1949

A minor catalogue of UFO reports and notations on various unofficial inquiries by individuals and privately funded organizations, as well as commentary on military investigations and governmental policies. Presented in chronological order.

By

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FORWORD

This period, July-December 1949, is marked by a number of significant developments. It had been General Cabell of AFOIN, Washington, who had taken the initiative by sending a Dr. Kaplan to Kirtland AFB, New Mexico, to make inquiries about the mystery "lights" being reported in the skies of the U.S. Southwest. Dr. Kaplan favored a natural phenomenon solution to explain the "lights" but he waited for a time to report back to General Cabell because he was not sure he had enough data. When Dr. Kaplan did report to General Cabell, he asked if he could confer sometime in the Fall with Dr. Edward Teller and Dr. George Gamow, both top experts in plasma theory, so they all could exchange ideas about magnetic aurora possibilities.

As we will see, the Fourth Army, acting much faster, launched its own limited investigation of the "lights" annoying them and managed to get some interesting data.

Apprehensions about the Fourth Estate were realized. The first major attempt to "wake up the public" occurred in August by magazine writer Frederick Moorehouse with his article in Argosy but his effort fell short of the mark. It would be December before Donald Keyhoe could put together the right information in a sufficiently sensational manner to cause an uproar.

In contrast to the efforts of the Pentagon's General Cabell, project GRUDGE working out of Wright Field, Ohio, was doing little and when arch-foe of UFOs Colonel Harold Watson replaced Colonel Mc Coy as project chief, the future of the ATIC investigation was bleak. Debunking of the subject would reach an extreme. Those who influenced GRUDGE wanted to curb "hysteria."

As stated in the top secret Air Force Intelligence report of December 10, 1948, Analysis of Flying Objects Incidents in the U.S., it was suggested that if the "flying saucers" being seen were Russian, the use of such unconventional aircraft was probably being done: "...to negate U.S. confidence in the atomic bomb as the most advanced and decisive weapon." (See the booklet: UFOs A History: 1948, p.102) In August, 1949, Air Force General Hoyt Vandenberg's air sampling aircraft detected radioactive traces in the atmosphere that proved an atomic explosion had taken place on the Asiatic mainland. Russia was no longer just an aspirant rival creator of atomic weapons, it now had the bomb --and two years earlier than American experts had expected! Perhaps it was not by chance that Colonel Watson chose August to end any special handling of UFO reports which effectively killed project GRUDGE.

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Skepticism about the reported aerial phenomena being extraordinary objects drew strength from two things not being reported:

- 1) Contact
- 2) Crashes

There were rumors, but other than the Roswell, New Mexico incident of July 1947,* which apparently was hushed up, little had been reported that could qualify. However, from mid-1949 on, things start to get fascinating.

Do flying saucers cause polio?

Driving down highway #70 along the east side of the Lake of the Woods in Canada on July 1, 1949, an American doctor from Decatur, Indiana, happened to notice a "silvery gray oblong object" in the sky rushing pell-mell horizontally in a westerly direction. The aerial anomaly exhibited an erratic motion as if it was being thrown across the heavens rather than being self-propelling. When the doctor returned to his practice in Indiana he searched the files of the Indianapolis Star and the Indianapolis News to learn what he could about UFO's. Tabulating UFO sightings published, he determined that the majority of sightings were reported in the months of July and August for the years 1947, 1948, and 1949.¹

At the office he was kept busy with the latest summer polio epidemic, a dreaded disease before a vaccine was developed. While all of his patients did not have polio, they did have symptoms similar to Uranium poisoning, or so he thought.² Noting that polio struck its victims between April to October, reaching a peak in July and August, he sat down and wrote a letter to the Air Force. It said in part:

"...there may be some connection between the polio epidemic and the flying saucers, either by atomic radiation from the so-called saucer, or by release of a polio virus which a foreign government may have isolated."³

The doctor admitted his proposed theory was far fetched but he felt he should submit it just the same.⁴ The Air Force OSI agent at Offutt AFB made a few calls and learned that the doctor was a reliable, responsible individual. The agent then phoned a

*The Roswell Incident, by Charles Berlitz & William L. Moore, Grosset & Dunlap, New York, N.Y., 1980.

medical authority at Benjamin Harrison AFB, Indiana to ask for advice. The Air Force was not about to laugh off any suggestion that had to do with atomic energy since for quite some time it was thought that UFO's might be real craft that used atomic power for propulsion. "Uranium" was one of the buzzwords at Wright-Patterson's Project GRUDGE headquarters.

The medical authority contacted thought the uranium poisoning concept advanced by the informant was interesting and suggested some statistical inquiries:

"(a) Does the uranium element produce any physiological reaction in human beings corresponding to symptoms applicable to many of the so-called Polio clinical and sub-clinical conditions?

"(b) Are topographical areas where so-called flying discs are predominately seen (or known uranium deposit) pin points of epidemic areas of clinical symptoms resembling Polio?"⁵

The reply from this medical authority generated further action by the Offutt agent. Messages were sent to various government departments and scientific consultants. The idea was found wanting and was discarded. The UFO mystery seemed to be hitting new levels of strangeness.

"Summary of Observations."

The office of the AC of S, G-2, Headquarters, Fourth Army, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, communicated its alarm over the continued aerial manifestations in the sky over Camp Hood, Texas by sending a report on the incident, "A Summary of Observations of Aerial Phenomena," directly to the Director of Intelligence, General Staff, U.S. Army, at the Pentagon. The Summary stated:

"Beginning 6 March 1949, a series of aerial phenomena has been observed in the vicinity of the restricted area at Camp Hood, Texas. For want of a better appellation, this phenomena has by common consent been tagged 'Balls of Fire.' The phenomena has recurred at Camp Hood on the average of every nine days since it began. Complete reports of each incident have been reported in detail to the Commanding General Air Material Command by direction of the Director of Intelligence, 25 March 1948. Detailed reports of numerous similar phenomena at Sandia Base, Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Los Alamos, New Mexico, have already been made direct to the Director of Intelligence.

"Observations made at Camp Hood indicate:

"--The 'fireballs' are highly luminous lights usually greenish-white but sometimes orange-red in color.

- "--They are usually round but are sometimes of diamond or oblong shape.
- "--Some move and some appear to be fixed 'bursts' described as like the turning on and off of an electric switch. The movement has been reported as in an arc, vertical, and zig-zag.
- "--Observations always occur on the same or consecutive nights--the shortest observation period being one night and the longest three. The smallest number of individual phenomena reported during any period of manifestations has been 4 and the largest 50.
- "--When artillery observation and plotting methods were used, the following data was obtained by triangulation: On 7 May 1949, from 1940 hours to 2105 hours. Weather was clear and a bright moonlight night.
- "--Diamond shaped fireball, red to greenish white, 15 yards in diameter and 1,000 feet high, moved approximately 100 yards horizontally in 57 seconds and appeared to 'go out.'
- "--No sound or odor has ever accompanied the phenomena.
- "--All observed groups of phenomena have 'bracketed' the restricted area.
- "--Over 100 men and officers have observed and reported the phenomena (including field ranks and college graduates).
- "--Flights of aircraft and all firing and training schedules have been checked and rechecked without a single such incident having been found that coincides in time and place with any of the observed phenomena."6

The "summation" of the summation states flatly that the Army was at an impasse, but only indirectly the unpleasant fact that they were very disappointed with the lack of help from the Air Force's Project GRUDGE:

"No explanation of this phenomena is known to nor has any been presented to this headquarters. In the absence of scientific equipment and observers, it appears that no explanation is foreseeable."7

The Army generals in the Pentagon passed on the summary to Project GRUDGE for what it termed: "...consideration and appropriation action."8 Thinking that it might give a push to Wright Field, the Army High Command added:

"Commanding Officer, 10th OSI Kelly Air Force Base, an authority charged with Air Force investigation responsibility at Camp Hood, has advised this headquarters he is in accord with the recommendations and concurs in the request."9

If Project GRUDGE had been as active as it should, it would have had teams of investigators out west where there was a flap in progress. The latest UFO appearance was, of all places, at an air show.

At 10:40 a.m., on July 3rd, a Naval Reserve officer by the name of M. B. Taylor (former Officer-In-Charge of guided missile work under Rear Admiral Delmar S. Fahrney)¹⁰ was at the Longview Airport, Longview, Washington, waiting for an air show to begin when the first of three UFO's hove into view. Visible for three minutes, it traveled in a large arc at a constant altitude. Since the object was unfamiliar and moving in a clear sky, there was no way to be sure about anything except that it was of a metallic color and definitely circular. It was at a high altitude but not so high that Taylor missed noting something about the object which he described as regular oscillations which he timed at the rate of 48 per minute. The motion he described as a "skulling," or falling leaf motion.

An identical object was observed at 10:40 a.m., and a third at 11:25 a.m.

Over 150 persons witnessed the UFO overflights, among them a stunt pilot, Sammy Mason, and an aeronautical engineer by the name of Arthur Robertson, both of whom agreed with Taylor that the UFO's could not have possibly been balloons. The airshow was a mixed blessing. There were plenty of witnesses at Longview Field, but when Taylor contacted the local radio station to get it to broadcast an appeal for possible witnesses to the passage of the UFO's at different localities, the station refused, thinking the phone call to be just a publicity stunt for their air show.^{11, 12}

A run-of-the-mill report detailed the sighting of a round object of a polished metal appearance on July 5, 1949, about 6 miles northwest of Boise, Idaho on Skyline Road. What was other than run-of-the-mill was the following detail:

"Dark grey smoke appeared to emit from one side of the object near the bottom part of the circle in irregular, but intermittent intervals. This smoke appeared to follow the lower contour of the object to almost halfway up the other side of the object and would then disappear."¹³

The news media and the Commander McLaughlin case.

The Public Information Officer, U.S. Army, for White Sands Proving Ground, a Captain Edward Detchemendy, assumed his duties at the New Mexico installation on May 30, 1949, and not long afterward was approached by a Sgt. Feldman.

Sgt. Feldman felt compelled to inform Detchemendy that a UFO had been tracked by telescope on a testing range (the Arrey incident of April 24th). Detchemendy immediately discussed the UFO incident with Clyde Tombaugh, Chief, Ballistic Measurement Section, White Sands Proving Ground, who said the sighting had been made by

Naval personnel. Since no formal report was made to him and nothing had leaked to the press, the case was not pursued by Detchemendy.

Later on July 6th, the Public Information Officer of the National Military Establishment, Washington, D.C., a Mr. Scholin, arrived at White Sands on a one-day orientation tour seeking to gather information on possible leads to future news releases. Detchemendy and Scholin stopped in at the Naval Operations Office in the course of the tour and there ran into Navy Commander Robert McLaughlin. McLaughlin, who had been involved in the tracking of the UFO over White Sands, took Scholin aside and began to talk freely about the amazing incident. Detchemendy was shocked and tried to hush McLaughlin, who in turn, retorted that the UFO incident was "known information." Detchemendy, puzzled, asked McLaughlin what he meant to imply by such a remark, protesting that the Army treated UFO information as classified but that did not stop the Navy Commander who ignored Detchemendy and continued to talk to Scholin. Detchemendy protested again and when he finally got Scholin to leave, he made it clear to the Washington press chief that the Army "...considered all information gathered on flying discs classified and any release regarding them would stem from official information channels in Washington."¹⁴ The Army?

More from out west:

Do UFO's like water? It would seem that often UFO's are reported near water. The correlation is not that marked, but at times one wonders:

"On July 8, 1949, between the hours of 6:30 and 7:00 a.m., my wife and I were fishing from a rubber boat on the north end of Shoshone Lake in Yellowstone Park, when I heard what sounded like the whirl of duck wings. I said to my wife listen, what is that sound, on looking straight up over our heads, I should say 800 to 1,000 feet, there were eight objects appearing to be round and I would say about 20 feet in diameter, and very bright metal like bright aluminum, sailing as I have sailed a lid from a can many times. They were not in formation but reminded me of a flock of black-birds in a group some above and some below each other.

"There was no smoke or exhaust of any kind, it was a beautiful clear morning and the sun was shining bright. If there had been any exhaust we would surely have seen it. They did not sail on a level course but seemed to go up and down just like some of the smaller birds fly when in a group. They were going very fast and if they had not been directly over our heads we would never have heard or seen them because we were watching the water. There was no sound of a motor.

"When the disc-shaped objects were about over the center of the lake one of them turned completely over sailing in among the rest of them without coming in contact with the other objects.

"They looked the same on both sides but I could not tell how thick they were, but judging from the diameter they are large enough to have one or more men aboard.

"Many times when I was younger I have taken a flat round lid or heavy cardboard and threw it to see what it would make. This disc object turned completely over and sailed through the air as if the air current had changed its course. Just before the disc went out of sight the one on our right turned on its edge and sailed down and away from the rest.

"I have seen jet planes and know about their speed, but these objects were just as fast if not faster.

"I have been kidded about seeing things and having too much to drink. But the sky was clear and the sun shone bright. We had had a good night's rest and nothing but good clear water to drink.

"My wife and I saw these eight metal objects if we ever saw anything in our lives. My opinion is that they are controlled by some device some where outside of the disc itself and there is no man aboard, even though they are large enough to carry a man. I think there is some device that keeps them from colliding with each other, and my opinion is that they belong to the United States Government, because if they did not, the U.S. Government would soon find out where they came from."¹⁵

Judging from the last sentence, it is nice to note that someone had faith in the government. As it turned out, Project GRUDGE did not have that much faith in this witness' ability to observe accurately:

"Reflection of the sun's light off the wet bodies of birds often gives the appearance of a very large object at a much greater distance from the observer than they actually are, especially during the periods of dusk and dawn."¹⁶

East coast, west coast:

A silver disc was seen over Astoria, Oregon, on July 6th, and the following day a: "...fast moving, brilliant light...was reported over the hills to the west of Portland. J. High Pruett, a University of Oregon astronomer, suggested that in all probability the light was the planet Venus. Spotted at 10:08 p.m., by a John Webber, the light had a reddish hue and was visible for about 8½ minutes as it swung across the horizon."¹⁷

Scores of persons reported sighting some silvery discs heading across the sky at Philadelphia, Pa., going in the direction of Trenton, N.J. on July 9th;¹⁸ while at Alexandria, Va., a single shiny disc was seen.¹⁹ July 10th was a busy day with two people in Tacony, Pa., counting nine saucer-shaped objects crossing the sky at one minute intervals, while at Philadelphia, Pa., nine "dull lights" were spotted in the heavens.²⁰ The lights were dimly lit saucer-shaped things that were seen traveling swiftly across the sky under a layer of clouds. They appeared intermittently between 9:30 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.²¹ The UFO's may well have been searchlight beams although during the day a witness reported a flying saucer over Mt. Lebanon, a geographical landmark near Pittsburgh.²²

Are flying saucers a "joke?"

Meanwhile, investigative journalist Donald Keyhoe, hired by True magazine to dig up all the facts on the UFO mystery, had not been idle. After spending a couple of weeks quizzing experts in Washington, D.C., Keyhoe learned that many of them had felt that the flying saucer business was a joke until the time Captain Mantell met his death on January 7, 1948. This surprised Keyhoe, and since there had been some confusion over the identity of the thing Mantell had pursued, he decided to zero in on this particular case. The Mantell episode was laced with intriguing loose ends, discrepancies in times of various sightings of the UFO, the apparent erratic path traced by the UFO, the peculiar descriptions reported, and the fact that the UFO could not be located right after Mantell crashed, to say nothing of the strange reports from outside the state of Kentucky. The Mantell case was sensational stuff, just the kind of story to give the proposed magazine article the impact needed.

Keyhoe left Washington, D.C. for the west coast to question various UFO witnesses. For several weeks during the summer of 1949 he talked to airline pilots and other individuals. He had his basic outline finished but still sought more dramatic detail.²³

The first anniversary of the Chiles-Whitted case.

The military Dick Tracys had been momentarily mesmerized by rocket-like UFO reports in 1948, with the Chiles-Whitted encounter the blue ribbon incident, and before the Air Force Chief of Staff discouraged the idea, some at Wright Field cared to muse Martians in our midst and questioned whether mankind was indeed the "crown of creation." Now, a year later, an interesting letter arrived at Air Force Intelligence headquarters. Did the missive support the mystification of the encounter high over Alabama that night in 1948? The letter read:

True and Keyhoe were "scooped" by Argosy magazine and investigative writer Frederick G. Moorehouse. The July issue of Argosy carried the results of Moorehouse's UFO inquiry:

- 1.) Flying saucers exist.
- 2.) They are an advanced type of guided missile.
- 3.) They have an atomic engine that utilize what Moorehouse termed "soft fission."
- 4.) They are guided by a percise and simple control method.

Moorehouse consulted aero-dynamicist to determine the practicality of a circular airfoil and questioned reliable private scientific sources. He suggested that if the flying saucers were a product of a foreign country, the U.S. Air Force must be busy developmementing a weapon system to checkmate them. Moorehouse took to heart Air Force announcements the saucers were not jokes, but are not reason for alarm either. The critical portion of the article, and where Moorehouse would differ with Keyhoe, was the conclusion. Keyhoe reached a spectacular conclusion, one that made news, but Moorehouse's investigation ended with: "...your guess is as good as mine as to who was flying them."*

*Moorehouse, Frederick G. "The Case of the Flying Saucers." Argosy July 1949. p.26.

"At the risk of being ridiculed, I have finally decided to inform you of that which my sister and I saw about 8:00 p.m. on July 24, 1948.

"First, let me say that I am a Public School Teacher in this, my hometown, where I have lived most of my sixty-nine years. Practically everyone in Rayne knows me and my sister, --- (deleted), retired teacher. I refer you to Missrs. --- (deleted), and --- (deleted) of the Rayne State Bank.

"Although my sister's vision is very poor now, it was not so bad at the time of which I write. That evening she and I were seated on our east porch from which we often watch the airplanes traveling east or west.

"There are two parallel routes, the most northerly being a little north of our house. It was on this northerly route that we heard and saw coming swiftly from the east a large cubicle, box-like thing without wings. We had a good view of its two rows of windows, four above and four beneath, lit by a deep red glow. Of course we saw only the south side of the object. I ran through the house to a door opening on the west, and saw it disappear in the distance as it continued its westerly course. There was a flare or tail of light streaming out behind it.

"A peculiar thing was the irregularity of form and windows, i.e., no right angles, but outlined as a child might draw them. We did not observe its nose construction. I cannot say whether it was very close to the ground, or of immense size, but I do know that the size of a single window appeared larger than the planes that cross high above by night.

"It seemed to run more smoothly than an airplane--practically purred.

"On the following morning we heard over the radio about the experience of pilots Chiles and Whitted. Their description tallied with ours with one exception. They saw the windows lit by a white light, whereas we saw them red.

"I read Sidney Shalett's article about "Flying Saucers" in the Saturday Evening Post of May 7, 1949.

"My reason for writing you is because this flying object was not coming southwest of Montgomery, Alabama, at 2:45 a.m. and passed over Rayne, Louisiana at approximately 8:00 p.m., of the same day. Discounting the fact that there might have been two of them, where was it during the intervening hours? Might it not have a hide-out somewhere along the route and travel only at night?"²⁴

Addressing himself to the Air Force's later change of the explanation of the Chiles-Whitted case from "unknown" to "meteor," scientist Dr. James McDonald, after an extensive review of the

military's UFO investigation procedures after 1948, remarked: "Such shifts in official categorizations are not uncommon, but they do not always appear to represent clarifications."²⁵

The Pullman puzzle.

Air Force OSI agents from McChord AFB, Washington, investigated an incident at Pullman, Washington, upon receipt of a newspaper clipping from the Spokane Spokesman Review:

"The date of sighting was 13 July 1949 at approximately 1430 to 1500 hours, Pacific Standard Time. The observers were at the Union Pacific railroad yards; two were working on the railroad tracks and two were loading coal from a bin into a truck. Three objects were sighted, flying in formation, echelon to the left. At the time of sighting, the objects were estimated to be ten miles northwest of Pullman at an unknown elevation. None of the observers would venture to make an estimate as to altitude but stated that it was about the same height as the average airliner. The objects were sighted at an indicated 45 degree angle above the horizon, and two of the objects passed directly overhead. The objects were estimated to be in sight from five to eight minutes. The objects were circular-shaped discs, being approximately six feet through the center or middle section and ten feet in diameter. They were black on the top and silver colored on the bottom. The material or substance of construction was unknown. They were flying toward the southeast. The object oscillated in flight, creating a blinking effect as the silver and black surfaces came into view. The arc or swing of the objects was very mechanical and regular and covered approximately 80 degrees. When the objects were approximately five miles from the observers, the trailing object made a 90 degree turn to the left and disappeared from view northeast of Pullman. The two remaining objects continued in a straight line of flight until they were directly overhead, and then they executed a 90 degree turn to the left and continued a straight line of flight to the northeast. There was no evidence of smoke or vapor trails nor any type of exhaust. No sound was audible. The weather was hot and humid, with a few scattered clouds, and the observers did not recall seeing the object pass through or near any clouds. The speed was constant and estimated as about the same as a commercial airliner. There was no evidence of propulsion other than the oscillating effect and no evidence of control surfaces were noted. The objects continued in flight until they disappeared from view. The observers did not know what the objects were."²⁶

"Convention of Saucer Witnesses."

The Young Mens Business Club of Alexandria, La., discussed the possibility of inviting scientists, science writers, and government investigators to a convention of saucer witnesses. The Pineville News of Pineville, La., noted the proposed saucer convention and learned that people from all over the nation had expressed interest in attending. Two UFO reports came in from the Pineville area at the time and the editor remarked: "It's becoming harder and harder to be skeptical about these mysterious discs."²⁷

Out of Brownwood, Texas, came a very odd story. A Mrs. Armstrong related to the press that a strange thing had passed over her home sometime after midnight, July 17th. It was about a foot in diameter, she reckoned, and "glittered" with light. The thing slowly wafted over the house, moving into the teeth of the wind, about 30 feet up. When the thing brushed a tree branch, it cast off multi-colored sparks. Soon afterward, the thing flew away to the south. After it passed from sight, a rumbling was heard and a glow lit up the horizon.²⁸

"Hey, you guys!"

