

Largest Selling Man's Magazine

TRUE

THE MAN'S MAGAZINE

MAY 25c

NEW!

**WHAT OUR AIR FORCE
FOUND OUT ABOUT
FLYING SAUCERS**

A Fawcett Publication



FREDERIC REMINGTON - '89

Bonus - 8 Rare Paintings of the Real West

MARION OHIO
311 PENN AVE
D J SANSOTTA
2204192 128 64 27 0266

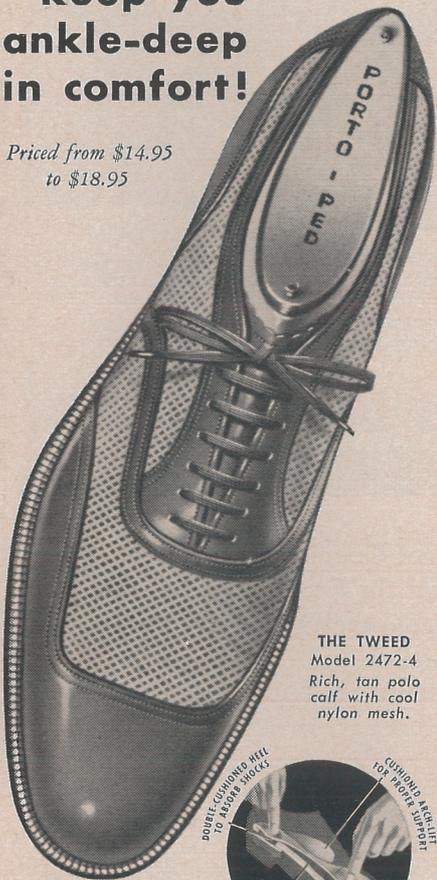


Porto-Ped

Air Cushion Shoes

keep you
ankle-deep
in comfort!

Priced from \$14.95
to \$18.95



THE TWEED
Model 2472-4
Rich, tan polo
calf with cool
nylon mesh.



The inside story of
Porto-Ped Comfort

"YOU'RE walking on grass" when you step out in Porto-Peds. They put you miles ahead in style, and give you exclusive PATENTED features that keep you ankle-deep in comfort.

PORTAGE SHOE MFG. CO.

Division of Weyenberg Shoe Mfg. Co.
Milwaukee 1, Wisconsin

See your Portage dealer or write us for his name

May 1954

TRUE

the man's magazine

W. H. Fawcett, Jr., President

Roger Fawcett, General Manager Gordon Fawcett, Sec.-Treas. Roscoe K. Fawcett, Circulation Director
Ralph Daigh, Editorial Director Lee Wilson, Production Director Al Allard, Art Director

Ken W. Purdy, Editor

Thomas J. Naughton, Managing Editor

Lenwood Bowman, Supervising Editor

Pete Barrett ...Outdoors Editor Al Silverman ...Associate Editor P. B. Davis ...Associate Editor
Norman Kent ...Art Editor Ed Downe ...Associate Editor Len Leone ...Assistant Art Editor
C. N. Barnard ...Associate Editor Will Lieberman ...Associate Editor Sy Sakin ...Art Associate
Fred R. Smith ...Associate Editor John Kingdon ...Associate Editor D. Schwartz ...Art Associate
Dale Shaw ...Associate Editor D. Van Dyke ...Research Editor

CONTENTS

book-lengther	What Our Air Force Found Out About Flying Saucers <i>Capt. Edward J. Ruppelt, USAFR</i>	18
	<i>From 1951 to 1953, Mr. Ruppelt was in charge of Project Blue Book, the official Air Force investigation of Unidentified Flying Objects. In this story he tells what he learned about them.</i>	
true adventure	Thirteen Against the Gods <i>Watson S. Sims</i>	36
	Beyond the Hindu Kush <i>Harrison Forman</i>	62
in the news	The Artful O'Malley and the Dodgers <i>Milton Gross</i>	48
	Double-Duty Duds <i>Fred R. Smith</i>	66
personalities	Camera in the Wilderness <i>Jean Muir</i>	42
sports	Ketchel Was a Wild Man <i>John Lardner</i>	33
	Sports Cars vs. Gas Bag <i>Robert Halmi</i>	38
	GI's at Last Are Learning How to Shoot <i>Lucian Cary</i>	44
	The Great American Mystery Fly <i>Ted Trueblood</i>	52
general	Bunyans of the Back Yard <i>Edward Downe</i>	51
pictorial	A Portfolio of Paintings by Frederic Remington <i>Harold McCracken</i>	54
short features	TRUEly Yours 4 Man to Man Answers 16	
	The Editor Speaking 10 Meals for Men—	
	This Funny Life 12 Corned Beef 64	
	Strange But True 14 It Happened in Sports 76	
	TRUE Goes Shopping 118	

Cover painting by Frederic Remington

Copyright permission, Remington Art Memorial, Ogdensburg, N. Y.

VOL. 34

A FAWCETT PUBLICATION

NO. 204

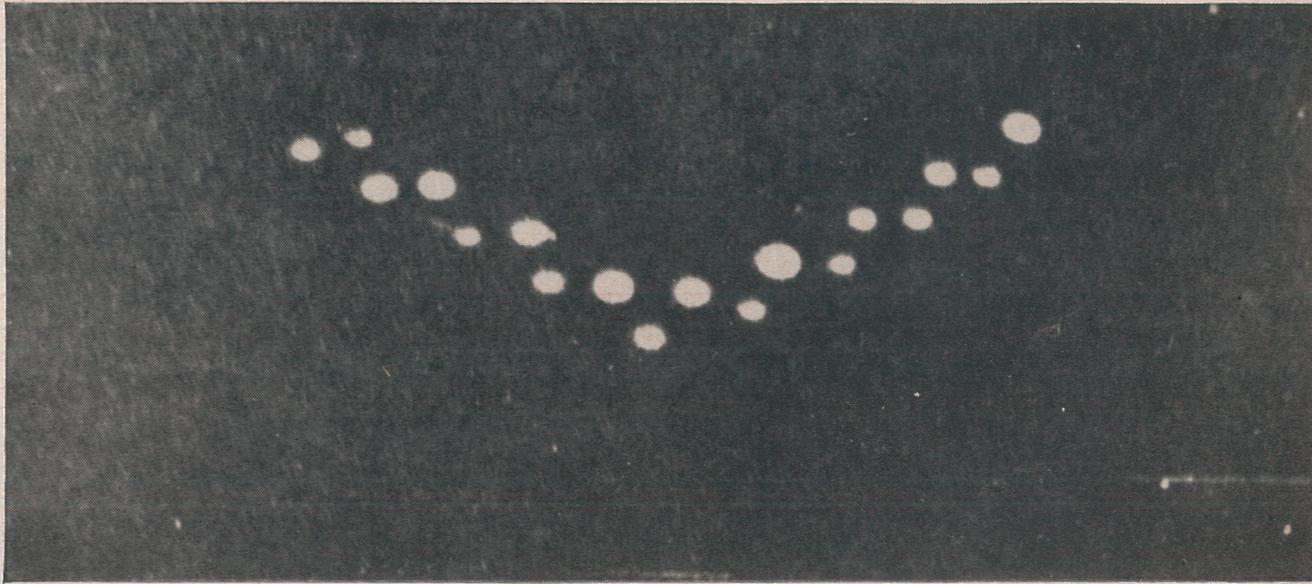
THE FACT STORY MAGAZINE FOR MEN

Permission hereby granted to quote from this issue of this magazine on radio or television, provided a total of not more than 1,000 words is quoted and credit is given to the title of the magazine and issue, as well as the statement, copyright 1954, by Fawcett Publications, Inc.

TRUE is published monthly by Fawcett Publications, Inc., Fawcett Bldg., Fawcett Place, Greenwich, Conn. Editorial offices: 67 W. 44th St., New York 36, N. Y. Advertising Manager: C. E. Nelson. Advertising offices: 67 W. 44th St., New York 36, N. Y.; 612 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.; 643 S. Flower St., Los Angeles 17, Cal.; 605 Market St., San Francisco 9, Cal.; 1659 Guardian Bldg., Detroit 26, Mich. Entered as second class matter at the post office at Greenwich, Conn., under the act of March 3, 1879, with additional entry at Louisville, Ky. Printed in U.S.A. Copyright 1954 by Fawcett Publications, Inc. Reprinting in whole or in part forbidden except by permission of the publishers. Address manuscripts to New York editorial office. Unacceptable contributions will be returned if accompanied by sufficient first class postage. Not responsible for lost manuscripts or photos. All remittances and correspondence concerning subscriptions as well as notification of change of address should be addressed to TRUE Circulation Dept., Fawcett Place, Greenwich, Conn. Price 25c a copy. Subscription price \$3.00 a year in U. S. and possessions; 35c a copy in Canada, Canadian subscription price \$4.00 a year. All other countries \$6.00 a year. Foreign subscriptions and sales should be remitted by International Money Order in U. S. funds payable at Greenwich, Conn.

MEMBER AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS

A T R U E B O O K - L E N G T H F E A T U R E



Photographs of the famous Lubbock Lights, by an 18-year-old amateur, were "never proved to be a hoax."

WHAT OUR AIR FORCE FOUND OUT ABOUT FLYING SAUCERS

From 1951 to 1953 Mr. Ruppelt was in charge of Project Blue Book, the official Air Force investigation of Unidentified Flying Objects. This is what he learned about them

BY CAPTAIN EDWARD J. RUPPELT, USAFR

On August 12, 1953, a woman in the Ground Observer Corps in the Black Hills of South Dakota reported a light hovering in the sky to the east of her position. Two operators from a radar station went out to check the thing visually while the woman was still on the telephone. While they were scanning the sky, the woman reported, "The thing is beginning to move over Rapid City." At the same time, the two radar men observed the light start to move. They returned to their radar to pick it up, and the woman reported that the object was moving back to its original position. The radar got a fix on it at that spot.

An F-84, in the air at the time, was vectored in to

the target. The jet pilot sighted the light visually and started after it. The object headed north with the jet after it, and the radar operators observed the chase on their scope. The Unidentified Flying Object stayed ahead of the jet and seemed to put on speed whenever the pilot speeded up the jet. After chasing the object 120 miles, the pilot ran low on fuel and was granted permission to return. When the jet turned around, the UFO also turned and followed him back.

After the first jet landed, a second F-84 went up to investigate. He was talked into position and spotted the thing visually above him. He went up to 20,000 feet, reported that he was level with the

The author, now a civilian, believes that saucers are interplanetary or do not exist.

Photograph for TRUE by Lou Jacobs, Jr.



light, and again the object took off to the north with the jet in pursuit. Again the chase was observed on ground radar, with both the UFO and the jet showing plainly on the scope.

In the second pursuit, the pilot made a number of tests to rule out some of the common phenomena that have been mistaken for "flying saucers." He turned off all his instrument lights and kicked the plane around to make certain that he was not chasing a canopy reflection. He was not. He observed the object carefully in relation to the stars, and swore that it moved across them, thus eliminating the possibility that he was chasing a planet or a star. Finally, when he thought he was closing in on the object, he switched on his radar gun sights. This type of jet has a light on the instrument panel that goes on to indicate a "lock on" with the target by the radar sights. The light went on.

The second jet chased the light 160 miles to the north before abandoning the pursuit. This time the UFO continued flying north. The Ground Observer Corps Filter Center ahead was alerted, and observers there reported a light speeding north.

This was indeed an astounding occurrence. There were simultaneous visual sightings from two ground sites linked by telephone, simultaneous ground and radar sightings, simultaneous ground-radar and jet-visual sightings, a pursuit in which the UFO outran the jet, a reversal in course, a second jet-visual sighting confirmed by ground radar, an air-radar "lock on" and finally a sighting from the ground hundreds of miles away.

What was the object? For two years, from 1951 to 1953, I flew 200,000 miles, conferred with dozens of top American scientists and an exotic collection of hot-eyed screwballs, stumbled through Florida mangrove swamps, dragged myself out of bed at 3 a.m. to answer transatlantic telephone calls, inspected scores of strange photographs and watched one short amateur movie ninety-seven times in an effort to answer this and similar questions.

My colleagues and I were lambasted by fellow Americans for concealing the biggest news story in the history of modern man, and by Radio Moscow for setting the stage for atomic war.

I was called an ignorant dupe, a Charlie McCarthy manipulated by powerful forces in the Pentagon. I was consulted by the White House, and I briefed the highest figure in the Air Force, who listened respectfully and let me do all the talking.

For two years, with the help of the best brains in the



Radar operators James Copeland and James Ritchey saw "unidentifiable blips" on Washington National Airport's scope in 1952. Right: Photograph, July 16, 1952, by a Coast Guardsman purports to show five flying saucers over Salem, Mass.

country, we worked on a giant jigsaw of a puzzle that was either utterly meaningless or would rock the world.

For every piece that we fitted into place, we found that two more had been added to the puzzle's pile.

I finally found myself soberly inspecting a piece of cow manure to learn if it had come from outer space.

