

UFO INVESTIGATOR



NICAP, 5012 Del Ray Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20014, (301) 654-8091

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MORE SIGHTINGS IN WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAINS

The February issue of the UFO Investigator carried a report on the 5 December 1979 sighting of many night lights in the area of Ansted, West Virginia. In this issue we continue with reports of other sightings in the Ansted area during this period.

Two nights after the "mother ship" dropped 18 lights (see the February issue) a neighbor phoned Mrs. Norma White to announce: "They're back again." It was 7 December 1979, about 5:40 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. The sun had set behind the mountains but the sky was still light. Mrs. White went 600 feet north to her neighbor's house and together they saw to the west in the clear sky three white-silver dots of light. The dots made the irregular up-down and side-to-side movements that the 18 lights had made two nights before. They stayed within an area the size of a hand held at arm's length, about 40 degrees above the horizon.

Mrs White and several of the neighbors returned to her restaurant. A group of others had already gathered there. There were about 15 persons in all. By now the sky was dark and the three "zig-zagging" lights that were first seen were no longer visible. But, to the southeast the observers saw two yellow lights above the ridge line about 30 degrees above the horizon. The lights were the color of daffodil flowers. They were a little larger than the size of a pin head held at arm's length. They made no sound, did not blink and were moving steadily, without erratic motions.

Lights Close Together

At first, the yellow lights were close together and moved at the same speed. As they moved to the south, they descended below and in front of the ridge line. One of the yellow lights came toward the observers until it was next to a brick house about 400 feet away. The sole occupant of the house is an old man who lives by himself. The next day he said that he was asleep at the time the yellow light approached and did not see or hear anything.

The close yellow light then moved away from the observers and rejoined the other, waiting, yellow light. But they now had a wider separation from each other than before. Together, the two yellow lights moved slowly and steadily from south to the west. They continued their slow movement, always visible above the ridge line, from west to north and around to due east.

The two yellow lights stood still in this position for several minutes. Then, one disappeared straight up at great speed. A minute later the remaining light disappeared upward in the same way. It had taken more than 15 minutes for the two yellow lights to make their slow circuit of the town.

Another, Separate, Sighting

There was another, separate, sighting near Ansted on the same night, 7 December 1979. But the story did not come to light for several more days. A salesman who travels in the Ansted, Oak Hill, Beckley, W. Va. area (and who does not want to be identified) was driving home after dark, early in the evening. About three miles east of Ansted he passed along a straight and level stretch of road. He said the woods there were "full of lights." From his description, the lights were of the "flash bulb" variety.

As he drove along this stretch of road the car began to lose speed. The engine ran erratically and lost power even though he had pushed the gas pedal nearly to the floor. He checked the car instruments for signs of trouble but noticed only that the second hand on the electronic clock had stopped moving. When he passed beyond the woods where the lights were seen the engine returned to normal and the car quickly accelerated to 80 m.p.h. before he could ease up on the gas pedal. Also, the second hand of the clock began moving again. He said that nothing would have persuaded him to go back and investigate the lights.

Great Horned Owl

Several nights later, on 9 December 1979, Mrs. White and her children saw an estimated group of six of the "flash bulb" type lights in the trees to the north, below the ridge line. They were dancing back and forth among the trees. The way they disappeared was not observed. But apparently the lights disturbed a Great Horned Owl that lived in that area of the woods. Almost every day for the next three weeks an owl could be seen, 1,000 feet or more from the woods, perched on the cross arm of an advertising sign which is ten feet from U.S. Route 60 the most heavily traveled road in the area. A Keeper of the Birdhouse at the National Zoo in Washington, D. C. says that it is unusual for an owl to perch repeatedly so close to a main road in daylight and especially so in December.

The NICAP representative who investigated these sightings also talked with other businessmen in the town. One was asked if he had seen any of the lights that the others had talked about. He replied, in a disapproving way, that over the years he had seen many airplanes but never any of the UFO lights. He said he thought what the people were seeing were airplanes.

