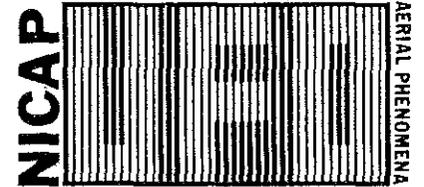


UFO INVESTIGATOR



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Case Unreported Since 1967

"Hidden Case" Reported From Ohio

A multiple witness sighting of five objects flying in formation at low altitude has recently come to light, following a reluctant decision by one of the witnesses to tell her story in hopes of finding a sympathetic party who could give her a logical explanation for the experience.

"Why now after so many years have I bothered to go through this again?" asked the woman in a letter to NICAP. "What a pity for so many people like myself, who are not part of 'occultist' flying saucer clubs or sensationalists trying to get publicity . . . that we are not to be believed, that we must face such a lonely experience. How do people deal with it? How do I?"

The woman, who now lives in Washington, D.C., said she had gone to a local library to find out if other people had reported experiences similar to her own. There she found a copy of NICAP's *The UFO Evidence*, which prompted her to contact NICAP to report her observation.

Here is the story she told:

"It was shortly after 11 p.m. one evening in July or August, 1967. I was attending graduate school that summer at Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, having completed two years in the doctoral program in philosophy . . . My companion that evening was a Chinese

student at Case Institute of Technology who had just completed his Ph.D. in physics and was leaving to assume a teaching position at Boston University.

"We were driving in my car (I was at the wheel) on Cedar Road, not far from the city of Cleveland. I am unable to remember the township we were passing through at the time . . . We were heading back toward Cleveland, away from Chagrin Falls. There were very few cars on the road that evening. This part of Cedar Road, out in a country-like area, is not well traveled at night.

"The windows of the car were open, the radio was playing, my companion and I were talking. At some point I noticed ahead, to my left and coming along the opposite side of the road and in the opposite direction, a very bright light. I still had not focused my mind on the light. It seemed like the light one would see from an approaching train.

"I continued talking with my companion but gradually my attention became more focused on this approaching light. It occurred to me suddenly that there are no railroad tracks out there. As the light came lower and closer I saw that it was 4 or 5 distinct objects with a blue-white luminous glow and luminous trail of light

(See Hidden Case, page 4)

N. Z. Mystery Ball Is Identified

The "flying saucer" that dropped a strange metal ball over New Zealand last summer turns out to have been made in Russia.

NICAP member H. H. Fulton, who lives in New Zealand, reports that government officials have identified the ball as a component from one of the Soviet Cosmos satellites.

The 13-pound metal sphere was found in a field near the town of Ashburton and recovered by a local police officer. News of the find was reported in the United States last August by a tabloid called *Midnight*, which alleged that "Experts say this ball fell from a UFO." The paper quoted a New Zealand metallurgist who had examined the ball as saying, "If there's anything on Earth right now that comes from another planet, this object

could be it. It seems to be made from a metal that bears no resemblance to anything known to man."

The ball measured 16 inches in diameter and exhibited a ragged hole in one side.



MESSAGE TO NICAP MEMBERS

by
John L. Acuff, President

As we embark on a New Year, a report to NICAP's most important asset — the individual members — on the activities of 1972 is desirable.

As you know, NICAP has two closely related corporate functions. These functions are: conducting research on aerial phenomena, with the subsequent reporting of findings, and the business aspects of maintaining and expanding the corporation so that members may be served and research conducted.

During 1972 NICAP made important strides in establishing new or better working relationships with scientists throughout the world. These relationships will result in an exchange of information and improved analysis of data. The format for NICAP's computer study (Project ACCESS) is nearing completion. Plans have been made to secure donated computer time and the project will be implemented as soon as money is available to convert reported data into a machine useable form.

We are in the process of restructuring and expanding NICAP's investigative Subcommittees to improve both the quantity and quality of sighting analysis. The day to day research continues to improve. While on the subject of research, I would like to take this opportunity to make mention of NICAP's philosophy. When a case comes to our attention we approach the investigation with an open mind. If the data lead our investigators to classify the case as a good or positive one, this is how it is entered in our files and reported to members. If the investigation shows that it is a poor or negative case, this is how it is entered in our files and reported to our members.