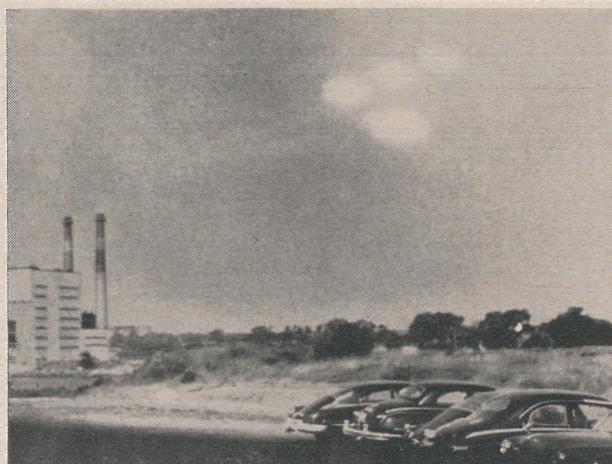
From 1951 to 1953, I was in charge of the official Air Force investigation of Unidentified Flying Objects, the things that whiz through space under the popular name of "flying saucers."

The Age of the Flying Saucer was in Year Five when it plucked me out of my job as technical intelligence analyst for the Air Technical Intelligence Center at Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio.

Year One had opened on June 24, 1947, when a Boise businessman named Kenneth Arnold reported seeing a chain of nine "saucerlike things" glinting in the sun as they flew at 1,200 mph—twice the speed of sound—near Mt. Rainier. His story snared the nation's imagination with one baffling fact. No known aircraft in the world had broken the sonic barrier at that time. "I don't believe it," Arnold said, "but I saw it."

If Arnold's story had stood alone, the Age of the Flying Saucer would have opened and closed with a one-day stand. But in the next thirty days there were fifty-three more reports of saucers. Near Portland, Oregon, a couple of deputy sheriffs reported "twenty in a line going like hell to the west." A Chicago housewife saw one "with legs" and ran into the house and slammed the door. A prospector in the Cascade mountains spotted five or six of them "with tails" and was startled to see his magnetic compass "gyrating wildly." In Spokane, a woman reported five of them "about the size of a five-room house." Hers were shaped "like washtubs." A remarkably cool gentleman in Seattle spoke out and reported, "Why, they come through our yard all the time."

At the time, I was out in Yellowstone National Park, on vacation from Iowa State College, where I was studying aeronautical engineering. It was my second try for a degree. I had dropped out the first time, in 1942, to enlist in the Air Force. I had been assigned as bombardier in the first B-29 squadron organized, flown the Hump out of India, and then moved over to Tinian for the big raids against Japan. Our group flew the last mission of the war, a raid against Tokuyama, just 15 minutes before the end of the war.





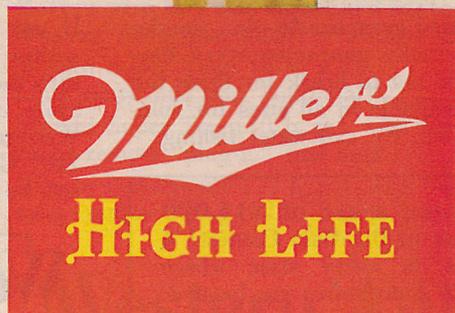
Duchren

AFTER ALL...

It's the Champagne of Bottle Beer

One of the deep, friendly pleasures of any golf game is the locker room banter... when each putt and drive is replayed... and the scorecard is proudly shown for proof of birdies. Another pleasure many golfers enjoy... is the satisfying refreshment of golden Miller High Life...

a perfect way to end the day, for after all, it IS the Champagne of Bottle Beer.



THE NATIONAL CHAMPION OF QUALITY

© Miller Brewing Company
Milwaukee, Wisconsin



Revelation

Fishing Lines



**Guaranteed Not To Break
Within 3 Years... Or Replaced Free!**

Finest lines ever made—no wonder we can actually guarantee every Revelation line not to break for three full years! Available in all sizes for spinning, casting, fly, salt water fishing.

Win your share of \$14,000 in prizes in Big Bass Contest! 4 winners in every state where Western Auto stores are located.

\$10 bonus in merchandise for all winning entries caught on any Revelation Line.

If any Revelation Line should break within 3 years—for any reason—return the remnant to any Western Auto Store or Associate Store—or send to Western Auto Supply Co., Dept. 311L, 2107 Grand, Kansas City, Mo., and it will be replaced free, postpaid.

Western Auto
STORES AND ASSOCIATE STORES

NOTE: WESTERN AUTO ASSOCIATE DEALERS OWN THEIR STORES AND SET THEIR OWN PRICES, TERMS AND CONDITIONS. PRICES MAY VARY DUE TO DIFFERENCES IN LOCAL CONDITIONS.

Within a few days after Arnold's sighting, youngsters were tossing paper plates over our lodge at Yellowstone and yelling, "Saucer, saucer!" Some of the tourists started seeing things and would come in and tell about them, as if their vacation was complete. I read Arnold's story and shrugged it off. Twice over Japan I'd seen strange objects in the sky. One was an orange-yellow light that followed our B-29 for awhile and then suddenly winked out. The consensus was that it was a "foo fighter"—the strange light spotted dozens of times by airmen over Europe and Japan. The theory was that it was a static-electricity phenomenon. Another time, flying home with jumpy nerves after a rough mission, I cut loose with six .50-caliber guns at a bright object just about dawn. After getting the crew in an uproar, I suddenly realized I was shooting at the planet Venus.

Among the sightings that followed Arnold's, however, there appeared some that looked like more than hysteria. They came from pilots acquainted with the tricks that flying can play on the eyes, from scientists, from other presumably sober and unexcited observers. A meteorologist in charge of the U.S. weather bureau station at Louisville, Ky., reported an orange light "rolling" through the night sky. At Muroc Air Field, in California, site of secret government experimental plane tests, Lt. Joseph McHenry spotted "two silver objects of either spherical or disklike shape." He summoned three other people from the base and they saw the same things. Three more witnesses joined the group, and five of the seven saw a third object. No experimental craft were in the air. The objects moved against the wind and hence were not balloons. A few hours later, a major and a colonel at Muroc made a separate sighting of "a thin metallic object" that sported over the field for eight minutes.

Two United Air Lines pilots, E. J. Smith and Ralph Stevens, flying from Boise to Portland, reported following four or five "somethings" for 45 miles before they "disappeared in a burst of speed." They described them as "thin and smooth on the bottom and rough-appearing on the top."

The Air Force, I learned later, wavered between two schools of thought during this first rash of sightings. Some fairly high officials felt concern over them. The U.S. had seen complacency lead to one Pearl Harbor, and international tension was beginning to tighten under the climate of the "cold war." These officials felt that we ought to find out—and quickly—what was causing the epidemic of saucer stories.

Opposed were those who argued that Arnold's story had triggered a mass hysteria. They felt that the publicity given to the first sightings set millions of people to scanning the sky to "see a saucer," and that they deluded themselves with all sorts of things—blowing paper, birds, reflections from planes. This group reasoned that the sightings would dwindle in the normal course of events.

The skeptics were bolstered by the discovery that Arnold's account had some holes in it. His estimates of the size of

Remember Mom...



THIS
MOTHER'S DAY

Say it with Flowers-By-Wire

If you can't be with Mother on May 9th
... let the beauty of your Flowers-By-Wire
tell her of your love.

Simply stop in or phone your F.T.D. Florist—
the shop with SPEEDY and the famous MERCURY
EMBLEM. On Mother's Day, as always, F.T.D.
Florists *guarantee* delivery. Even last-minute
remembrances get there on time!

*Be sure to look for SPEEDY and the famous
MERCURY EMBLEM. They identify F.T.D.
FLORISTS, who guarantee worldwide delivery.*



Florists' **T**elegraph **D**elivery Association
Headquarters: Detroit, Michigan

the objects and their distance from his plane did not jibe. He reported them to be 20 to 25 miles away and from 45 to 50 feet in length. When his sighting was analyzed, it was discovered that objects of that size cannot be resolved by the naked eye from that distance. If his estimate of size was correct, the objects were only six or seven miles away—and flying at about 400 mph, well inside the range of conventional craft.

The early skepticism was strengthened when none of the objects indicated any menace, landed, or crashed where examination could establish that they were indeed something new under the sun.

The early dispute over the handling of the Unidentified Flying Object stories was settled by the UFO's themselves. They persisted, month after month, with a hard core of incidents that came from seasoned observers and defied analysis. The Air Force decided to centralize the investigation and build up a body of data that could be analyzed.

They set up Project Sign and went after the saucers in earnest. Later the code name was switched to "Grudge." We changed it later to "Blue Book" when someone in the Pentagon suggested that "Grudge" gave the impression that the project was tackling the job begrudgingly. The code "Blue Book" was taken from the traditional college blue books that had all the answers to the examination questions. It did not prove a particularly apt choice.

The sightings kept coming in through 1947, 1948, 1949 on an average of about one every three days. The controversy over them built up and the confusion multiplied. Articles began to crop up in national magazines, and radio commentators periodically broadcast "the inside story of the saucers," with each account contradicting the other. They were secret U.S. weapons, new Russian craft, emissaries from another planet scouting the earth.

In 1949, the Air Force submitted the 375 sightings then on hand to an intensive re-evaluation, and issued a thick report on its findings. Dr. J. Allen Hynek, head of the astronomy department at Ohio State University, screened the reports for things of astronomical nature, such as stars, planets, meteors. The Air Force Air Weather Service checked the reports for balloons. The Rand Corporation (a high-level research group that has nothing to do with the business-machine firm), the Air Force Geophysical Laboratory, the U.S. Weather Bureau, and Dr. F. M. Fitts, a psychologist from the Air Force Aero-medical Laboratory, made some general appraisals from their specialized viewpoints.

The Rand Corporation commented: "We have found nothing which would seriously controvert simple rational explanations of the various phenomena in terms of balloons, conventional aircraft, planets, meteors, bits of paper, optical illusions, practical jokers, psychopathological reporters and the like."

Dr. Hynek: "Assuming evidences of observers and investigators to be correct, it is concluded that 32 percent can be explained astronomically, 35 percent can be attributed to birds, balloons, sky

STYLISH,
COLORFUL
and THRIFTY...

Sir Jac

in
Danstorm Poplin



only about \$3.95 men's—
\$3.49 boys'

• Poplin is popular for spring . . . and none more so than this sparkling *Sir Jac* in famous *Dan River Danstorm* poplin.

Thrifty as the proverbial Scot, this new poplin *Sir Jac* is loaded with quality features . . . has slash corded frame pockets—wide inside facings—adjustable cuffs—zipper front—elastic hip inserts. Moreover, it's pre-shrunk, guaranteed washable and Impregnole water repellent.

See this handsome new poplin *Sir Jac* at your favorite store in these exciting spring colors: Flame Red—French Blue—Navy Blue—Jet Black—Grey—Oyster—Cocoa Brown—Sage Green—Dark Green—Yellow.



Stahl-Urban

COMPANY

TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA
BROOKHAVEN, MISSISSIPPI

rockets, aircraft, etc., and 33 percent either lacked necessary evidence or a suitable explanation was not apparent."

The USAF Air Weather Service stuck to its own field, commented that "12 percent apparently were balloons."

Of the 375 reports, 13 percent did not have readily explainable solutions. Dr. Fitts advanced a theory: "There are sufficient psychological explanations for the reports of Unidentified Flying Objects to provide plausible explanations for reports not otherwise explainable. These errors in identifying real stimuli result chiefly from the inability to estimate speed, distance and size."

Supporting these analyses were bulky articles of carefully reasoned and qualified consideration of the data. The press, always eager for an answer that will fit into two lines of headline type that counts twelve letters to a line, condensed the whole report into a "write-off" by the Air Force. The UFOs ignored the Rand Corp., Dr. Hynek, the press, *et al*, and continued to fly. In 1950 exactly the same number landed in the project files—152—as showed up in 1949.

Then in 1951, they began to dwindle.

Meanwhile I had finished my college work at Ames and had rolled up my new sheepskin just in time to be recalled to Air Force duty because of Korea. They stationed me at Dayton, where for the first seven months I worked on conventional aircraft that you can see, feel and measure.

The primary function of the Air Technical Intelligence Center is not, as some people believe, analyzing the UFO mystery. It is charged with the prevention of technological surprise by a foreign country. It studies all the data it can get on enemy aircraft, guided missiles, and technological advances on anything that flies. It got the saucer project because the one thing that every observer agreed on was—the things flew.

This once stirred a harrassed Blue Book investigator to complain, "Why in the hell don't the damn things swim so we can turn them over to the Navy?"

By the summer of 1951, Grudge was down to one man, the sightings were dwindling, and it looked as if the project would fold for lack of business. In June, for the first month in four years, not a single sighting came in. In August the lone investigator was transferred, and the project was turned over to a friend of mine, Lt. Jerry Cummings. I used to drop in and kid him about the poor state of the saucer business.

"You're going to be out of work, boy," I told him.

"You're right," he told me, "but for the wrong reason. I got a discharge coming up."

At 3 p.m. Sept. 12, 1951, the project suddenly came to life. The ATIC teletype began chattering out a yard-long message from northern New Jersey. When it signed off, it looked as if the Garden State had been invaded by something out of H. G. Wells.

