

the apro bulletin

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TUCSON, ARIZONA

DECEMBER 1976

1976 CALIFORNIA UFO REPORTS

Russians Debate UFO Issue

A five-page document containing information on several alleged UFO sightings and purporting to be a copy of a lecture delivered by Felix Y. Zigel, an assistant professor at the Moscow Aviation Institute, has been circulating in Moscow, giving rise to much heated debate.

Professor Zigel has made no public statement about the controversy, but because of the closed-society situation in the USSR, many tend to believe rumors rather than government pronouncements.

The document was circulated in early 1976 and in early December, Yereimei Parnov, a Soviet Science Fiction writer, appeared in print to denounce it. The paper allegedly contained the sentence: "In the USSR there exists a ban on all kind of publications about UFOs," a comment sure to increase the credibility of the paper.

It also contained scanty information about a UFO which hovered over the city of Natchik for 36 hours in January 1976, a UFO which trailed an airliner from Vorkuta to Omsk and a 1961 sighting of a UFO which allegedly hovered over a railroad crossing at Golystino, which is 28 miles west of Moscow. The paper claimed that the engines of cars stalled and could not be started until the UFO left.

It is entirely possible that a ban does exist, as has been the case in the past. At the request of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, APRO furnished back issues of the Bulletin and a free subscription to that body in the late 1950s. This was discontinued, however, because there was no reciprocation on the part of the Soviets. Therefore it would seem that there is interest in the UFO subject in high places in Russia, but that, like in other countries, the public is kept ignorant of the facts.

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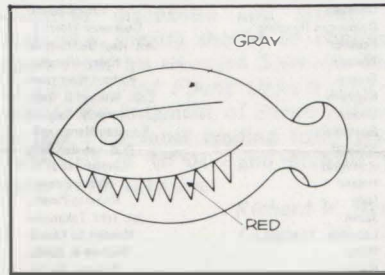


Fig. 1 — See Column Three

Yakima Reports On Increase

by Mel Podell

The frequency of observations of unexplained night lights on the Yakima Indian Reservation near Toppenish, Washington, has risen during late October and early November 1976. There has been a concentration of sightings in this area of Washington for the past number of years. The majority of these latest reports originate from the Satus Peak Lookout. Mrs. D. Sturm, the fire lookout, was the witness to many of these sightings. Having served in the position of fire lookout for some 17 years, she is considered to be a most reliable witness.

The most eventful night of these sightings was October 26, 1976 at 8 p.m. PDT. Mrs. Sturm observed a large strobe-like white light to the west of her lookout. The light disappeared after a few minutes. At 9:10 the same night she observed a very red glow at a distance of approximately ten miles to the SSW of her post. This is in an area behind Simon Butte. The night was clear and the light was of sufficient intensity so that the outline of Simon Butte could be seen in the distance. The glow of the light was a deeper red than that produced by a fire. As Mrs. Sturm observed the glow, there arose from its center in an area behind the Butte a red cigar-shaped object moving at a high rate of speed. It disappeared into the sky along with the red glow. No flame was noticed as the

(See Yakima — Page Five)

by Dennis Leartart

INTRODUCTION

The cases in this report are factual in every detail, and have been personally investigated by me to their full potential.

The witnesses involved in these cases were ordinary people in all walks of life whose testimony is without doubt, and who would stand to lose more than they could gain by relating their information to me. All of them were intelligent, reasonable, and logical people looking for answers to an event they did not willingly want to participate in, nor could explain in terms of their own realm of experience. Many, upon relating their information to me were visibly shaken and frightened by what they had witnessed, simply because there were no logical answers available.

This is how it starts and this is why we are here — to analyze, review, and piece together a problem that has possibly plagued mankind for centuries. It is time to end the blindness, and proceed in a logical manner to piece together what someday may be labeled the greatest single scientific problem ever faced by mankind. It will not be solved by any single group or person. It must be a collective effort based on cold, hard, scientific evidence. This will be the doorway to the solution of this phenomena.

All of the following cases are documented. They will be presented in chronological order. All took place in Ventura County between August 31st and November 6th, 1976. Names and addresses of witnesses have been withheld upon request.