In disseminating information to the members we try to be factual and report fully only on those cases that have personally been investigated by NICAP. Since the news media are not reporting sightings with the same frequency as in the past, we attempt to fill this void with the "Sighting Advisory," even though many of these

(See Message, page 4)

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

By Stuart Nixon

Human Memory: Is It The Weakest Link?

Part Two of a Two-Part Series

Part of the problem in assessing a UFO report is trying to decide how reliable the witness's memory is. Any honest recognition of the many factors that can interfere with human memory is enough to make a conscientious UFO investigator throw up his hands in despair and turn to other pursuits that offer fewer frustrations.

One reason memory is such a problem is that UFO encounters are *spontaneous* events. Like traffic accidents and crimes, they happen without warning to people who do not know their observational powers are about to be tested. While the sighting is occurring, the natural center of interest is the UFO itself, not the environment of the observation or the sequence of events. Only in retrospect, when the experience is just one more datum in the memory, do these other factors become important. This requires the witness to reconstruct in his mind a complex series of details he may have only been vaguely aware of at the time of the sighting. There is, after all, no way he can know the kinds of information the investigator will later need to *develop a meaningful picture of what happened*. Even followers of the UFO subject who make sightings do not always remember to take note of all relevant factors.

This is not to say that all reports from human observers are automatically in error. It is only to caution that from the investigator's point of view, there can be any number of valid reasons why a report should not be taken at face value.

One solution to the problem of memory is to eliminate the human witness altogether and depend on instruments for collection of data. Although this is a popular idea that often turns up in magazine articles, it has the serious drawback of removing what may be the key to the entire puzzle: man himself. Many of the best "hard-core" cases are chance encounters under circumstances where instruments would never likely be in operation. A good example is a moving vehicle on a rural road. Without the "random sensors" of human observers, the phenomenon might virtually disappear from public view. It is also important to recognize, however grudgingly, that an instrumented approach presupposes that the strangeness in UFO reports is a physical rather than psychological fact. Although many researchers are willing to make this assumption, a completely scientific approach must allow for the opposite possibility.

If science is to accept testimony as the basis of its investigation, the obvious step is to take as many precautions as possible to protect a witness from those influences

that can affect his memory. From the point of view of the UFO enthusiast, the price of doing this may be depressingly high, since it will require a departure from the usual style of investigating cases and reporting on them to the public.

The reason for this gets back to human nature and the problem of story escalation. The number one enemy of good investigation is publicity. One of the worst things a witness can do while his memory is still fresh is talk about his experience with all the different people who are curious about it, such as neighbors and news reporters. Even discussing it with other witnesses can alter the memory beyond restoration.

This difficulty arises partly from the fundamentals of human psychology and partly from the experience itself. By definition, a UFO is an anomaly; it is not normally experienced and has no immediate explanation. In most UFO cases, the witness comes to the decision he is observing something extraordinary only after first trying to account for it in conventional terms but failing. This puts him in the position of having made the judgment that something that shouldn't have happened did. The moment he repeats the experience to someone else, he calls into question not only his own powers of observation but his ability to judge sense experience. In other words, having said he saw a UFO (even if he doesn't actually call it that), he is virtually committed to that belief, even if he has some doubt about it or is confronted with evidence to the contrary. The alternative is to admit he made a mistake and got excited about nothing.

In NICAP's experience, many witnesses take great pains to point out they are not jumping to conclusions but simply want to find out what they saw. Unfortunately, this hardly ever turns out to be the case. The act of reporting the experience becomes—unconsciously—the act of affirming the experience as an event worthy of reporting. This puts the witness on the defensive and makes him suspicious of any suggestion that he erred in his observation.

All of us, as human beings, can understand this feeling and sympathize with it, but it is important to recognize its implications for the investigator, who must somehow avoid any similar belief on his own part until he can get all the information he needs to evaluate the report.

Almost always, the first person a witness talks to after a sighting is a close relative or friends, or another witness. If this party is sympathetic, as he usually is, the witness's memory tends to be reinforced, since at least one other person

now shares the view the witness saw something strange. If the reaction is not sympathetic, the memory may be reinforced anyway, since the witness may feel his report is being judged unfairly or prematurely. Either way, he develops an attitude toward his experience that can affect the details he remembers and the way he answers questions.