It had started two days before, on Sept. 10, at 11:10 a.m., when a student operator was giving a demonstration to a group of visiting brass at a radar school in New Jersey. He had been picked for

the show because he was the top man in his class. He demonstrated the set under manual operation for awhile, picking up local air traffic. Then he announced that he would demonstrate automatic tracking, in which the set is put on a target and follows it without help from the operator. The set could track objects flying at jet speeds.

The operator spotted an object about 12,000 yards southeast of the station, flying low toward the north. He tried to lock on for automatic. He failed, tried again, failed again. He turned to his audience of VIPs embarrassed.

"It's going too fast for the set," he said. "That means it's going faster than a jet!"

A lot of very important eyebrows lifted. What flies faster than a jet?

The object was in range for three minutes and the operator kept trying, without success, to get an automatic track. It finally went off the scope, leaving a red-faced operator talking to himself.

Twenty-five minutes later, the pilot of a jet trainer, carrying an Air Force major as passenger and flying 20,000 feet over Point Pleasant, N. J., spotted a dull silver disklike object far below him. He described it as 30 to 50 feet in diameter and as descending toward Sandy Hook from an altitude of a mile or so. He banked over and started down after it. As he shot down, he reported, the object stopped its descent, hovered, then sped south, made a 120-degree turn and vanished out to sea.

The Jersey puzzle then switched back to the radar group. At 3:15 p.m. they got an excited call from headquarters to pick up a target high and to the north—which was where the first "faster-than-a-jet" object had vanished—and to pick it up in a hurry. They got a fix on it and reported that it was traveling slowly at 93,000 feet. They also could see it visually as a silver speck.

What flies 18 miles above the earth?

The next morning *two* radar sets picked up another target that couldn't be tracked automatically. It would climb, level off, climb again, go into a dive. When it climbed, it went almost straight up.

The two-day sensation ended that afternoon when an unidentified hovering object was picked up for several minutes.

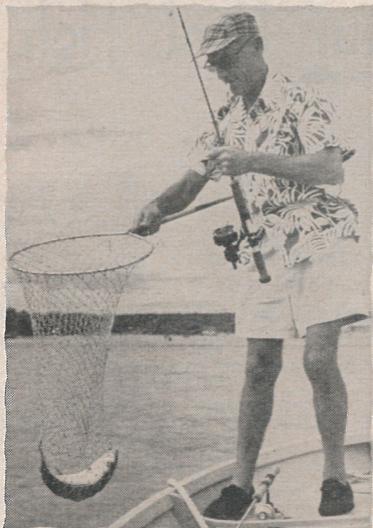
A copy of the long New Jersey report went to Washington, and shortly later Dayton got instructions to go up, investigate and report to the Pentagon. In a matter of hours, Lt. Cummings and an ATIC lieutenant colonel were flying out to see what was up.

Two days later they were back with reams of raw data. Before Cummings could start sorting out the jigsaw, he got his discharge.

Up to this point, I had done the work I was assigned to and paid little attention to flying saucers. But the New Jersey outbreak fascinated me. Whatever had happened there was plainly a lot more than the occasional "saucer" story I'd read in the papers, where a Dakota farmer saw something zip over his barn, or a housewife saw six disks wobbling through the sky while she hung up her wash. My

[Continued on page 30]

FISHING VACATION?



The author lands a 7-pound bonefish on spinning tackle and artificial lure.

The BAHAMAS offer the BEST

Within easy reach of the larger cities of the United States and Canada are the Bahamas, fabulous big-game fishing grounds of international reputation.

Whether you are a fly fisherman, a spinning enthusiast or a deep-water angler, the Bahamas offer fishing that is hard to equal anywhere.

Whatever your budget may be, the Bahamas has fishing facilities and accommodations that will fit it.

Contact your travel agent for a \$64.00 all-expense summertime visit to Nassau in the Bahamas.

For a straight-out fishing vacation look into the offshore cruising-fishing trips offered by Bahamas charter boatmen. It is possible to charter a boat for fishing in the "Resort Islands" of the Bahamas for as little as \$400.00 per week.

For information write

DON MCCARTHY

**Fishing Information Bureau
NASSAU, BAHAMAS,
DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

Bay Street, Nassau, Bahamas

For a copy of the "Fisherman's Guide to the Bahamas" use coupon below.

NASSAU, BAHAMAS, DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Bay Street, Nassau, Bahamas T-5-54
Here's my dollar—please send me a copy of the "Fisherman's Guide."

NAME.....
STREET.....
CITY.....ZONE.....STATE.....

[Continued from page 26]

curiosity overcame the ancient rule that men in uniform have followed since Hannibal's day. I volunteered.

I told myself that I'd solve the Jersey puzzle and then go back to my regular work. It turned out that I did neither. As if to jeer at my brash confidence, the UFOs suddenly started flying all over the country. In a matter of days I found myself down in Texas tangled up in one of the classics of the saucer saga—the Lubbock lights.

I went into the UFO investigation with curiosity and no preconceptions. I soon found that the job had enormous difficulties. The basic one was that there were no precedents, rules or manuals for chasing flying saucers. The evidence you work with—with few exceptions—is the recollection of observers, usually excited, puzzled or frightened humans trying to describe events completely foreign to their experience. And what they had seen usually appeared unexpectedly and vanished in a matter of seconds. After a few months I got so I could predict the start of their stories.

"Now listen," they would say, in a mixture of apology and belligerence, "I never believed in these things before. I laughed at them like everybody else. You can check me with any of my friends. I'm not cracked and I wasn't drunk. I don't know what it was, but I tell you, I SAW it. . . ."

What did they see? Trying to evaluate it led you into a dozen complex technical fields — psychology, meteorology, physiology, astronomy, aerodynamics, electronics, physics, logic, chemistry, plain and fancy detective work.

Most of the people we talked to tried earnestly to tell us exactly what they had seen. But human beings are imperfect observers. This is not something unique to saucer sighters. Police and newspapermen have struggled with it for years. Ten eyewitnesses to an auto wreck will tell ten different stories, and each will be positive that his is the true account. Autos travel only 60 or 70 miles an hour. The incidents we investigated involved things supposedly moving as fast as 25,000 miles an hour. And they were seen from great distances, usually under the worst possible conditions for accurate reporting, often at night and for only a few seconds.

The data in the Lubbock case was much better than in 99 percent of the incidents that came into Blue Book. It involved multiple sightings by a group of Ph.D.'s, backstopped by a series of independent sightings. In addition, there were pictures—four of them.

The sightings had been going on for weeks before we got word of them. They had started on the evening of August 25, when four professors from Texas Technological College were sitting in the backyard of one of their homes watching for meteors. At 9:20, a flight of weird bluish-green lights, in a roughly crescent formation, raced across the sky. The sight caught them by surprise. Being men of science, they deplored the fact that their first startled observation had been hasty and incomplete. They vowed to do better if the lights reappeared. That night

they made a second sighting. In the next few weeks, they made twelve more.

When I got to Lubbock, they had compiled what data they could. They had measured the angular velocity and found it to be 30 degrees per second. In an effort to compute the speed, they had set up an ingenious two-way radio system and had tried to get sightings from two spots and make a rough triangulation. This had failed, but the failure provided a clue.

The sightings had been reported in the local paper. In the nights following the first appearance of the flying lights, they were seen by hundreds of non-professional witnesses. Arguments were raging all over Lubbock as to whether the objects were new secret missiles, space ships—or ducks.

On the night of August 31, an 18-year-old amateur photographer shot some pictures. He had the prints and the negatives. The pictures were later reproduced all over the world, and are included in almost every book about the saucers.

"I was lying in bed when I saw a flight of the lights go over," he said. "I grabbed my loaded Kodak 35 and went out in the back yard. In a little while a second flight came over and I made two shots. Then a third flight passed over and I took three more shots." The camera was set at f 3.5 and the shutter at 1/10 of a second.

His prints were clear, and showed the lights in a sharply defined V. One of the negatives had been misplaced, but we had four for analysis. Each showed 18 lights in the V formation, with a larger one off to the right. This was promptly labeled "the mother ship" by the science-fiction boys—an analysis that struck me as 99 percent fiction and about one percent science.

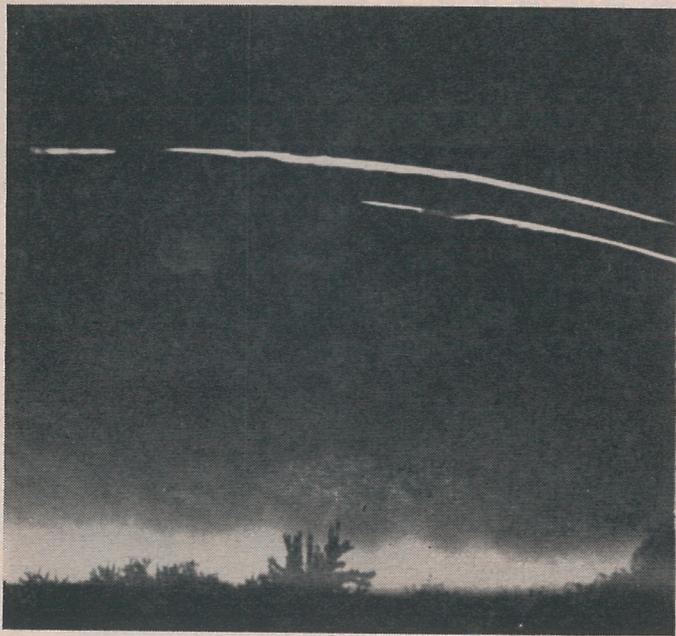
Close examination showed a peculiarity in the pictures that has been ignored in almost every account of them that I have read. There is a marked dissimilarity in the lights in the four pictures. In one, they are diagonal dashes; in the next, roughly circular; in the third, they are tadpole-shaped, with their tails all pointed to the left; in the fourth, they are like arrowheads. In each picture, the "mother ship" changes shape to match her brood.

I have read in dozens of accounts that "the Air Force has declared these pictures to be authentic." The Air Force said nothing of the sort. The pictures were submitted to intense scrutiny at the photo laboratory at Wright Field. There was little that could be evaluated. There were no points of reference in the pictures—only the lights. The photos had not been retouched. The Air Force said only that "The photos were never proved to be a hoax."

The endless retellings of the Lubbock story recount the multiple sightings, the impeccable reputation of the observers, the supporting evidence of the "authentic" pictures—and stop there. The full story contains some intriguing facts. It is told here for the first time.

First, whatever the pictures show, they are not the lights seen by the professors. They looked at the pictures and said so. Their first two sightings were roughly crescent, the [Continued on page 124]

WHAT OUR AIR FORCE FOUND OUT ABOUT FLYING SAUCERS



In 1947 some unexplained objects flashing across Kentucky night skies were photographed by a Louisville newspaperman.

[Continued from page 30]

rest showed no geometric pattern—V-shaped or otherwise. None of the independent sightings was V-shaped, either. The pictures, however, are as precise in formation as a double row of Radio City Rockettes.

Second, the pictures were taken on a clear night, with plenty of stars. No stars show in the pictures. This means that the lights were much brighter than the stars—and in Texas, the stars at night are big and bright. Neither the professors nor the other observers described *their* lights as big and bright. *Theirs* were dull and glowing.

Third, with much of the town scanning the sky, no one else in Lubbock reported the lights on August 30, when the photographer saw his three bright, spectacularly geometric flights.

Fourth, we reconstructed the scene later at Dayton, attempted to duplicate the pictures, and failed. The photographer had showed me the site in his backyard. Because of trees and other obstructions, it afforded a span of 120 degrees of clear sky. I questioned him about the speed at which the lights crossed the sky. He estimated it at 30 degrees a second—a figure that agreed with the earlier estimates by the professors. To double-check, I had him move his hand across the sky and clocked him. It was close to 30 degrees a second. This gave him four seconds in which to shoot each flight—two pictures one time, three the next.

The Kodak 35 has a hand wind to feed fresh film into place. At Dayton we simulated 120 degrees of open sky with lights traveling 30 degrees a second, took a Kodak 35, and tried to shoot and wind until we had three shots. We couldn't do it. We tried over and over, with different people. The best anyone could squeeze in was two badly hurried shots. And with the shutter at 1/10 of a second the two shots were badly blurred.

In poking around Lubbock, I talked to many people who had seen the lights and were sure that they were birds. One old gentleman had seen the lights several nights. His description matched that of the professors.

"Shucks, officer," he drawled. "Them things is plovers."

I went off to read up on plovers. They're water birds about the size of quail with light breasts that could reflect light. A local game warden told me there were plovers in the vicinity.

A few blocks from the area where most of the sightings had been made was a boulevard lighted by mercury vapor lights

that gave off an intense bluish-white glare. Then I recalled an odd bit of information. When the professors had tried to set up a second observation post elsewhere, they saw nothing, while the sightings continued at the original spot—near the lighted boulevard.

Four times in the following year, at Fargo, N. D., Greenville, S. C., Randolph Air Force Base, and Bakersfield, Calif., we got cases that duplicated the Lubbock affair. Each time they proved to be birds reflecting ground lights.