Case 1 — Mrs. W of Moorpark. Age 29; Date — August 31, 1976; Time — 4:30 P.M.; Weather — Overcast, Wind from the West; Location — Somis Rd. near 101 Freeway, Camarillo, California.

Mrs. W was heading south on Somis Road from her home in Moorpark with her two young children at approximately 4:30 P.M. In amazement, she noticed the blimp shaped object shown in figure 1. It was hovering over some railroad tracks. The object was gray with red

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*Small footprints were found at the landing site.

*One of the legs of the UFO scraped against a rock, leaving metallic traces consisting of an alloy of zinc and iron not manufactured on earth.

*There are indications that the emblem on the side of the craft was not [X], as has generally been published, but may have been.

*Slides of the landing site taken by Patrolman Ted V. Jordan within ten minutes of the landing turned out fogged, apparently the result of atomic radiation.

Stanford also reveals these cover-ups: the composition of the metallic traces, by NASA; the emblem, by the Army; the humanoids, by the FBI; and Jordan's slides and information on an analysis of the vitrified sand found at the site, by the Air Force. If it sounds like a conspiracy, maybe it is. *Socorro 'Saucer'* could well be the book which explodes the U.S. Government's "UFO Watergate" and forces Congressional hearings on the subject, at which Stanford says he would be willing (and even eager) to testify. In the meantime, one could try to obtain the information and evidence through the Freedom of Information Act, something it seems Stanford hasn't done.

Stanford says that NICAP (then under Acting Director Richard H. Hall) was a party to NASA's cover-up of the metallic traces. He says that Hall ignored what was told him unofficially by Dr. Henry Frankel, the NASA metallurgist who analyzed the traces, and reported only the official results (common silica) after NASA had taken over what was originally being done on an unofficial basis by Frankel. However, Hall wrote me, "I deeply resent Stanford's insinuations that I participated in any conscious cover-up. Stanford claims being given (verbally, on the phone, with no other witnesses) different results and further claims that Frankel told me the same thing. He flatly did not." But in a subsequent letter Hall wrote, "A phone memo in the NICAP files indicates that Frankel told me via telephone on 8/4/64 of a tentative finding of iron, alpha iron, and zinc suggestive of a galvanized pail, but prior to any quantitative analysis and obviously not presented as a meaningful or final analysis." I cannot comment on the accuracy of what Stanford says about Hall, but the latter assures me that he and Walter N. Webb (who also participated in taking the sample to Frankel) agree that Stanford's account of the events involving him and NICAP's cover-up of the traces is subjective, incomplete, and incorrect.

Speaking of cover-ups, I wonder why Stanford kept all this vital information on the Socorro case secret so long. His investigation on the 1964 case lasted five years, and apparently the basic manuscript of the book was completed (See Review - Page Five)

Book Review

Socorro 'Saucer' in a Pentagon Pantry, by Ray Stanford, 1976. Blueapple Books, P.O. Box 5694, Austin, Texas 78763. \$8.95

I thought that it has long been passe to call a UFO a "saucer," but Ray Stanford fittingly revives the word in the catchy title of his new book, and it is a blockbuster. This is one of those all-too-rare books which take an in-depth look at a single UFO case - in this instance the famous April 24, 1964, sighting by Patrolman Lonnie Zamora at Socorro, New Mexico, which involved occupants and physical traces. Despite what the title might imply, however, Stanford does not

claim that the Pentagon actually possesses the craft in its "pantry."

In a narrative style reminiscent of Donald Keyhoe's, replete with reconstructed conversations, Stanford gives a step-by-step look not only at the sighting itself, but at his investigation of it. In the process he effectively deflates the arguments against the case which have been put forward by confirmed UFO skeptics, notably Phillip Klass. Much of the information will be new to the general UFO reader, and some of it has never before been published. This includes the following:

*The UFO was seen by at least ten people besides Zamora, including Paul Kies and Larry Kratzer, from Dubuque, Iowa.

*The roar the craft made on landing and takeoff was heard by "hundreds of persons."