For this reason, the following guidelines might be useful in contacting people who have reported sightings:

1. If he has not already done so, the witness should write his experience down in his own words, without interference from anyone else, especially the investigator. If he can do this before discussing the experience with other witnesses or other interested parties, all the better.

2. Before deciding to report the experience to outside authorities or the news media, the witness should ask whether it seems as unusual in retrospect as it did when it happened. He should be honest with himself about his own abilities of observation and his knowledge of the many phenomena that can appear in the sky. If common sense suggests a reasonable explanation for the experience, he should consider whether he might be letting an awareness of the UFO subject influence his opinion of what he saw.

3. If the sighting involves a close approach or landing, no attempt should be made to publicize the experience until a competent investigator has examined the site and collected all necessary data. It only takes one curiosity seeker or practical joker to ruin a site for scientific study.

4. In deciding where to report the sighting, the witness should keep in mind that not everyone who reads books on UFOs or gives talks on the subject is a qualified researcher. A university scientist might be a better person to report to than the head of the local UFO club.

5. Publicity, at best, is a mixed blessing. If a witness decides to talk with news reporters or appear on the radio, he may be starting a chain of events he cannot stop. The greatest danger is that he will eventually tell his story so many times, he will cease to remember what actually happened.

Other guidelines could be added to these and additional procedures developed to improve data collection. The important point is that human memory is going to worsen as a problem in UFO investigation unless the research community comes to grips with it. After 25 years of listening to people tell their stories, the time for this step would appear to be overdue.

Boston University Holds Symposium**Panelists Ponder Contact With Aliens**

Although expressing a minority viewpoint, two panelists attending a symposium on life beyond Earth held at Boston University, Nov. 18, agreed with a viewpoint expressed earlier in a May 1972 *UFO Investigator* article which cautioned that contact with alien worlds could prove fatal for the human race.

The Boston University symposium, titled "Life Beyond Earth and the Mind of Man," was sponsored by the university's department of astronomy and NASA, and was moderated by BU astronomer Richard Berenzen.

Appearing on the panel were Cornell University astronomer Carl Sagan, Harvard's Nobel Prize-winning biologist George Wald, anthropologist Ashley Montagu, Harvard theologian Krister Stendahl, and MIT physicist Philip Morrison.

While all five panelists agreed the probability was high for the existence of extraterrestrial intelligent life, two of them, Wald and Montagu, expressed extremely negative views regarding the advisability of establishing such contact.

Referring to communication between Earth and more advanced technologies elsewhere, biologist Wald declared the prospect of such contact was "a little terrifying to me." Contact with other worlds, he noted, could prove "a nightmare" and could mean the downfall of the human race as we know it.

A similar viewpoint was expressed in NICAP's May article titled "Cosmic Isolationism — Scientists Ponder the Alternatives."

In that article, Manchester University Professor Z. Kopal noted, ". . . should we ever hear that 'space phone' ringing in the form of observational evidence which may admit of no other explanation, for God's sake let us not answer; but rather make ourselves as inconspicuous as we can to avoid attracting attention."

MAN IS DANGEROUS

Echoing Wald's negative views, but based on his own knowledge of modern man's encounters with primitive cultures on the Earth, anthropologist Montagu argued with other panelists that "Man is the most dangerous creature on earth . . . we have destroyed many civilizations here on earth we could have learned from because we have approached them with the idea we are a superior culture. . . we are destroying them now.

"We need to communicate successfully with ourselves first," Montagu said, "before we can communicate with 'beyond-earthers'. . . To prepare ourselves (for the discovery of extraterrestrial intelligence), we must begin on a program of rehabilitation by leading loving and creative lives."

Panelist Sagan, responding to Wald and Montagu, said he was not concerned either that the Earth would morally contaminate another civilization or that it would exploit the Earth.

He said it would have to be at least our equal to have the radio technology to reach us. "So we would be the low man on the exploitation totem. I cannot get very exercised about our destroying them." On the other hand, Sagan noted, he was not worried about danger to the Earth because it is insulated by the "cosmic quarantine" of the enormous distances between the stars.

During an animated exchange between panelists and later with members of an audience estimated at more than 500, Sagan and Wald carried on a running debate revolving about human versus technological priorities. Sagan reiterated his belief that extraterrestrial contact should not be feared and that it would have a positive influence on mankind.

The question of UFOs was not raised by either panel members or the audience.