Gas Station Operator

The operator of a garage and gas station in Ansted (who does not want his name used) told of his experience. Two or three days before the "big sighting" of 5 December he was driving home in the dark after work. About 8 miles southeast of Ansted his eye was caught by "a big red light in the sky, bigger than a star. It was standing still, high in the sky. Around it were six or seven green lights that were moving in a jerky pattern." He continued to glance up at the lights for about a minute. But since he was late for dinner he did not stop to look at the lights further.

A very conservative and well respected businessman in Ansted had a sighting in early December. It was so unlike anything he had ever seen before that he would not discuss it with strangers or with many of the town people for fear of ridicule. But he did tell a trusted friend. He and his wife were driving on a road up a hill about 2 miles west of Ansted. In the sky at the top of the hill was a single, stationary white light which was bigger and brighter than any star he had ever seen. He stopped the car and he and his wife watched it for ten minutes. It did not move, change size or color. They are both convinced that they really did see something, but they have no idea what they saw.

Lights for Next Six Weeks

The White family says that for the next six weeks following the 5 December sighting, until about 12-14 January 1980, night lights could be seen around Ansted three and four times a week. By then, the night lights were such a familiar phenomenon that nobody kept an exact count of the date and times they were seen. During this period they saw the familiar red, red-white, white lights as well as the "flash bulb" lights and yellow ones.

The lights continued to make their darting, irregular movements as well as long, slow movements across the sky. The lights were generally seen in the period from 6:00 p.m. when it got dark, to 10:00 p.m. In general the "flash bulb" lights and the red, red-white, white lights were seen during the earlier hours of the night and the yellow lights were seen during the later hours. The yellow lights were never seen at the same time as the red, red-white, white ones but were occasionally seen later on the same nights.

The people of Ansted regularly see commercial jets in the area. They identify them by engine noise, the straight flight path, the short time they are seen, and by their flashing anti-collision lights. There is one particular jet that goes past at high altitude about three times a week around 10:00 p.m. It flies from southwest to northeast. The people of Ansted do not think the night lights they have been seeing are airplanes.

NIGHT SIGHTING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

A 22 year old college student reports seeing two lighted UFOs over his home town in southern New Hampshire. On Thursday, 6 March 1980, Kevin Riley was walking along a street near his home in the residential area of Hudson, N.H., a suburb just east of the Merrimack River from Nashua. It was 8:35 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. The sky was clear and many stars were visible but the moon had not yet risen. Riley happened to look to the north and saw lights hovering in the sky at about 20 degrees above the horizon.

He describes the object as about the size of a 25 cent piece (1 inch or 2.5 cm.) held at arm's length. It was circular on the bottom. At the top there was a row of blue-green lights that rotated around the verticle axis of the object. At the very top there was a flashing red light. Riley says that the object he saw did not look like any airplane or helicopter he has ever seen. Riley says that the object did not cause any electrical interference, did not cause any reaction by animals or birds and left no physical evidence of having been in the area. During the time it was in sight, the object produced a low, continuous hum.

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Hovered, Then Drifted

The first object continued to hover for several minutes in the area where Riley first saw it. Then it began to move at what Riley calls a slow drifting speed. The object moved to the east for a distance of several city blocks, then slowly turned 180 degrees and disappeared to the west in the direction of Nashua. As the object moved off, the blue-green lights disappeared but the flashing red light could still be seen.

While the first object was still hovering, Riley saw a second object, smaller than the first. It was not seen as clearly as the first but seemed to carry flashing red lights. The second object approached from the north, crossed the residential area of town and disappeared to the east. It moved faster than the first object, at about the speed of a private airplane. Riley then returned to his home.

At 9:15 p.m. while he was in his yard Riley saw the second object return. It came from the east, passed above his house, and disappeared to the west. When it was over his house the object appeared to be circular with four flashing red lights on the bottom. Riley phoned the local police but they had no other reports of the two objects.

This case was investigated by long-time NICAP member H. James Freedman who is a NICAP Regional Investigator. Freedman lives in Nashua. He interviewed Riley the day after the sighting report was received. Freedman notes that it is difficult to evaluate the sighting because no one else has reported it to either the police or the newspapers. However, Freedman states that he could find no discrepancies in Riley's story. He also notes that Riley seems to be a responsible person who is in no way interested in any publicity that might come from the sighting. Freedman concludes that in the absence of additional information on the sighting it will have to stand on its own merit.

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