California

(Continued from Page One)

diamond-shaped marking located around the bottom. She estimates that the object was no more than 50 ft. above the tracks. Frightened, she continued on and noticed a similar type of object hovering in the general vicinity of the Canejo Grade (101 Frwy.) near Newberry Park. This was enough to convince her to call the Sheriff's department and report her sighting.

As it turns out, this became a multiple witness case. A Mrs. P saw the same type of object near Point Mugu where she works. Several of her co-workers also saw it. The time of this sighting was 4:10 P.M., 20 minutes before Mrs. W. was to spot the similar type of object. Calculations of the wind speed and direction for that day seem to indicate that this was a "free floating" object of some kind. Information requested from the Air Operations Officer at Pt. Mugu revealed that the Goodyear blimp was operating that day in the Newberry Park area. However, this does not explain why two objects were spotted, why one object was flying so low near Somis Rd., nor why the object was seen near Pt. Mugu. Examination of the general area near Somis Rd. after the incident revealed nothing unusual. No other reports were received, and the case remains unsolved.

Case II — Miss S.S. 17, Mr. B.D. 18, Mr. M.S. 16, Miss C.S. 19, Mrs. J.L. 41, Mr. R.L. 16; Date — September 6, 1976; Weather Conditions — Clear night, warm weather; Location — West Simi Valley, Ventura County, California.

On the evening of September 6, 1976, the above witnesses viewed an oval shaped object from their home in West Simi Valley.

Mrs. J.L. describes the object in her own words as follows:

"It sat in one place in midair for approximately 45 minutes (the sighting started at 9 P.M.). It had a red light on top and green on the bottom. The position of these lights changed. There was a very bright white light in the center. The red and green lights moved around this central light. It then moved straight to the left, up, and then back to its original position. (See diagram above). It kept moving in that pattern until approximately 11:15 P.M. The white light was much larger than the green or red. The shape seemed to be more round and not definite."

Other observers mention:

"It moved at 90° angles too rapid for a plane." Mr. B.D.

"The object appeared to be 3½ miles away judging from the mountains in the background." Miss S.S.

The object wasn't too large, airplanes and jets flying near it were bigger." Mr. M.S.

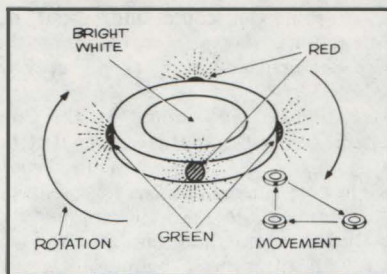


Fig. 2 — See Column One

The police department and the fire department were contacted by the witnesses. The fire department referred them to the Point Mugu Missile Range who in turn contacted a UFO group in Seattle, Washington. The witnesses were interviewed the following day over the phone. On September 7th, a similar type object was spotted at about the same time by Mr. B.D. who tried to follow it in his car and get some pictures. This was about the same time as the first sighting. The pictures never turned out, and the witnesses were unable to follow the object for very long, but did note that it repeated the same type movement as shown in the figure on the previous page.

All of the witnesses in this case were interviewed separately. All reported seeing the same type object as described. They seemed very concerned and were often at times confused as to how to describe what they saw in normal language. Because the object made such strange flight patterns in the sky, and because the witnesses seemed to be highly reasonable people and not given to exaggeration, their story is highly believable. Unfortunately, Point Mugu's radar facilities do not pick up well in the Simi area below 3,500 ft. No other reports have been received from the witnesses to date, and this case remains unsolved.

Case III — Mr. S.F., Age 24; Date — October 7th, 1976; Location — Central Simi Valley, Ventura County, California; Weather Conditions — Clear, no wind; Time — Approximately 1:00 A.M.

This object might be classified as an IFO, however, it is worth noting as a case because of its similarity to case II. The object was sighted by Mr. S.F. three miles from the location in Case II heading south towards the Rocketdyne Testing Area. The object was described as follows by Mr. S.F.;

"Large red dome light on top (as seen through binoculars) slowly pulsating — white light pointing towards the direction of flight — one green light on the side with four smaller red lights around the edge — the shape of the object could not be discerned."