The morning of July 18th an enlisted man named Clemmensen yelled to three of his buddies inside Building T-516 at Fairfield Suisun AFB, California: "Hey, you guys, come and see these 'flying saucers'!" Since Clemmensen sounded serious, the others ran to the door. They all viewed two, white, round objects hurtling eastward. The objects were out of sight in five seconds.²⁹

Another high speed object, or thing, was seen speeding over Galveston, Texas, July 18th. It appeared to hesitate for a moment and then zoomed west at a tremendous velocity.³⁰

A rumor that U.S. Air Force fighters had shot down one of the mysterious flying discs over New York state, on July 20th, made the rounds, but the Hamilton (Ontario) Spectator attempted to squelch such speculation attributing the alleged downed disc to an advertising balloon from Quebec province that had come to grief.³¹

This is as good as place as any to broach the subject of "crashed saucers." There has been considerable confusion over the "little men from Venus" story, a sensational yarn that has obfuscated the study of unexplained aerial objects to an extent difficult to calculate. The genesis involved two confidence men, Silas M. Newton and Leo A. GeBaucer, dealers in fake oil leases and operating out of Denver, Colorado, and Mojave, California. Together they concocted a unique scheme, but before we explore that, there should be a remark or two about what may have seduced their imagination.

Inspiration was adequate. The April 1949 flying saucer article in the Saturday Evening Post stirred national interest in the mystery, and for many people raised more questions

than it answered. The April 1949 Air Force press release about Project SIGN discussed hypothetical supporting and propelling systems that might be utilized by a flying saucer and in the process made comments about the possible use of the Earth's magnetic field. Perhaps the best source of information available to the two con artists was the spring 1948 issue of Fate which had considerable material about the saucer problem and detailed the adventures of two fellows who claimed to have recovered a number of metal fragments from a damaged flying saucer. Fate not only seemed to accept the fellow's story but dared to suggest, which is of considerable interest to our examination of Newton and GeBaucer, that more saucers may have crashed specifically referring to the 1947 Zamalayuca, Mexico meteor.

On June 5th when Walter Winchell charged the Air Force with concealing information about UFO's detected over Newfoundland, suspicions became more definite. The climate of mistrust gave Newton and GeBaucer a weird idea.

Reflecting on the marvels that might be salvaged from a mutilated machine from another world, a crashed flying saucer, Newton and GeBaucer mused possible profit in an unique bit of hokum. It had a special appeal to them since they had scientific pretensions that favored geomagnetic mumbo-jumbo.

The swindlers decided to make up a story about magnetically powered and controlled flying saucers that are attracted to radar installations, the electromagnetic waves emanating from the equipment at the sites invariably causing the craft to crash. The imagined flying saucer space ships were supposed to originate from the planet Venus which was known to have a thick atmosphere somewhat like Earth's and also having a strong magnetic field. They would claim the saucers were piloted by small, peaceful, human-like beings, and that the circular craft that had crashed were undergoing secret examination by the U.S. government.

Newton, posing as a highly successful oil executive, would steer prospective investors to GeBaucer who would be acting the role of a government scientist engaged in classified Pentagon projects. GeBaucer would then casually drop hints about "crashed saucers" when the opportunity presented itself. With such fascinating bait, the unsuspecting victim would be drawn deeper and deeper into a financial snare Newton and GeBaucer carefully prepared.

Early summer 1949, found the two bogus oil men in Denver, the front man of the pair, Newton, living in a lavish suite in the Brown Palace Hotel hobnobbing with the local well-to-do crowd and in the process capturing the amateur golf title of Colorado.

Establishing the "Colorado Geophysical and Development Company," the two con men sold stock and played a game with their clients until their credibility started to deteriorate. They then fled to Mojave, California, where they had an oil rig in operation in the desert, a set up that provided a facade of legitimacy for "promising oil leases" in the Mojave to be sold to the gullible. GeBaucer didn't tarry long in California since

he owned a business in Phoenix and preferred to spend much of his free time in Arizona. Newton, who had more polish than GeBaucer, and happened to be an excellent golfer, took to hanging around the bar at the Lakeside Country Club in Hollywood. He also got in touch with an old acquaintance who had achieved a position that could benefit his efforts to cultivate contacts with Hollywood society, Frank Scully, a columnist for Variety, the newspaper that catered to the entertainment industry.

More about Newton and GeBaucer later.

"Please expedite explanation."

Two UFO reports continued to annoy Project GRUDGE. Colonel W. R. Clingerman, Chief, Analysis Division, at Wright Field, put the whip to his advisors on July 21st about the matter. He fired off a message to all pertinent Commands:

"The enclosed information regarding the sighting of unidentified aerial objects in the vicinities of Arrey, New Mexico and Southern Oregon is forwarded for your review and comment as to possible origin and/or identification of these objects.

"In view of the source of these reports (Navy personnel at White Sands and a very prominent businessman) Headquarters, USAF, has requested action on this matter be expedited and that both incidents be given special attention in an effort to obtain a logical explanation.

"It is desired this office be advised by telephone of the estimated date your comments can be expected."32

"What are those lights flying around in the sky?"

Fishing for bass at Merrill Stone quarry outside of Delphi, Indiana, on July 23rd, produced more excitement than it did food for the dinner table. Two men at the quarry had nothing much to do while waiting for the fish to bite so they leaned back and relaxed. One, a Mr. Robertson, happened to look up. Although it was close to midnight and the sky was very dark, he noticed a pair of luminous objects in the heavens north of Delphi. Robertson turned to his companion, pointed, and then uttered: "What are those lights flying around in the sky?" Both witnesses watched as the objects zoomed in circles, moving horizontally, one in a clockwise orbit, the other in a counterclockwise orbit. Occasionally the objects emitted a phosphorescent glare. The objects dipped and dived as they went their merry way.

The objects were huge, maybe the size of a five room house. At least that is the estimate of the observers although they were guessing at the altitude of the sky objects which they put at 1,500 feet. The fishermen were sure the UFO's were metal objects, aluminum or magnesium. Since the objects were not going anywhere, one witness ran to a nearby house and persuaded a man inside to also witness the UFO's. The new witness said he would summon

the police and contact the newspaper office in Delphi. The authorities never came, and meanwhile the objects gradually shifted their circling farther away until they were out of sight.

Within a half hour, however, the objects reappeared in the sky in the original location. They were still circling. The two men continued to observe the orbiting objects as they cast for fish. It wasn't until 3:00 a.m. that the UFO's were lost from sight.

The witnesses were certain the objects were solid metal objects. They discussed different explanations between themselves and walked around the area to view the objects from different angles. They decided they were not watching the northern lights, stars, landing field beacons, bats, searchlights, or birds reflecting the city lights of Delphi.³³

What is unusual in this case is not the nocturnal orbiting, but rather the length of time the UFO's spent in the area. It is rare for a UFO report to mention a period of time of more than a few minutes at most. There also may be some connection between this report and a number of reports that would take place in the Cincinnati, Ohio area, beginning in August 1949.

"Observers are very reliable."

An Air Force Captain and an Air Force Major were surprised at the passage of some bluish-white lights over Fort Worth, Texas at this time. Obviously the Air Force had to describe the observers as "very reliable;" after all, the Air Force had trained them. The Major's account reads:

"On 24 July 1949 at approximately 2030 hours, I saw what appeared to be seven dully lighted objects in a type 'V' formation slightly to the west moving very rapidly from south to north. The distance between lights apparently did not change during the time they were visible, which indicated that they might have all been on a single object. This formation of lights was visible for only four or five seconds and finally faded away into the northern sky."³⁴

A little later on July 26th, a whirling, saucer-shaped object emitting a bright light, sped over the Nebraskan landscape at 400 to 500 m.p.h. A doctor living near the town of Mitchell, Nebraska viewed the object and estimated it to be 25 feet across and about 6,000 feet in the air. The saucer passed through a number of clouds before disappearing behind some hills.^{35, 36}

The epidemic of flying saucer-itis continued in the Pacific Northwest.

A B-29 bomber flying over Washington July 26th attracted the gaze of an observer in the city of Spokane who claimed he

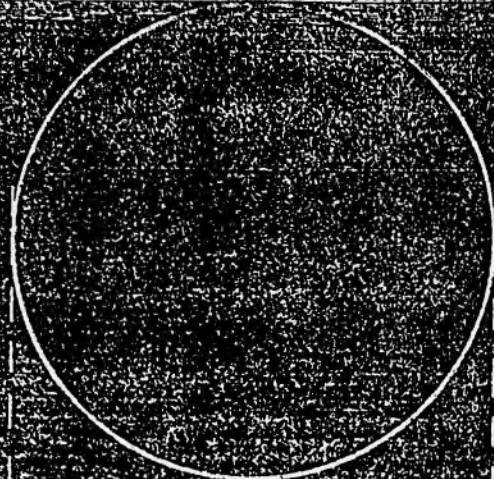
saw eight disc-shaped objects a 1,000 feet above the aircraft. The UFO's were traveling in the same direction as the bomber and quickly outdistanced it.³⁷ To the west of Spokane on the same day a motorist six miles north of Bellingham, Washington, saw something he first thought was a burning aircraft in the sky. Rolling the car window down, he peered closer and judged the spot in the heavens to be the size of a fuselage of a C-47 and about six miles away and some 15 degrees above the horizon. Red-orange in color, the thing was egg-shaped and had a sharp outline. It remained stationary and made no sound.³⁸

Over Redmond, Oregon, also on July 26th, something that gave the impression of being a "flat sheet of aluminum" soared over at tremendous velocity, flashing in the sun.³⁹ Likewise, a flying disc brilliant in the rays of the sun passed overhead at Puyallup Valley, Washington two days later. It was reported by J. Sagmiller, veteran flyer and since the war, an aerial crop duster for Washington farmers.⁴⁰ What may have been the same object was spotted over Seattle on July 30th about 10:40 p.m. A Mr. R. L. McCormick described the intruder as glowing and: "...flat like a saucer with a bright center and sort of a halo around the edge."⁴¹ Only hours before a brilliant object alarmed an observer at Burien: "It was three times as big as the largest star...the flame shot out (and) just really frightened me."⁴² The previous evening a Mrs. E. Lund spotted something over Port Susan she guessed: "...was not a plane or balloon and disappeared after flashing visibly a few moments..."⁴³

"Star light, star bright..."

This mysterious sky activity over Washington continued the next night when about 9:30 p.m. a Seattle housewife and her three children gazed at the dark night heavens. One child pointed out a star of particular brilliance and as the family made a wish on what they believed to be a heavenly body, together saying: "Star light, star bright...", they abruptly stopped in mid sentence. The "star" had started to move. It fell slowly and finally flashing out with a small explosion of pink and green light when it appeared to drop to earth in the Olympic Mountain Range.⁴⁴

Things began to get hectic when one UFO intruded into the air traffic over Portland, Oregon. Events started at 9:45 p.m. on Saturday, July 30th, when CAA traffic controller, Bernard Basford, at Portland Airport, caught sight of two red lights and one white light south of the Columbia River where the Bonneville power lines cross.⁴⁵ Basford took a sighting on the lights and estimated that they were half way between Hood River and Mt. Hood, or just about over the city of Camas, Washington, at about 7,000 feet. Basford, a CAA controller at Portland for over six years, was puzzled by the lights because the mystery lights did not match those required by law to be displayed by all aircraft for night flying. Approaching Portland airport at the time was an United Airlines passenger plane from San Francisco.



OVERHEAD VIEW

25'



PROFILE

3' OR 4'

Its pilot, who was not named in press accounts, later told the newspapers:

"I first spotted the red light when I was between Salem and Albany letting down from 15,000 feet, about 10:10 p.m. It looked like a red light, with now and then a flash of white always off to the east of us, apparently quite a way away." 46

Furthermore:

"It would grow brighter and then fade. It seemed to be moving, but I couldn't seem to get any closer. It was off to the east when we arrived over Portland and the tower told us to hold off south of the city." 47

The mention of the white light explains the radio command from Portland Tower. Basford, who had the red lights under observation for approximately 30 minutes, saw a white flash and thought it was an emergency flare. He set in motion aircraft-in-distress procedures. Passenger planes preparing to land at Portland, United flights 667 and 623, Western Airline flight 628, and Northwest Airlines flight 109, were ordered by Basford to assume a holding pattern away from the field. All four pilots of these airliners saw the mystery lights.

The alarm was also sent to the Air Force, the Army Flight Service, and the different sheriff and police offices throughout the area. Law enforcement officers immediately confirmed the presence of something odd in the starlit sky. In Clark County, deputies reported red lights east of Portland and police officer Robert Burke patrolling on Hayden Island reported both red and white lights which seemed to be five miles east of Rocky Butte in the Vancouver, Washington area. Clark County deputy sheriffs Henry Kaiser and Paul Markly also claimed to have spotted the "mystery plane" dropping what seemed to be a white flare. The "plane" was circling.

Back at Portland airport, Basford noted: "I couldn't tell anything about its speed since it was moving almost in a straight line toward and away from me...moreover the light would brighten, then dim. First it seemed to approach close to the field, then retreated." 48

By now Basford's assistant, Robert Henry, and other airport personnel, were in the tower and were able to confirm what was occurring. Basford thought the UFO was a helicopter in trouble so he turned the airport's spotlight on the object to assist a landing but the UFO reacted by zooming off at a high rate of speed in a southwest direction. 49 As soon as the warning net was alerted, Portland Tower received calls from police departments at Camas, St. John's and other communities.

In the air, Captain Paul Thrush, piloting Northwest Airlines flight 628, cruising at 220 miles per hour, sighted the strange lights at 2100 hours when his plane was between

Stevenson, Washington and Troutdale, Oregon. He surmised that the lights might be several aircraft in close formation. The phenomenon was two steady red lights and an occasional white one. He was puzzled because this was:

"...nonstandard lighting and as such commanded his close attention as he approached Portland from the east. When Thrush heard Basford over the radio ordering incoming airliners to stack over Portland Field, he banked his plane 180 degrees to close the lights that seemed to be following his particular aircraft. The attempted interception was futile, the lights pulled away with ease."⁵⁰

After 15 minutes of waiting for the "aircraft in distress" to attempt a landing, Basford gave orders for the resumption of normal airport operations.⁵¹

The Army flight service control center insisted that no military aircraft was responsible, and no civilian planes had been reported as missing.⁵²

Air Force investigators, according to the Portland Oregonian, rushed to the Portland area to conduct an investigation and sent the results to:

"...the Air Force's 'flying saucer' project at Washington D.C. They immediately classified all details of the incident as 'secret' under security regulations and, while they have no direct authority over civilians, instructed airline pilots to observe the same restrictions. Captain Thrush (and C. J. Cole, his co-pilot) said he had also been called by Naval Intelligence with the same instructions."⁵³

A police sergeant of the Portland department who witnessed the whole series of weird sky events that night, became extremely annoyed when the red lights were explained in some newspapers as Very-lights shot up from Mt. Hood some 75 miles away. The law officer also happened to be a member of the Fortean Society* and sent a heated letter to Tiffany Thayer, the editor of the group's journal, which enclosed newspaper clippings on the flying lights over Portland airport and closed his letter with the declaration: "...I am more of a Fortean than ever!"⁵⁴

The Portland mystery lights were mentioned again in the August 3rd edition of the Portland Oregonian with the news that official investigators had arrived at no conclusions. Other than that, it was reported that a woman in Vancouver, Washington, had seen lights of red and white suspended under some clouds

*The reader is referred to the author's booklet: "Charles Fort, The Fortean Society, and Unidentified Flying Objects, by the author, Fremont, California, 1976.

and a Mr. Meserve living out at Gray's River, Washington, had contacted the Oregonian about an odd phenomenon visible over his hometown Friday night, the day before the strange lights made their appearance over Portland on Saturday. The phenomenon was said to resemble: "...beams thrown from the ground by powerful searchlights."⁵⁵

Project GRUDGE "withers away?"

At this time, according to Ruppelt, UFO reports forwarded from military units around the country and from overseas to Wright Field were not being investigated or verified. The reports were just being filed. What were the Intelligence experts doing to keep busy? Ruppelt reveals:

"The meager effort that was being made was going into a report that evaluated old UFO reports, those received prior to the spring of 1949. Project GRUDGE (experts) thought that they were writing a final report on the UFO's."⁵⁶

It was known by the experts at Project GRUDGE that periodicals had investigative journalists trying to obtain the "full story" on the UFO mystery.⁵⁷

The military Intelligence experts concluded:

"All evidence and analysis indicate that reports of unidentified flying objects are the result of
1) Misinterpretation of various conventional objects;
2) A mild form of mass-hysteria and war nerves."⁵⁸

This August document further stated:

"It is, therefore, recommended that conclusions 1 and 2 of this report with sufficient supporting data, be declassified and made public in the form of an official press release. This action would aid in dispelling public apprehension, often directly attributable to the sensationalistic reporting of many of these incidents by the press and radio.

"There are indications that the planned release of sufficient unusual aerial objects coupled with the release of mass-hysteria. Employment of these methods by or against an enemy would yield similar results."⁵⁹

The 375 reports in Air Force files, which was the amount compiled up to the spring of 1949, were screened by: Dr. J. Allen Hynek, head of the astronomical department at Ohio State University; the Air Force Air Weather Service; the Rand Corporation; the Air Force Geophysical Laboratory; the U.S. Weather Bureau; and a Dr. Fitts, a psychologist from the Air Force Aero-medical Laboratory.⁶⁰

The Air Force Weather Service attributed some 12 percent of the records on file to balloons by correlating general description, motion and speed with known balloon launches.⁶¹

Dr. Fitts advanced a theory (Dr. Hynek's views will be given later on in this text) that makes more sense if applied to civilian observers; unfortunately many of the good unknowns were reported by technically trained personnel:

"There are sufficient psychological explanations for the reports not otherwise explainable. These errors in identifying real stimuli result chiefly from the inability to estimate speed, distance and size."⁶²

Perhaps the most critical appraisal, because it was not so confined by a specialized viewpoint, was the RAND Corporation's. But first a note about RAND. The RAND Corporation was a "think tank."

A group of scientists that had worked together during World War II on research and development formed the RAND organization in 1947 and established headquarters in Santa Monica, California. RAND's basic mission was to bring systematic and analytical thinking to bear on Air Force tactics and strategy. The RAND people said of the UFO material:

"We have found nothing which would seriously convert simple rational explanations of the various phenomena in terms of balloons, conventional aircraft, planets, meteors, bits of paper, optical illusions, practical jokes, psychopathological reports and the like."⁶³

UFO investigations continued but activity was mostly by local Air Force OSI units, and other military services like the Navy.

When, on August 1st, an American reported seeing a strange, torpedo-shaped object like a "Fourth of July sparkler" zipping over the countryside outside Tampico, Mexico, the story on the incident was forwarded to Wright Field by U.S. Navy Intelligence agents stationed at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City.⁶⁴

The Army, with "mystery flares" troubling Camp Hood in Texas, attempted once again to arouse Project GRUDGE to action. Major Schaffer, in charge of security at Camp Hood, sent a batch of new UFO reports to his superiors and pointed out that all of the latest sightings did not have the strange characteristics of former ones. These latest sightings, he asserted, were no doubt natural meteors. Perturbed, the Major lashed out:

"These reports of natural phenomena by Army personnel who assume they see unidentified aerial objects bears out the necessity, as previously recommended, for assignment of qualified technical

personnel with special equipment to carry out the mission of observing and recording unidentified aerial phenomena."65

"Assigning probability percentages."

The experts at Project GRUDGE wrestled quite some time with the Arrey, New Mexico and the "southern Oregon" cases.

Any closure of Project GRUDGE activities necessitated the explaining of these two puzzling incidents, an irksome task, but since they were so fresh and well witnessed it had to be done.

In order that the reader may get some insight into how Project GRUDGE analyzed UFO sightings, let us look over the shoulder of Captain T. K. Oliver, Acting Chief, Office of Air Research as he examined the Arrey and southern Oregon cases:

"In the analysis of the data presented, the first question that must be answered -- 'Did the observers actually perceive the objects which they describe through their physical sensing organs or were they created within the observer; i.e., noise?' The objects have been seen simultaneously by several observers and certain common characteristics described. This is irrefutable evidence and it must be recognized that the objects which the observers reported were real and perceived from stimuli received from outside the observer.

"Now let us examine the testimony. What are the firm facts brought out by the observers?

"The object had contrast with the sky by virtue either of a high albedo or radiation emanating from its surface.

"The object was moving relative to the observer. The speed at which the objects were moving cannot be established to any degree because of the lack of range information. Whether it was moving with the air mass or not is not certain. Shell observed the object to be moving retrograde to his own vehicle at an estimated 230 mph airspeed but without definite range measurement, very little can be made from this part of the observation. Bright objects appear to be larger when viewed at a distance. Consequently one could assume any number of situations which would physically satisfy the conditions described by the observer, i.e., the object could be at a distance in a free field, as the object came closer, its size would appear in truer perspective and to the rear of the athwart ship axis, the object would again appear to be larger. This

would give the impression of great distance and consequently great speed for a given angular rate. In the case of the ground observer, the angular rate was equivalent of the anticipated motion of the air mass but of a different direction of air mass; consequently, it cannot be definitely established that the bodies observed were not moving with the air mass, and on the other hand, it cannot be proved that they were. Therefore, all we can conclude was the object moved relative to the observer at an unknown speed.

