

LIVE CONDUCTED BY THE OLD CODGERS

LETTERS

Sceptics who dismiss sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects as the wishful thinking of over-enthusiastic science-fiction fans may like to ponder on the following.

A. E. SHACKLEFORD, of Catherine-street, Leicester, writes :

NOW that the usual seasonal spate of reports on Unidentified Flying Objects is in full swing, I wondered if your readers would be interested in two separate reports of UFOs which appeared in a newspaper dated 1783!

The first, datelined Leicester, reads: "On Monday night about nine o'clock, a most uncommon phenomenon illumin'd this place. A globe of fire, apparently about the size of the moon in full, with a tail of several yards, like that of a comet, and seemingly not more than forty yards above the tops of the houses, passed over the town.

"Its motion did not appear swift, nor the colour of the flame red and terrifying, nor was it accompanied with any extraordinary heat in the atmosphere, nor any rumbling noise. . . .

"The appearance was beautiful beyond description: the fire of a liquid pearl colour."

At the same time a reporter in Nottingham observed: ". . . a very large ball of fire . . . it moved first horizontally and with incredible velocity.

"It afterwards passed, in an oblique direction, upwards, when it burst into a number of parts.

"In passing over the forest . . . it was observed to make a great hissing, but at the explosion, a noise was heard like that of remote thunder."

These reports may allay the fears of some by proving that at least UFOs are nothing new.

☆ Indeed, friend. And it is interesting to note that those eighteenth-century scribes seemed to take them a good deal more calmly than some folk do today!