Mr. S.F. thought at first the object may have been a helicopter. It kept turning around in short circles. It kept doing this for about a half hour before

heading south. Mr. S.F. was not completely sure that this was an unidentifiable object, because it did not do anything very unusual or appear out of the ordinary to any normal observer, except for the placement of lights, and strange flight pattern. (Note: Three objects were sighted in San Francisco one hour before this call).

Case IV — Mr. D.W. and girlfriend; Location — Sturgis Road, Oxnard, California; Date — October 16, 1976; Time — Approximately 9:30 P.M.; Weather — Light ground fog; Geography — Farmlands, freshly plowed, oil pumps, a few and widely scattered farmhouses and industries.

Of the six cases presented in this report, this is perhaps the strangest of all. When the report was initially received from the Oxnard Police department, it was thought to be a landing case, since the object seen was so close to the ground. The report is as follows:

Mr. D.W. and his girlfriend were heading home to David's house at about 9:30 P.M., heading West on Sturgis Road. They were driving very slowly and David was in the passenger seat. All of a sudden out of the Northeast, and coming fast in front of their car, was what was described as an oval shaped object about 10 ft. in circumference. It had a "silvery glow" that may have been due to the car's lights reflecting on it. The object passed no less than 20 nor greater than 40 ft. in front of them and continued on in a Southwest direction (see map). This scared the observers tremendously, who in no uncertain terms were going to hang around to find out what would happen next. They proceeded to David's house quickly, called the Oxnard Police who in turn contacted the Seattle group.

Due to busy telephone lines, the investigation did not begin until about 10:15 P.M. that same evening. Several passes up and down Sturgis road revealed no magnetic anomalies or anything visually out of the ordinary. Only one car passed through during this time. Sturgis road is not heavily travelled, and usually only used by farming vehicles. Mr. D.W. did not want to come at the time of the investigation because they were too scared. The fields in and around the area were not explored due to the many no trespassing signs in the area. Many mail boxes in the area were stuffed with flyers asking to report anything that could have been unusual for that night or discovered later.

I was unable to contact Mr. D.W. for several weeks. Apparently, he raises Afgans and is home infrequently. He lives about a mile north of Sturgis and his father owns most of the farmland in that area. Nothing unusual was found by anyone in the area, or at least none was reported.

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I reached Mr. D.W. again on November 10, 1976 and he adds the following: "The object was definitely not a reflection or a natural phenomena that would be within our frame of reference of aircraft seen in this or any other area of the earth. A friend who visited me later on that evening (approximately 1:00 A.M.-2:00 A.M.) reported seeing military jeeps and personnel in and around the general area of the sighting." Mr. D.W. also recalls seeing an after glow made by the object and extending out from its flight path. To date Mr. D.W.'s girlfriend will not go near the area where the object was sighted nor even talk about what happened. She was intensely scared by the whole incident.

It should also be noted that on the same day of this occurrence, there was an airshow being put on by the Pacific Missile Range at Point Mugu several hours previous to this case. It was also put on again, the following day.

Specific reference to this case was made to Pt. Mugu, and they had no comment on their return letter. This case remains unsolved and open to speculation.

Case V — Mrs. V.; Location — Northeast Simi Valley; Date — November 2, 1976; Time — 7:00 P.M.; Weather — clear.

This is the third case which had occurred in Simi Valley. Mrs. V. had been shopping with her children and saw along with several other observers a glowing green light at an estimated elevation of 5,000 ft. It moved sideways, up and down and in all different directions as though it were trying to attract attention. After several minutes, it went straight up and out of sight, growing smaller and smaller. When it turned sideways, Mrs. V. got a better look at the object which was round with a dome on top and one very intense green light on the bottom.

This would be classified as a multiple witness case. Other witnesses include those who were at the gas station not far from the sighting. I was unable to talk to these witnesses directly.

The object in this case was located very near the location of the object seen in Case II. The description of the objects, however, do vary greatly. Cards were distributed to many homes in and around the area of the sighting, which to date has solicited no replies. The case remains unsolved.

Case VI — Mr. Bob Johnson; Location — Port Hueneme, Ventura County; Date — November 7th, 1976; Time — 5:15 A.M.; Weather — Clear, no wind.