"Configuration: Elongated oval; a solid of revolution. These seem to be common observation.

"Size: indefinite.

"Altitude: Shell reported what can be considered a reliable observation of beneath the level of his own vehicle which was at 9,000 feet above mean sea level and 4,000 to 5,000 feet above the terrain.

"Geographic: It is to be noted that the locale of these two observations was in the semi-desert waste lands of Western U.S., in general, a region of low surface earth conductivity and low humidity and sharp changes in the refractive index of light and temperature near the surface of the earth and high thermal current in the air mass.

"Let us consider the objects and phenomena which inhabitate or manifest themselves in the atmosphere near the surface of the earth.

"Natural: Animal Life.

Birds

Bugs

Physical Disturbances

Particles -dust -water vapor

Optical Anomalies

Energy Exchanges

"Airborn Vehicles:

Conventional

Non-conventional

"Let us discuss each of the items:

"Of the animal life that can make itself airborn, only two general classes need be considered--birds and bugs. Both of these can propel themselves in the atmosphere and have been reported found at high altitudes probably as a result of the vertical motion of air masses and not of their own locomotion. That these animals could give the configuration and albedo reported by the observers is possible. Swarms of bugs are known to make mass migrations and are believed to be responsible for the 'angels' sometimes seen on Radar presentations.

The arbitrary weighing given to the plausibility of the objects reported being animal life is one-tenth, where unit is defined as certainty.

"Physical disturbances, by which is meant any disturbance to the natural homogeneous distribution of the constituents of the atmosphere and their energies, such as dust particles, accelerated by thermals or water vapor or ice particles, could conceivably assume the configuration reported. That dust laden air can be made to retain its original configuration for long periods of time is evidenced by the British experiments for determining the velocity of the upper air mass (100,000 feet) by the use of puffs of smoke from rifles. These particles can also have the albedo observed. There are other phenomena which are the result of energy exchanges which give small masses of gas luminosity and self propelling energies, one of which is the 'Fire Ball' or nitrogen glow discharge that often is seen accompanying static discharges. Optical anomalies are common in tropical atmospheres and varying indices of refraction give curved paths to light propagation. Although there is little evidence to support the optical anomaly conclusion, is there reason to exclude it? The arbitrary weighing given the probability of physical disturbances being the phenomena observed is two-tenths.

"The conventional airborne vehicles, when viewed from a distance at unfavorable aspects, do present the appearance of ellipsoid and have the appearance of reflection observed and commonly frequent the atmosphere close to the earth. However, when viewed from less than 10 miles over a period of minutes, most aircraft would present a recognizable configuration. The arbitrarily assigned probability is one-tenth.

"For non-conventional aircraft, one must say that no such configurations are known to Allied aircraft designers; that no propulsion systems capable of moving against estimatable (from our present aeronautical engineering knowledge) drag forces through the distances commensurate with the spheres of our influence are known. Yet this exists as possibility and the arbitrarily assigned probability is one-tenth.

"On a scale of probability where six-tenths is the minimum necessary to make a prediction, we can intelligently make no conclusion as to the nature of the objects observed."66

The only thing certain here is that the expert is uncertain. He deals in probabilities that are "arbitrarily assigned."

So much for the military aeronautical engineer doing the analysis for Project GRUDGE. On the other hand, Milton Greensberg, Chief, Plans and Operations Section, Base Directorate for Geophysical Research, forwarded the opinion of Dr. J. A. Peoples,

Chief, Terrestrial Science Laboratory at the Air Force's Cambridge Research Laboratories, Cambridge, Mass., to Project GRUDGE at Wright Field. Dr. People's opinion also happens to mention the last names of the witnesses to the Arrey and the southern Oregon sightings.

"From my contact with Mr. Moore* in the development of constant level balloons, I known him to be a careful observer. Because he has been flying such balloons, the possibility of some reports of unidentified objects being due to balloons had been discussed with him as well as the observational methods which would yield a maximum amount of information. His report is the best evidence that I have seen that the phenomenon is real.

"Concerning the observation of Mr. Shell, the only possible explanation is that the object was a chain of meteorological balloons. This explanation is very far fetched because the balloons would be strung out. That could not have been due to any Terrestrial Science Laboratories' activities.

"I can offer no logical explanation for the phenomenon. I believe that in both cases something real was seen."⁶⁷

Other odd things over Oregon.

An Air Force Intelligence Report states:

"...Wallace Lee McDonald, Aviation Photographers Mate, First Class, Naval Air Auxiliary Station, Monterey, California provided information regarding the observation of unconventional aircraft or unidentified objects on 8 August 1949. McDonald's log book showed that his SMB-5 was refueled at Medford, Oregon 8 August 1949. The pilot was P. O. Hull, AP1, of Seattle; the co-pilot R. Tuswell, Chief Air Pilot; and J. H. Sparks, AF1, Alameda, crewman. All observed five (5) white, luminous objects overhead traveling east-southeast in an off balanced V-formation. One object appeared to be leading the formation with one to its left and three on its right. McDonald stated that at first the impression was one of dandelion seeds blowing along, and then it was realized the objects were at an altitude estimated at 10,000 feet. The diameter of each object was estimated to be 35 feet. McDonald stated the pilot called the tower and asked if they had observed anything. The tower reported that they had seen flying saucers overhead. Pilot

* J. Gordon Vaeth, aeronautical engineer employed by the Office of Naval Research was the general supervisor of the launch. Charles B. Moore, Jr., an aerologist of General Mills, Inc., operated the 25 power theodolite.

Hull requested clearance for take-off and the tower asked if they intended to attain altitude enough to follow the objects. McDonald further stated that on attaining 8,000 feet altitude the formation of the objects could still be seen and their shapes appeared to be that similar to a camera lens; over (convex) on top, and flat on the bottom. They appeared to be travelling at a speed of 150 miles per hour, east-southeast from the Medford Airport moving in a straight line. Time of observation was between 1300 and 1330 8 August 1949. The objects did not reflect color but gave off 'florescent glow.' No sound was heard or exhaust trails observed. The objects remained in sight for a period of thirty (30) minutes. From an altitude of 8,000 feet in the air, McDonald stated the objects appeared to be 10,000 feet higher than their aircraft. McDonald attempted to obtain a photograph but was unable to do so as his camera had a six inch focal length lens and a nine inch plate which was not adequate for photographing the objects at such a distance. During the period of observation, one object dropped down an estimated 1,000 feet out of the formation and then returned. This object was the last one of the right echelon."68

Flying saucers on terra firma.

The debate over the interpretation of affidavits would, of course, be instantly reduced to minor quibbling if a dramatic development were to occur; to paraphrase an old saying: "A saucer in hand is worth two million on paper." The UFO over Portland in July, loitering as it did for some time over the city's airport, might suggest the prospect that if the unexplained phenomena known as flying saucers were actually visitors from off the earth the last act in their journey was overdue, either by disaster or design.

Disaster?

The Roswell "UFO crash" of July 1947 is a most fascinating story and told best in the book The Roswell Incident. The thesis is the claim that something very mysterious crashed one night on a ranch near Roswell, New Mexico, during the height of the flying saucer flap of 1947. Although the incident is a 1947 event, a couple of years later, about now in our historical study, there occurred a subsequent development. It seems that the son of the rancher that discovered the Roswell "wreckage" had picked up more fragments during the months after a military recovery team had gone over the site. This gentleman referred to this collection one evening while visiting friends in Corona, New Mexico in mid-1949.

Somehow word reached the military about the collection in private hands and the very next morning a Captain Armstrong

backed up by three enlisted men showed at the collector's home to demand the material since it "was vital to the nation's security."

The Captain displayed the most interest in the string-like material in the collection and also asked to be shown the area where the material was found. The military men were taken to the site where they looked carefully behind bushes and under rocks until they were satisfied nothing more was to be recovered. The military didn't say any more about the material or incident and the puzzled collector of the strange material forgot about the business in time.⁶⁹ Thus the book closes on the Roswell incident until 30 years later when nuclear physicist and lecturer, Stanton T. Friedman, gave a talk on the UFO mystery to a group of businessmen in New Orleans. After the talk one of the businessmen took Friedman aside and urged the physicist to look up a certain retired Air Force Intelligence officer, a Jesse Marcel, who "once picked up pieces of a flying saucer."

The Roswell incident may have been the real thing, an actual disc disaster and the investigation is continuing,* but a vastly more well known and vastly more controversial crashed saucer story, the Newton and GeBaucer scam, has its beginnings at this point.

On August 8, 1949, the phone rang in the Los Angeles office of the FBI. Agent R. B. Hood answered. On the other end of the line was a man who identified himself as an announcer for a Long Beach radio station. He told Hood that he had some information of possible interest. The Air Force record on the FBI call states:

"...(the announcer) stated that he had received a telephone call from --- (deleted). --- (deleted) stated that he and another individual, identified only as --- (deleted), were prospecting in Death Valley approximately two or three weeks ago when they noted a large circular object crash to the ground a short distance from them. Immediately following the crash two "small men," heavily clothed, ran from the crash and disappeared over a ridge. The large circular object was inspected by --- (deleted) and --- (deleted) and according to them was approximately twenty-four feet in diameter and seven feet thick.

"--- (deleted) stated that --- (deleted) had a scientific background, and after examining a portion of the object, declared it to be principally calcium, iridescent and radioactive. The material reported had small green wires running throughout. --- (deleted) stated to --- (deleted) that he had a small portion of the material in his possession.

*Stanton Friedman discussed Jesse Marcel's testimony with this author and stated that it was crucial that the military officer that assisted Marcel in the recovery of the alleged saucer fragments be traced and questioned. Marcel said he could only remember his partner's last name: "Cavitt."

While the author of this history was examining Air Force files, it was noticed that a Special Inquiry report dated September 7, 1949, originating from Kirtland Air Force Base, OSI District Office #17, was prepared by a military officer named: "Sheridan W. Cavitt."

"--- (deleted) was unable to furnish --- (deleted) address but stated that if --- (deleted) recontacts him he will endeavor to obtain same.

"No action is being taken by this office and the above is for any disposition deemed appropriate by you."⁷⁰

Air Force records have the FBI document on this phone call on file and scribbled in pencil across the bottom of the page is the word: "hoax." No record of an investigation is indicated. Whether it was due to the slow-down within Project GRUDGE or a snap judgment is not clear, most probably the latter. The public became aware of the alleged disc crash on August 20th when the INS carried a briefer account datelined: "Mojave, California." The two prospectors were named: "Buck Fitzgerald and Mase Garney."⁷¹ Were our old friends Newton and GeBaucer up to something already? But we anticipate.

An equally absurd story concerning an alleged "landing" also had its beginnings in August 1949.

"Advanced Thinkers Club."

Southern California's reputation as an incubator of weird ideas is well known and the George Adamski story is no doubt a classic example. Born in Poland in 1891, Adamski emigrated to America with his parents just two years later. During World War I he served in the U.S. Army. Fascinated by philosophy he studied every religion of major importance. Once he almost applied for admission to a Catholic monastery before being deterred by a strong belief in reincarnation. Finally, he came to believe that Lamaism had considerable merit, but he wanted to utilize the "application of knowledge" much like the Christian Science organization. Adamski founded the "Royal Order of Tibet" in the mid-1930's and established a monastery in the placid hills behind Laguna Beach, California. There he and some disciples of his doctrine paraded around in long robes embroidered with the group's symbol, a 24 point star. Around their necks dangled crystal pendants.

One would assume that Adamski wanted to escape the world but total isolation was not his ambition. It was well to meditate in cells once in a while but Adamski felt he had a calling to be a teacher and lecturer to the world-at-large.

He had radio programs on KFOX Long Beach and KMPC Los Angeles for some time which gave him publicity and created a demand for speaking appearances at various service clubs in southern California.⁷²

An admirer presented Adamski with a six-inch telescope and the gift started him on a life-long interest in astronomy, a hobby he incorporated into his philosophical outlook. This hobby prompted a move in 1940 from Laguna Beach to the tiny community of Valley Center, because the world's largest telescope, a 200 inch monster, was planned for an observatory atop nearby Mt. Palomar. Adamski envisioned a cafe to provide food and drink to tourists.

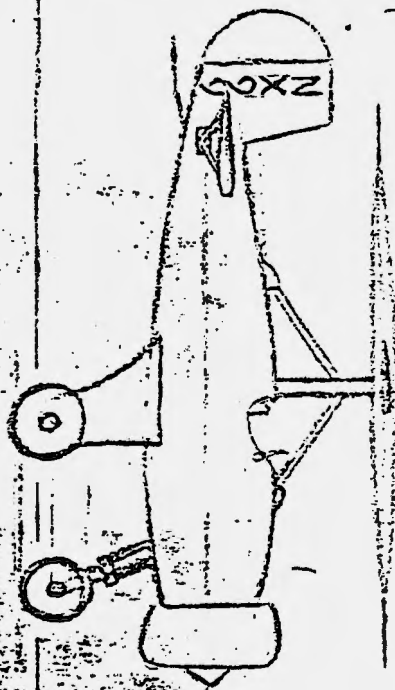
Adamski was always unhappy with critics that pictured him as a "fry cook" at the cafe. As the owner he did not have to work and could spend his time in the dining room chatting with tourists, and various experts that stopped by while coming and going to check on the construction of the huge Hale telescope.⁷³ Up to early 1949 Adamski was unknown outside of southern California but in mid-year he took the first step in a zany journey that would lead to international prominence.

In August 1949, a novel by Adamski: Pioneers of Space--A Trip to the Moon, Mars, and Venus appeared on the market. It told of telepathic Venusians, ethereal women and radiant men that made up a religious hierarchy on that orb mankind called the evening star. The book was an acknowledged fictional effort although Adamski did say in the foreword the work was a speculation upon the possible inhabitants of other worlds by using natural laws of growth and progression known to mankind on this earth. He invited inquiries from the readers to be sent to the "Advanced Thinkers Club" at Valley Center in care of "professor George Adamski."⁷⁴ In time Adamski would become dissatisfied with "fictional" yarns.

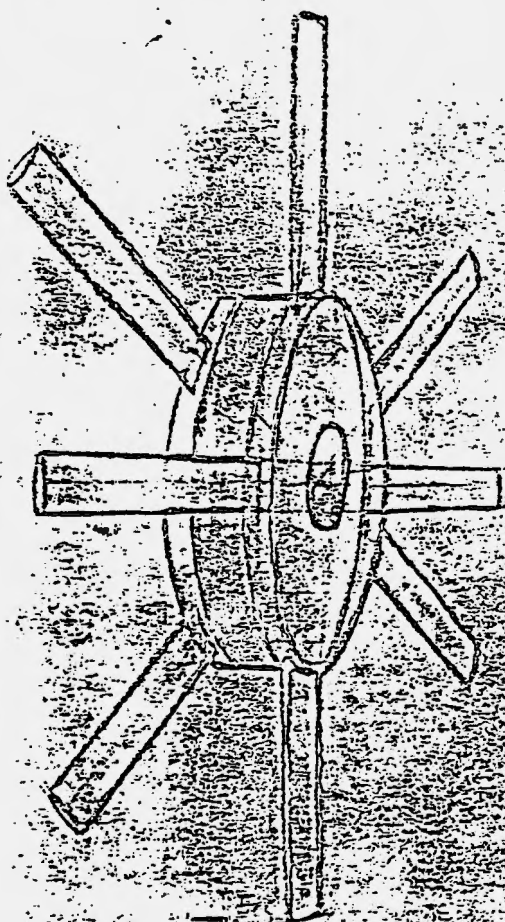
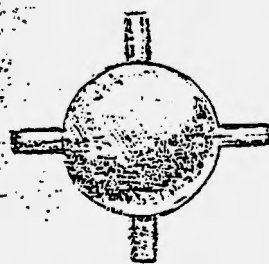
The Grey Goose and the Rotoplane.

A series of events that reached a climax in the latter part of August had its beginning on May 19th. It seems that back in 1939 a Maryland inventor, J. E. Caldwell, sold stock and formed an aircraft company. Caldwell built some flying models and then suddenly left town without notice. Now, in 1949, one of the stockholders thought there was a chance that Caldwell had gone into seclusion to perfect his craft and was responsible for the flying saucers since Caldwell's designs called for a type of circle-winged plane. The stockholder contacted the FBI but the Bureau turned the investigation over to the Air Force OSI office at Bolling, AFB, Maryland. Special Agent Adelbert C. Von Maucher corresponded with the stockholder on June 7th and learned more about Caldwell who had created the "Grey Goose Corp." The informant provided documentation about the "Grey Goose" operation and Von Maucher followed it up by checking with the Glen Burnie, Maryland, Postmaster to determine the last address of Caldwell. Accompanied by Maryland State Trooper J. J. Harbaugh, Von Maucher learned that Caldwell lived and worked on the old Lypton farm on the outskirts of Glen Burnie. The present owner knew of Caldwell's activities and said that the improviser had utilized several out buildings as work shops.

In an old tobacco shed, two craft, after enduring dust and decay for a decade, were found. They did resemble somewhat a "flying saucer" and it seemed they had at one time been used in an aeronautical experiment. Since it was late, Von Maucher left and didn't return until the next day, August 18th. Working with Trooper Harbaugh, Von Maucher took photographs and made sketches of the rusted heaps of metal and fragments of rotting fabric. Everyone connected with Caldwell's enterprise was questioned and cautioned that the interrogations were: "...of a classifield nature and they were not to talk about the investigation to anyone."



GREY GOOSE



ROTO-PLANE

24-93 Photo No. 1 - Artist Conception drawn by Mr. George Rolfe, Baltimore, Maryland from a description furnished by S/A C. E. Reik, 13 August 1949

The old tobacco shed housed a battered gyroplane named the Grey Goose (hence the name of the corporation) that had actually got off the ground once in a test flight, and in a corner there was also a pile of rusted metal hoops that marked the last resting place of a much less successful flying washtub dubbed the Rotoplane.

A mechanic that had worked with Caldwell on the old craft tipped off the press.

The remains of the two craft were loaded aboard a truck to be taken away, and while this was being done a reporter for the Baltimore Sun appeared and questioned Von Maucher. Von Maucher refused comment and referred the Sun's representative to Captain Belk of the 4th OSI District Office.

Things hit the fan when a story later turned up in the Sun that quoted an unnamed Air Force officer (Belk may have been the one) as saying something in regards to the find in the tobacco shed: "I, personally, think the inventor went to some other part of the country and that he (Caldwell)--or someone else-- developed new planes along these lines and is sending them up."⁷⁵

The story was picked up by the New York Times which catapulted the Maryland incident into the national limelight. This embarrassed the Pentagon, the generals there denying the Air Force sanctioned the idea that the strange old Maryland craft were prototypes of the reported mysterious flying saucers.⁷⁶

Shocked by the reaction of the High Command, Major Sealers of the Office of Public Information, Press Bureau, Headquarters, USAF, wanted Captain Belk to explain the statement that had appeared in the August 20th issue of the Baltimore Sun. Special Agent Belk was not that happy either so he questioned the Sun's editor who declined cooperation for the vague reason that: "...newspaper reporters are protected under the circumstances(?)."⁷⁷

The Air Force then made it known that its official position was: "...that agents of the Office of Special Investigations could not be quoted and were not in a position to make any official statements or publication."⁷⁸

The military had similar trouble with the other Baltimore newspaper, the News-Post, which was supposed to have "falsely attributed" several direct statements to Captain Belk.⁷⁹

This friction with the Fourth Estate was not the last incident during 1949.

Caldwell, now 66-years old, surfaced in southern California at Manhattan Beach and joined the Air Force in issuing disclaimers that his inventions were in any way tied to the mystery discs.⁸⁰

The "original saucer observer," Kenneth Arnold of 1947 fame, was quoted by the news services as denouncing the Caldwell Rotoplane explanation of flying saucer reports. Arnold remarked that Caldwell's inventions could not possibly perform like the "real saucers" while pointing out that a craft like the Roto-plane was not newsworthy since it was not based on a particularly new concept.⁸¹

"Neith and Monstrator."

In the spring of 1949 Doubt magazine carried a long essay by Fortean Norman Markham who was Vincent Gaddis' nearest rival among those in the Fortean fold in regards to the extraterrestrial diagnosis of the UFO mystery. Called "A Fortean Speculation," Markham's article: "The Riddle of Monstrator," was a sketch-work of a bit of datum discovered by Charles Fort. According to Markham, there was a vast amount of material in Fort's books that could be worked up into more circumstantial detail, enlarged like a photographic print. "Neith" was the name given by some astronomers to a supposed moon of Venus, an orb detected in the year 1645 and which disappeared in 1791. There were those who charged that observers were just not meticulous and the alleged satellite had been nothing more than a ghost image, an optical illusion. And then there was another supposed body in space, an anomaly that observers in Basel and Lausanne, Switzerland, calculated to be hovering close to the Earth, a stupendous bulk maintaining a discrete distance above our planet in the year 1762. Fort gave this thing a label he originated himself: "Monstrator." Astronomical purists are probably on safe ground when they attribute "Monstrator" to confusion over a sunspot but the commentary on such phenomena fueled conjecture by Fort which maintained that man may not be alone, that "Neith" may have launched "Monstrator."

Looking over the data, Markham had something to say himself, and his anti-anthropocentric eloquence matched that of his Bronx master:

"Maybe something only waited out there, thinking in terms of voyaging onward, supremely and utterly aloof to anything like contact with the swarms of humanity milling here below.

"Something out there with loftier things to do than hold concourse with marauding, war-like, self-aggrandizing, selfishly enterprising small white vermin..."⁸²

It is left to the reader to gage if Forteans like Markham were being too harsh in putting the knock on mankind but one should recognize that there is some virtue in a talent of determining affinities and connectabilities. Also, such a daydream of "outsiders" lurking high in the sky was exactly the idea proposed most seriously by an Air Force scientific advisor, Dr. Lipp, in the fall of 1948!