The project files carry the Lubbock lights as "unknown." The pictures were never *proved* to be a hoax. Maybe, under intense excitement, one man in a thousand can shoot three unblurred shots with a hand-held Kodak 35 in four seconds. I'll believe it when I see it done.

But so far as what the professors saw, I think that a 10-gauge shotgun would have brought down the Lubbock saucers in a shower of feathers.

While I was in Lubbock, a temporary investigator, Lt. Henry Metscher, had made some sense out of the Jersey mystery that had lured me into saucer chasing. Among the data that Cummings had brought back on the "faster-than-a-jet" radar objects were some plots on locations and times. It turned out that the object that had outsped the automatic tracking and startled the VIPs actually plotted out at an unspectacular 400 mph. On questioning, the operator conceded that he had got excited because of the visiting brass. The object undoubtedly was a conventional plane.

The "disk" spotted over Sandy Hook by the jet? Metscher learned that a large balloon painted silver for radar tracking had been launched near Sandy Hook just before the pilot and the AF major saw their UFO. What about its maneuvering? Hang onto that question for a bit.

The excited call the next morning from headquarters? Another balloon carrying a radar target. The HQ officers had a bet on about its altitude, wanted a fast report, didn't bother to tell the radar crew the reason for the urgency. By this time the radar boys had the saucer fever and were ready to see anything. The second supersonic object proved to be a weather blip. The last saucer that hung ominously over New Jersey was definitely tabbed as another balloon.

I congratulated Metscher and settled down to the business of knocking off saucers like an ace skeet shooter. If the saucers can laugh (we had several that whistled), they probably zipped through the stratosphere chuckling to themselves.

One of the first things I did was go back over the files of the project from its inception. There were some odd facts and some baffling sightings. One thing I learned was that Arnold wasn't the Columbus of the flying saucer at all. The project had thirteen listings prior to June 24, 1947—the supposed dawn of the Saucer Era. They all had come into the project after Arnold told his story, with the usual explanation that the observers had been reluctant to tell their tales until Arnold had broken the ice.

Among the post-Arnold sightings were three classics—the tragedy in which Capt. Thomas Mantell was killed, the dog-fight between an F-51 and a light at Fargo, N. D., and the sighting of a "space ship with lighted windows" by an air liner near Montgomery, Ala.

The Mantell case was headlined across the nation as "Flier Killed Chasing Saucer." His tragedy is interwoven with saucerian folklore, and frequently is told in conjunction with a local story of a plane that takes off after a "thing" in the sky and is never seen again. I have heard local variants of this story perhaps twenty times. Each time the account starts out: "You remember when Mantell was shot down by a saucer? Listen to what happened here last month. . . ."

On the afternoon of January 7, 1948, two airmen in the control tower at Godman AFB, near Louisville, Ky., began getting calls about an unidentified object spotted by civilians in the area. They checked with Flight Service about experimental craft, were told that none was in the vicinity. Shortly later, one of them spotted an object from the tower, pointed it out to his companion. They summoned their officers, who also saw something.

At this point, four F-51's of the Kentucky National Guard approached the base. Mantell, the flight leader, was asked to check on the object and try to identify it. One of his planes had to land because of fuel shortage. Mantell and the other two took out after the thing in the sky.

The Air Force account of the case was monumentally fouled up. It had all three fliers describing the object as "metallic and of tremendous size," and told how Mantell climbed away from his mates, radioing reports back to the tower until he suddenly fell silent. Some time later his body was found with the wreckage of his plane scattered over a wide area. The account then reports that the first analysis of the case indicated that he was chasing the planet Venus.

The obvious public reaction to this account was: "Who do they think they are kidding?" If three fliers agreed that the thing was "metallic" and "tremendous," how could it have been the planet Venus? Later in the project, we had many instances of pilots mistaking Venus (and other planets) for something flying through the sky. None of them ever described it as "tremendous."

In examining the original reports on the tragedy, I learned the following:

1. The two men in the Godman Tower were joined by five officers while the chase was in progress. None of the seven men agreed on their description of the thing in the sky. One called it an "ice cream cone tipped with red," a description that was picked up in the Air Force release as agreed upon by all the observers. Actually, the other descriptions varied greatly: "round and white," "huge and silver or metallic," "small white object," "one-fourth the size of the full moon," "one-tenth the size of the full moon."

2. One wingman never saw the thing at all. He radioed: "What the hell are we looking for?" When the other landed, he described it as "resembling a reflection in the canopy."

3. There was almost no agreement among the seven men listening on the tower squawk box as to what Mantell actually said. Only one said he heard Mantell call the UFO "metallic and of tremendous size."

The project learned later that there was a huge skyhook balloon in the vicinity. It was spotted later southwest of Louisville by two observers with telescopes, and was identified as a balloon. Such identification should have plucked the planet Venus out of the Air Force's speculation.

Why would an experienced pilot like Mantell chase a balloon? The skyhooks were new at that time so he may not have known about them. To him a balloon was one of the small weather models frequently launched from air fields.

What happened to his plane? Why was the wreckage scattered over such a wide area if it was not blown to bits by a hostile saucer?

The wreckage showed that the plane was trimmed to climb. Mantell had no oxygen aboard, and he was near 20,000 feet—almost four miles up—when his wingmen abandoned the climb. It is likely that he blacked out from lack of oxygen. At some higher altitude, the plane's power would drop off and the F-51 level out with an unconscious man at the controls. The propeller torque would pull it into a slow left turn, into a shallow dive, then an increasingly steeper descent under power. Somewhere during the screaming dive, the plane reached excessive speeds and began to break up in the air. . . .

Classic No. Two—the "dogfight between the plane and the saucer." It is listed as the lone case of "combat" between a plane and a saucer. Actually, there were three other such cases.

The pilot was George F. Gorman, a 25-year-old second lieutenant in the North Dakota Air National Guard. On October 1, 1948, starting at 9 p.m., he chased an apparently disembodied light for 27 minutes in his fast F-51. He described the UFO as "a small ball of clear white light, between six and eight inches in diameter." For awhile it winked on and off, then it appeared to put on power and glowed steadily. Gorman pushed his F-51 to the limit and was unable to catch it. He reported that it made one turn that he couldn't follow and twice came at him in what appeared to be ramming attacks. Both times he dived his plane out of the collision course. The "dog fight" ranged from low level up to 17,000 feet, and the light finally pulled straight up and disappeared.

"I had the distinct impression that its maneuvers were controlled by thought or reason," Gorman said.

Four other observers at Fargo *partially* corroborated his story. An oculist, Dr. A. D. Cannon was near the field in his plane with a passenger, Einar Neilson. They saw a light "moving fast," but did not witness all the maneuvers that Gorman reported. Two CAA employees, on the ground, saw a light move over the field once.

Here are the other "dogfight" cases:

On June 21, 1952, at 10:58 p.m., a Ground Observer Spotter reported that a slow-moving craft was nearing one of our atomic energy installations. An F-47 patrol in the area was vectored in visually, spotted a light and closed on it. They "fought" from 10,000 to 27,000 feet and several times the object made what seemed to be ramming attacks. The light was described as white, 6 to 8 inches in diameter, blinking until it put on power. The pilot could see no silhouette of anything attached to it. The similarity to the Fargo case was striking.

On the night of Dec. 10, 1952, near another atomic installation, the pilot and radar observer of a patrolling F-94 spotted a light while flying at 26,000 feet. They checked and were told that no planes were known to be in the area. They closed on the object and saw a large, round white "thing" with a dim, reddish light coming from two "windows." They lost visual contact, but got a radar lock-on. They reported that when they attempted to close on it again, it would reverse direction and drop away. Several times the plane altered course itself because collision seemed imminent. There was a solid undercast of clouds, which would eliminate the possibility of refraction of ground lights.

In each of these instances, as well as in the case narrated next, the sources of the stories were trained airmen with excellent reputations. They were sincerely baffled by what they had seen. They had no conceivable motive for falsifying or "dressing up" their reports.

The other "dogfight" occurred September 24, 1952, between a Navy pilot of a TBM and a light over Cuba. It had a sequel that revealed some fascinating information about the illusions the supposedly objective human eye can contrive.

The pilot had just finished making some practice passes for night fighters when he spotted an orange light to the east of his plane. He checked on aircraft in the area, learned that the object was unidentified, and started after it. Here is his report, written immediately after he landed:

"As it (the light) approached the city from the east it started a left turn. I started to intercept. During the first part of the chase the closest I got to the light was 8 to 10 miles. At this time it appeared to be as large as an SNB and had a greenish tail that looked to be five to six times as long as the light's diameter. This tail was seen several times in the next 10 minutes in periods of from 5 to 30 seconds each. As I reached 10,000 feet it appeared to be 15,000 feet and in a left turn. It took 40 degrees of bank to keep the nose of my plane on the light. At this time I estimated the light to be in a 10 to 15 mile orbit.

"**A**t 12,000 feet I stopped climbing, but the light was still climbing faster than I was. I then reversed my turn from left to right and the light also reversed. As I was not gaining distance, I held a steady course south trying to estimate a perpendicular between the light and myself. The light was moving north, so I turned north. As I turned, the light appeared to move west, then south over the base. I again tried to intercept but the light appeared to climb rapidly at a 60 degree angle. It climbed to 35,000 feet, then started a rapid descent.

"Prior to this, while the light was still at approximately 15,000 feet, I deliberately placed it between the moon and myself three times to try to identify a solid body. I, and my two crew men, all had a good view of the light as it passed the moon. We could see no solid body. We considered the fact that it might be an aerologist's balloon, but we did not see a silhouette. Also, we would have rapidly caught up with and passed a balloon.

"During its descent, the light appeared to slow down at about 10,000 feet, at which time I made three runs on it. Two were on a 90 degree collision course, and the light traveled at tremendous speed across my bow. On the third run I was so close that the light blanked out the airfield below me. Suddenly it started a dive and I followed, losing it at 1,500 feet."

When he landed, anyone who would have tried to tell him he was chasing a lighted weather balloon would have had a

A True Book-Length Feature

WHAT OUR AIR FORCE FOUND OUT ABOUT FLYING SAUCERS

rough time. Twenty-four hours later, he was *convinced* that he had chased a balloon.

The following night, a lighted balloon was sent up and the pilot was ordered up to compare his experiences. He duplicated his "dog fight"—illusions and all. The Navy furnished us with a long analysis of the affair, explaining how the pilot had been fooled. It is recommended reading for anyone who believes that an experienced pilot cannot be fooled by what he sees.

In each of the four cases of "dog fights," including Gorman's, a balloon was known to be in the vicinity.

In the case involving the ground observer and the F-47 near the atomic installation, we plotted the winds and calculated that a balloon was right at the spot where the pilot encountered the light.

In the other instance, with the "white object with two windows," we found that a skyhook balloon had been plotted at the exact site of the "battle."

Why can't experienced pilots recognize a balloon when they see one? If they are flying at night, odd things can happen to their vision. There is the problem of vertigo, as well as disorientation brought on by flying without points of reference. Night fighters have told dozens of stories of being fooled by lights.

The third saucer classic did not involve a saucer at all, but a "wingless aircraft, 100 feet long, cigar-shaped and about twice the diameter of a B-29." It was sighted the night of July 24, 1948, near Montgomery, Ala., by C. S. Chiles and J. B. Whitted, pilots of an Eastern Airlines plane. The underside of the thing had a "deep blue glow," there were "two rows of windows from which bright lights were glowing, and it had a 50-foot trail of orange-red flames!" Only one passenger of the flight was awake at the time. He saw only "a trail of fire."

On the basis of later experience, the project was fairly sure that this was a meteor. At about the same time, a plane flying between Blackstone, Va., and Greensboro, S. C., reported independently that it had seen a "bright shooting star" in the direction of Montgomery.

On the night of November 24, 1951, there was a similar incident, with multiple sightings. It started when a CAA tower in southern Michigan told the Air Force Flight Service that an airline crew had seen a huge object with bluish-white flames going southwest at an extremely high speed. At about the same time, other reports flooded in from Air Force personnel at Selfridge AFB, north of Detroit, from a soldier on leave at Battle Creek, from another CAA tower, from some sheriff's deputies. All reported the same sort of object going the same direction. Most of them described it as rocket-shaped. One, an experienced pilot, was certain it was a V-2 type missile. All these observers—at scattered points—reported the thing "about four miles east." It turned out to be a very large meteor passing over the New England states; we verified it with experienced meteor observers and the time checked to the dot. I talked to a number of the witnesses later and they remained firm in their belief that they had seen a Something.

The science-fiction boys, of course, converted the Chiles-Whitted Something into another "mother ship." It was in sight for only a few seconds, was seen by only three people, and then vanished into the black night. But it flies on endlessly in the pages of saucer lore, a transport from outer space packed to the gunwales with flying disks.

It is popular folklore among the more fanatical saucer fans that the Air Force has either bungled or deliberately sabotaged the saucer investigation. Our sterner critics imply that a saucer could land within ten feet of a Project Blue Book man, and he would turn his back on it and walk away. Frank Scully says, "It's high time that the Air Force stop fumbling with the saucer question and turn the investigation over to a competent civilian group."