I was not able to talk to the witness directly on this case. I did send a letter to the Port Hueneme Police department in care of Mr. Bob Johnson, asking if there

was anything he could add about his sighting that was not reported in the newspaper article. I received no reply to date.

Mr. Johnson was quoted by the Port Hueneme Press Courier as saying that he was in his patrol car on Willowbrook Drive in Port Hueneme when he saw three red objects in the sky. He stopped the car, looked again, and saw another red light, with three more behind that, and another single object following. Johnson said he was impressed by the odd formation and the size of the objects which he compared to the size of an airplane. He did not specify which kind. As the objects got closer he saw green and white lights flashing along with the constant red light. He estimates that he watched them for approximately 10 minutes, whereupon they went toward the coast, then turned northeast at about 1,000 feet altitude. When he returned to the Police Station he told the sergeant on duty and they both went outside and saw green and white lights disappearing over the rooftops of Port Hueneme. Johnson said: "The sergeant thought they were airplanes and that I was crazy."

It is instructive to note that this was the only case in which more than one or a few objects were seen (eight all together), and in a location far removed from the others.

MAGNETIC FIELD REPORT

Maintained at my location is a version of the Klein K-1 Detector that was built with modifications, which was previously sent to APRO. The suspension of the magnet remains the same, but the activating device is a LASCR (light-activated-silicon-controlled-rectifier).

Unfortunately, this detector is subject to many external causes for false alarms. Some are as follows:

1. Minor earthquake tremors (this problem is eliminated by contacting the Geophysics Lab at Pt. Mugu)
2. Temperature changes (thermal expansion causes the arm to swing)
3. External vibration and settling of the house
4. Power consumption from large appliances, shorts in house wiring, power drops or outages

The following is a list of the dates that the detector was set off and no other cause except magnetic disturbance in the area of the detector seemed to be the blame. There was no visual contact on any of these dates of any UFO's in the area either because there was none or because they could not be seen because of fog or cloud layers obscuring vision. The detector was not in operation between September 1, 1967 to September 8, 1976. The date and time of alarm signals given off are as follows:

| | |
|----------|--|
| 1/17/76 | 10:35 p.m. (no visual contact) |
| 1/27/76 | 10:43 p.m. |
| 2/1/76 | 8:53 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. |
| 2/11/76 | 12:30 p.m. |
| 3/10/76 | 10:30 p.m. |
| 3/11/76 | 10:00 p.m. |
| 4/1/76 | 5:00 a.m. (strong signal) |
| 4/8/76 | 7:24 a.m. (jets heard in area) |
| 5/8/76 | 8:19 p.m. and 9:24 p.m. (jets heard in vicinity) |
| | 9:45 p.m. (low rumbling heard) |
| 6/2/76 | 6:50 a.m. (strong signal) |
| | no visual contact — foggy |
| 6/10/76 | 3:00 p.m. booms heard in southern California |
| 6/11/76 | 7:00 a.m. |
| 6/17/76 | intermittent between 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. |
| 7/21/76 | 12:20 p.m. |
| 3/26/76 | 12:50 p.m. (strong continuous signal) |
| 9/12/76 | continuous between 6:03 p.m. to 6:17 p.m. |
| | 11:40 p.m. |
| 10/18/76 | 7:50 a.m. |
| 10/19/76 | 12:10 p.m. (seemed odd — woman outside walking dog apologized for disturbance) |
| 10/22/76 | 9:24 p.m. to 9:36 p.m. |
| 10/24/76 | 11:15 p.m. and again at 11:40 p.m. |
| 10/26/76 | |

There has been no disturbance since 10/26/76. Since that date, things have been very quiet as far as the detector is concerned. Please also note that there was no correlation between these apparent magnetic field disturbances and the cases investigated in this report. This is to be expected, since none of these cases occurred within four miles radius of the detectors location. A backup detector is in order and one is being built based on the magnetic field effect, but not subject to external vibrations and false readings like the K-1.

CONCLUSION:

If UFO's are interested in our civilization's technical advancements, then Ventura County is a likely candidate for surveillance. But the question arises — why now? For four years, since I have been here, nothing has occurred out of the ordinary. Why has there been such an intensification of activity in the last few months of this year? Maybe it is by chance, or maybe other factors are involved. Consider the following:

In Ventura County (see map), the following facilities are located and a good percentage of the population works for them:

1. Port Hueneme — the second largest port on the West Coast with the Seabee base located near by.
2. The Pacific Missile Range actively engaged in testing advanced missile systems.