Dr. La Paz's 5th report.

On August 17, 1949, Dr. La Paz submitted the fifth of a series of reports on "anomalous luminous phenomena" reported in the skies of the American southwest. What is fascinating is that Dr. La Paz found that the "luminous phenomena" seems to have changed its behavior.

"This report covers anomalous luminous phenomena reported to and/or investigated by the Institute of Meteoritics during the months of June, July,

and the first ten days of August 1949. Incidents occurred on Sunday, June 5, 7:55 - 8:17 p.m. (El Capitan, New Mexico); Monday, June 20, 8:10 p.m. (Los Alamos, New Mexico); Wednesday, June 29 (Flagstaff, Arizona rocket incident); Sunday, July 24, 8:26 p.m. (Socorro, New Mexico); Sunday, July 31, 7:47 p.m. (Vaughn, New Mexico); and Saturday, August 6, 8:00 p.m. (Vaughn, New Mexico).

"For these incidents, it was possible to carry out reasonably satisfactory field investigations only for those occurring on June 5, July 24, and August 6. A small amount of field work was also done on the incidents of June 20 and June 29. Detailed reports on certain of these incidents are attached below as appendices.

"Certain general impressions have resulted from the investigations alluded to in the previous paragraph:

--Many of the green fireballs now appearing descend in nearly vertical paths, whereas, in earlier months almost all of the green fireballs observed moved almost horizontally.

--There appears to be a concentration of New Mexico incidents near weekends, especially on Sunday and near the hour of 8:00 (in the interval from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

--Unlike the fireball incidents of December 1948 - January 1949, most observations of recent incidents have been obtained from stations remote from the fireball path. Stations near the path either failed to report any observations or the testimony obtained is conflicting. This situation may arise from the fact that a fireball descending almost vertically through the zenith of a given station is an extremely difficult object for which to estimate elevations and azimuths.

--As in all the green fireball incidents reported on in earlier months, the characteristic green color continues to be observed by the great majority, but by no means all, of the observers; and the failure to observe any sound (meteoritic detonations) persists.

"Recommendations:

--A recommendation made many times in the past will again be repeated here. All eyewitness accounts of which I have knowledge fall in the unwarned category. It is strongly recommended that a systematic observing program be instituted which will provide something besides accidentally obtained data.

--Some decision should be arrived at in regard to the nature of the interrogations which are to be carried out by representatives of the Office of Special Investigations in the field. For several reasons namely newspaper and radio publicity, the layman is much more curious and concerned about

fireball incidents now than he was last December. As a result, the interrogator frequently has the experience of being himself interrogated. If he refuses to answer any of the questions asked him (for example, in regard to the possibility that guided missile experiments are responsible for the fireball incidents), then he may not be able to obtain any information from eyewitnesses who almost certainly have something of value to relate. It is the writer's conviction that very few people any longer take seriously the story that the Air Force is interested in the meteorite aspects of the fireball incidents.

--It would seem desirable to take steps to widely publicize in the New Mexico area the occurrences of such rich annual meteor showers as the Perseids of early August. Otherwise, investigators will be flooded with reports concerning ordinary shooting stars."⁸³

"Monstrator" over Ohio?

Cincinnati, Ohio, the city that is to figure so prominently in the UFO story during the rest of 1949 and well into 1950, was host to some strange "balls of fire" which were noted by a local Weather Bureau expert during the night of August 20th. The Weatherman entertained thoughts that the glowing spheres might be weather balloons but the round objects were holding their own against gusts of wind up to 32 miles per hour. Another witness, according to a press account, also reported what may have been the same phenomenon around 4:00 a.m.,⁸⁴ claiming that the strange balls emitted a pulsating light. But these reports were small potatoes compared to a series of sightings over Cincinnati by searchlight that began the night before. Lt. Colonel Fred Dixon of the Department of Military Science and Tactics at the University of Cincinnati alerted Headquarters, Ninth Air Force, by letter:

"On Friday night, 19 August 1949, Sgt. Donald R. Berger, a member of this organization was operating a standard Army General Electric antiaircraft searchlight on a volunteer basis for a local group who were using the light for publicity purposes. Between the hours of 2000 and 2300 he picked up an object in the light beam in the sky which presented an unusual appearance and was not readily identifiable.

"This subject appeared to change color in the light beam from a sort of phosphorescent appearance to a bluish color if held in the light and when the beam was removed the object remained visible with what has been described as a luminous appearance.

"The object was North but slightly East of Cincinnati at an elevation of 1585 miles or approximately directly overhead. Judging from the atmospheric conditions and the range of the light,

the object appeared to be at an altitude of 4 to 5 miles and at about the same range. It did not seem to move but remained as far as could be determined approximately stationary for the entire period of the three and one-half hours Sgt. Berger observed it.

"This phenomenon, whatever it was, was seen by several hundred people in this city, a number of whom called it to the attention of Sgt. Berger while he was operating the searchlight. A notice of this incident, although not released by military personnel, appeared in at least one daily newspaper of this city."

"Signed: Fred Dixon, Lt. Col.
CAC Act. P.M.S. and T.
U of Cincinnati, Cinn., Ohio"⁸⁵

"News media timebomb."

The Arrey, New Mexico UFO sighting was impressive, and as we have seen the Air Force tried hard with little success to eliminate all doubt about the case. The same went for the southern Oregon incident but there was a big difference with the Arrey sighting, and that was the location. The White Sands area, where the Arrey balloon launch site was located, swarmed with experts on missiles and the physical sciences, just the kind of people who would have considerable curiosity about UFO's, and it would soon become painfully apparent to both the Army and the Air Force that some in the Navy did not share their apprehensions about the UFO problem.

During the third week in August 1949, the U.S. Navy was test firing its new "Viking" rocket and a crowd of news media people were invited to personally witness the launches. At 4:00 p.m., August 24th, the news people got off the airplane at White Sands airport. The Fourth Estate was well represented. The radio networks were represented by CBS, and the Mutual Broadcasting System. Newscasters from two west coast radio stations, KRKD and KFWB, were there, as were writers from three magazines: Popular Science, Aviation Progress, and Popular Mechanics. And three Los Angeles newspapers: the L.A. Times, the L.A. Examiner, and the Hollywood Citizen News sent reporters. The newsreel outfits outnumbered every other media: Acme News, News of the Day, Paramount News, Universal News, Fox Movietone News, and Pathe. Others included a man from Inter News Photo and a lone reporter from the New York Times.⁸⁶

Army Capt. Edward Detchemendy, the Army's White Sands PIO, assisted Navy authorities to orientate, accommodate, and transport the press Corps. On August 25th the day started out with a briefing by Navy Capt. William Gorry who gave an introductory talk to the news people at the officer's mess. The talk was followed by a short lecture by Dr. Newell, of the Navy Research Laboratory, who spoke on the Navy's new "Viking" rocket. The lights were then dimmed and movies of both the Viking and the old wartime German V-2 rocket were shown. It was cautioned that

certain details were classified. The group then left for the test range.

Since the optical tracking telescopes were at locations some distance from White Sands Proving Ground Headquarters, some newsmen interested in ballistics, were permitted to travel unescorted by security guards to interview technicians at tracking sites, a lapse of judgment Detchemendy would regret later.⁸⁷ Meanwhile, something was happening right under his nose.

Capt. Detchemendy spent most of the time talking with newsmen Clute Roberts of Hollywood radio station KFWB since the newscaster had just returned from Germany and the Army PIO had just received orders transferring him to the same European country. Roberts had a portable sound recorder, and during one rocket firing, he wandered from Detchemendy to record the "swoosh" of oxygen being pumped into the missile's fuel tank. Roberts just happened to pass close to a pair of Navy officers, one of which was Navy Commander Robert McLaughlin (the same officer that had a run-in with Capt. Detchemendy back on July 6th). Hesitating for a second at a rope barrier, Roberts' ear picked up a few words McLaughlin was saying to the other navy officer--something about UFO's being reported over White Sands. The remark had an electric effect on Roberts who immediately went up to the Navy Commander and accused him of "holding out on him." If there was a juicy story to be had, Roberts wanted the complete package.

Detchemendy, meanwhile, was kept busy with 12 reporters and photographers but did glance at Roberts engaged in conversation with a Navy Lieutenant and a Navy Commander across the way.

As Roberts listened carefully, the Navy Commander said something about a recent local UFO sighting and muttered something about photographs. When pressed on the subject of photographs, Commander McLaughlin hedged and indicated that the pictures were of no value. On that note Roberts let McLaughlin off the hook.⁸⁸

Later on during the afternoon of August 26th the Aviation Editor of the Los Angeles Times, Marvin Miles, happened to be in the Navy PIO office discussing rockets with Capt. Gorry when a Navy officer entered and began to confide news about a UFO sighting made at White Sands that very day. Unable to resist the temptation since Miles had heard UFO stories from others at White Sands, Miles approached the Navy officer shortly thereafter and urged that a full disclosure be made for the benefit of the readers of the Los Angeles Times.⁸⁹ Miles' story appeared Tuesday, August 30th, in the morning edition of the Times:

"White Sands Proving Ground, N.M., Aug. 29
--Flying saucers--or at least mysterious flying
'objects'--have been sighted by service personnel
at this vital center of America's upper air re-
search.

"I talked with three men, two senior officers
and an enlisted technician, who reported seeing
strange objects in the sky, one as recently as
last Friday during preparation for a high-altitude
missile flight.

"In all fairness, it must be pointed out that
other officers and engineers at White Sands scoff

at the reports and put them down to imagination, weather balloons, dual images in high-powered optical equipment, or possibly distant planes reflecting sunlight.

"Yet the men who gave these reports presumably are familiar with such possibilities and well acquainted with the appearance of balloons and planes and the quixotic results of staring at a fixed point in the sky for long moments.

"One officer believes, sincerely, that the objects seen are space ships and declared that a ballistic formula applied to one observation through a photo theodolite showed the 'ship' was 35 to 40 miles high--an 'egg-shaped' craft of fantastic size and travelling at incredible speeds of three to four miles a second!

"The observer in this case, he said, was tracking a balloon into the upper air when the object swept across the balloon's path and cavorted for some 10 seconds--taking turns up to 22 times the force of gravity--before it disappeared. It had no visible means of propulsion.

"The enlisted technician reports seeing an object at 3:35 p.m., last June 14, as he was tracking the course of a V-2 test rocket in a 20-power elevation telescope, an instrument that can follow a missile to altitudes of 100 miles or more.

"'I don't know what it was, but I had never seen anything like it before,' he told me. 'It seemed to be metallic, but I couldn't tell its size, its speed or its altitude. It would be impossible unless you knew one of the three factors.'

"He added he had informed his superiors of the incident and was told the next morning he had seen a 'disk.'

"A check of one officer elicited the response: 'It was probably a weather balloon,' but he declared the enlisted technician is considered a 'reliable man.'

"Last Friday's object was seen by a senior officer shortly after 11:00 a.m. and reported to the unit commander. The observer was preparing for a missile firing and scanning the skies through binoculars.

"'I don't know what it was, but it came out of the north in a shallow dive and turned west. No, I wouldn't guess at speed or size.'

"He hastened to explain he is a 'skeptic.'

"'Isn't seeing such a thing the best proof for a skeptic,' he was asked.

"'I should say it was,' he smiled. 'But I just saw something and reported it.'

"In all, some five reports have been made in the last six months, one officer said, with only one last year.

"On one occasion, he told me, three or four officers saw a flying object with the naked eye, and at another time two smaller objects were observed to 'chase' a test rocket. These may have been dual images on the telescopes, he said, although they were seen from several widely separated stations.

"These reports tend to take the 'flying saucer' question out of the realm of housewives' stories and the tales of air transport pilots. Still they have proved nothing--merely added to the mystery."90

Clete Roberts was stunned when he read Miles' article over coffee that Tuesday morning and without much reflection dialed the Aviation Editor's desk at the Times. When Miles answered, Roberts asked why he broke the story since such material was seemingly not subject to publication. Miles brushed such objections aside, remarking that the New York Times' man at the launches, Glad Hill, had every intention of doing the same story and it was just a matter of being faster on the draw. In other words, the eastern paper had been scooped. After all that, Roberts got the feeling he was being left in the dust so he made up his mind to tell what he knew during his radio program on station KFWB, Hollywood, that evening.⁹¹

The phone rang at the Army PIO office, White Sands Proving Grounds, Las Cruces, New Mexico, at 9:05 a.m., August 31, 1949. Capt. Detchemendy answered. Calling was a reporter for the El Paso Herald Post, a Mr. Cowan. The conversation went:

"Mr. Cowan: 'What is this the radios are putting out about you people at the White Sands seeing flying saucers--or flying discs up there?'

"Capt. D: 'I just heard about it from some people who came out from El Paso--is it a story put out by a Mr. Roberts?'

"Mr. Cowan: 'Yes--a Mr. Roberts and a Mr. Miles, from Los Angeles, I believe.'

"Capt. D: 'These men were here last week as guests of the Navy, and if they have any information of this type, I imagine they got it from the Navy--shall I switch you to the Navy and let you talk with them?'

"Mr. Cowan: 'Do you have a Navy PIO?'

"Capt. D: 'I'll switch you to Cdr. McLaughlin who will be able to clear you up on where the stories came from. We have had no such information here, and have made no release at all...'92

Detchemendy dashed off a notation on the phone message record:

"I believe Mr. Roberts received this information on which he based his release--from the Navy. Cdr. McLaughlin released verbal information of a similar nature to Mr. Scholin, Public Information representative National Military Establishment, Washington, D.C.

when he was here at this post some weeks ago--in my presence."⁹³

Fuming, Capt. Detchemendy rushed to Brig. General Blackmore's office to complain about the treatment of classified information by the press and the impropriety of using unnamed sources (neither Miles or Roberts named names.).

The General expressed sympathy and suggested that Navy Capt. Gorry be called to account since the press had been the primary responsibility of the Navy. Knowing that the source was "high ranking" and suspecting McLaughlin, Detchemendy vowed to prove it.

His wrath weakened by ignorance, Detchemendy approached Gorry cautiously. Gorry's response was one of astonishing indifference: "It was that same old thing of the Navy tracking of discs in the Spring and that they got this story from us." Capt. Gorry thought so little of the supposed security breach he didn't even bother to compose a decent sentence in making his reply.

Thinking back, Detchemendy did not remember Roberts conversing with any high ranking Army people. In fact, likely candidates as Lt. Colonel Eifler had left the Viking test area immediately after extending a welcome to the press and General Blackmore had never even showed up.⁹⁴

Headquarters, 17th District, Air Force OSI, Kirtland AFB, requested that S/A John F. Frampton investigate the circumstances surrounding the press accounts of UFO's seen over White Sands since no official news release about the subject was on file.

Inquiries to be made in California were handed by S/A James Shirley of the Maywood office.

Shirley phoned Roberts who, in turn, referred him to Miles. When Miles was finally contacted, Shirley needled him about basing such an incredible story on an anonymous authority. Miles snapped: "Do you think I made it up?" Shirley got Miles to suggest that an officer with the last name of McLaughlin had something to do with the release of information but not with the kind of wordage that would nail down the responsibility. Miles, very wary of the line of questioning, insisted that Shirley do some arm bending on Capt. Gorry and terminated the interview by asking if the OSI was: "trying to get someone into trouble."⁹⁵

Switching his attention back to Roberts, the OSI agent got the radio broadcaster to admit that perhaps Miles' source had been a "Commander Jansen" or some sort of name that had a similar sound.⁹⁶ Roberts also thought that a reporter for the Hollywood Citizen-News, an Austin Conover, might be a good bet to know something. Shirley checked the list of newspeople present at the Viking tests and found that a reporter representing the Citizen-News by the name of Austin Conover had indeed been part of the group. In fact, a story much like Miles' had appeared in the Citizen-News under the byline of Conover. Shirley obtained a copy. The first four paragraphs were of the most interest:

"Mysterious flying objects that are called 'flying saucers' or 'flying disks' have been

sighted by rocket experts at White Sands Proving Ground, New Mexico.

"During a visit there last week, I was told by a top Navy officer who has had long experience in observing high-altitude missiles:

"'While sunbathing one day recently I saw a mysterious object cavorting high in the air above me.

"'Just before that, I turned in a report to Washington that two such objects were observed by a party of rocket experts visiting here. At that time I was skeptical. They insisted that I make the report.'"⁹⁷

Further on in the article Conover mentioned a name that was familiar. This individual also seemed well disposed toward the subject of flying disks:

"'Flying disks,' said Comdr. Robert McLaughlin, who since 1939 has been engaged in rocket research, 'have nothing to do with any experiments carried on by American scientists or for that matter by anyone on earth.'"⁹⁸

Shirley confronted Conover in the offices of the Citizen-News and found him as evasive and cagey as Miles and Roberts. Much of the article Conover admitted he: "...sort of dreamed up."⁹⁹

Questioned September 19th, Navy Captains Gorry and McLaughlin: "...advised that insofar as they were concerned the article contained in the Los Angeles Times dated 30 August 1949, contained no factual data whatsoever(!?)."¹⁰⁰ According to Capt. Gorry, both Miles and Roberts had talked with numerous Naval personnel at White Sands and the April 24th UFO Arrey case was one of the topics discussed.¹⁰¹ Gorry volunteered his opinion that UFO reports had no validity, at White Sands or anywhere else. That same afternoon a visit to the White Sands Photographic Office turned up a denial by Lt. Alexander Szabo, who was in charge of such things, that there was any picture of UFO's on file.¹⁰²

"Unconventional Aircraft Project."

Why was the Army so uptight and the Navy so indifferent? Well, one can make a guess or two. It was true that the Army at Camp Hood was very concerned about safeguarding of the atomic weapon storage area and the repeated visits of mystery "balls of fire." That fact, and the lack of assistance given the Army by the Air Force's Project GRUDGE ignoring messages imploring aid, left the Army to its own devices. The possibility that the Army was doing more about UFO's than twiddling its thumbs would explain a puzzling remark by a Lt. Paul Davidson in his capacity as Technical Advisor to the Army PIO at White Sands. Lt. Davidson declared: "...the Naval unit is fully cognizant that the Army's Unconventional Aircraft Project is classified as 'Restricted'

and is therefore not eligible for free and full dissemination to civilian organization."¹⁰³ Did the Army have its own UFO project!?

A paragraph of a declassified Air Force OSI document dated September 22, 1949, gives the impression that the reduction of the Air Force's Project GRUDGE in August to a low level effort was also marked by the emergence of interest by another agency:

"...it is noted that the Counter Intelligence Corps, Department of the Army, is also investigating these objects. In order to avoid duplication, it is requested that you contact the proper Department of the Army CIC offices and coordinate your efforts on these investigations."¹⁰⁴

Eventually Commander McLaughlin was firmly identified as the principle source of information about UFO sightings at White Sands. Cleve Roberts got the opportunity to apologize to the Commander, but McLaughlin, unperturbed, remarked: "Oh, that's all right. I don't care."¹⁰⁵ Some of the things McLaughlin subsequently said stuck with Roberts like: "White Sands Proving Grounds had an observation point located 42 miles from... (the test range) on a hilltop where observations had been made of objects in the sky since 1947."¹⁰⁶ And: "In all probability some men from somewhere or objects from other planets were checking on the tests--based on the fact that such occurrences seemed to take place only during the rocket and other types of tests."¹⁰⁷

Newton, "Dr. Gee," and Frank Scully.

Meanwhile, Newton and GeBaucer were finalizing plans at their home base at Mojave, California; in fact it is strongly suspected that the "Fitzgerald and Garney" named in the August 20th's news item were our two friends using assumed names in an abortive plot. Anyway, a more successful scheme was now initiated with GeBaucer adopting the alias: "Dr. Gee."

Newton and "Dr. Gee" were telling everyone that there was more oil under the Mojave Desert than under the sands of countries in the Middle East, but their boasting went unappreciated until they befriended a newspaper columnist by the name of Frank Scully in the summer of 1949. They easily impressed the writer with descriptions of detecting trapped oil with "magnetic microwaves." Chatter about obtaining millions of dollars in petroleum by hardly lifting a finger was appealing enough but "Dr. Gee" had even more amazing things to relate. "Dr. Gee's" discourse about his background in electromagnetics led to his revealing his claimed employment by the government on classified projects and one project in particular was a real conversation piece. Not only did "Dr. Gee" believe in flying saucers, he asserted

that he had even "examined" such a craft for the government, a craft that had crashed near Aztec, New Mexico! Scully was all ears and when he was invited to accompany "Dr. Gee" to visit Newton's oil exploratory operation headquartered in the town of Mojave on September 8th, he eagerly acceded to the invitation. En route, "Dr. Gee" was loose-jawed about his secret government work and quite ready to delve into details about the "crashed saucer", in particular on how the craft was powered and constructed.* No doubt with Marvin Miles' White Sands story still exciting interest across the country, "Dr. Gee's" yarn was palatable. Anyway, Scully swallowed "Dr. Gee's story hook, line, and saucer."¹⁰⁸

In reality Scully's two pals were "doodlebuggers," in oil trade terms that meant fellows who tinkered with mysterious (read phony) oil locating devices, impressive black boxes, covered with fake knobs and meaningless flashing lights. A couple of the slickest con men this side of Venus, the two wanted to make a big impression on people who knew nothing about oil but who had plenty of money to help them learn the hard way. Before the con men could make a quick buck on dubious oil land leases, it behooved them to establish a reputation of sorts.

