

OCT. 29, 1989
YOUNGSTOWN
VINDICATOR

COUB-1

Sightings of unusual craft have Okla.-Kan. folks abuzz

By Matthew Schofield

The Kansas City Star

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WELCH, Okla. — Whatever they were, the two 9-foot, green, glowing, thin beings that may or may not have had heads certainly weren't Oklahomans.

The England family — out driving when they say the things pop from a round object that decidedly was not a car — got mighty worried about that.

"We were driving down this gravel road out south and this round thing with two red lights was blocking our way," said Shirley England, the mother. "Then these green, glowing things popped out. Me, Debbie, John, Sarah, the baby and a neighbor girl, we all saw it. I don't know what it was, but we're all pretty jumpy around here now."

The Englands are not alone. Between Oct. 8 and Oct. 16, more than 100 people in

northeastern Oklahoma and southeastern Kansas reported seeing white, red, yellow, and green or blue lights zipping through the dark sky or hovering over trees or houses.

Only the Englands, who Craig County Sheriff Jess Walker said are not the type to tell tall tales, claim to have seen creatures.

But thousands of others — from police chiefs and sheriffs to county commissioners, morticians, television cameramen and newspaper reporters, schoolchildren and retired citizens — claim to have seen the lights.

"Folks were lining their cars along country roads and sitting out to watch the lights dance in the sky," said Police Chief Bob Baine of Commerce, Okla. "I'd say that around here, more people saw them than didn't."

The lights often flew high but frequently dipped to tree level or just below. For a

week, they appeared every night between 8 p.m. and midnight. The lights appeared to rotate as they moved.

Those who say they observed this draw pictures of a ball-shaped or a partly deflated football-shaped ship. And though many people said they thought they were within a mile of the object, no one heard any engine noise.

The lights sometimes were stationary or moving slowly but often traveled about the speed of a small plane.

Occasionally, however, the lights "in the snap of your finger, or the blink of an eye, are across the horizon, and I guarantee you we don't have anything in our Army that could catch those buggers," said Jack Young, an Ottawa County commissioner.

The overwhelming feeling in the region is bemusement. Was this some cosmic trick? Were secret weapons being tested? And, if

not, just what the heck were folks seeing?

"I've read stories before about people who've seen this stuff, and I've always thought they were idiots," said Larry Murdock of Columbus, Kan. "But I looked at the lights through the binoculars, and I never was so shocked in all my life.

"There it was, the traditional flying saucer, spherical and turning. Honest to God, I believe it's something from another planet. I just hope no Barney Fife type decides to go shooting up whatever it is."

Jim Green, a police officer and Miami civil defense director, said craft from outer space might be going a bit far.

"If we had 12 witnesses to a robbery give stories this similar, we'd have a pretty good case," he said. "Something is out there, probably some experimental aircraft.