It is utter nonsense, of course, to charge that Blue Book doesn't *want* to verify the existence of the saucers. If they come from outer space, the first man to lock down proof of it would go down in history with a bigger name than Christopher Columbus. He'd be remembered when such minor figures as U.S. Presidents

were long forgotten. Every time a good sighting came into Blue Book, you could feel a suppressed excitement run through the staff, an unspoken "Maybe this is it."

Here is what Blue Book did in its efforts to pin down the facts about the flying saucers. Virtually all the evidence we had to work with was the reports of witnesses. Shortly after I took over the project, we set about preparing a model questionnaire that would get the maximum amount of data from the witnesses. If there was a pattern to the saucer stories, we wanted to find it.

The project had tried a variety of questionnaires in the past. We gathered all these together along with a cross section of accounts by witnesses. We took this material to the psychology department of a Midwest university that is noted for the excellence of its statistical questionnaires. We got together a panel of engineers, physicists, mathematicians, astronomers and psychologists to list the questions they would like to have answered. The project also listed the things it wanted to know. Then the psychologists determined whether it was feasible to expect an eyewitness to answer each question and if so, how it should be worded.

When we got through with all this, we used the result as a test model, and sent it out to several hundred saucer-sighters. When the reports were returned, we revised the questionnaires again, from the way it had worked out. The result is the standard questionnaire that Blue Book is using today.

The questionnaire ran eight pages and had 68 questions. It was booby-trapped in a couple of places to give us a cross-check on the reliability of the reporter as a witness. We got quite a few questionnaires answered in such a way that it was obvious that the signer was drawing on his imagination.

From this standard questionnaire, the project worked up two more. One dealt with radar sightings of UFOs, the other with sightings made from a plane.

At the instigation of Blue Book, the Air Force sent out orders to every one of its installations in the world, instructing them on the reporting of "saucers." Immediate reports were to be made by wire to ATIC, listing the basic data such as time, date, location, description of the object, names of observers, etc. These initial reports were to be followed up with expanded written reports. Blue Book was also given authority for direct communication with any installation in the U.S., thus cutting a lot of red tape and speeding up the investigations.

This AF regulation, unfortunately, was issued on the same day that *Life* magazine came out with a flying-saucer story that reversed its previous attitude and considered the question soberly. A lot of people added two and two and got six. The story went around that *Life* was "softening up the public for the truth" while the new Air Force regulation was "alerting the military." Actually, it was coincidence.

We obtained the cooperation of astronomers all over the country. Scores of them were queried on whether, in their constant watching of the skies through giant telescopes, they had ever seen anything that resembled a space ship. The answer was no. There are also a number of stations across the U.S. where automatic cameras photograph the sky at intervals every night the year around to help track meteors. We asked these people if their cameras had ever caught anything that resembled a flying saucer. The answer was no. Both the astronomers and the sky-photographers were asked to notify the project if they ever turned up anything unusual. They never did.

We sent out eighty special cameras to places where there had been a high number of sightings in an effort to get pictures of our own. Each camera had two lenses, one of which had a diffraction grid to split light into its component parts and thus give a clue to the source of the light—whether it was coming from a jet's tail, a balloon, or what? We had a lot of trouble with the cameras, and got only five or six pictures, all of which were worthless. The light-gathering power of the lenses was too low. The cameras have been re-equipped, and the Air Force recently has redistributed them.

We did not rely solely on our own resources in trying to unravel the UFO riddle. In January 1952, Col. Frank Dunn, then chief of ATIC, decided that we should hire several well-qualified scientists on a consultant basis, to help us gather certain technical information, to review outstanding "unknowns," to go over our conclusions and to suggest future courses of action. The names of these people have never been made public, and it is unlikely that they will be. The project

learned early that publication of anyone's name in connection with the saucer stories brought on a deluge of mail, telephone calls and visits from cranks.

The invariable comment of scientists who examined the project's data was that they offered insufficient solid information for evaluation. Several hundred people, of all different sorts, said they had seen something that they couldn't explain, under a wide variety of circumstances. Where did you go from there?

The new questionnaire and the Air Force order came at a fortunate time—just before the enormous upsurge of sightings in 1952. By the end of the year we had a much better collection of data—both in quantity and quality—and we decided to summon a week-long conference of scientists to look it over and tell us what they thought.

They met early in 1953. Like our consultants, they cannot be named, and for the same reasons. But the group consisted of some of the nation's top people in astrophysics, operational research, intelligence, physics and psychology.

First we briefed them thoroughly on the operation of the project, on our methods of evaluation, on our conclusions and how we arrived at them. When we were through, they examined closely the "best" of the UFO cases that the project had been unable to explain. They viewed movies, looked at still photographs of "saucers," and heard reports from specialists on radar and photo-interpretation.

At the end of the week, they unanimously concluded that we had nothing that proved—or even indicated—that any type of vehicle was violating U.S. air space. There was discussion that possibly some new natural phenomenon was causing some sightings, but this was rated doubtful.

On the possibility of emissaries from outer space, they made this statement: "We as a group do not believe it is impossible for some other celestial body to be inhabited by intelligent creatures. Nor is it impossible that these creatures could have reached such a state of development that they could visit the earth. However, there is nothing in all the so-called "flying saucer" reports that would even vaguely indicate that this is taking place."

This group viewed—and rejected as proof of the existence of saucers—the controversial Tremonton movies.

These pictures were taken at 11:10 a.m., July 2, 1952, a few miles out of Tremonton, Utah, by Warrant Officer Delbert Newhouse, a Navy photographer. He was driving in his car with his wife when they saw some white objects circling in the blue sky. Newhouse took out his camera, a 16 mm. Bell and Howell, and shot 40 feet of film. After he had the film developed, he sent it to Blue Book for analysis.

I've sat through ninety-seven showings of the film. When I first saw it, I was impressed by it—and puzzled. It shows several groups of white spots orbiting against the blue Utah sky. There are no points of reference—only the moving spots and the sky. Near the end of the film, one of the spots moved away from the others, and Newhouse panned the camera along to follow it. When he turned back, he reported, the other spots had vanished.

I sent the film on to the Pentagon, where it was received by Maj. Dewey Fournet, liaison man for ATIC. Fournet, an excellent engineer, holds strongly to the theory that saucers are real and come from outer space. He has since left the service and is in private industry in Texas. He was tremendously excited with the movies.

The movies were inspected by a group of high officers at the Pentagon and were sent back to Dayton for analysis by the Air Force photo laboratory. The lab examined them and reported that there was no evidence of fraud, and that the objects were not spherical balloons. It was the consensus of everyone who viewed the movies, incidentally, that they were not a hoax, that they showed something that Newhouse and his wife had seen. We decided to send them on to the Navy photo lab for further evaluation. They were taken there by Fournet, and I understand that he gave them quite a buildup to the Navy technicians.

The Navy subjected them to an intense analysis, involving thousands of man-hours of work, and came up with an astounding report. The gist of their evaluation was that the movie was authentic, and that the objects were not birds, balloons, planes, or anything earthly. They examined the film, frame by frame, and analyzed the density of light on each object.

They reported that the objects appeared to be rotating in three groups, with each light increasing in brilliance, then decreasing, disappearing and returning as if spinning about an axis.

On the panel of scientists that inspected them later were some men with excellent reputations in the field of astronomical photo analysis. They viewed the movie a number of times, and questioned the Navy analysts closely about their methods of evaluation. They concluded that the Navy's method of measuring light density had been faulty, and that the conclusions drawn from it were therefore unsound. They suggested that the whole study be redone by new methods before the analysis be released.

Among the panel were a number of people who were convinced that the objects were sea gulls soaring on a thermal current. This theory also had been advanced by other persons familiar with gulls, who had seen the movie earlier. The ultimate decision of the experts was that the movie did not warrant the great time and expense of a second analysis.

At the time, I was doubtful of the gull explanation. But later, while in San Francisco on an investigation, I saw a group of gulls soaring on a bright day over the bay. I was astounded by the similarity between the sight before my eyes and the movie that I had seen almost 100 times.

The project received three other movies that got considerable attention. One, in color, was taken at Great Falls, Mont., and showed two bright spots of light speeding across the sky and passing behind a water tower. Two F-94s were in the area, and the lights could have been reflections of the sun on these jets, but we were not able to come to any definite conclusions.

The other two movies were made at the White Sands Proving Grounds with Askania Cine theodolites—scientific tracking cameras for following guided missiles. The first was made on April 27, 1950. Shortly after a missile was fired and had soared into the stratosphere and fallen, someone spotted an object in the sky. The theodolites were hooked up by an intercom system, and several stations were instructed to try to get pictures. Unfortunately, only one camera had film. The pictures showed a smudgy, dark object, not very well defined. It was moving.

On May 29, 1950, after word of the first picture had got around and the stations were more alert, another object was sighted just before a missile was to be fired. A second station was called, and they reported that they also could see the object visually. Both stations swung into action and took photos. On



WHAT OUR AIR FORCE FOUND OUT ABOUT FLYING SAUCERS

developing the film, it turned out that each was tracking a different object—bright dots of light—and again we had no triangulation. Whatever the dots were, they were impossible to evaluate.

As a result of these incidents, the Air Force set up "Project Twinkle," two Askantias to be manned 24 hours a day. The project was operated for a year and didn't get a picture. It was first set up in an area where there had been many "saucer" sightings, but as soon as it was in operation, the sightings stopped and we began to get a flock of sightings from another area about 100 miles away. After months of inaction, the Askantias were moved to *that* spot, whereupon the sightings stopped there and resumed at the original site.

When I told this story to a dedicated saucer fan later, he had an immediate explanation. "Of course," he said, "the saucers were *watching* you guys."

We were always on the lookout for "hardware"—any sort of tangible object that conceivably might have dropped, been wrenched or stolen from a saucer. We got a variety of things that people said had fallen from the sky and we had them all analyzed. Among them were some slag from Virginia, an aluminum mop handle from Washington, D. C., and a tar-covered marble from Illinois.

Once a Texan reported that something had flashed across the sky and plunged through the ice into a pond on his farm. Investigators went out with hollow tubes and probed into the ooze under the jagged hole in the ice. They sent me one sample of the cross section from their pipes that puzzled them. It turned out to be cow manure.

We naturally tended to give more credence to sightings from a group of witnesses than from a single observer. One person can have spots before his eyes or hallucinations, but they won't be seen by a friend. This elementary rule-of-thumb resulted in one saucer-sighter risking his happy home in an effort to convince us.

We got a report, from a town that is going to remain nameless, that a citizen was sitting in his car when it was buzzed by a flying saucer. We wrote back to the intelligence officer to whom the report was made and asked him if there was any corroboration, pointing out that an unsupported story was an unsupported story.

"Look, mister," the citizen told the officer. "I'm not the only one who saw it. There was a woman with me, and she saw it too. The trouble is, she wasn't my wife." This was the lone case that we received of a saucer flying down Lovers' Lane.

Because of a run of saucer incidents that turned out to be balloons, we attempted to set up a system that would give us information on every balloon in the country. The complex project yielded some results, but explained only a small percentage of the unknowns.

We got flying-saucer reports from a weird assortment of origins—an oil drum exploding in a city dump, paper plates caught in an updraft, bugs silhouetted against the sun. Birds flying over a well-lighted area, like an athletic field at night, caused a lot of reports of "glowing objects."

We were always being collared by volunteer experts. Each non-believer always had some revolutionary theory that would explain away every saucer in the country. Invariably it was something that fifty other people had thought about years before. For some reason or other, there were a lot of military generals who "knew what the saucers are." They would tell us that each sighting was just a reflection on a plane's canopy, and then go into long stories about their own experiences with canopy reflections. Whenever we were badly outranked we would listen carefully and try to nod at the proper time.

About the fifteenth time that an earnest member of the brass started unveiling the canopy reflection theory, I rebelled.

"Look, sir," I said, "what about the thousands of sightings on the ground by people who don't have canopies?"

"Hmmm," mused the two-star theorist, "I never thought of that."

The variety of the UFOs, the many different circumstances under which they were sighted—in bright sunlight, at dusk, at night, from planes, from the ground, by radar, by groups of people—should have ruled out any attempts to explain them away by a single theory. But people kept trying.

Professor Donald H. Menzel, in a book entitled *Flying Saucers—History, Myth, Facts*, attempted a single explanation for the stubborn 20 percent of unknowns that the project could not account for. His theory was that "this mysterious residue consists of the rags and tags of meteorological optics: mirages, reflections in mist, refraction and reflections of ice crystals."

His explanation failed to account for the many cases where there was a simultaneous radar fix on a UFO and a visual sighting. Mirages and reflections can and do fool the naked eye, but they don't show up simultaneously on a radar scope.

On the one batch of spectacular UFOs that looked as if they ought to have a meteorological explanation, the explanation collapsed. These were the flock of green fireballs that appeared in the Southwest.

They caused considerable concern because they showed up in sizable numbers around the Atomic Energy Commission's vital installations at Las Alamos and Sandia. They all showed the same characteristics and were seen by hundreds of people, including a lot of top-flight government technicians and scientists.