Donald Keyhoe, meanwhile, returned from the West Coast to Washington, D.C., picking up loose ends in his attempt to knit together diverse threads into a blanket theory, a big addition being the ideas recently aired by Commander McLaughlin. At length, he got around to reviewing "old" UFO reports, those reported back in the 1800's, the ghost rockets of 1946, and those few sightings made before the Kenneth Arnold affair, the famous June 24, 1947 report that marked the outset of the first large scale American UFO flap. This "old" evidence reinforced Keyhoe's growing conviction that the UFO riddle was indeed a significant phenomenon of a puzzling longevity. Upon reaching Washington, Keyhoe ran into a friend who had done a complete turnabout on the UFO question. Formerly a scoffer, recent reports of radar tracking of giant, high speed targets, coming in from various military installations, had him doing an about face.¹⁰⁹

"Took him by surprise."

Did a strange machine land and then take off at Oak Flat? The report on such a possibility reads:

"On 5 September 1949, at approximately 1200 hours, while flying at approximately 7,000 feet en route from Los Angeles to Sacramento, California, I sighted an object over Camp Oak Flat which was several thousand feet below us coming up with a

*Newton and GeBaucer's idea of a geomagnetic powered space ship was not that new. Donald Keyhoe found that a Canadian physicist, Dr. Ferand Roussel, suggested such craft in a privately published treatise: The Unifying Principle of Physical Phenomena (1943).

terrific ascent headed approximately due south as if to go over Los Angeles. We were just rounding an 8,000 foot mountain and took him by surprise. He was coming up at about an 85 degree angle and coming up from some small foothills to the right of the large mountain. When he reached our altitude he seemed to hover for a time and changed course as if going out to sea over Santa Paula. I followed him with my eyes until he was out of sight. I could not detect any sign of power or controls as the shadows underneath prevented it. It looked metallic with a canopy on top with approximately 35 feet of span. There was no way to determine speed but the rate of climb was terrific."¹¹⁰

The above statement was made by a Sgt. Richard Miller, who sighted the object while flying in a Piper Cub aircraft with another member of the Air Force, Sgt. Rudy Palmer. Sgt. Palmer made a statement of his own that went:

"Sgt. Miller and I left San Bernando at approximately 1200 hours, headed in a northerly direction straight over Grapevine Pass. Just before we reached the highest point of the pass, with an 8,000 foot mountain to our left and on the right other lower mountains, we sighted an object ascending from the foothills at about an 80 or 85 degree angle. It was about 3,000 feet below us when we spotted it and came right up approximately even with us, about 1,000 feet off our right wing tip. Our elevation at this time was approximately 8,500 feet above sea level. It seemed to rise from the floor of the hills but we didn't actually see it leave the ground. When it reached our altitude, it seemed to hover for a moment and then it shot off almost directly south. It was traveling at a terrific speed, slightly ascending at about a 5 degree angle. It headed south over the ocean disappearing from our view. This object appeared to be like a sphere, slightly oval in shape, appearing a little longer than wide. This object did not appear to have any support of any kind, no exhaust or control surfaces whatsoever, and was of a dull metallic substance, similar to aluminum. It appeared to be about 30 or 35 feet in diameter."¹¹¹

The two military men drew a sketch of the strange object for the official record.

A giant, high speed target?

Noontime, the 8th of September a Major Louis Seville was leading a three ship flight on a short hop around Clark Field in the Philippines. While at 6,000 feet and making a turn to

the left, wingman 1st. Lt. R. Semrau said over the radio: "Look up to the right!" Major Seville's report on the incident states:

"I saw an object climbing at a steep angle (approximately 30 degrees). Once sighted, I would estimate it to be at about 15,000 feet, 30 miles from our position and climbing rapidly. I reversed the turn to the right and spread out the wingmen while in the turn, all the time maintaining about a 35 degree bank. Upon reaching a heading of north, which took not over a minute and a half since it was a steep bank, the object had reached an altitude estimated to be 50,000 feet. It was dark in color and far enough away so that nothing more was distinguishable than a black dot. At about 50,000 feet it made a sharp level-out with its con-trail. My first impression was to start after it but obviously its speed was so great it was impossible. The con-trail was one long thin line and had not dissipated to any extent at all from its beginning at the south to its present position almost out of sight heading north. Upon plotting its relative position from us, and the quick lengthening of our separation, it is estimated to have been traveling well over 800 miles per hour."112

The other pilots also made reports on the incident. 1st Lt. R. J. Semrau adds this: "The Flight paralleled the course of the con-trail and the object continued to climb and make us look like we were standing still..."113 And: "There was a definite break or 'elbow' in the con-trail when the object leveled off."114

The third wingman in the Flight, 1st Lt. Ronald Cree, contributed: "Immediately following the change of direction a slight rolling-in of the con-trail occurred. It was like the wake from a ship, but instead of rolling-out this was curling-in."115

Ohio again.

The second in what would be an amazing series of Ohio sightings took place September 11th at the Community of Madeira outside Cincinnati. It amounted to a repeat performance of the first incident. Sgt. D. R. Berger, once more operating a searchlight at a church festival at St. Gertrude's on Miami Avenue, swept the night sky with a long beam of light and inadvertently illuminated a large round "something" resembling a tiny moon motionless in the sky at an altitude of about 17,000 feet, inscrutably aloof. The object, apparently annoyed at its discovery, sought the privacy of greater height, elevating itself out of range. So many questions plagued witnesses, Air Force Intelligence at Wright-Patterson AFB was alerted by phone, but by then it was too late for any official military observers to catch a glimpse of the UFO, however the weather, like on the first occasion on

August 19, was clear and thousands of persons out for an evening stroll had seen the strange image high above them. 116, 117

The "End" of Project GRUDGE.

The Air Force UFO study, Project GRUDGE, had all but ended at this time: "Major Jeremiah Boggs, AFOIN (Air Force Intelligence Evaluation Division) Technical Capabilities Branch, told Donald Keyhoe in early January 1950 that the project had ended in late August/September 1949."*118 UFO expert Dr. Bruce S. Maccabee reminds us: "...as Ruppelt points out, the top men in Air Force Intelligence did not request the end of Project GRUDGE, it was the lower echelon OSI officers who decided to stop the activities of Project GRUDGE since 'most UFO reports were trash.'"119 A document was drawn up titled: Project GRUDGE Report 102-AC 49/15-100." Originally classified SECRET, the document was declassified and made available to the public on August 1, 1952.120

While the GRUDGE report was ready in August, 121 it did not see the light of day until the end of the year and perhaps the reason for the delay is not too difficult to guess. As Edward U. Condon said in an essay he penned on the history of UFO's during the period 1947-1968, the Air Force in August 1949: "...was aware of the public relations problem involved in the UFO situation."122

People were now writing in to Marvin Miles telling of seeing things like "huge blunt-nosed bullets" in the sky and "bright golden objects glowing with green light" race across the heavens. Miles selected excerpts for his daily column, working up a humorous essay for the September 16th edition of the Los Angeles Times and expressed a wish someone would send him a good photo of the darned things.123

American seismograph sensors recorded the detonation of the first Soviet atom bomb on August 29th, but authorities kept the knowledge from the public for three weeks.

The Project GRUDGE report contained an expressed concern that someone might try to use UFO reports in psychological warfare. It is true that the Germans used panic-causing rumors to great effect in the first years of World War II when the Nazi war machine blitzkrieged many countries in Europe, but would the Russians attempt a similar stratagem? Could the Russians, if they were so inclined, convince Americans they had a fleet of super-airplanes? This fear took on a new dimension with the chilling announcement by President Truman on September 23rd that an atomic explosion had occurred in the USSR signaling the end of America's A-bomb monopoly.

*There is reference in Air Force files to an "AFCSI Letter No. 85 dated 12 August 1949." It probably had a bearing on the reporting of "unconventional aircraft," but the details of the document have not yet been discovered, or at least nothing that has come to the attention of this author. The same is true for an "AFCSI Letter No. 106 dated 18 October 1949."

"Priority message."

A message had been flashed south to Wright Field from the Yukon back on August 23rd. Given a priority classification, the message named a Norman Mitchell, member of a Coast Geodetic Study team. He informed Intelligence authorities at Ladd AFB, Fairbanks, Alaska, that while away from the survey camp he suddenly heard a loud whistling noise. The whinnying sound he likened to a high velocity projectile. Some 30 seconds after the sound started some objects flew into view, traveling at high speed at an altitude of 15,000 feet. The objects came out of the northeast, passed over Tigvariak Island where Mitchell observed them, and then flew toward the southwest. Six of the objects were in a circular formation with a seventh "weaving in and out behind them." Mitchell said the UFO's were roughly round in outline and dark in color. The Geodetic expert was adamant that the UFO's did not look alike, or sound like jet planes. Seventy-two hours later Mitchell, in the company of a cartographer named Harry Lantxy, heard the mysterious whistling noise again but this time sighted no flying objects. The two men were away from camp at the time and the others on the Arctic expedition at the camp were inside tightly insulated huts with radios blaring and could not corroborate what Mitchell and Lantxy experienced.¹²⁴

With the priority message from Alaska on a desk at Wright Field, a news item from Hollywood was an eye-widener. Dated September 13th, a United Press story by Aline Mosby reported that producer/actor Mikel Conrad was filming a spy mystery and he claimed to have had some incredible luck while on location in Alaska. While shooting footage near Juneau he said he had heard Indians talk about "things flying through the skies." Later on, according to his account, some strange objects suppositively swooped within range of the movie's company cameras filming scenes for "Arctic Manhunt," and he obtained 900 feet of film.

Conrad boasted: "I have scenes of the saucer landing, taking off, flying and doing tricks. The saucer is not created in miniature or by trick photography. It is a mechanical, man-made object."

Catching the eye of the military Intelligence officials was the further claim by Conrad that he had the blessing of "authorities" and that a military officer named "William McKnight" was "conducting an investigation."¹²⁵

He also said: "'The saucer footage is locked in a bank vault.'" He explained: "'I'm not showing it to anyone yet.'" With the spectacular capture of a real saucer on celluloid, Conrad was announcing he was now acting in, producing, directing and writing: "The Secret of the Flying Saucers," a movie that would feature Russian spies, a blond heroine, and a handsome hero. Although he was filming the saucer movie behind closed doors, he did reveal some of the storyline:

"The plot concerns a playboy, Michael Trent (Conrad), who steels his weak chin and goes saucer-hunting in Alaska for the government. To throw the Russian spies off the track, he cleverly disguises himself as a drunkard seeking the cure. Trent is accompanied by an FBI agent, who turns out to be a beautiful blond (Miss Pat Garrison), cleverly disguised as his nurse."126

On September 16th, Mr. G. Towles of the Analysis Division, Intelligence Department, Headquarters, Air Material Command, discussed the Mikel Conrad story with Mr. John Morrill of the 5th District OSI. The Acting Chief, Analysis Division, Intelligence Department, Headquarters, AMC was then contacted. He agreed with Towles and Morrill when they suggested an inquiry.127

Special Agent James Shiley of the Maywood, California office, the same investigator that had a long talk with Marvin Miles, was ordered to have a discussion with Mikel Conrad. Shiley finally found the office of the film company associated with Conrad, Colonial Productions, and left several messages for the Hollywood personality, but Conrad took his time returning the agent's calls.128

Camp Hood is finally heard.

Dr. Joseph Kaplan, member of the Air Force Scientific Advisory Board, had kept abreast of the "green fireball" puzzle and had corresponded with the Air Force's Geophysical Science Directorate of Research and Development about the matter. The experts of the Directorate also took cognizance of the pleas of the Second Armored Division, Camp Hood, Texas, for a scientific investigation of strange "flares." It was emphasized by the Directorate that concern was also an issue in regards to the New Mexico manifestation: "...because of the fact that it (the green fireball phenomenon) has been observed only since the year 1947 and has caused a high degree of apprehension among security agencies in the area."129

Although noting that Dr. Kaplan had dismissed the green fireballs as natural phenomena, the Directorate still suggested positive action no doubt due to the anxiety shown by personnel in the field. The Geophysical people wrote Project GRUDGE September 14th and pointed out that the UFO study group was under the control of the Air Material Command and that Command:

"...has under contract several organizations in the Boston area that are specialists in observing techniques and the interpretation of celestial phenomena. It is desired that these organizations be consulted regarding the 'green fireball' phenomena. If necessary, consideration should be given to the establishment of an observational program designed to obtain additional information necessary to an explanation of the phenomena."130

Lt. Col. John Tucker, USAF, acting on behalf of the Geophysical Directorate, urged that Project GRUDGE send a representative to a meeting to be held at Sandia in New Mexico concerning the forementioned "light phenomena," a meeting scheduled for the middle of October.¹³¹

Ohio yet again.

The mysterious sky intruder had returned to Ohio on September 11th as mentioned previously. A week later it returned again to haunt Sgt. Berger who was testing this searchlight at the small community of Milford, Ohio, just outside Cincinnati. Word got around and a number of interested individuals made plans to be on hand when the UFO made another nocturnal appearance.

Sgt. Berger kept a log. The third entry in his skywatch log reads:

"Place: Milford, Ohio, 1900 to 2000 hours. Testing the searchlight about dusk, I had set it at 1600 mils. I could see an object which looked like a white glow. When I turned the light off, I could see nothing. I did this several times. As soon as it became dark I turned on the light at the same elevation and caught object in the beam."¹³²

Ghost rockets over the eastern seaboard?

Northeast of Rome, New York, a pilot of a C-45, Lt. Colonel Phillip Kuhl, spotted a silvery cylindrical object spouting an orange and white exhaust more than twice the length of the object, moving horizontally and letting down slowly until it entered a cloud layer at 7,000 feet. This took place on September 20th at 9:06 a.m.¹³³

The same day about an hour later in the same region another pilot, 1st Lt. W. E. Archibold, piloting a C-47, noticed a bright light and saw that the source of the light was a steady orange flame trailing from an object the aviator described as: "... similar in size and shape to a fighter fuselage, silver in color, and of an undetermined material." No protrusions on the body were detected. It came out of the north and vanished in a shadow cast by some clouds while in a 45-60 degree dive.¹³⁴

Six days later the folks living in Winchendon, Massachusetts had a front row seat to the passage of yet another "ghost rocket." The object in question passed directly over Winchendon and a number of townspeople walking the streets sighted the phenomenon. At 10:15 a.m., a woman, whose name has been deleted from Air Force records, was the first to see the object. Her attention was attracted skyward by a gray smoke trail. Peering closely, she observed;

"...an object in the sky which appeared to be diving or falling slowly, emitting puffs of gray smoke in rapid succession. The object was first sighted directly overhead. It remained in sight for 15 minutes traveling from Northwest to Southeast and changed course from a vertical descent gradually to that of horizontal flight. No sound was noticeable. 'A silver, shiny airplane body, yet more box-like in appearance,' the object disappeared about six miles distant from the observer after a big puff of smoke had been emitted."¹³⁵

Another woman contested the account of the first:

"(She)...stated that the gray smoke was trailing behind the object in a steady stream and that when the object disappeared, no large puff of smoke was observed...(and) when the object reached the horizon, it seemed to disappear. It just disappeared strangely."¹³⁶

News from Europe.

A news dispatch dated September 10th said: "Graz, Austria (UP) Police reported today that two 'flying saucers' had been sighted two days ago over Radkersburg near the border between Austria and Yugoslavia."¹³⁷ This shows that things might start popping in Europe at any moment.

The UFO engima had sent sizeable reverberations as far as England where an English book publisher by the name of Waveney Girvan finally made the decision that the strange goings on in the sky merited monitoring, so he subscribed to a service that provided newspaper clippings, but alas, not much UFO news was to be had from the English press for it seemed English editors were too conservative to publish such "bedtime stories." Only a few snippets in small town papers were forthcoming, nonetheless Girvan still learned enough to become convinced of the gravity of the UFO problem surmising that it would only be a matter of time before things UFO-wise would boil over in England and as matters stood, there existed an informational void made to order for a publisher. In fact, Girvan actually felt rushed, fearing that some spectacular UFO sighting, or government announcement, would cause an uproar before he was prepared. However, finding the right author proved a tough chore for no established writer wanted to trouble himself with a subject as yet so unfashionable in Europe. After an extended search, Girvan stumbled across a couple of tiny articles on UFO's in the small English magazine Enquiry, the essays penned by a personality widely known in England for his radio talks, public lectures, and articles on popular scientific topics, the Cambridge educated Gerald Heard, no stranger to anomalies of nature warring against preconceived notions. With the aid of the editor of Enquiry, Girvan contacted Heard and proposed that the English writer

expand his two short UFO articles into a book on the subject for the British market. Although odd correlations of science were just his cup of tea, Heard begged off, excusing himself on the grounds he had previous commitments that would occupy him for some months to come. Crushed, Girvan resigned himself to the fact that he had failed for the time being in his bid to bring the UFO story to British readers in 1949.¹³⁸

Across the channel, even in official circles, the UFO business was not laughed at. The highly decorated General Lionel M. Chassin, who eventually was promoted to Commanding General of the French Air Force and later General Air Defense Coordinator, Allied Air Forces, Central Europe (NATO), had become concerned over UFO reports made by French pilots in 1949 and he encouraged a member of his staff, Colonel Robert Clerouin, to keep tabs on the Phenomena.¹³⁹ Colonel Clerouin embraced the assignment with gusto and began a two year study of the sky mystery.¹⁴⁰

Behind the Iron Curtain the ordeal of Soviet fighter pilot Arkadiy I. Apraksin, whose encounter with strange "flying cucumber" back on May 6th led to the mysterious disabling of his aircraft and his loss of consciousness, lay in a hospital bed until mid-August when he was summoned to Moscow to be questioned by the Soviet Air Force Directorate of the Ministry of Defense, or at least that was what he expected. He had been questioned extensively by the military while he convalesced in the hospital in the city of Saratov and it had been the expected military interrogations. Once in Moscow, however, he was taken to a psycho-neurological clinic where he was treated with shock therapy much to his discomfort and anger. On a number of occasions men dressed in white coats, which he felt was a crude attempt to disguise their real affiliations, made repeated tape recordings of his testimony about the encounter with the "incomprehensible craft" evidently trying to break down his story by finding contradictions. Apraksin would not be released from "treatment" until January 1950.¹⁴¹

On the other side of the city at Moscow prison camp #7864/10, a German POW, one of the many soldiers being used by the Russians for reconstruction work long after the cessation of hostilities, was assigned to work at a construction site at Ismaylova. One day that summer of 1949 a fellow POW became excited and exclaimed: "Look, what is that over there in the sky?" Up in the sky was something the likes of which none of the Germans had ever seen. The Russian guards were as puzzled and alarmed as the German POW's.

The POW relating this story guessed that the thing under observation was anywhere from 2,000 to 5,000 feet high but it was hard to tell. It remained motionless for some 10 minutes and then suddenly moved away.

A second sighting like the first took place at the same location some time later. The UFO was the same object or something very similar hovering over the same spot which just happened to be a "restricted" area. The phenomenon was a group of

objects, a flying rod and some spheres:

"...the flying rod looked to be the size of a pencil but may have been about 10 meters long and 30 centimeters in diameter if the distance to the object is taken into consideration. In comparison with the diameter of the rod, the spherical items had a diameter of about three times the diameter of the rod, namely about 90 to 100 centimeters. The spherical items and the rod seemed to have been painted all white. The items may have been balloons, but source could not claim that. Source stated that he saw no antenna or anything else come out of the items. Four of the spherical items were symetrically arranged about five meters above the rod in a square, while one spherical item was further away from the rod.¹⁴²

These objects remained for ten minutes and then moved off.

This account was not a lone report from the depths of Russia. Another originated from Dnepropetrovsk in the Ukrainian S.S.R. The source was another German POW, who told U.S. military Intelligence after being repatriated that he had witnessed the flight of strange missiles during the dead of the night from a location in Dnepropetrovsk. In view for up to a minute and a half, the missiles flew a wide arc to the south. The witness produced a sketch and listed the following details:

"Point #1: BODY. From the distance Source saw the body, it appeared to be a large disk, the center of which was almost black. It became red towards the outer edge, but the edge itself appeared to be white hot.

"Point #2: FLAMING ARCH. A flaming arch was observed on top of the disk, but the upper edge of the body could be seen.

"Point #3: SPARKS. Sparks emerged from the edge of the disk, white hot, with a tail similar to the one of a falling star."¹⁴³

A check of Air Force files discloses a curious similarity with a Humbolt, Nebraska, UFO sighting made on September 29, 1949.

The Humboldt report reads: "It was oval-shaped and apparently composed of luminous rings of some translucent material, moving southward in the sky..."¹⁴⁴ A sketch made by the witness bears a close likeness to the object drawn by the German POW.

All this time Donald Keyhoe kept building his case that "flying saucers are real." Returning to New York and the offices

of True magazine, Keyhoe learned some disquieting rumors about other magazines scrambling to be the first to do the story on the UFO mystery, so the race was on. Aside from being an exciting journalistic endeavor, the job given Keyhoe was beginning to affect him in a personal way. He was developing a feeling that he had a mission, that of aiding the Pentagon to prepare the public for a mind-numbing revelation.¹⁴⁵

"Man were we scared!"

In the fall of 1949, a plant superintendent of a steel firm, not the type to go around telling tall stories, swore that he and his wife were motoring along a stretch of highway in New Mexico minding their own business when the car's radio went crazy emitting only a loud static. The driver, A. D. Bushnell, then noticed a huge, domed, object some 60 feet in diameter as it dropped down out of the sky and hovered just above the blacktop some distance ahead blocking the road. Without waiting for the auto to close the distance, the object zoomed straight down the highway directly at the oncoming vehicle. The UFO streaked along just four feet above the asphalt and a head-on collision seemed imminent. Brushell stood on his brakes while his wife let out a horrendous scream as visions of impending death flashed through both their minds. At the last second the UFO adjusted its altitude just enough to clear the auto. The shaken driver jumped out once his vehicle slid to a complete halt and looked this way and that but the UFO, saucer, or whatever, had apparently sped away too quickly to be seen departing. Bushnell confessed to the press: "Man were we scared!"