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California

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3. The Rocketdyne Testing Area directly south of Simi Valley

4. Atomics International — Located northeast of Rocketdyne
Also shown on the map and under much controversy at the present time is the proposed site of a Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) port for the docking of Super-tankers from Alaska and a proposed Steel Mill. Both of these facilities could have a tremendous environmental impact on the county, and have undergone much discussion in the past few months. The exact location has not completely been decided upon.

Perhaps a few careful parallels can be drawn between the cases in this report and the locations of these facilities. Case VI occurred directly over Port Hueneme. Did the UFO's in this report scan this area and then swing off? Case I was apparently headed away from Pt. Mugu, where the Pacific Missile Range is located. The UFO in Case III was heading for the Rocketdyne Testing Area. Case IV was speeding away at low elevation from the Oxnard Air Force base, now closed, but nevertheless may have appeared attractive enough to investigate. Only Case II and V occurred in areas removed from facilities mentioned. Of course, there may have been other reasons not immediately apparent for their appearance in that area.

It it were not for the span of time that occurred between these cases, one could almost label this area as having a mini-flap. It has not been this active here for the last four years, and it would be instructive to learn if activity had increased anywhere else in the country during this time.

Ventura County is now quiet — extremely quiet. Since November 6th, 1976 when officer Johnson saw those eight objects fly in formation there hasn't even been a false alarm. The K-1 detector remains silent. Is it over? No, I think it is just the beginning. The door has been opened here, and time will tell what happens next.

Review

(Continued from Page Two)

back in 1970, according to Gordon Creighton's letter to *Flying Saucer Review* in that year's Sept. — Oct. issue. By publishing it now, however, Stanford was able to include a chapter on the activities and methods of his Project Starlight International, which is

"dedicated to instrumented monitoring of UFO hard data."

As Stanford admits, as a youth he sympathized with and associated with some of the contactees. I have read *Look Up*, a booklet he co-authored with his brother, Rex, in 1958, which tells of their mental contacts with the "space Brothers," and has sections on "Your Part in the Plan" and "Psychic Development." Stanford says he has learned from the mistakes of his youth and matured. Be that as it may, I think it is only fair to judge *Socorro Saucer* on its own merits, the same as Edward Condon's contributions in the fields of quantum mechanics and atomic and molecular spectra should be considered apart from his so-called *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects (and vice versa)*. My judgment of *Socorro Saucer* is that it is must reading for everyone interested in UFOs — and perhaps even more so for skeptics.

Richard W. Heiden
(August 28, 1976)

Yakima

(Continued from Page One)

object ascended into the sky.

Another episode occurred on October 30, 1976 at 8 p.m. PDT. Mrs. Sturm and another lady observed a large bright orange round ball of light at about 9 miles S.E. of Status Peak. The light was described as being above ground but below the horizon without any motion. It was visible for only a few seconds.

On November 1, 1976 at 7:30 PST there was another sighting 6 miles NNW of Status Peak by Mrs. Strum and another lady. This was in an area adjacent to Ft. Simcoe. A red round light ascended straight up into the sky and disappeared at a high rate of speed. Again on November 3, 1976, the same lady and a friend observed some 16 miles east of Status Lookout a bright white light which disappeared after moving parallel to Status Creek and US 97. Ranch hands and visitors at a cattle ranch along US 97 have often observes similar lights in this area about the same time each night.

The area encompassed by the Yakima Indian Reservation is certainly noted for mysterious and puzzling occurrences. It has been the location of previous unexplained night lights, humanoid sightings, and auto light malfunctions. All of the above mentioned sightings appear to have occurred within the boundaries of the reservation. Therefore, it is unlikely that they can be ascribed to activities originating in two important adjacent areas to the east. These are the US

Military Reservation Firing Range and the Hanford Works of the U.S. A.E.C. Reservation. Sightings of UFO's often have been recorded in the vicinity of Atomic Energy Commission installations. However, it cannot be ascertained at this time whether this is a factor in these latest sightings. Moreover, this is not the first time there has been a wave of UFO sightings on an Indian Reservation.