South African Scientists Examine UFO Landing Site

Extensive testing of soil samples taken from an alleged UFO landing site in Fort Beaufort, South Africa (*UFO Investigator*, Aug. 1972), has proved negative, according to scientists from South Africa's National Physics Research Laboratory (NPRL).

The tests, according to published accounts, revealed nothing to indicate that any strange object had been in contact with the samples taken from the site.

"If a foreign object did come into contact with one of the samples, it certainly did so without disturbing its composition in any way," said one analyst. "We found nothing to indicate the presence of a rocket or any high temperature object having been close to the ground," he added.

The tests were exhaustive, according to NPRL officials, and included test for radioactivity, humidity, organic content, and acidity. The tests were conducted using samples taken from both the alleged landing spot and another location three meters away.

SIGHTING ADVISORY

Preliminary information on new reports. Details and evaluations will be published when available.

Dec. 13, 1972 — West Willington, Conn. Three adults and one teenager reported a brightly lit UFO moving from west to east approximately 8 p.m. Witnesses said the UFO, when first observed, appeared simply as a "bright light." Later, however, as it approached their location, the light appeared more as a solid object with rotating lights. The object, according to one of the witnesses, appeared to have a "round" structure on top and "illuminated holes" beneath it. The incident was reported to the state police, but they expressed no interest in the sighting.

Dec. 7, 1972 — Port Elizabeth, N.J. A husband and wife, while driving northeast of Port Elizabeth, reported observing a "cylindrical white light," about the size of a small airplane, crash into a heavily wooded area. The light was first observed flying high above the highway ahead of the couple. State police, investigating the incident, reported finding what one officer described as a "crash site" — a cleared area, two feet in diameter, devoid of all vegetation, with a round hole in the center approximately two inches wide and four inches deep.

Nov. 19, 1972 — Albuquerque, N.M. Several local citizens reported several UFOs flying above the city. One witness, a college professor, said he observed "seven lights, yellowish in color, passing overhead." The lights, according to the professor, did not blink and were relatively close to the ground as they moved in a northerly direction. Officials at both the FAA and at nearby Kirkland Air Force Base said they received numerous calls regarding "lights" but could offer no explanation for the sightings.

Oct. 9, 1972 — Vincennes, Ind. Several local residents reported sighting a "silvery, blimp-shaped object" high in the sky over Knox County at approximately 10 p.m. One witness reported to local police that a blimp-shaped object was hovering near her home. Police officers said they checked with a nearby resident who also confirmed the sighting. All witnesses, according to a local newspaper story, gave similar descriptions of the object's shape.

Oct. 5, 1972 — Verdugo City, Calif. A woman in Verdugo City, which is near Glendale, was outside her home around 7 p.m. when she observed "three, round-red circular rings moving from north to south." The UFOs, according to the witness, were flying low and appeared as "three red-rimmed discs."

newsnotes

JAPANESE RESEARCHER LAMENTS CONTACTEE BOOK

The Philippine magazine *Asia* recently quoted a Japanese UFO investigator as saying he regrets the day the first writings of the late "contactee" George Adamski appeared in Japan. "The book was a shock," said Kinichi Arai, director of the now inactive Japan UFO Research Association, which once had 1000 members. "It was a best seller, and it gave the impetus to our organization. More than 300 joined us after reading the book. . . . Then we found out it was not true, and many of our members left us again." The 48-year-old Arai added, "It was the only book on UFOs available in Japan at that time. Everyone had been enjoying the mystery of flying saucers. But after reading it, people didn't believe it and began to call us in our association 'crazy.' It was very bad that such a book. . . . was translated and published in Japan."

CORNELL BOOK DUE IN FEBRUARY

The long delayed book on UFOs from Cornell University Press (*UFO Investigator*, July 1971) is now set for publication next month. Originally called *The Physics and Psychology of UFOs*, the book has been titled *UFOs: A Scientific Debate* and is edited by two scientists associated with the UFO subject: astronomers Dr. Carl Sagan and Dr. Thornton Page. Most of the book is devoted to papers given at the 1969 Symposium on UFOs sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Some new material is offered, including a letter from participants in the symposium to the Air Force, urging that all official UFO files be preserved for open study. NICAP had planned to offer the book to its members but decided against the idea.

Message

(Continued from page 1)

cases have not been investigated to our satisfaction.