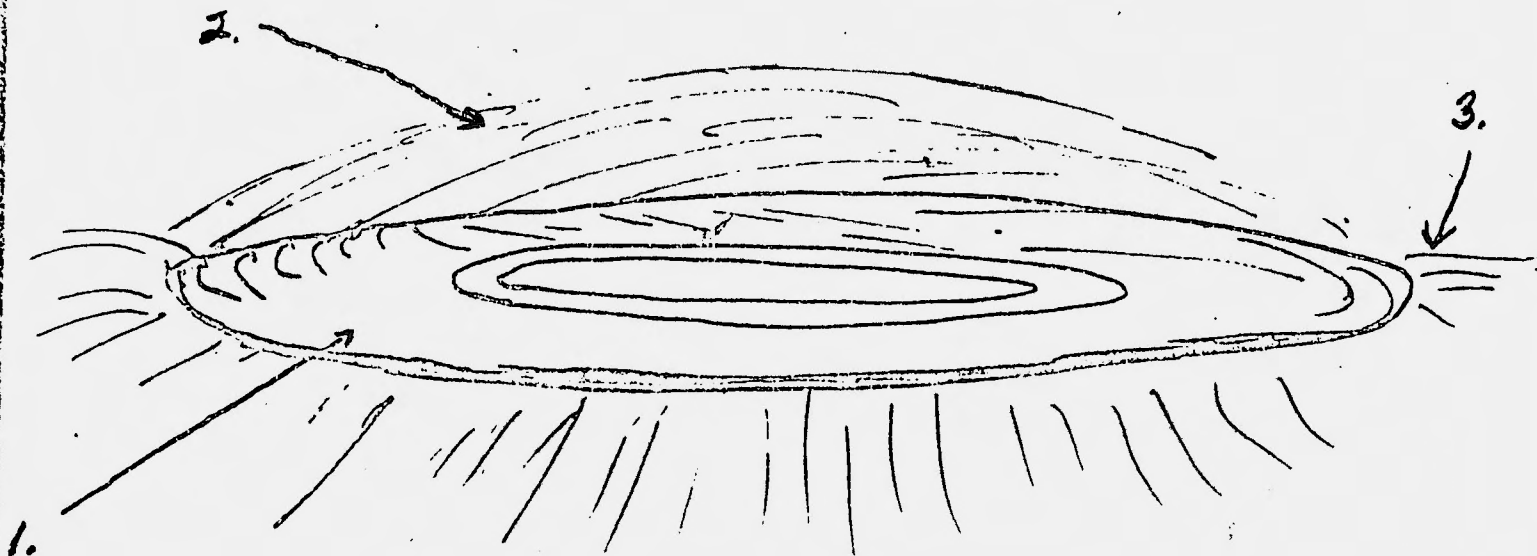
The encounter had sinister overtones. Certainly it was on par with the wildest imaginings of Hollywood scriptwriters.¹⁴⁶

To move on to something less startling, AFSS inspector G. A. Polsin stationed at Los Alamos, New Mexico, contacted his superior, Chief Inspector Lt. Colonel John A. Carroll, about a strange three-second flash in the night sky at 9:10 p.m. on October 2nd. Polsin likened the light to a Very flare except for its having a tail. Two elements of the sighting were of special interest. The brilliant spot fell vertically and was a bright green.¹⁴⁷

Holland, Michigan, October 2nd, a witness with an extensive military background claimed he:

"...sighted a very bright and shiny object shaped like a dinner plate. Going east the object approached a transparent cloud, the object did a flip, and went up into the cloud. --- (deleted) expected the object to come out of the other side of the cloud, but instead it came out at the point of entry, and traveled back along its original route and disappeared into the east."¹⁴⁸

In New York Donald Keyhoe huddled with Ken Purdy and True's aviation editor John DuBarry reviewing the data gathered so far, and after an exchange of opinions, it was decided that the



SOURCE'S MEMORY SKETCH

"Saucer" over Dnepropetrovsk, Russia.

magazine's upcoming UFO expose' would go all out for the extraterrestrial solution to the UFO mystery. Publication was set for the last days of December.¹⁴⁹

On October 6th the Los Angeles Daily Mirror tapped the rumor mills and was able to alert its readers that sufficient evidence had been accumulated to prove the reality of the flying saucers and the data indicated they were from "somewhere else;" that after the greater part of the reports had been satisfactorily disposed of, a residuum showed that the strange objects were from Mars or even the farthest infinitudes.¹⁵⁰

"Launched by someone unknown."

Another star gazer, John O'Neill, science columnist with the New York Herald-Tribune, spent the evening of October 9th with his eye glued to the eyepiece of his own telescope, preparing to observe a lunar eclipse. With his instrument in sharp focus, he was thrown into confusion when a dark body, approximately oval in shape, shot across the face of the Moon in a straight, well defined course. Because he had his telescope carefully calibrated, O'Neill was certain the dark object was not a bird, airplane or any terrestrial object. In a spin over the incident, he mused that perhaps the "queer asteroid" may have been artificial and launched by someone unknown, entertaining the thought even though he felt such babble was the reserve of fiction.¹⁵¹

Did such space faring objects fly closer to Earth? Evidence of such a possibility continued to come from New Mexico. An Alamogordo military observer stated:

"On 12 October 1949, about 11:15 o'clock, I was sitting behind a B-29 which was parked on the Main Area Parking Ramp and I was facing approximately South East, when I saw a white looking round object that had the appearance of a balloon about 6" in diameter, coming from a Southward direction at an enormous rate of speed and, compared to the size of a B-29, it seemed to be about 35,000 feet in altitude. It seemed to curve slightly and disappear in a North East direction within approximately 45 seconds. Both boys said that they saw it and I called to about three other crew men, that were under the wing, to come look at it and due to the fast disappearance they were unable to see it.

"This object was of a silver color but I did not notice any bright reflections from it and it seemed to have no external configurations or vapor trails. The disappearance was sudden and there seemed to be no noise. The object seemed to pass between here and Alamogordo."¹⁵²

Official teletype sequence of local weather conditions showed that the object in question traveled into the prevailing winds at all altitudes.

"Special Joint Meeting."

Another gathering to discuss the fireball problem was called at Los Alamos on October 14th. Those participating in the meeting were the following persons:

"Joseph Kaplan, Member USAF Scientific Advisory Board.

Lincoln La Paz, Professor of Meteoritics,
University of New Mexico.

Captain Melvin E. Neef, 17th District OSI (IG) USAF.

Lt. Col. Doyle Rees, District Commander, 17th District
OSI (USAF).

Major L. C. Hill, CMP, Branch Intelligence Office,
Fourth Army.

Major F.C.E. Oder, Geophysical Research Division,
USAF.

J. Phillip Claridge, Special Agent, FBI, Albuquerque.

Jerry Maxwell, Resident Agent in Charge, FBI, Los Alamos.

Sidney Newburger, Jr., Chief, Security Operations
Branch, AEC.

W. E. Bradbury, Director, Los Alamos Scientific
Laboratory.

John Manley, Technical Assistant Director, LASL.

Edward Teller, Assistant Director for Weapon
Development, LASL.

George Gamow, Staff Member, LASL.

Fred Reines, Group Leader, T Division, LASL.

Major H. K. Kolster, J-2, Sandia Base.

Stanislaw Ulam, Los Alamos, New Mexico."153

The second meeting, unlike the first held in February, arrived at some conclusions:

"(1) Real phenomena exist.

(2) A scientific project should be set up to conduct
a well coordinated investigation."154

These two conclusions gave support to an announcement that Dr. Joseph Kaplan made at the meeting. He:

"...advised that he had been requested to discuss the phenomena before the Scientific Advisory Board, USAF, of which he is a member, on 3 November 1949 in Washington, D.C."155

George Adamski and the Mt. Palomar reports.

On October 14th at approximately 1:15 p.m., a member of the Palomar Observatory staff, a Mr. Marshall, was driving down the mountain when he sighted 16 to 18 objects fly by in a formation, a "V" of "Vs," emitting a strange sound. Mr. Marshall felt he was familiar enough with all types of aircraft but for the life of him he couldn't make out any wings or tail structures on the silver colored objects as they zoomed by at 5,000 feet altitude.

Marshall phoned an associate at the Observatory shortly thereafter and informed him of the sighting. As it happened, this associate, an electrician in charge of all electrical apparatus at the Observatory, went to the power-house where the Naval Electronic Laboratory of Pasadena, California, had installed some Geiger counters and recording equipment. He happened to notice that the recording pen had jumped off-scale at about 1:15 p.m., something that had never occurred before. There was no apparent malfunction. Pasadena was contacted and authorities there believed the odd coincidence called for an inquiry.¹⁵⁶

At 7:20 in the morning of October 17th a member of the staff of Palomar Observatory went to check the Geiger tubes in the power house. When he was inside, his attention was drawn to the window. To the southwest a small black dot was visible zipping along at high speed beneath a cloud ceiling at 7,000 feet. At the same moment the Geiger counter recorder pen jumped off-scale. Was this further evidence of something significant?¹⁵⁷

Around October 21st another high speed object was seen near Palomar Observatory. In view eight seconds, nothing in the way of wings or any sort of projections were detected by the witness. In appearance the object looked to be "elongated and slightly curved like a banana." The object was spotted at 2:30 p.m. On this occasion, however, there was no reaction by the Geiger counters.¹⁵⁸

A scientist at Pasadena notified the Office of Naval Research in Washington, D.C. on October 16th about the apparent correlation which if true would prove that the reported flying saucers were atomic powered, a contention entertained by many in the Intelligence community.

The tape of the unusual oscillations was brought back to Pasadena where it was examined and discussed. One of the top men of the California Institute of Technology assessed the evidence and stated:

"It was not likely that the reaction of the Geiger counter was the result of an atomically powered plane, inasmuch as the pen went off-scale and returned to scale in a matter of seconds; whereas the polluted air from an atomic engine would tend to linger in the vicinity for some minutes.

"It was most likely that the electrical relaying or amplifying mechanism of the Geiger counter had been activated by a plane's radio, altimeter, or radar mechanism. This was particularly true if the Geiger counter and amplifier were not shielded."¹⁵⁹

Both the Naval Laboratory at Pasadena operated by the California Institute of Technology, and the Navy's Point Loma Electronic Laboratory, sent representatives to Mt. Palomar to check on the strange radiation.

One day about noontime, four Navy people stopped at the Palomar Gardens Cafe on their way to Palomar Observatory. It

was pouring rain that day and the four men dashed for the entrance of the diner. In spite of their hurry they noticed two small observatories behind the diner, the shiny domes exact miniatures of the giant structure atop the mountain.

When the four entered and sat down, the owner of the eating establishment, George Adamski, looked up and recognized two men from Point Loma, G. L. Bloom and J. P. Maxfield. The other two from Pasadena, one of which was in Navy uniform, were unfamiliar. Bloom and Maxfield had stopped in before and knew Adamski.¹⁶⁰ As the Navy people ordered lunch, Adamski wandered over and engaged the men in conversation. Adamski related several stories of little interest until he mentioned sighting a "cigar-shaped object" on October 21st about 2:30 p.m. The men perked up at that. The date, time, and general description given by Adamski matched that given by a member of the staff of the Mt. Palomar Observatory.¹⁶¹

Official records do not confirm it, but Adamski claims that the Navy men asked his cooperation, requesting that he use his small telescopes in back of the cafe to scan the heavens and to photograph any suspicious aerial objects.¹⁶² We will hear more from Adamski in 1950.

As for the Navy, the reports from Mt. Palomar were considered to be of such importance arrangements were made with the Commander of the Navy Aviation, Pacific Fleet, to send both conventional and jet aircraft on missions near Mt. Palomar to see if the passage of the planes could affect the Geiger counters. Results were negative. This was on November 9, 1949.¹⁶³

In a summation dated November 23, 1949, it was stated: "The Commanding Officer, ONR, Pasadena, personally investigated these incidents and while he does not have a belief that these were actually flying discs, he is at a loss to explain the phenomena."¹⁶⁴

Further comment in an Air Force document declared:

"The Navy (it was a Navy cosmic ray contract, supposedly investigated) wrote a report, and concluded that this was all due to a circuit failure. The people operating the equipment also checked and are claimed to have flatly denied this, saying that due to the circuitry it would be impossible for similar failures to occur in all the circuits at the same time."¹⁶⁵

Other October occurrences.

October 12th the New York edition of Variety, the show business newspaper, surprised its readers by featuring a two column article by Frank Scully detailing the "saucer crash" related to Scully by the mysterious "Dr. Gee." For the first time, the public was exposed to the weird story, a yarn about a crashed flying saucer a 100 feet in diameter and some 72 inches high, and containing the dead, charred bodies of 16 "little men." This initial appearance of the yarn caused no excitement.¹⁶⁶

The second green fireball conference.

Los Alamos was host to a second green fireball conference on October 14th and official documents tell us that, aside from the fireballs being reported over New Mexico, the mysterious "flares" tormenting Camp Hood, Texas, were discussed. The apparent spread of unexplained sky phenomena was the key issue on the agenda.

Various organizations sent representatives to the conference. Official records named the following organizations: The Atomic Energy Commission, the University of California, the Fourth Army Armed Forces Special Weapons Project, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. No names of the forementioned representatives are given, however, four other organizations that sent people that are named in Air Force records were Major Frederic Odor, Acting Director of the Base Directorate for Geophysical Research; Captain Melvin Neef of the 17th District OSI, Kirtland AFB; Dr. Lincoln La Paz of the University of New Mexico; and Dr. Joseph Kaplan of the Air Force Scientific Advisory Board.

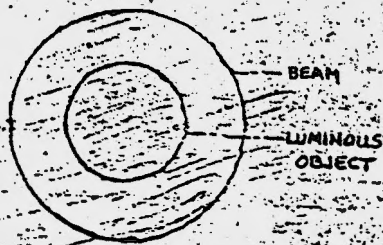
Since witnesses to the strange sky phenomena were trained personnel and they observed the "flares" or whatever, on an individual basis, those at the conference were in agreement that "something definite" was being seen. The New Mexico region had produced 209 observations of strange aerial phenomena which gave Capt. Neef and Dr. La Paz plenty of data to discuss and to provide a basis for some sort of conclusion. The official report on the conference states:

"It was the conclusion of the group present at the meeting the present information on the phenomena was not sufficiently quantitative and objective to allow any profitable scientific consideration. Instrumental observations (especially photographs, triangulation, and spectroscopic) were considered as essential.

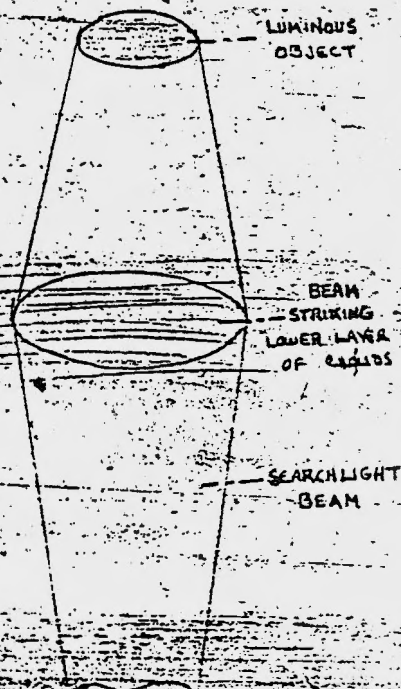
"Dr. Joseph Kaplan, who was officially representing the Scientific Advisory Board, USAF, at the meeting, plans to report the problem to the next meeting of the Board (2 and 3 November 1949) with the recommendation that the USAF provide a suitable investigation of the phenomena using the Geophysical Research Directorate, Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratories, AMC as the agency for the project."167

A UFO question: "If there's no place for them to 'home' on the whole Earth, where then, in the name of Noah's dove, can they find an Ark to which they can return to roost?"

During the evening of October 23rd at Norwood, Ohio, Sergeant Berger was busy again with his searchlight at St. Peter and Paul's. The big UFO appeared again from somewhere out of the unfathomable night. This time there were eager witnesses on hand and the UFO did not disappoint anyone. Present was the pastor of St. Peter and Paul's, two reporters from the newspaper, Cincinnati Post, a Norwood policeman, and some 50 curious pedestrians. The huge object hung in the night sky as before, clearly visible in the searchlight beam. After about 45 minutes an astonishing thing happened according to witnesses.168



LOOKING DIRECTLY UP
SEARCHLIGHT BEAM



AS SEEN FROM A SHORT
DISTANCE TO ONE SIDE

COPY OF DRAWINGS MADE BY
MR. [REDACTED] CINCINNATI, OHIO
ON 23 OCTOBER 1949

Mysterious image seen over Cincinnati, Ohio, area. One witnesses' drawing.

Sgt. Berger's fourth entry in his log reads:

"About 2200, two distinct groups of triangular-shaped objects seemed to come out of the main disc. Each group had about five objects. They came down the beam then turned out of the beam. The same performance was repeated about a half hour later. The disc was still visible when I turned out the light for the night."169

Witnesses speculated about the possibility the image in the searchlight beam was some sort of huge construction under intelligent control, a "space platform" as it was dubbed, a vast thing that silently arrived after sunset and remained fixed in the atmosphere above Ohio for hours which indicated that its helmsmen--or their directors--might be in a contemplative frame of mind.

Leonard Stringfield questioned some of those at the October 23rd viewing and learned, for example, that William Winkler, a businessman, was one of those that claimed he had detected visually the "smaller objects" which he termed triangular. Likewise, Father Miller and his brother Cletus, also a priest, agreed with Winkler and likened the smaller objects to the apex of an arrowhead. Stringfield extracted an admission from Robert Linn, Managing Editor of the Post, that something solid was reflecting the searchlight's beam and there were other, smaller objects that he said appeared like "bits of paper." Linn was impressed enough to join with Father Miller in an effort to alert Wright-Patterson AFB at Dayton, Ohio.

While the Cincinnati Post followed the searchlight case with interest, the city's other newspaper, the Enquirer, ignored the story but did tell its readers UFO reports were being made elsewhere in the state of Ohio.170

The next day, the 24th, we know from Sgt. Berger's log that he was ready again with his instrument set at 1600 mils. An investigator from ATIC Wright Field arrived in Norwood and conferred with Berger who was still stationed at St. Peter and Paul's church. Shortly after the sun had set at 7:15 p.m., Sgt. Berger flipped a switch sending a beam of light shooting up into the heavens while the OSI agent, Berger, and another witness by the name of Lou Gerhart, peered anxiously skyward hoping to catch a glimpse of the mysterious aerial "whatsit." There was no waiting for the object had not moved. It maintained the same position it occupied the previous evening.171

October 24th, a busy day.

October 24th: "Last Monday residents of Hymers, Ontario, reported they saw a huge streak of fire race through the sky, perform a neat loop and disappear."172

Also October 24th: "A streak of fire (was) visible 15 minutes over Fort William, Ontario, Canada."173

The "flying saucer" as a Hollywood star.

After numerous delays, Mikel Conrad finally returned the call of OSI agent James Shiley of the Maywood, California OSI office. This was on October 26th. Conrad extended an invitation to Shiley to attend a censor's preview of the newly finished movie "The Flying Saucer," the film that contained the footage that so interested the Air Force. Shiley showed up and took down the following notes:

"...the picture ran approximately one hour and a half and as indicated in the article, concerned a story of Michael Trent's (Mikel Conrad) attempt to locate a flying saucer which was rumored as being produced somewhere in Alaska. The Russian espionage agents were also attempting to locate the saucer for the Soviet government. It developed in the story that a spot bordering on Twin Lakes across the Ice Caps from Taku Harbor near Juneau, Territory of Alaska (sic). Trent locates the saucer prior to the Russian spies, who secure information concerning its existence and location from Dr. Lawson's assistant who sells out to the Russians for a few million. The picture ends with the assistant attempting to send the saucer to Russia and flee from Trent. However, the saucer explodes at the end of the picture when the assistant of Dr. Lawson attempts to launch it, Dr. Lawson having placed a bomb in the saucer to avoid just the situation that transpired."174

It wasn't a Rex Reed review but then OSI agents are not supposed to get paid for watching the latest from Hollywood. When the lights came back on Conrad admitted to Shiley the so-called "real flying saucer footage" was fake and the statements given to the press just Hollywood hype. Conrad implored Shiley not to spill the beans. Shiley agreed, displaying magnanimity considering the time wasted.175

News that government scientists were now taking the green fireball problem seriously prompted the 17th District Office of the OSI based at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico to request from Washington an easement of its involvement in the investigation of the problem. A letter in Air Force files spelled out the request, a missive dated October 28th:

"...since approximately 8 December 1948, this district has investigated and reported all known incidents of Unidentified Aerial Phenomena that have occurred in this area. It is estimated that these investigations have utilized the full time of at least two agents during that period.

"Authority is requested to discontinue this investigation because of the following reasons:

- The agent personnel are being reduced in this district to the point where the continuance of this investigation will delay other investigations.
- The investigation of this case has developed to the point where trained scientific personnel are required. This district has no such personnel."176

The Air Force's Scientific Advisory Board met on November 2-3, 1949 and one of the topics considered was the strange "light phenomena" being reported in the U.S. southwest. Board member Dr. Joseph Kaplan recommended to the Board that the Air Force provide funds and personnel to investigate. After hearing Dr. Kaplan state his case, the rest of the Board found itself in agreement, and since the phenomena seemed to be atmospheric it was suggested that any investigation be under the control of the Geophysical Research Directorate of the Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratory.¹⁷⁷ Informed of the decision, Major Frederic Odor of the Geophysical Directorate felt the assignment was appropriate if the Air Force allotted the necessary requirements of men and material.¹⁷⁸

On the 14th of November the Washington headquarters of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations replied to a plea by its 17th District Office at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico for permission to relax its investigation of the green fireballs being reported over Los Alamos and other areas in the southwest. Colonel Carpenter, speaking for the Inspector General, USAF, said in a letter to the 17th District:

"Authority is granted to discontinue the present inquiry carried under your file number 24-8 and to close subject investigation.