They were large, often described as big as the full moon, only brighter, and kelly-green in color. They traveled at terrific speeds at apparently low altitudes. One airline pilot flying west of Albuquerque swerved his plane, nearly throwing the passengers out of their seats, in his fear that he was going to collide with one. They began appearing in December 1948, and had their biggest night on December 5, when crews of both civilians and military aircraft and ground observers sighted them. They appeared sporadically afterward, and then vanished. I talked to many people who had seen the fire balls, and they must have been an impressive sight.

The obvious initial theory was that they were meteors, and that they had shown up in one section of the country by a fluke of the law of probability.

Dr. Lincoln La Pez, director of the Institute of Meteoritics at University of New Mexico, strongly opposed this theory. He is one of the world's leading authorities on meteorites—and he had seen the green fireballs. I had a long talk with him in July 1952, and he had some convincing reasons.

1. The color was wrong. Although there are green meteors, the color described by hundreds of people was too bright a shade of green.

2. Meteorites as low and as bright as the green fireballs would be as noisy as jet bombers. The strange fireballs were silent.

3. The fireballs did not follow the trajectory of a meteor, which arcs down under the pull of gravity. They flew in a straight line, from horizon to horizon.

4. Dr. La Pez was never able to locate any fragments of the green fireballs. He has long experience in plotting the paths of meteorites, determining where they exploded and finding fragments. And witnesses did not report the fireballs as exploding.

I heard many reports that the copper content of the air in the New Mexico area showed a marked increase during the invasion of the weird green balls of fire. This was reported flatly as fact by a national magazine. We tried diligently, but were unable to authenticate this story.

On the green orbs, the project drew a blank, and the visitors to the Southwest remain a big question mark in the Blue Book files. But whatever the emerald mysteries were, they were a separate puzzle from the classic flying saucers. They had no characteristics in common with the silvery disks except that they flew.

As our experience in investigation broadened, we found that the reliability of saucer reports varied inversely with the detail that the observer reported. The hoaxes were almost always marked by a vivid description. When a witness could tell us exactly how many rivets the saucer had, we started checking his background.

One morning when we arrived at work we found an urgent telegram from a Military Air Transport Service base in Florida. It told about a scoutmaster who had been attacked by a saucer and burned. The incident had been witnessed by three scouts, and the local intelligence officer had made a quick check on the

story and could find no holes in it. He reported that the scoutmaster had a good reputation for reliability, which of course was what you'd expect.

I showed the report to my superior at ATIC, Col. Frank Dunn, and he approved an on-the-scene investigation. In 20 minutes we had a B-25 ready with two pilots. I threw some things in a bag, got Lt. Robert Olssen, a Blue Book investigator, and we headed for Florida. Just before we left, we called Florida and asked them to have a doctor examine the scoutmaster's burns.

We landed late in the afternoon and reviewed the case with the local intelligence officer. He was pretty well sold on the man's story. It was an exceptionally detailed account, and when I'd heard the whole thing, I smelled a hoax.

He said that he had conducted a scout meeting in the basement of a church, and at the end of the meeting started to drive four of the boys home. He dropped off one, and then headed for the nearby town where the other three lived. He took a back road that led through a sparsely settled area. This struck me as odd, but I checked the map and found that it was the logical route from the first scout's home to the town where they were going.

By this time, his story went, it was around 9 p.m. As they drove through a sandy section with scrub pine, he saw some lights come down low into the trees and disappear. The scoutmaster's first thought was that a plane had made a crash landing. The boys didn't see the lights, but he told them about them and said he thought he ought to investigate. The boys were afraid to be left alone in the car, and he started to drive on when he peered back into the trees and saw something glowing. This time the boys thought they saw it too. The scoutmaster decided that it was his duty to see if a plane was in trouble.

He had the radio on in his car, and a quarter-hour program was just starting. He told the boys to wait until the program was over, and if he hadn't returned, they were to go to a farmhouse a short way down the road and summon help. Taking a flashlight and a machete, he headed into the woods.

He stumbled through the night, keeping his light on the ground, until he came to a clearing a short distance from the road.

"I suddenly noticed something odd that frightened me," he said. "I felt a damp, muggy heat on my face. It did not feel natural. At the same time I smelled a faintly pungent odor.

"I stepped into the clearing and the heat and odor got worse. It felt like the radiation from a furnace. I glanced up to check the position of the North Star. It was a clear night and I had spotted the star when I left the auto, to orient myself. The whole sky was black.

"I was paralyzed with fear and turned my flashlight up. The beam shone on the bottom of something. It looked like battle-ship-gray linoleum. Whatever it was, it was so low I could have jumped up and hit it with my machete.

"I backed up until I could see the stars again. Then I flashed the light up again and could see the object plainly. It was about 30 feet in diameter, with things on the side like ventilators. The device was dome-shaped, with a slightly convex bottom. As I stepped back, the heat diminished and I could feel the cool, fresh air on the back of my neck.

"Suddenly I had the strange feeling that something was watching me. From the saucer there came the sound of something moving, of metal against metal, like a safe door opening.

"A glowing red ball appeared and started to float down toward me. In a reflex action, I threw my arms up to protect my face, with my clenched fists over my eyes. I was engulfed in a red mist and lost consciousness."

Back on the road, the scouts grew frightened, piled out of the car and ran to the farmhouse for help. The farmer called the state police, who relayed the alarm to the sheriff. Two deputies arrived on the scene just as the scoutmaster came stumbling out of the woods.

"He had the most scared look I've ever seen," one of the deputies told me. The scoutmaster poured out his fantastic story to the deputies and then accompanied them back to the clearing. They found his flashlight on the ground, still burning, and a crushed place in the grass where someone had been lying.

The whole party went to the sheriff's office, where the scoutmaster was examined. They found that the backs of both arms were scorched and that the top of his cap—a long-visored fishing or skiing model—had been scorched, too. They notified the Air Force.

We questioned the scoutmaster at length the evening after we arrived. He told a consistent story. When we got through, he asked if he could talk to anyone about the event, or should he keep buttoned up? "That's up to you," I told him. "The Air Force doesn't try to censor these stories."

We talked to his employer, who said he was a fine fellow. The next morning we went out to the scene and combed it foot by foot. The only theory we had was that he had been struck by lightning—possibly ball lightning—but there was no sign of lightning having struck the area.

We returned to the base and found it in an uproar. The scoutmaster had a lurid account in the local paper. He reported that "top Air Force officials from Washington" had questioned him. "The Air Force and I know what this thing was," he went on cryptically, "but I'm not allowed to tell because it would create a panic."

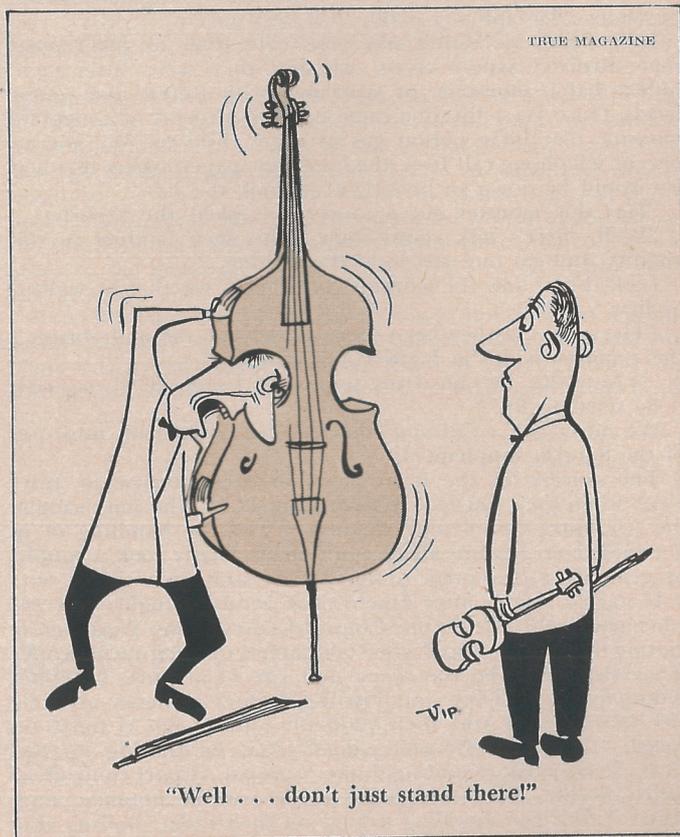
I looked at Olssen and Olssen looked at me. "Screwball," we said simultaneously.

The scoutmaster knew that we were from Dayton, not Washington, that we were a plain AF captain and a lieutenant, not "top officials," that we had offered no theory about the "saucer," and had told him he could talk freely. That afternoon we learned he had hired a press agent. That evening we did some intensive digging into his background, and the next day we flew back to Dayton.

We brought his hat back for a check at the lab. They reported the scorch marks were peculiar, as if they had been burned by a hot iron. There were folded areas that were not scorched at all. The lab expressed a strong doubt that the hat was on anyone's head when it was burned.

We sent out a few queries here and there, and found that he had a peculiar background for a scoutmaster. He had told a strange story about serving in the Marines in the Pacific, where he had landed alone on Jap-held islands and mapped them at night to make the Marine landings easier.

We queried the Marines and they told us that he had served six months and had never left the country. He had gone AWOL, got mixed up in a stolen auto case, had been kicked out of the corps and had served time. We checked the institution where he had done his term and learned that he was a somewhat unstable character, to put it charitably, given to spinning wild yarns. He reportedly had once told New York police he had seen two men hurl a woman out of a skyscraper and that the body had landed at his feet. Up sped a black limousine.



WHAT OUR AIR FORCE FOUND OUT ABOUT FLYING SAUCERS

he said, out jumped two other fellows who picked up the body, threw it in the back seat and roared off. The police went with him to the scene, and sure enough, there wasn't any body there. There wasn't any blood on the sidewalk, either.

We tipped off the Scout council and wrote off the story as a hoax. The fellow kept telling it, however, and it got better all the time. Within a month, the saucer had acquired an unspeakable monster, so foul that there were no words to describe it.

Later we had an even more fascinating "manned saucer" story from a radar station up near the Canadian border. Two radar men stepped out of their shack one night and were astounded to see a great glowing UFO low in the trees a few miles away. The generator that operated the radar set wasn't operating, and one of the men ran around to the Quonset hut to get it started.

While he was in the hut, the saucer flew up to the radar shack and halted, hovering in the air. A sliding door opened, and a little man, 4 feet high, came walking down some invisible steps. He was quite remarkable, even for a saucer crewman—he had two heads, one an old one and the other a young one. With proper respect for age, the young head let the old one do the talking.

"May I please have a drink of water?" the elderly head asked the radar operator.

The man stammered out that they had no water, which subsequent investigation indeed proved to be the truth. The old head thanked him politely, and the creature mounted the invisible steps and re-entered the saucer, which flew back to its original position among the trees. A little later the radar pair pointed it out to several other people, all of whom saw it clearly. The other witnesses, however, insisted that it was merely the moon.

A formal report was filed on this and forwarded to Dayton. We were still puzzling over it when we got a terse supplementary notation from the local intelligence officer who had interrogated the men. Behind the radar shack he had found two cases of empty beer bottles. "Please ignore original report," he wrote. "Disciplinary action has been taken."

In general, we didn't pay much attention to the reports that involved saucer crews, whether they were little men, indescribable monsters, or spacemen with junior and senior heads. Once West Virginia came up with a report of a metallic monster that blew poison gas at some children. We got an urgent telephone call from the local newspaper asking us when we would be down to investigate. I took the call.

"Has this monster got a saucer?" I asked the reporter.

"Well, there's talk about some lights seen landing in the vicinity, but no one has located anything."

I asked him how the monster got around, whether he walked or flew.

"The stories say he's been crashing through the underbrush," the reporter said, "so I guess he's walking."

"If he walks, he's an Army problem," I said. "Call me back if he starts to fly."

We never got a call, and the monster crashed off into one of the Sunday supplements.

The saucers hit the front pages in 96-point type in July, 1952, when they "buzzed" Washington, D. C. The story caught the Air Force completely off balance and the handling of it got fouled up beyond all recognition. It finally took a couple of generals and a press conference to straighten things out.

It started shortly after nine o'clock Saturday night, July 19, when the Air Route Traffic Control Center of the Washington National Airport noticed some odd targets on their radar scope. They seemed to be the shape and size of aircraft, but they didn't fly right. They would cruise around aimlessly at from 100 to 130 mph and then suddenly vanish—"in a burst of speed," the saucer Boswells added later, in dressing up the story. Shortly before midnight, the National Airport controllers called Bolling Air Force Base, just across the Potomac, and asked if they had anything strange on their radar. Bolling also

was picking up strange targets. About this time Andrews AFB chimed in and reported that they had some unknown objects on their scopes, too. Bolling, Washington National and Andrews are all tied together in a common communications net, and they started comparing notes over the squawk box.

Once, at a point close to the Andrews range, where the three radar systems overlapped, they all picked up what seemed to be the same target. Several people at Andrews were alerted and spotted a big orange-red object hovering just about where radar had it.

