

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

The world's most baffling UFO stories

Throughout man's history, unidentified flying objects — UFOs — have captured man's imagination, dazzling him with their mystery, speed and often incredible beauty. During the next five weeks, **The NEWS** will bring you the stories of five of the most important and fascinating UFO cases of all time. The facts were compiled by UFO expert Ronald D. Story in his latest book, "UFOs and the Limits of Science" (William Morrow and Co., Inc. \$12.95).

By **RONALD D. STORY**

A routine Army helicopter flight became an unforgettable close encounter in the skies. At a height of 1,200 feet, four Army aviators suddenly found they were on a frightening collision course with a speeding UFO that stopped dead in front of them.

The young pilot who was flying the chopper yelled that he had lost control of his aircraft — the pull of the large, metallic flying saucer was too strong.

It was 11 p.m. on Oct. 18, 1973 and the Army reserve helicopter was halfway between Columbus, Ohio, and its destination, Cleveland.

Captain Lawrence J. Coyne was in command. First Lt. Arigo Jezzi was at the controls. Sgt. John Healey, flight medic, sat behind him next to crew chief Robert Yanacsek.

They were flying at 90 miles an hour when Yanacsek spotted a curious red light to the east. Thinking it was a warning light on top of a radio or TV tower or a distant airplane, he watched for a minute or so before telling Coyne.

Thirty seconds later, Yanacsek sensed danger — the light was headed straight for them on a direct collision course. It was moving at about 700 miles an hour.

Coyne grabbed the controls to try to take the chopper down.

Another spine-tingling minute passed. The men were now below the object and they saw it clearly.

"This thing came out of nowhere and just stopped," Yanacsek said later. "It was like the hull of a dark submarine. It just stopped and I mean stopped, for maybe 10 or 12 seconds.

"I really didn't expect us to collide because the object was obviously in control of the situation. The edges were sharp — it was an exceedingly bright, starry night and the solid part of it blotted out the stars right behind it in an oval shape."

The red light which they had identified earlier could now be seen clearly — it was the nose of the domed cylinder. At the back was a white light and under that, a green light.

Everything in the cockpit turned green — the stream of green light from the hovering craft above was so strong.

The magnetic compass of the helicopter spun wildly, and as Coyne struggled to bring the chopper lower, it suddenly climbed 1,000 feet a minute — a rate of climb he couldn't control.

"The helicopter seemed to

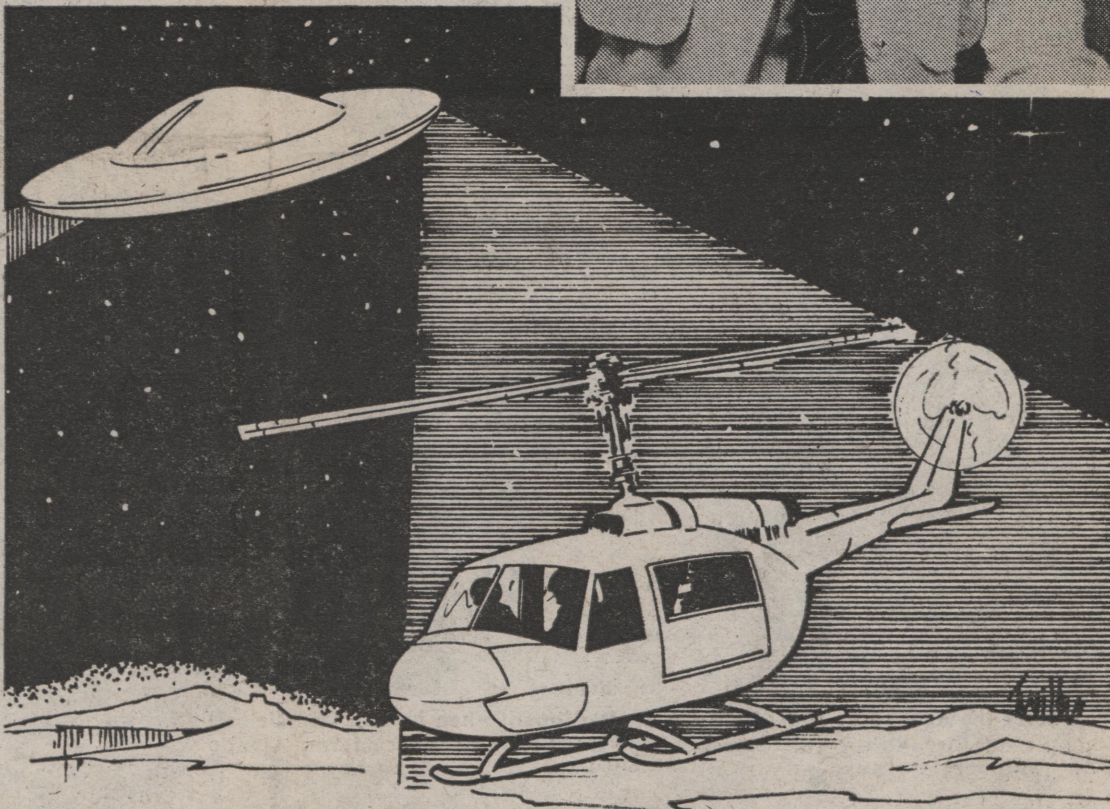
bump," Coyne said later, "like we hit turbulence. But the thing was already way to the west. It was already in the Mansfield area when we began to settle."

When the crew finally landed at Cleveland, each member filed a report with the FAA of their strange encounter, but officials could find no reasonable explanation for the sighting and the near collision.

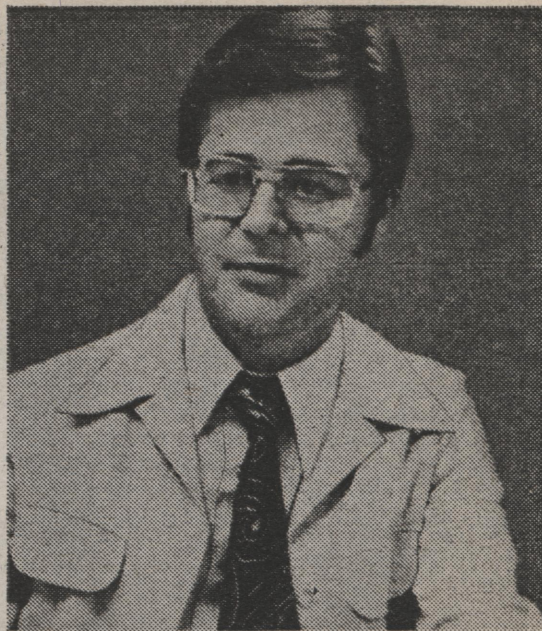
The entire encounter had lasted between four and five minutes.

Science writer James Oberg called the case "truly spectacular and unexplainable . . . something that behaved just like an alien spaceship might be expected to behave was reported by four credible witnesses.

"The Coyne UFO flies on, one of the best on record."



Ufologist Ronald D. Story, top, interviewed the four Army aviators who had a frightening brush with a UFO. An artist's impression of the incident, above, is based on their story.



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