The 1890s "Flap"

By Jerry Mathers

(Cont'd from the Nov. Issue)

Next reports come from almost a thousand miles west in central Nebraska around Hastings. The Feb. 10 Juniata Herald said the craft floated about 500 feet up "and after standing nearly still for about 30 minutes it began to circle about, then took a northerly direction for about two miles, after which it returned to its starting place and sank into oblivion."

A few days later the airship was "standing still" several miles west of Hastings. At first, the Herald said, people thought it to be a star but after careful observation decided that the color of the light showed it to be "artificial." "It certainly must be illuminated by a powerful electric dynamo, for the light sent forth by it is wonderful."

On Feb. 17 the Herald reported "without joking" a very large light in the sky that "seems to be like an electric arc light with a glass dome over it, and floated high in the air, then sideways for a distance, then drop, then disappear and reappear some distance away."

Two hundred miles southwest of Hastings in the extreme corner of Nebraska near the village of Haigler the airship put on a nightly show for about two weeks.

Edna Campbell, 15, walking home from a rural schoolhouse, was astonished by a brilliant light that appeared about a mile away. The light darted forward, stopped, then darted forward again. Several times it circled at high rates of speed.

Edna and her family watched the show between 9 and 10 every night for two weeks: sometimes as many as six circuits, sometimes within a quarter mile.

Sightings were also reported at Cripple Creek, Colo., which might have been the same ship. But about the same time other reports were coming in from as far as Washington, D.C.

On Feb. 25 at Wymore in southern Nebraska about 100 persons saw the phenomenon. "As it approached us the light became so brilliant it dazzled our eyes," said one witness.

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"Flap"

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Throughout February and March sightings came from "reputable citizens" in Omaha, York, North Platte, Beatrice, Falls City and Kearney. It was as though the object was surveying the south half of Nebraska, an area of 35,000 square miles.

On March 28 the object decided to visit Kansas for a change, naturally picking the capital, Topeka. About 200 people saw it from the steps of the Capitol. Some people hustled off to cellars, fearing the world was coming to an end. Residents of northeast Kansas towns of Atchison, Hiawatha, Holton and Belleville observed the airship about the same time.

The next night a ship was reported at Omaha, 160 miles north. And the night following this, the ship (or was it the Cripple Creek craft?) visited Denver, 480 miles southwest of Omaha.

On April 5 at 9 p.m. the ship reappeared in Omaha "causing a sensation." The motorman and conductor of a streetcar watched the ship hover some 600 feet up. They described the object as about 90 feet long and cigar-shaped, with wings fore and aft. At the front end was a bright light, at the rear a red light.

For a few seconds the thing almost stopped. Then it sped up and disappeared.

Other people saw it. Said the Omaha Bee: "All descriptions tally in regard to lights, for all who were fortunate enough to get a glimpse of the thing which is causing so much conjecture, state that it carried two of them, and that they were red and white."

Initiation ceremonies at the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben, the most prominent of Omaha community clubs, had a special added attraction that night. Reported the Morning World-Herald, April 6:

"About 50 members of the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben were treated to the sight of the airship last evening, the sight being observed twice, and each time for space from five to eight minutes.

"About nine o'clock, while the initiation was in progress, the attention of the members was attracted by a bright light flashing past the west windows of the den. They immediately sprang up to the window and saw a luminary appearing at least 18 inches in diameter, the reflection from which passed along what appeared to be a steel body, the length of which could only be estimated at from 12 to 30 feet.

"The object was about three-quarters of a mile high and a little over a mile west of the den. A stampede was at once made for the south entrance, when the course of the ship was watched for some five or six minutes. Its course was due south

until it reached, so near as could be judged, about the southern limits of South Omaha, the distance from the den being covered in about three minutes." (That's about five miles.)

The World-Herald continues: "It then described a semicircle to the east, following that direction for about a mile, when it turned against the northeast wind and traveled in that direction about half a mile. It then turned east, after some vacillations, and was lost behind a bank of clouds.