Washington National called all commercial aircraft in the area and asked them to look for lights that they couldn't identify as other aircraft. At 3:15 a.m., Capital Airlines Flight 807 reported seven lights between Washington and Martinsburg, W. Va.—a section where some of the mysterious blips had shown on the scopes. The captain of the airliner, a man with seventeen years' flying experience, described the lights as hovering awhile and then moving up and down. Shortly later a Capitol-National flight approaching Washington from the south reported that a light had followed them to within four miles of the airport.

At 4 a.m. an F-94 all-weather jet fighter was flown into the area and combed it thoroughly and could find nothing.

The location of this flareup—practically over the White House—plus the radar angle and the fact that a fighter had been scrambled combined to make this story big news. The radar aspects in particular impressed the newspapers and the wire services, and the case was played up as the first time that "saucers" had been spotted by radar. All over the country people said, "They must be real if radar picks them up." The night fighter roaring aloft to chase saucers away from Capitol Hill was the final touch.

Actually, radar is as tricky as the imagination of a scared youngster alone in the house at midnight. There are a number of ways radar can pick up objects that simply aren't there. An inversion layer in the air will bend the radar beam and cause it to interfere with another radar station that ordinarily is out of range. Or inversion will cause the scanning station to pick up ground targets—such as a big truck. On the night the saucers "buzzed Washington" there was a temperature inversion and all the sets were getting weather blips. The fact that three of them showed a blip at the same spot didn't necessarily mean a thing. They all showed blips wherever they were turned.

When we talked to the men at Andrews who had seen the orange-red object they had already figured out that it was a planet. The fact that a fighter had been sent up was not at all unusual. It is standard procedure whenever the Air Defense Command gets a target that they can't identify over a "sensitive" area. That's their job. We couldn't account for the airline sightings, and listed them as unknown.

But by the time we had pieced all this together, the Washington saucer story was a couple of days old, the papers were back on politics and hardly anyone was interested in a complex explanation of just why an exciting story hadn't been true. This time lag was a real drawback in keeping the public informed about the evaluations of the project. Someone out in Seattle or San Antonio or What Cheer, Iowa, would report a saucer and the local paper would call us up and ask, "How about this? What was it, anyway?" We'd tell them, in all honesty, "We don't know. We haven't been able to make our evaluation yet." The story would hit the paper's front page the next day under the headline:

PREACHER SEES SAUCER AIR FORCE CAN'T EXPLAIN

Just one week after the saucers buzzed Washington, they came back and buzzed it again—and again we stubbed our toe on the story. The reporters got word of the story and hurried to the airport. This time the all-weather fighters were called down right away. Commercial traffic was cleared out of the area and things were set up to work an "intercept." Here the trouble began; some of the procedures used in the situation are classified, so the reporters were shoosed out of the radar room. Everyone was excited, and the reporters were bewildered by the sudden bum's rush. They knew that "something" had been spotted over the capital again, and pretty soon they heard our jets roaring up and down through the night—while something big went on behind firmly closed doors. The next

day the papers broke out with 120-point bold headline type:

SAUCERS ELUDE 600 MPH JETS

Which was, after all, accurate in its way. The jets had been unable to find anything over Washington. They would be directed to the spots where the "saucer" blips showed on the radar and fly right through them. This was merely confirmation of what we'd learned the week before, that the blips were radar aberrations.

The big black headlines were on every news rack in Washington when the Pentagon got a call from the White House asking just exactly *what* was going on. White House calls were ordinarily handled by at least a three-star general, but in this case a captain—Ruppelt—was given the honor of explaining what was going on over the head of the President. I think there was something in the tone of the query that downgraded the assignment to my level. I made a reassuring report to Mr. Truman's air aide. Later I was told that the President was listening in on the briefing, but he didn't let out a peep.

The scare stories in the Washington press came smack in the middle of a record wave of saucer sightings. The year 1952 had started modestly with eleven sightings in January and built up steadily to 149 in June. This was almost as many as the project normally received in an entire year. While we were digging our way out from under the unprecedented June reports, July inundated us with 409. The two summer months produced as many sightings as the first four years of the Age of the Saucer. We went on a 16-hour day.

"I wonder," said Olssen, "what ever happened to the guys who said the saucers would go away as soon as people stopped talking about Kenneth Arnold?"

Prodded by the hubbub over the Washington flare-up and by the record crop of sightings, the Air Force called a press conference on July 29 at the Pentagon. Maj. Gen. John A. Samford, Air Force director of intelligence, went up against the biggest assemblage of newspapermen to turn out for an Air Force conference since World War II. He was accompanied by Maj. Gen. Roger Ramey, director of operations, and four technical men from ATIC—Col. Donald Bower, Capt. Roy James, Burgoyne Griffing, and myself.

Samford gave the project a pat on the back for disposing of a lot of unknowns, but added:

"However, there have remained a percentage of this total—about 20 percent of the reports—that have come from credible observers of relatively incredible things. We keep on being concerned about them." He stressed that the most careful examination of the reports indicated no menace to the United States.

The press was much more interested in the "saucers over Washington" angle and fired dozens of questions about that incident, concentrating on the radar "confirmation." It seemed to be news to many of them that radar is not infallible, that it is not a crystal-clear mirror that gives back exactly what is in front of it.

Many of the newsmen were amazed that a big "naval battle" had been fought in World War II with a nonexistent enemy because of tricks played by radar. The conference also brought out the fact that a fighter pilot, following a radar "target" caused by a temperature inversion, once had followed the bend of the image four times and found himself flying right at the ground.

These incidents took a lot of the edge off the capital saucer sensation.

I never got adjusted to the tremendous partisanship that the flying saucers inspired. Hardly anyone was neutral about saucers. People would bend our ears by the hour proving: (1) Saucers were a lot of damned nonsense and the Air Force was out of its mind to bother with investigating them, or (2) They were spaceships whose existence was beyond question and the Air Force was out of its mind to try to cover up the truth about them.

Both groups would wind up fixing us with a stern glare and demanding—"What do *you* think?"

I would tell them that we were trying to conduct an open-minded investigation, and that so far we didn't have sufficient data for a firm conclusion. This would just pour gasoline on the fire. People wanted a firm "yes" or "no" about the saucers.

We had our most bitter arguments with the "fans," as we called the believers. They believed in saucers with a passion that made a reasonable discussion almost hopeless.

Once I talked to a well-known psychiatrist about this. He was a nonbeliever.

"Look," I said, "I can understand how a man like Arnold feels strongly about the existence of saucers. He *saw* something. I can understand why anyone who has seen something that he can't explain will argue for the existence of space ships. Such a theory gives him an answer to a personal riddle. But why do thousands of people who have never seen a saucer swear that they exist?"

"I think they want to believe in saucers from another planet," he said. "The will-to-believe is a powerful thing, and it edits out reality. Visitation from another planet is a fascinating idea.

"The world we live in is becoming a place of increasingly unbearable tensions. The threat of atomic destruction hangs over us all, and we are losing faith in the invincible intelligence of man. In eight long years, the best brains on earth have frustrated each other in removing the spectre of mass destruction of whole nations.

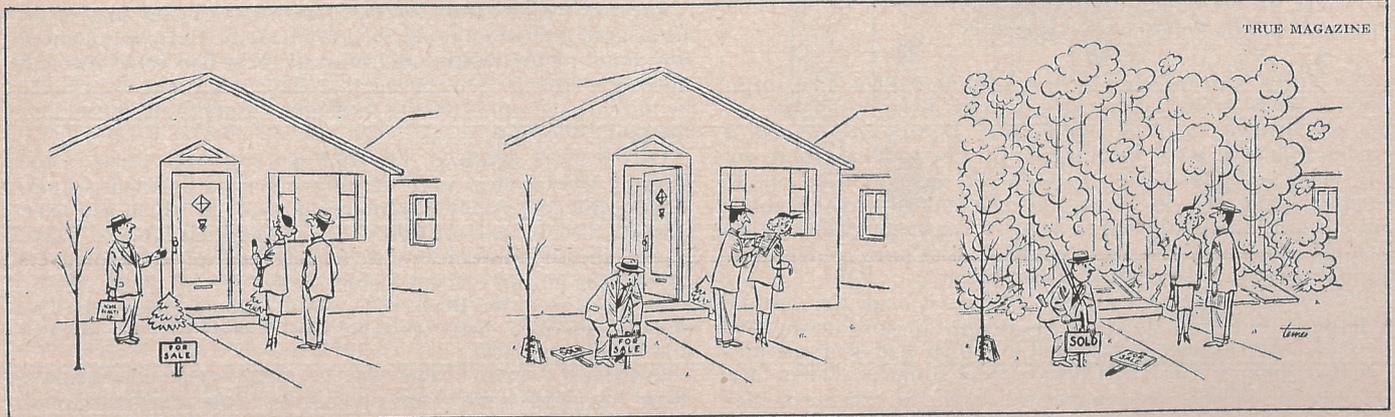
"If the saucers were real, if they came from outer space, what vistas they would open up! So far they have shown no menace. Whatever controlled them would be of a higher intelligence, since we are only beginning to fumble with the problem of space travel.

"So to people living humdrum and menaced lives, they hold out bright adventure that might remake the world. Man is doing a poor job, so we bring into being something better than man."

In addition to the plain believers, there were the cultists and the screwballs. The cultists had clubs, societies, associations, pins, conventions and special publications, and preached the saucer the way a devout Mohammedan preaches belief in Allah.

According to their unshakeable dogma, the Air Force is hiding the truth about the saucers in fear it will panic the public. Secret safes at Dayton bulge with sensational sightings, authentic close-up pictures, and wonderful movies of saucers, many in Kodachrome. Whenever a saucer lands or crashes, teams of tight-lipped investigators rush out, scoop up the saucer or the pieces and cart it off to a hidden laboratory. Meanwhile their colleagues hurry to the newspapers, flash their badges on the editor and kill the story.

Everyone knows that Capt. Mantell was shot down by a giant saucer—his body was riddled with bullets (version A) and his plane was scored with mysterious "lines of force" (version B). The project at Dayton has rooms full of little men, pickled in



WHAT OUR AIR FORCE FOUND OUT ABOUT FLYING SAUCERS

alcohol, who landed in Colorado or Arizona or Oregon and were killed by breathing our unfamiliar oxygen. Usually the little men are green, although some were baked to a crisp brown when our atmosphere turned their saucer into an incandescent toaster.

The saucers that don't carry little men are manned by monsters. And no questions, please, about whether the little men and the monsters are blood brothers or kissing cousins.

Each item in this catalog of nonsense has been told as the straight truth.

The cult is nourished by a small group of literary procurers who seize on every sighting and process it for consumption. They strip each report of any information that points to a natural explanation. They drop off all qualifying data. They omit the analysis—except when the project frankly admits it is baffled. Then they present the residue as verified fact “straight from the files of Blue Book.” A popular variant on this is “from secret Air Force records.”

In the scriptures of the cultist, everything reported to Blue Book is a saucer. The actual report may describe the UFO as a light six inches in diameter, an orb twice the size of the moon, a black speck in the sky, a strange blip on a radar scope, a cone-shaped object, a vague glow in the sky, a cigar-shaped figure, or a splash of light like a comet's tail. These dissimilar objects are all converted, with a flick of the typewriter, into saucers.

All estimates of height, speed, and maneuvering are treated as cold fact. If a traveling salesman, driving down a highway at 65 mph, glances up and sees something flash across the sky at what he guesses is 20 miles up and 8,000 miles an hour, the saucerian account comes out like this:

“At 3:17 p.m., on August 12, 1953, four miles west of Dubuque, Iowa, Joseph Doakes, a businessman, saw a saucer traveling 8,000 mph 20 miles above the earth. Doakes, a man of excellent reputation who does not drink, reported, ‘I never saw anything like it.’ The Air Force analyzed the sighting and was completely baffled.”

A few months ago, in Hollywood, I talked to Frank Scully, whose book *Behind the Flying Saucer* went through ten editions and sent a shining, silvery chain of disk-shaped dollars spinning at supersonic speeds into Scully's bank account. I was ribbing him about a couple of Southern California characters who were outdoing each other—and Scully—with fantastic saucer stories. One wrote a book about a citizen from Venus who landed his saucer in the California desert and had a long conversation with the author. Character No. Two topped that one with a yarn about riding on a saucer to a hitherto unknown planet named Clarion, whose female residents presumably are known as Clarionettes.

Scully, the staid old scientist who first put the story of the “little men from the saucers” between book covers, was appalled at such “irresponsible stories.” He complained bitterly about “the lunatic fringe invading the saucer business,” which gives a rough idea of the prevailing standards. The cultists are nearing the limits imposed by the law of diminishing returns. About the only sensation left for an author trying to break into the racket is to have his book delivered by little green men riding bona fide saucers with Venusian license plates.

The cultists watched the operation of Blue Book like suspicious wives eyeing wayward husbands. Everything that we did—or failed to do—had significance. If we investigated a flamboyant “little men” hoax, it was because we knew there *are* little men and were trying to keep the secret bottled up. If we ignored the story, we were playing a shrewd game of poker and cloaking the truth with a show of contempt. The cultists even used to analyze our facial expressions at press conferences. I usually made a “bland show of unconcern.”