"It is suggested that in the future each incident investigated concerning 'Unidentified Aerial Objects' be treated as a separate case and closed at the conclusion of the particular inquiry. This will preclude constant investigative effort."179

Moreover, on November 14th, the Air Force's Air Intelligence Requirements Division, Documents and Dissemination Branch, was sent some copies of OSI UFO investigative reports by Lt. Colonel William M. Turner, Executive, Special Investigations, The Inspector General, USAF. Colonel Turner also forwarded a note that warned:

"Disclosure of the nature, sources, or even the existence of such investigative information to persons mentioned in the reports or to other persons not normally entitled to such information may be made only when expressly authorized by the Director of Special Investigations, IG, Headquarters, USAF, or higher authority."180

"The Thing."

Some farmers were driving on a road on the outskirts of Oxford, Mississippi, at 9:30 a.m., November 16th, when they beheld an amazing sight in the sky. They stopped their car and dashed into a nearby store and yelled for storekeeper Alex Coffey to come outside and see "the thing." Coffey rushed outdoors into the sunlight. The weather was cool, crisp, and clear. Instantly Coffey saw the source of the excitement, a whitish-gray cloud-like cylinder shape moving slowly past the store in an easterly direction only 60 feet in the air. Upright and approximately two feet in diameter and tapered at one end, the "thing" drifted along at some 30 to 40 miles per hour. It took ten minutes for the phenomenon to move out of sight.¹⁸¹

Another "thing."

Two days after the oddity appeared over Oxford, another "thing" was viewed for 30 minutes in the sky just south of Raceland, Louisiana. It was daytime, 9:30 a.m. to be exact, the exact time of day as the previous case. The day was clear. No lights or sounds associated with the object were noticed. Four witnesses to the passage gave substantially the same testimony. The "thing," they said, was shiny and similar in shape to a fuselage of an aircraft but without protruding appendages of any sort. When first seen the object was traveling southwest but then executed two 90 degree turns. As it faded from view one observer noted: "...the tail section seemed to be split when the object entered turning maneuver."¹⁸²

Still another "thing."

Guards at a Biloxi, Mississippi, Veteran Hospital were astonished November 18th at 10:00 a.m. The guard at the Main Gate contacted his superior at once. The chief guard rushed to the Hospital's entrance which commanded a beautiful view of the waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Directly to the south and over Ship Island, a bit of land ten miles off the coast, a "thing" traveled along at about 2,500 to 3,000 feet altitude and about 50 miles per hour. In appearance it resembled a white colored cigar perhaps a couple of hundred feet in length. The sky was clear. No sound or exhaust were detected as the "thing" maintained a steady flight in the direction of Mobile, Alabama and passed from view behind some trees after being in sight for some 25 minutes.¹⁸³

As stated before, not much work was being done at Project GRUDGE headquarters because incredibly there is no comment in Air Force files that recognizes the very apparent similarities in the previously mentioned three cases: the geographical proximity, the similar time of day, shape, and even velocity. Furthermore, a communication from the Far East, specifically Akita, Japan, alerted Washington and Wright Field that on November 21st a "thing" made an appearance over Honshu. A

1st Lt. John Jackson piloting a F-80 reported an unfamiliar object, a grayish-white "thing" that looked like a giant tow target, rushing pell-mell (400 to 600 miles per hour) at 30,000 feet altitude. Lt. Jackson said the "thing" appeared to be rectangular, some 20 feet wide and 60 feet long, and had a trailing edge that fluttered. Ceiling and visibility at the time was unlimited.¹⁸⁴

A "funny" cloud.

Texans on the outskirts of the Texas town of Inez thought to themselves: "That's a funny cloud." On November 25, 1949, something long and cigar-shaped stood out prominently in the blue atmosphere. Unlike a cloud of Mother Nature's, this blurred mass tilted with a suddenness unknown to normal weather, dropping abruptly and ending up moving parallel to the road that connected Inez with the community of Edna, Texas. About two miles away from the witnesses on the road, the phenomenon sailed soundlessly along approximately 10,000 feet high. Three people on that strip of asphalt peered intently at what now came into focus. What initially seemed to be smudge of water vapor was actually a large disc-shaped thing radiating waves of heat, the high temperature turbulence producing a thick mist or steam that fringed the lower portion but not cloaking a raised top part that had a metallic glint when the rays of the sun hit it just right. On its way toward the horizon the vapor-shrouded thing executed several graceful turns and banking maneuvers.¹⁸⁵ So much for funny clouds.

One of the best of the "green fireball" reports took place November 16th, too late to be considered by the October 14th "light phenomenon" conference. Sidney Newburger, Chief of Security at Los Alamos, alerted Captain Neef in a note that said:

"This office has been informed by --- (deleted) a scientist with Group P-9 of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, of the following celestial phenomena observed at approximately 1950 hours, November 16, 1949, at Los Alamos:

- Two bluish-green lights (similar to that given off by burning zinc) in tandem were seen overhead, slightly south of the zenith. They appeared to be stationary, but suddenly curved around and disappeared to the north with the speed of a meteor. No sound was heard in conjunction with this observation.
- Mr. --- (deleted) said that his attention had been called to the sky by some children who reported having seen erratically moving green lights, and it was while he was looking, in response to their questions, that he observed the phenomena described above."¹⁸⁶

NOTE: THIS DRAWING FROM ROSSIE DRAWING BY MISS
ROSSIE, LATER BY OTHERS, AND FROM
DRAWINGS BY OTHER VEHICLES



OBJECT AS OBSERVED IN LEVEL FLIGHT



OBJECT AS OBSERVED ENTERING TURNING MANEUVER

The "thing" seen over Raceland, Louisiana, on November 18, 1949.

Returning to Norwood, Ohio, once more, on November 19th, we find the evening sky dark and mottled with a scattered low cloud layer. Sgt. Berger switched on his searchlight again for the purpose of advertising, sending a long brilliant beam into the star-strewn sky. Sure enough, the UFO was still parked in the heavens. The beam was shifted. Brought back to the position where the UFO was last seen, nothing was visible but after a quick scanning it was discovered that the circular glow/image was higher in the atmosphere.¹⁸⁷

Why the outer space connection?

The New York edition of Variety on November 27th gave Frank Scully more space to further pursue his "crashed saucer" story. This time Scully insisted that the saucer that had come down in New Mexico had been taken apart piece by piece by Air Force experts and trucked to Dayton so that the method of propulsion utilized by the "little humanoid's" craft could be studied. Few people paid any attention.¹⁸⁸

Before we leave Scully an interesting question might be asked: "why did Newton and GeBaucer come up with the fantastic yarn to sell oil leases? Why dream up a crashed flying saucer from Venus of all things? The answer is in that part of the story concerning the dismantling of the alien craft. GeBaucer, or "Dr. Gee," claimed to have been present at one dismantling and supposedly pocketed some parts as souvenirs. One part in particular played a pivotal role in the con men's game: an alleged "magnetic radio" that was supposed to have been found in the saucer wreck. A complete explanation requires the mention of a letter from the Los Angeles office of the FBI to the Air Force in the fall of 1949. Motion picture actor Bruce Cabot happened to be in the bar at the Lakeside Country Club on November 24th when he overheard a gentlemen boast of knowing all about several flying saucers that had crashed in New Mexico, Arizona, and Maine, and that he had even obtained samples of the aliens' uniforms, metal from the ships, and a "magnetic radio," a small (7x2x2 inches) device. The "radio" was in the fellow's possession and he flashed it for the benefit of his curious listeners. Cabot was skeptical, but still thought enough of the weird story to check with the FBI about it, phoning the Los Angeles Bureau office. The FBI was not in on the UFO investigation, by orders from Hoover, so the problem was referred to a local Air Force OSI unit.

With little more than a rumor to go on, the OSI entered the case. The biggest difficulty at the outset was determining the identity of the man with the alleged "magnetic radio." During the preliminary efforts to learn the facts the OSI was informed that radio commentator Sam Hays of station KFI had said something about the incident in question during a morning program. According to Hays there had been a party at a certain Hollywood country club and a: "...discussion took place over a round of drinks at the 'nineteenth hole' of the local golf course and that the story (of flying saucers from Venus) got better with each drink."¹⁸⁹

But Hays did not turn out to be their man. For the next three months the OSI tried to track down Newton, a slippery character if there ever was one, but in regards to the question posed at the outset, it seems that Newton was telling the other golfers at the country club that the alien's "magnetic radio" was being used by him to find oil deposits. With the possession of a super-sure "doodle bug," finding oil was a cinch.¹⁹⁰

For what its worth, Newton alluded to a "hush-hush" motion picture in production at MGM studios which: "...could very well concern the matter of flying saucers inasmuch as the whole story would break anyway."¹⁹¹

Newton may well have been inspired by a press release on Mikel Conrad's "flying saucer" movie datelined Hollywood, October 22nd, in which Conrad was credited with having actual "hush-hush" film footage of a flying saucer which was being kept under guard and was to be used in the soon to be released movie: "...with the cooperation of the United States government (which had) studied the films, and kept them for a long time before they were surrendered for use in 'The Flying Saucer'".¹⁹²

More witnesses in the southwest.

Another mysterious green fireball flashed east to west over Alamogordo, New Mexico, on December 3rd. More detail than usual was given on this sighting. The "meteor" was green with a fringe of orange light. Moreover:

"Sparks were emanating from the object and were more pronounced in the lower rear edge of the object. These sparks were orange to white in appearance. Intensity of the center part of the object remained the same, however, the intensity of the sparks along the edges varied."¹⁹³

Most remarkable, however, was a "maneuver" the witness believed he perceived: "Object was traveling in an arc downward; it seemed to prescribe a small loop about midway in its visible travel."¹⁹⁴

Yet another case.

A pale blue-green, it moved on an arced trajectory going east to west over the state of New Mexico and fading gradually during its brief journey. A witness to this phenomenon was driving a car near the town of Socorro on his way to Albuquerque. He was impressed by the size and slow speed of the thing in the sky. Having studied astronomy in college, he was convinced the phenomenon was not a meteor. When he got to his destination, Kirtland Field, the observer sought out OSI agent Melvin Neef to tell his story. The witness found Neef attentive which is understandable since the witness in this case was Lt. Colonel Charles Lancaster, Jr., Deputy Base Commander of Kirtland Air Force Base.¹⁹⁵

Were the green fireballs ordinary meteors, a speck of luminous cosmic dust that shoots along and then is extinguished? There were many ordinary meteors being reported but the green fireballs seemed special; they seemed to have been more than an incandescent bit of stone responding to gravity. A special case in this respect was one on December 13, 1949. Another motorist, this time traveling U.S. Highway 70 outside Alamogordo, New Mexico, sighted something in the heavens shortly after 8:00 p.m. at an altitude of 50,000 feet. The witness said:

"The object changed color from white to amber, to red, and to green, however not in the order listed. During the entire sighting a flame appeared to shoot out from various positions of the object. When the object disappeared from view, it faded out in a bright green color."¹⁹⁶

The oddest aspect of the case was the movement:

"During the first five minutes, the object did not appear to be moving. Then it began to slowly move downward and to the right. The last estimated 3/4 of seconds in view the object definitely suddenly picked up great speed while taking on this green color."¹⁹⁷

The witness was one of the OSI agents assigned to Kirtland! This witness, Special Agent Robert R. Johns, was a member of the Holloman AFB detachment at Alamogordo, N.M. When his report was filed, one of his superiors added the following comment to the document: "The writer (Johns) has observed several 'shooting stars' of a green color within the past year and at this time was acutely conscious of obtaining correct information during the sighting."¹⁹⁸

December 17th:

"The latest strange object report comes from the first officer aboard the Chinoik, the Seattle-to-Victoria car ferry, and is vouched for by the quartermaster and lookout.

"This week they saw a 'bright light in the sky moving towards Victoria at about 2,000 feet.

"'It was moving from side to side and up and down much too sharply to be a plane,' the officer said.

"The latest 'object' was too 'erratic to follow with binoculars and it was too dark to see any shape.'

"'It came within a mile of the ship and then spiralled swiftly upwards through the overcast.'"¹⁹⁹

For the seventh time, on December 20th, Sgt. Berger's searchlight picked up the mysterious circular image high over Norwood.

While the UFO did not put on a show in the atmosphere as before, there was something of that sort on the ground with an array of witnesses present. Evidently to put to rest unwarranted excitement over some sort of illusion two scientists from the University of Cincinnati, a physicist and an astronomer, stood next to the searchlight straining their eyes as the beam of light swept across the mysterious image high in the sky. Close by were two Intelligence agents, as was the mayor of Norwood.

Sgt. Berger's seventh log entry reads:

"Place: Norwood, Ohio. 2015 to 2200 hours. Turned light on at 2015 and picked up object immediately. At first it was faint and small. As haze cleared, object brightened. At 2130 it got much brighter and spread out almost as large as beam, then disappeared. Present were D. A. Wells, Dr. Paul Herget, two OSI members, Father Miller, the mayor of Norwood and Reginald Myers."200

Leonard H. Stringfield learned from Father Miller that the names of the OSI agents: "...were suspiciously alike, one Eichleberger and the other Eichlebager."201

"What Glows On Here?"

Stringfield quotes a feature article by Cincinnati Post reporter Harry Mayo who asked: "What Glows On Here?" Mayo wrote of the comments made by Dr. D. A. Wells and Dr. Herget. Mayo reported that Dr. Wells said of the image: "In my opinion its an optical illusion." Professor Herget was quoted as remarking: "It's not a fake. I believe it may be caused by the illumination of gas in the atmosphere. We need an explanation to squash people's fears."202

Dr. Wells, of the University of Cincinnati, was questioned by OSI agent Harrie L. Stewart, of the 5th District office based at Wright-Patterson AFB, on December 22nd. Officer Stewart reported the following:

"He (Dr. Wells) stated that he believed the object itself to be the light of the beam striking a high layer of thin clouds. He stated that the fact that the object appeared to remain in the same place when the beam was moved off of it might be due to latent retinal image caused by staring at the spot for long periods of time. He reserved opinion on the reported diving objects due to the fact that he had not been present when the occurrence took place. He based his explanation of the nature of the object on the fact that the appearance and disappearance of the object on the night of 20 December 1949 coincided with the reported high cloud conditions from the Greater Cincinnati Airport Weather Bureau."203

The scholar's opinion was deemed satisfactory by agent Stewart. The case was considered closed. The men named "Eichlebager and Eichleberger," if they existed, might have been U.S. Army CIC agents. Air Force files make no mention of such individuals, at least not by those names.

"Flying Saucers Are Real."

December 21st radio commentator Frank Edwards happened on an advanced copy of True's January 1950 issue with Keyhoe's investigation on the sky riddle that trumpeted, as the title of the article proclaimed, "flying saucers are real." Quickly scanning the pages, soaking up the impressive quotes by experts and the electric conclusions of Keyhoe, Edwards became transfixed. When at last he felt he had sufficient grasp of the material, he paused to let out a long, low whistle. This, his reporter instinct told him, was blockbuster stuff. Impatient to be a klaxon alerting the nation, Edwards aroused True's editor from his slumbers to obtain permission to tell the American public about the magazine's startling charges. Edwards wanted to break the story during his regular scheduled broadcast over the Mutual network. Protesting in vain that Walter Winchell had priority by previous agreement, Purdy capitulated since the cat was out of the bag. Delighted, Edwards went on the air soon afterward, quoting some two hundred words which was the limit allowed by a sleep-drugged Purdy. 204, 205

The mention by Edwards sufficed to titillate the listening audience, so much so, the Associated Press carried a news story on the broadcast the following afternoon. This was the first indication Keyhoe's article was going to go over big, real big.

Meanwhile, GeBaucer had been busy in the U.S. southwest. In Albuquerque he ran into an acquaintance from Denver by the name of George Koehler and told him the latest about the "little men from Venus" and how one body of the diminutive saucer crew had been sent to Chicago's Rosenwald Institution for display, and that parts of two alien saucers were in storage at a "United States Research Bureau" in Los Angeles. GeBaucer even embellished the yarn some, claiming that he had been present when one of the saucers had run into trouble over an Arizona radar site forcing 15 Venusians to bail out. The Venusians allegedly made themselves invisible when GeBaucer approached.

Suitably impressed, Koehler borrowed the alien "magnetic radio" from GeBaucer, plus some gears and metal fragments that were supposed to be from a crashed saucer. Koehler returned to Denver where he worked as an advertising salesman for a Denver radio station. One can imagine Koehler's excitement at the prospect of being in possession of evidence of visitors from another world. It would be the news story of the millennium. The dazzling prospect, however, did not stop Koehler from trying to authenticate the material before becoming too enthralled. He phoned a local Ford Motor plant and discussed things with an engineer there, a Jack Murphy, and asked if an analysis of the alien material could be conducted in the plant's machine shop.

'FLYING SAUCER' PROOF PROMISED

Radio Commentator Says Disks 'Not Of This World.'

By Associated Press.

INDIANAPOLIS, Dec. 22. — Radio Commentator Frank Edwards promised today to elaborate Monday on his statement that "flying saucers" actually exist.

Edwards said last night in a Mutual network broadcast from here that the saucers do exist but that "they are not of this world." He will begin broadcasting from Washington next week.

Edwards said the government's investigation of the widely-reported flying disks has continued for more than a year and "is still going on." He said "a million and one" reliable witnesses have testified to seeing the phenomena.

The commentator added that investigators have decided there are two types, the spinning "saucers" or disks that were first reported, and a "flying fuselage" seen later.

The first report came in 1947 from a private flier near the Cascade mountains in Washington state. Thousands of other, similar reports followed from almost all parts of the world.

In making the request, Koehler told Murphy the whole Venusian story. Murphy told Koehler he didn't think the plant had the proper tools to test the alleged alien material.²⁰⁶

A Rudy Fick, a Kansas City auto dealer, happened to be in Murphy's office when Koehler called. Naturally Fick wondered what the crashed saucer business was all about, so Murphy told Fick what he knew. After Fick returned to Kansas City, a Kansas City weekly, the Wyandotte Echo, learned the full story from Fick just before Christmas but didn't get around to publishing the fantastic tale until January 6, 1950. The story as it appeared in the Echo was essentially that being spread by Newton and GeBaucer. Fick's opinion on why such an amazing secret was being allowed such currency is worth repeating however:

"Mr. Fick's assumption as to the reason behind the apparent lack of security is that the government desires the information to be spread from unofficial sources, until people are more or less familiar with the facts. He feels that the security departments of the military fear that the sudden shock of a surprise announcement of the fact that interplanetary travel was possible might cause mass hysteria. No cause for alarm seems necessary, however, for from all indications, the Venusian visitors are quite peaceful, and even unwilling visitors to our planet."²⁰⁷

The January issue of True hit the streets December 24th and as arranged, Walter Winchell plugged the Keyhoe article during his moment on the airways to enlighten Mr. and Mrs. America and all the ships at sea. Other top notch journalists like Lowell Thomas followed suit. With backing like that, the very best, Keyhoe had it made.

Not only did Keyhoe push the visitors from space concept, he also took on the Air Force, accusing it of continuing its UFO investigation on a strict hush-hush basis. The nation's press, with its lust for the novel, was quick to pick up on the rekindled controversy. Typical were the spiced-up headlines in newspapers like the Oakland Post-Enquirer: CLAIM SPACE SHIP RAIDS, and the Los Angeles Times: FLYING SAUCERS CALLED SPIES FROM ANOTHER PLANET. The Los Angeles Times emphasized that True and Keyhoe had learned that one rocket authority working on Project GRUDGE was totally sold on the extraterrestrial explanation and had insisted that Air Force Intelligence embrace the idea, moreover, that reports of strange aerial objects were still coming in at a rate of one a day.²⁰⁸

Historian David Jacobs' critical analysis of Keyhoe mirrors Ruppelt's and is on the harsh side: "Keyhoe used his imagination liberally in the article. When he could not see a clear reason for the Air Force policy or action, he surmised the reason and said it as fact. Scholarship and reliable information were not strong points of the article."²⁰⁹ In defense of Keyhoe, it is supposed he saw himself more as a catalyst, reaching the general public in a popular mode of communication, inspiring actions by others who would supply the essential scientific evidence. If he hurt a few feelings in the military or government, apparently

An additional note.

Close to Washington D.C. is Andrews AFB. In December 1949 the airbase was home to the 95th Fighter Squadron that flew the F-51 Mustang, the prop-driven fighter of World War II fame. A Captain John P. Hulejik of the 95th had been on a training flight the evening of December 24th and was returning to base when he noticed he was being chased by a strange object. Captain Hulejik was convinced the object was some sort of machine, something with the appearance of a bubble-topped metallic disc. Attempting to shake off the object, the Captain hit the runway at Andrews at a bad angle and at too high a speed. The landing gear couldn't take the stress and gave way. The F-51 skidded to a stop on its belly, throwing sparks and making a dreadful shriek. Fortunately there was no fire. Captain Hulejik climbed out of the cockpit with minor injuries. Checking the sky, the Captain saw the UFO flying away.

Thrope, D.C. "Air Battles With UFOs- The Early Days." Ideals UFO Magazine #1, ed. D.C. Thrope. Ideal Publishing Co., New York, N.Y., 1977. p.68.

it was because he believed it necessary due to the vast importance of the UFO question.