"After the initiation, while waiting for the cars, they saw the ship again."

Two days later the paper said "a thousand people in Omaha, more or less, have seen the airship, or rather the lights attached to the airship." The World-Herald then quoted Father Rigge, professor of astronomy at Creighton College (now University) as saying:

"I am satisfied in my own mind that the alleged ship seen about a month ago was the planet Venus... The last airship was undoubtedly a balloon which some wag had sent up to enjoy the fun!"

Sound familiar to present-day "scientific explanations"? A Venus 90 feet long with lights on each end which made circles, stopped and started, and could go in any direction certainly should have brought the good astronomer out at night with his telescope.

The World-Herald reported many prominent men saw the airship and no doubt they had their private opinion of scientists after that remarkable statement that completely ignored the observations.

The airship headed east apparently. On April 8 it was seen at Cedar Rapids, Ia., 250 miles from Omaha, at 9 p.m. At 10 p.m. the same night a ship was spotted at Northwood, Ia., near the Minnesota line about 150 miles northwest of Cedar Rapids.

On April 10-11 an airship was reported at various towns in eastern Iowa - Ottumwa at 7:25 p.m. April 10, Eldon at 7:40 15 miles away; and also Reinbeck, Shell, and Waterloo.

It is possible this same ship visited Kansas City and Chicago. It was seen by many around Kansas City April 1 pausing to shoot down a brilliant white searchlight beam. Kansas City is 500 miles east of Denver and 200 south of Omaha where it had been seen previous nights.

The Chicago sighting was on the night of April 9 from 8 p.m. until 2 the next morning. Said the New York Herald: "Thousands of amazed persons declared that the lights seen in the northwest were those of an airship, or some floating object, miles above the earth... Some declared that they could distinguish two cigar-shaped objects and great wings."

Two giant searchlights were also mentioned by Chicago witnesses.

Anyway, the ship or ships were back in Nebraska April 12. The sighting

was - coincidentally? - at Ashland, which in 1967 was the site of the sensational Patrolman Schirmer contactee case. The description in the Ashland Gazette of April 16 reported what a lady saw the previous Sunday night:

"Something quite small... about the size of an ordinary room. It appeared not far from the ground and was hovering over the western part of town. Its flight was rapid and twice it moved to the north, twice it flashed its brilliant light and shot beyond its range of vision."

The night after, the ship was observed at Deadwood, S.D., 450 northwest of Ashland and at Harrison, Neb., 130 miles south of Deadwood. The "airship of gigantic dimensions" was seen by lawyers, jurors and witnesses who were attending the spring term of district court.

The Omaha World-Herald said that when discovered, it was "sailing in a southeasterly direction at what seemed to be an extraordinary speed when suddenly, to the astonishment of all, it seemed to slacken its speed and careen around in a circle, and then came to a stop and hung motionless as if suspended by a rope for several minutes."

Witnesses said the ship had different colored lights which alternated from white to red, blue and green. Then extremely bright lights shot from either side of the craft and it left.

The same or another ship was spotted "dangerously close" to the Missouri River at Decatur, Neb., which is 400 miles east of Harrison, the same night. It was the second sighting at Decatur.

The following night, April 14, the airship was seen at Plainview, Neb., 80 miles west of Decatur, and also at Red Cloud and Oak, Neb., 160 miles south of Plainview. And sightings came from 140 miles north of Plainview at Canton and Woonsocket, S.D.

The Plainview sighting was described thus in the Omaha World-Herald: "Sioux City, Ia. - Station agent Murphy of the Pacific Short Line Railroad wired today from Plainview, Neb., to his superior, Train Dispatcher Jackson of this place, that the airship passed over that place at 9 o'clock last night. It was in view five minutes, bore two lights and looked like an immense cigar. The whole town turned out to view the phenomenon."

The ensuing night reports came from Columbus, Silver Creek and Clarks in east-central Nebraska, and from Underwood, Ia., just east of Omaha and 90 miles east of Columbus.

The next night reports came from Villisca, Ia., 70 miles southeast of Underwood, and from Clay Center, Neb. 180 miles southwest of Columbus and 275 miles west of the Villisca sighting.

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