NICAP continues to grow and maintain itself as a viable organization. The 1972 certified audit will be summarized in the *UFO INVESTIGATOR* as soon as it is available. Our internal review shows that we achieved the budgeted income, operating within budgeted expenses and completed the year in a profitable position.

Your comments on NICAP's activities, philosophy and direction are always welcome. This is your organization and I invite you to contact us with the assurance that your comments will be considered and acted upon, if possible.



MEMOS
FOR
MEMBERS

CALENDAR IS SUCCESS

Credit for NICAP's special calendar, "The Year of the UFO," which has won enthusiastic approval from NICAP members, goes to long-time NICAP staffer and contributor Isabel Davis. Miss Davis put in long hours compiling and checking information for each of the calendar's six editions. We sincerely appreciate her help.

AID ON FAA CASE

A word of thanks to author Philip Klass for his help in securing data on the Missouri sighting that has been evaluated as a daylight meteor (*UFO Investigator*, Sept. 72). He assisted NICAP with information on the American Airlines flight from which the meteor was observed.

Hidden Case

(Continued from page 1)

protruding from each object. They were oval-shaped, flying at exact intervals, as though in a formation.

"The pattern was in a V-shape, with one of the objects apparently in the leading position. They were exactly parallel to the road, spaced at exact intervals from each other all of the time that we were able to observe them, and were flying directly above the trees. From the position of the trees along Cedar Road we later estimated that they were flying about 50 feet from the ground and about 50 feet from the road. There was no sound. There were no effects on the car or on us.

"At the moment that they were directly alongside of the car I blurted out "Do you see it?" I turned to my companion and he was also stunned. In discussing it afterwards he said that he had also noticed it earlier when it just appeared as a single light in the distance but, like myself, had not focused his attention on it until the thing was about alongside of us and could be clearly discerned as 4 or 5 distinct objects. (In later discussions all of our impressions matched exactly.)

"I was so caught up in the sight that I was driving with my complete attention on it, not even watching the road for about 15-20 seconds as it came alongside us, to my left. What impressed me the most was the kind of motion. So smooth, almost gliding. No jerking, an evenness that no machine could achieve. It reminded me of the motion of a toy boat, I

NICAP AGENT MISQUOTED

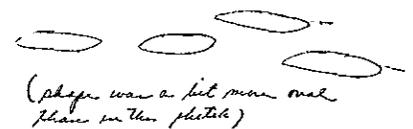
NICAP'S Los Angeles Subcommittee reports it was misquoted in news accounts of the Lucerne Valley, California, sighting of November 13, 1971 (*UFO Investigator*, Oct. 72). One account quoted a Subcommittee spokesman as expressing early optimism that the case would prove to be authentic. No such statement was made, advises the Subcommittee, in keeping with NICAP policy to refrain from premature opinions on cases still under investigation. The error apparently was due in part to a California reporter's willingness to let one of the witnesses write part of the news story.

BUFORA BOOKLET OUT

The British UFO Research Association (BUFORA) is offering a new booklet entitled "A Guide to the UFO Phenomenon." Released concurrently with publication of Dr. Allen Hynek's new book in England, the 17-page booklet covers general aspects of the UFO subject. For information on how to obtain the guide, write BUFORA at 6 Cairn Avenue, London W. 5, England.

had once seen on a lake, that was operated by remote control by a child on shore.

"The objects had no distinguishable parts or markings. They were simply oval shaped and luminous with light trails streaking behind them. Something like this:



"The whole sighting was perhaps one minute. We watched as it passed us and then could no longer be seen behind the trees. I was driving at approx. 40 mph. and as far as I know continued at that speed the whole time. It seemed that they were traveling about twice as fast, but of course they were passing in the opposite direction from us. . . . I would guess that each object was about the size of a car. . .

"Our first reaction was to "do something about it," so we rode on for a few minutes until we came to a gas station on our side of the road. There was nothing on the road between the point of the sighting and that gas station. We stopped at the gas station, asked the attendant if he had seen anything unusual. He said he hadn't and we called the police. The whole conversation was rather unfortunate. The police were over-polite, said there were no other reports. My companion and I were nervous and it was difficult enough for him to communicate in his Chinese accent. I took the phone then, gave our names, repeated the story, but they seemed rather uninterested."