Within a sunrise and a sunset after the appearance of the True article, the Air Force retaliated with a press release that followed the guidelines set down back in August in Project GRUDGE's policy paper. The Los Angeles Times, among others, carried the Air Force's announcement:

"The Air Force has discontinued its special project (GRUDGE) investigating and evaluating reported flying saucers on the basis that there is no evidence the reports are not the results of natural phenomena. Discontinuance of the project, which was carried out by the Air Force, was concurred in by the Department of the Army and Navy."²¹⁰

In the text of the announcement, which was drawn up back in August, it was admitted officially that a whopping 23 percent of the UFO reports studied were unknown but the newshounds of the news media failed to appreciate the importance of this very significant statistical amount. Dr. J. Allen Hynek, the scientist that provided many of the Project GRUDGE explanations, experienced a feeling of astonishment at the oversight and could only guess that the newsmen scanned the Air Force document too quickly, seizing only on the principle recommendation that the Air Force phase out its investigation, which implied that UFO reports offered no challenge to science although results indicated quite the contrary.²¹¹

The Air Force took at least one direct shot at True and Keyhoe:

"The Air Force Material Command has been working very closely with intelligence on the whole matter of flying saucers.

"We probably have the most complete file on the saucers anywhere, but there is nothing new or startling to indicate that the saucers are interplanetary visitors."²¹²

The civilian head of radio and press information at the Dayton Air Center, Dayton, Ohio, a Harry Haberer, consulted prudence, declaring that the Wright Field UFO investigation project had been discontinued three months back (August) and, after a yawn no doubt, muttered: "As far as I know, there has been no report of a flying saucer from any Air Force pilot since that time (!)"²¹³

This comes no where near the truth so we might wonder just who this man Haberer was, but little is available other than what Ruppelt says, referring to Haberer as a "crack public relations man," the Pentagon's choice to see that Shallet "got the full UFO story" for the Saturday Evening Post.²¹⁴ Was something rotten in Denmark?

The Air Force announcement on GRUDGE had this to say of future office interest: "Continuance of the project is unwarranted since additional incidents now are simply confirming findings already reached."²¹⁵ On the other hand, we have Dr. Hynek's word plus evidence in declassified Air Force files, that reports at that time were still being filed at Wright Field regardless of the very low level of interest shown the cases by the Intelligence staff.²¹⁶

Ruppelt wondered why the 600 page GRUDGE report was not commented on in the press since it was available to back up what the Air Force had said in its much briefer announcement. For an answer Ruppelt asked a Washington correspondent who had followed the UFO mystery closely:

"He remembered when the Grudge Report came out; in fact, he'd managed to get a copy of his own. He said the report had been quite impressive, but only in its ambiguousness, illogical reasoning, and very apparent effort to write off all UFO reports at any cost. He, personally, thought that it was a poor attempt to put out a 'fake' report, full of misleading information, to cover up the real story. Others, he told me, just plainly and simply didn't know what to think--they were confused."²¹⁷

Life magazine's investigative reporters later determined that although the Air Force had briskly dismissed hard core UFO cases as mental aberrations in its December 27th press release, pacifying the public and the press, reports—good reports—did continue. Alarm within military ranks, even at policy level, was substantial, and became more so as the months progressed.²¹⁸

Another view of things has been offered by Dr. David Saunders who speculated whether the prestidigitation was a "play within a play" conceived and executed for the dual purpose of confusing foreign Intelligence and reassuring the cadre of America's establishment.²¹⁹

Project BLUE BOOK.

A Lou Corbin, a Maryland radio personality and a military officer with some good connections in Washington, told Keyhoe later there was a "switch from Project GRUDGE to a Project BLUE BOOK instead of a shutdown of Air Force UFO investigative activity."²²⁰ Most students of the UFO problem now agree that GRUDGE had just merely been downgraded to a more normal status from a "special project" priority. In time, the continued interest in UFO's was formalized with the code name: BLUE BOOK.

The first Air Force UFO project, named SIGN, with its figurehead chief, James Conant, the famous former Harvard president,²²¹ had given way to GRUDGE. Now another name change was in the offing. The code name SIGN was said to have been compromised, but GRUDGE was a different matter. Code words are selected with the intent they have no connotation bearing on the endeavor so designated. A random choice, the word GRUDGE, was

dropped when the Air Force eventually upgraded the service's UFO investigative effort. Ruppelt claims that the word GRUDGE was never resurrected because: "...someone in the Pentagon suggested that 'Grudge' gave the impression that the project was taking the job begrudgingly."²²²

"Civilian Saucer Intelligence."

The seeming repudiation of the UFO question by the Air Force could not but help lead to a disturbing development: the civilian investigation of reports of unexplained aerial objects.

When some UFO activity convulsed the population of North and South Carolina on December 28th, John DuBarry of True magazine did the only thing that seemed logical if he wanted to learn the real story since the Air Force was "no longer interested." He hopped a train heading south.

Instead of discouraging the public, the Air Force in the future would be faced with serious and unwelcomed unofficial competition. Official conclusions about flying saucer reports would have to endure severe tests in the years to come.

DuBarry did a credible job. After his interviews with witnesses, he arranged his notes under different headings: "shape," "color," "altitude," "direction," "size," etc., and added a final heading: "my opinion."²²³

Since there were numerous witnesses plus the fact that there had been other such "ghost rocket" reports from the eastern seaboard during the latter part of 1949, it might be of interest to review the case.

According to the Associated Press, the UFO in question was initially spotted over Fayetteville, North Carolina, about 4:30 p.m., diving straight down out of the afternoon sky. The thing was described by observers as appearing like a "white blob," or as one individual expressed it, like a "drop of quicksilver." Yet another witness compared the thing to a "vertical neon lighting tube." The thing came out of its dive, leveled off, turning over as it did so.^{224,225} Whatever it was, its appearance was so dramatic and strange, persons squinted skyward and pilots took off in private planes in pursuit:

"...two pilots said it appeared to be a streak of smoke about fifteen or twenty feet long coming from an unseen plane. But the object, the pilots said, retained its shape during the ten or fifteen minutes that they followed it. The four pilots who chased it said they were unable to gain on it in their planes."²²⁶

What DuBarry ascertained after analyzing his notes on the times and locations of different accounts and using these calculations as a baseline, was that the UFO must have been 100 miles high and of tremendous size! Shades of Norwood!²²⁷ However, it is probably safe to say that DuBarry was way off in his calculations but the UFO must have been sizeable and very high.

At 4:45 p.m., the thing was also visible from Hamet, North Carolina, some 50 miles southwest of Fayetteville which proves that it must have been at a very high altitude. First sighted by Hamet physician W. James and the city's Fire Chief, J. C. Worley, the two men alerted the local airfield.²²⁸ One description from an unnamed witness said the UFO resembled: "...a dirigible standing on end."²²⁹ A Hamet pilot took up the challenge, a man by the name of Phillip Gibbons who later described the thing in terms completely different from any other witness. He said he got near enough to discern a "large metal ball" that exceeded greatly the size of a weather balloon. He estimated the dimensions as about 20 to 30 feet in diameter. Gibbons mentioned that it did not change its altitude while he had it under observation, a fact which tended to disprove the balloon theory. The weather station at Charlotte issued a statement that agreed with Gibbons but on different grounds saying that weather balloons were not being released that late in the afternoon at Hamet.^{230, 231} Gibbons, an overseas news correspondent and a one-time Air Force pilot, chased the UFO until he lost it in the sun, flying some 12 miles southwest of Hamet in the process. After returning to Hamet airport, Gibbons expressed his frustration to the press: "Something is really fishy. It was no conventional airplane, or balloon, that I know about."

A Mr. D. F. Owen watched the UFO with some people at Fayetteville. His version of the incident as spokesman for the group of witnesses went:

"We calculated that it was at an angle of some 20 degrees from the horizon...(and some) 15 to 20 miles above the Earth's surface.

"This flying saucer was witnessed by five people who were with me at the time, and several other townsfolk. It was sighted due west in the direction of the setting sun.

"From downtown Fayetteville, the object appeared as a rather long, cigar-shaped thing. The sun's rays were striking its sides at an oblique angle and it gave off flashes of light which would indicate the outside hull was of a bright metallic nature.

"(It was)...also observed by another person some two miles from our point of observation and at a much better position visually...(he) reported the object to be cigar-shaped, of a metallic nature and in a vertical position instead of horizontal."²³³

The next city to sight the phenomenon was Newberry, South Carolina. The next day the following story appeared in the press:

"An elongated, slender, shiny apparition was spotted over the west end of Newberry yesterday evening about 5 o'clock.

"According to observers, and there were about eight of them, or ten, who have actually been heard from, the 'thing' was flying erratically and apparently without any set course or purpose.

"When seen, the object was flying along at a very slow speed on a course parallel to the ground, then it veered off in another direction and seemed to be descending slightly."234

Some 30 miles away at Greenwood, South Carolina, at 5:00 p.m., the UFO was visible to witnesses. The director of the tree department in Columbia, a William Shields, was hunting with some friends in the countryside when the "thing" was noticed in the sky. It looked to them like a "fluorescent light blub" and hovered for at least 30 minutes in the sky in one spot and then, according to Shields, it "shot off through the sky at a terrific rate of speed." He later told the press: "I thought I was seeing things until I heard that other people had seen the object also."235

The Greenwood Index-Journal had this to say among other things:

"Mayor A. H. Woodle asked Johnson's Flying Service to see if they could determine what it was. Joe Poole, instructor, and W. C. Ashley, took off in a Piper Cub rising to about 3,000 feet. They chased it almost directly west, passing over Abbeville and almost to the Georgia line. They sighted it all the way but seemed to make no headway against it at all, although it had seemed to be traveling slowly--almost drifting--over the airport before they took off.

"From their 3,000 feet perch the object appeared to be on their level or somewhat above it. Mr. Poole had estimated the elevation at about 6,000 feet as it passed over the airport.

"He said it looked like smoke used in sky-writing, but it never drifted apart, although the shape varied. It seemed almost like a long ribbon of paper fluttering at times, he said.

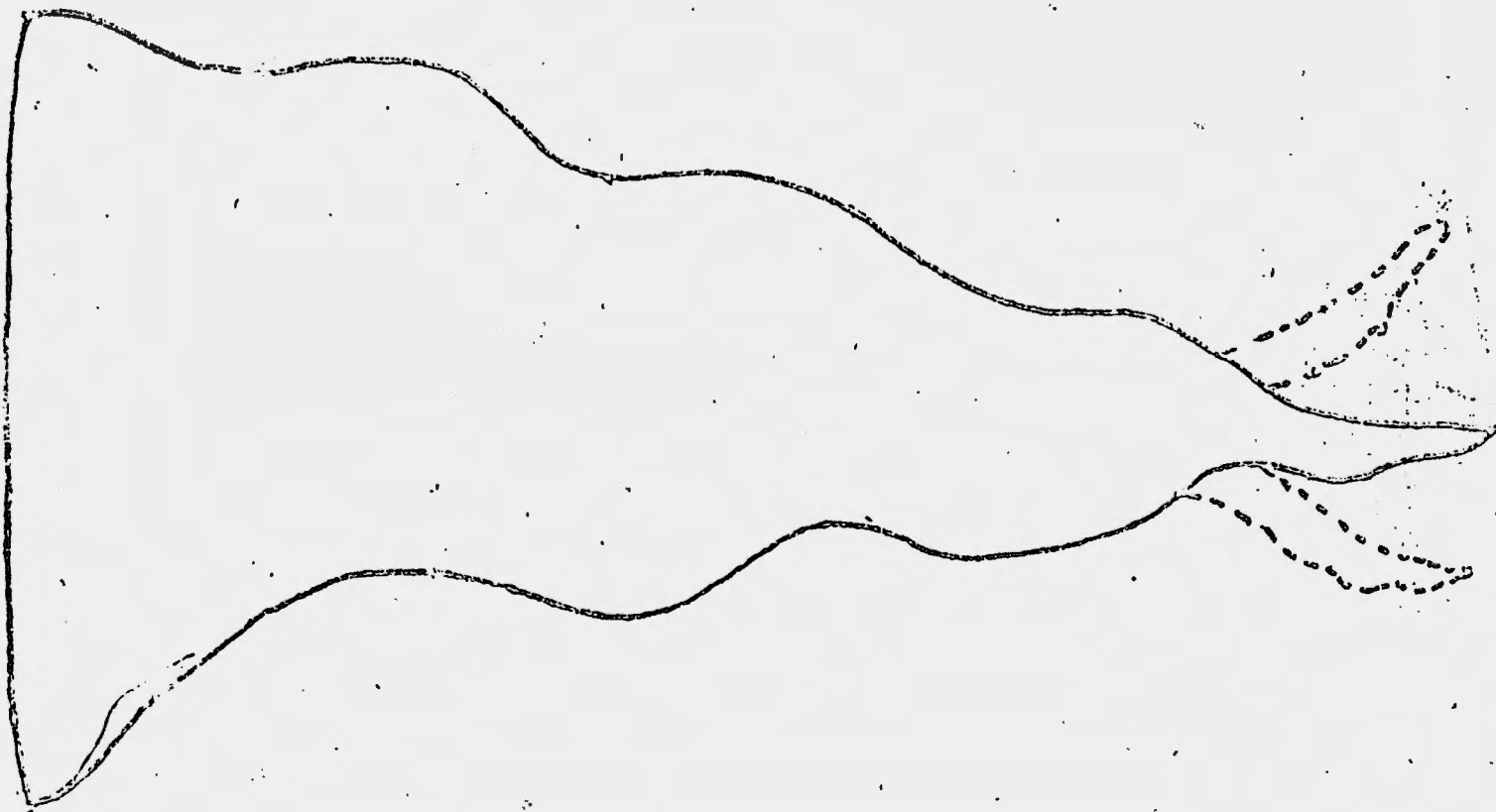
"Mr. Ashley said that it took various shapes, and appeared at one time to be a crescent. Others this morning said they first thought it was the moon when they spotted it.

"Mr. Ashley said that the object was traveling in the same direction as the prevailing wind."236

The last remark raises suspicion that the object was a partially inflated Skyhood balloon being wafted along by a strong air current.

"Shorn of its mystery?"

When another ghostly tube appeared above Charlotte at 3:45 p.m., on December 30th the local airport insisted the UFO was nothing



Cone-shaped object seen over Langley, Virginia, on December 30, 1949.

UNCLASSIFIED

more than a vapor trail from a high flying Air Force B-36, a mass of ice crystals formed when the aircraft's hot engine exhaust came in contact with the frigid air nearly eight miles up. Charlotte officials may have been right since the "tube" was visible for 15 minutes as it slowly drifted away.²³⁷

"Operational Immediate."

A classified Air Force message titled: "Operational Immediate" concerned a military observation of the thing, at Pope AFB near Fayetteville. The official report on the military observation reads:

"Object appeared as an extremely short beam of light just to the right of the setting sun. A close observation through field glasses revealed that the edges of the beam were frayed. Object also appeared to remain stationary and was visible for approximately one hour. Impossible to photograph due to close proximity to sun and lack of adequate filters. It is the opinion of the observer that subject's glow was caused by the reflection of the sun upon dust particles or other nuclei present in the atmosphere.²³⁸

But if witnesses at Charlotte, North Carolina were right about the "thing" in the air being a mass of ice crystals, why was something similar seen near Langley, Virginia the same day two hours before the manifestation in the Carolinas. At 1:20 p.m., something was spotted at an altitude of 5,000 feet. Three sergeants attached to the Ninth Air Force Adjutant General Section sighted the "thing" moving south in the direction of the Carolinas. T/Sgt. Ernest Hendrix described the phenomena in the following way:

"The white, vertical, cone-shaped object appeared to be eight feet in diameter at the base by twenty feet in height. It was estimated to be at 5,000 feet altitude, 10,000 feet from the observer and moving slowly in a southeasterly direction. The base of the cone remained steady and the top slowly oscillated."²³⁹

Complicating the issue further is another report the day after the Langley one. At Andrews AFB in the District of Columbia, on December 31st, a member of the Air National Guard happened to glance directly overhead and saw:

"...an object floating--it seemed--leisurely in and out among the clouds. When it tilted toward the sun it appeared to be a huge sheet of tinfoil. I kept my eye on it and suddenly realized that it was traveling at a terrific rate of speed in a southeasterly direction."²⁴⁰

In the wake of the latest east coast UFO excitement, a radio station at Richmond, Virginia aired a fictional drama of a landing of a flying saucer with its crew disembarking to converse with some amazed Earthlings. The show was prefaced with an explanatory announcement, yet as people will tend to do, a number of listeners still took the story as fact bringing to mind the 1938 Orson Wells Martian invasion scare. To many of those following the UFO enigma, such a landing was not so implausible, for no longer were they imbued with a spirit of serene and inextinguishable self-satisfaction that the Earth was the only inhabited world in the whole stellar universe. Indeed, they could now warm to liquifaction frozen dreams of the imminent arrival of exotic emissaries from some far off land of Oz.

Some comments on the year 1950.

The year 1950 is a very fascinating one in terms of UFO history. A big world-wide UFO flap hit in mid-March, and politically the most severe East-West crisis since the Berlin blockade occurred in June when the Korean War erupted, causing heightened worry about the Russian hypothesis to explain UFOs.

American atomic plants worked hard to process raw uranium to meet the Joint Chiefs of Staff's goal of 400 nuclear bombs by 1951, while scientists were busy developing a vastly more destructive weapon that would utilize fusion instead fission. At the same time the atomic plants experienced UFO visitations, especially Oak Ridge where some really bizarre aerial phenomena was sighted.

Something passed over Oak Ridge on October 13, 1950 in full view of security guards, a metallic-looking, pear-shaped object trailing a 20 foot-long glowing "ribbon." This writer suggests that this "ribbon" was a sensor seeking to detect gaseous effluent from the atomic plant's uranium enrichment process (radiation escaped into the environment on a regular basis).

Also, a Dr. Craig Hunter, on March 15, 1950, sighted a saucer-shaped object near St. Mary's, Pennsylvania, which he claims was trailing a 200 foot-long by 10 inch wide flexible "ribbon." Is there some connection?

As noted in the top secret December 10, 1948 Air Force report, Analysis of Flying Object Incidents in the U.S., it's clear that the U.S. military was victimized by the Kremlin's psychological warfare department because of the credit given to the supposed existence of high performance Russian aircraft, even though the Pentagon often warned against such a trick.

In 1950, however, one will find, oddly enough, that in the public sector the American secret weapon theory to explain UFOs got a big play. Radio commentator Henry J. Taylor made a very reassuring claim just after the big 1950 UFO flap began, announcing in late March that the mysterious sky objects being reported were Uncle Sam's. The claim was widely publicized and was published in Reader's Digest, both the domestic and international editions. Newspaper ads promoting that month's issue featured Taylor's "great discovery" that UFOs were American secret weapons. Even the respected news magazine U.S. News and World Report climbed on the bandwagon. Every official source, however, denied the commentator's assertion.

A DelWayne B. Johnson, in the process of satisfying requirements for his M. A. in Journalism, researching his dissertation titled: "Flying Saucers---Fact or Fiction?", tracked down Taylor and interviewed the man on May 12, 1950. The radio commentator had a speaking engagement that day at the Greater Los Angeles Press Club, and after the dinner and speeches, Johnson had a chance to talk with Taylor at some length.

Johnson knew much more about the UFO story than Taylor it seems and the young grad student was quick to detect errors and inconsistencies in the man's version of UFO events, but Johnson let Taylor express himself fully.

Taylor related to Johnson that he had been investigating the UFO riddle ever since the announcement of the end of project GRUDGE by the Air Force in December 1949, which, in Taylor's opinion, was mistakenly done in the face of evidence that was overwhelming in favor of UFOs being extraordinary objects deserving of more study. Convinced that there was something to the mystery, Taylor launched a personal investigation that eventually took him to Texas where he questioned a Mr. Norman Hargrave, a Baytown jeweler that reported to the press on July 6, 1947 he had found a small flying disc floating in the

waters of Trinity Bay that had markings indicating it was a secret U.S. device (See this author's booklet: UFOs A History: 1947, pp.18-20). To Taylor the Hargrave story seemed too detailed and realistic not to be the truth even when Mr. Hargrave insisted to Taylor that the report was a complete hoax. The radio commentator was suspicious of Hargrave's confession and continued his quest for a solution to mystery.

When the Defense Research Laboratory of the University of Texas, Austin, released a news bulletin stating that it was doing work on sophisticated target drones for the military, Taylor immediately jumped to the conclusion there was a connection with the flying discs.

What troubled Johnson, however, was Taylor's overriding motive in endorsing the domestic idea. Taylor admitted his research and conclusions could be open to question, but the current "Cold War" with Russia was of vital importance (Taylor dwelled on the "Cold War" to a large degree in his talk to the Los Angeles Press Club) and that the psychological warfare struggle with the Kremlin was so fierce that it behooved the U.S. to claim ownership of the flying discs before the Russians did! *

The prolonged Korean war, 1950-1953, did one thing for the UFO mystery. In spite of continuous crisis the Communists never played their "UFO card." It is no surprise then, that the extraterrestrial theory gained ascendancy.

* Johnson, DeWayne B. Flying Saucers---Fact or Fiction? A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Journalism. University of California, Los Angeles. August, 1950. p.165.

An additional note:

There was a lot of talk about copper in regards to the "green fire-balls" because of the intense green color reported, however, Dr. Donald Menzel in his book Flying Saucers, pp.254-255, makes the interesting point that magnesium is also particularly strong in the green part of the spectrum. This is interesting when one ponders the case of a supposed flying disc fragment which was discussed in the "Condon Report," The Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects, pp.257-260. The reader of these lines is also referred to this writer's booklet: UFOs A History: 1948, pp.72-73, which tells the story of R.J. Strong.

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