Once one of the project's technical advisers made the mistake of lapsing into mild satire in his report. In considering the saucers-from-space theory, he noted that there had been speculation that some of the UFOs behaved like animals. “There are few reliable reports,” he commented dryly, “of extraterrestrial

animals.” This quip was pounced on by the cult as an enormously significant slip-up in our great conspiracy to hide the truth, and became an “official Air Force admission that some of the saucers carried beings from outer space.” Raymond Palmer, a science-fiction publisher, and Kenneth Arnold, in their book *The Coming of the Saucers*, reprint this passage and exult: “But those few, gentlemen! Those few! Where did you get them?”

Such experiences tended to make us cautious in our public announcements, and we tiptoed on verbal eggs. This, of course, was taken by the cultists to be further evidence of Operation Cover-Up.

The saucer project attracted screwballs in droves. One gentleman, who was a plasterer through the week and the shepherd for some off-beat religious sect on Sunday, telephoned me incessantly until I gave him an appointment. He was a tall, hollow-eyed fellow who looked like an undertaker down on his luck. A sister in his flock had solved the riddle of the saucers. She had it all written out, with citations from the Bible as documentation, and he clutched the historic document tightly and kept a wary eye on me. All he wanted for it was \$15,000 cash.

I told him, as gently as possible, that the government didn't hand out that kind of money for a saucer in the poke.

“All right, mister,” he said, “I'll tell you what the saucers are. But you'll have to put the cash on the barrelhead to find out how Sister Betty figured it out.

He took a deep breath. “The saucers are four angels dancing in a circle.”

He grew surly when I didn't haul out a roll of crisp \$100 bills, fresh from the U.S. Treasury, and start counting them out for him.

“What's the matter, mister?” he asked. “Doesn't the Air Force want to solve this problem?”

I got off the hook by telling him that our budget had been cut and that he could make more with Sister's secret peddling it to one of the big national magazines. He went off with a gleam in his eye.

Then there were the letters. They went into a special file with the cryptic notation “C. P.”—for crackpot. We got them by the hundreds.

From Campbell, Ohio, a gentleman offered us “spectrograms of saucer lights”—at a price—and warned us that he was selling “to the highest bidder, domestic or foreign.” “These spectrograms are protected against forceable seizure,” he noted tersely, “and I would not recommend such action on your part.”

From Long Beach, Calif., a woman wrote us a long series of letters about saucers “torching” her day and night. “They also nip your toes,” she complained. “They just make you sick.”

My favorite was from a gentleman who signed himself “Uncle Sam's Most Unique Booster.” He offered us three working saucers in exchange for train fare from California to Dayton. “I fly them by changing the potential energy in centrifugal force to a kinetic energy of 33 pounds to the square inch in the form of a jet propulsion,” he wrote. “Roll that around your attic.” His saucers were powered by vacuum cleaner motors. If we weren't interested in them, he had an atomic machine “that makes yours look sick,” and a helicopter that folded up into a suitcase.

Obscured by the hoaxes, distorted by the literary charlatans who hail every vagrant light as a verified space ship, the case for the flying saucer rests on the inexplicable instances that have cropped up year after year since 1947.

In 1952, we extracted the best sightings from the files to see what kind of sense we could make from them. These represented the cream of the reports and most of them had come through military channels. This meant that they either had been made by military personnel or had undergone a preliminary check at the point of origin.

Of the 2,199 sightings, 434—19.7 percent—were listed as unknown. Among them were sightings reported by scientists and veteran pilots of excellent reputation, many of whom had been scornful disbelievers until they had sighted their saucers. These reports included instances of flight performance and maneuvers beyond the abilities of any known craft.

In addition to the Black Hills, South Dakota, case which I've already described, here are some of the cases that the project was unable to crack:

INCIDENT NO. 2—On July 29, 1952, near Port Huron, Mich., two F-94s were in the air making night practice runs on

a B-25. A radar station in the vicinity picked up an unknown object and asked one of the planes to investigate. The jet went up to 20,000 feet where the pilot spotted the object visually. He started to chase it, and the fleeing UFO and the pursuing jet both showed up on the radar scope, which tracked the chase. The jet pilot switched on his gun radar, got an automatic lock-on. The object easily kept out in front of the jet, even when the pilot kicked on his afterburner. Our investigation showed that there were no other planes in the vicinity, and the double radar verification ruled out planets, stars, reflections, hallucinations.

INCIDENT NO. 3—On July 24, 1952, two Air Force colonels stationed at the Pentagon were en route in a B-25 from Hamilton AFB to Colorado Springs. They were flying at 11,000 feet near Carson Sink, Nev. It was 3:40 p.m. on a calm, clear day with unlimited visibility. Suddenly they sighted three silver objects shaped like arrowheads approaching them at terrific speed. The objects first appeared at the 1 o'clock position and passed the B-25 in a continuous bank. The two colonels both observed the three strange objects carefully and were positive that they were no craft that they had ever seen before. They estimated their size at about that of an F-86, and their distance at the point of passage at between 400 and 800 yards. Both men reported that the objects had a "definite ridge along the top," and had sharply defined outlines. Neither man was a flying saucer believer.

INCIDENT NO. 4—On January 28, 1953, at 9:35 p.m., a jet pilot near Albany, Ga., spotted "an extremely bright light" at 10 o'clock high. At first he thought it was another aircraft or an unusually bright star, but when he went up to 10,000 feet it appeared to be ahead and a bit below him. When first spotted, the light was white, but later it began changing constantly from white to orange and back to white again. The object was in view for 17 minutes. In the last 15 seconds it changed shape from circular to triangular, and then the triangles split into two triangles—one immediately above the other—and both disappeared as if someone snapped off a light.

The pilot called Albany, Ga., but before he could make his amazed report, ground asked him if he had seen anything unusual. They advised him that ground radar had picked up both his jet and a strange target. On the radar scope, when the jet had speeded up, the target had stepped up, too, to maintain its lead on him.

INCIDENT NO. 5—Shortly before midnight on August 5, 1952, two airmen were walking toward the tower at Haneda AFB in Japan to begin their shift when they spotted a large round object bearing a light in the sky. Hurrying to the tower, they pointed it out to the other tower operators, and they took turns observing the object through 7x50 binoculars. Under the glasses, a less brilliant light could be seen around the edge of the object. The tower people called radar and gave them a bearing on the thing, and radar picked up a target in the immediate area. By correlating movement of the radar target and the visual UFO, they established that they were both observing the same object. The radar tracked the object at speeds varying from hovering to 300 knots. An F-94 was scrambled and vectored into the target. It got a radar lock-on and started to close on the object. At 6,000 yards, the jet lost radar contact and at the same time the tower and ground radar lost it, too. At the end of the sighting, the object as seen on the ground radar "broke up into three pieces which flew formation at quarter-mile intervals." During the incident, a weather balloon was released at the base, and the witnesses reported that its light was much dimmer than that of the UFO. One of the puzzling aspects of the incident was that neither the jet pilot nor the radar crew was able to get a visual sighting on the object, although each was closer to it than the air base tower.

INCIDENT NO. 6—On the night of January 26, 1953, a group of Air Force people stationed at a radar site in New Mexico observed a "very bright, reddish-white" object west of their station and then picked it up on their radar. The object was in view for 45 minutes both visually and by radar and once moved behind a hill and then reappeared. Radar showed it 9 miles from the station, traveling north at a lazy 12 to 15 knots, at 10,000 to 15,000 feet. Although a balloon was in the vicinity, the UFO traveled steadily almost directly into the wind.

INCIDENT NO. 7—On February 16, 1953, at 11:30 p.m., a pilot and an instructor in a C-47 over Turnagain Arm—a bay near Anchorage, Alaska—saw a red light that they judged to be

a jet aircraft, five miles away. But as they watched it, it got bigger and brighter, as if headed toward them. Unable to see any green navigation light, they asked the tower at Elmendorf AFB if any other craft were in the area. The tower said there was none, and then made a radar check with negative results. The object was first seen low and definitely below the horizon. The C-47 was flying at 2,000 feet. The object continued to close on the C-47, increasing in brilliance and size until it was two or three times the original size. Then it seemed to stop and hang suspended for five minutes. The pilots, still thinking it might be another aircraft, headed toward Elmendorf, where the tower asked them if they still could see the light. It was still visible, and the tower asked them to try to intercept it. As the C-47 took up the chase, the light appeared to accelerate and shortly vanished.

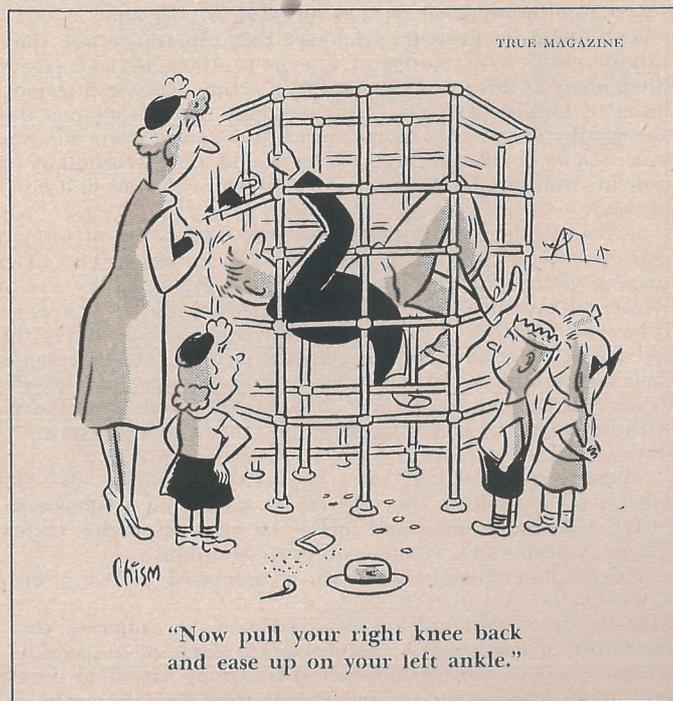
The following night, about 8 p.m., five Air Police on patrol spotted the same—or another—red light near the end of one of the Elmendorf runways. By comparing it with known lights at the base, they judged it to be similar to a 36-inch light seen from $\frac{3}{8}$ mile away. It was in a gradual climb, at about jet speed, headed for Anchorage. The Air Police called the tower. It had nothing on radar, but ordered up a jet to intercept. As the jet became airborne, the object showed a noticeable increase in speed, and when the jet came around to get on an intercept course, the light climbed vertically into the overcast at 5,500 feet.

The Air Police did not know of the original sighting when they made their report. A careful check showed no balloons in the area. Stars and planets were eliminated because the first night the object was below the horizon, and the second night there was a solid overcast. If it had been a conventional craft, the radar should have picked it up. If it had been a stray balloon that wandered in from some distance, on the first night the C-47 should easily have closed on it and passed it. On the second night, its sudden vertical rise disposed of the drifting balloon theory.

These cases, and the hundreds more like them, are the core of the flying saucer mystery. Despite our best efforts over a period of seven years—assisted by top-grade technical and scientific advisers—we were unable to crack them. They remain to baffle and intrigue millions. And despite the improvement in methods of analysis that has resulted from our experience, scores of unknowns are added to the project's files each year.

Hundreds of people have asked me, "What do you think, yourself?"

The job of Project Blue Book was fact-finding, not speculation. Our investigation of the saucer sightings was aimed at compiling as much firm data as we could, in the hope that it would provide the basis for analysis that would answer the



WHAT OUR AIR FORCE FOUND OUT ABOUT FLYING SAUCERS

seven-year mystery. The project failed in this attempt. The mystery of the saucers is still as baffling as it was the day that Kenneth Arnold landed his plane and told the story of what he had seen near Mt. Rainier.

My own opinion is that either the saucers are interplanetary or they do not exist. I do not believe that there is enough evidence at hand to choose between these alternatives. You can argue either case indefinitely, and in the end you will have only an opinion.

In the operation of Blue Book, we briefed a number of assemblies of scientists—guided missile experts, atomic people, experimental aircraft technicians, physicists, etc. We found them intensely interested in the saucer mystery. At Los Alamos, for example, we jammed an amphitheater with standees and answered questions for three hours after we concluded our briefing.

These people were trained in the scientific attitude, as opposed to the cultists who accept every wild-eyed report as a certified, gold-seal fact. Among them were people who had seen things that they could not explain. They were eager for facts that would help them put their experience into perspective.

These are the facts upon which I think that any responsible conclusion about them must be based:

1. To my knowledge, the Air Force has not concealed any secret sensations about the saucers. In the earliest days of the investigation, the project *was* secret. There was considerable alarm then, and some officials thought that the objects might be something new from Russia. As the alarm waned, the information was declassified. Whatever secrecy has been thrown around subsequent incidents has been only to protect classified information—precise locations of radar stations, performance data on jet fighters, etc. We also protected the identity of informants who wished to remain anonymous. We did this to encourage people of standing to feel free to report any incredible incident. Beyond these exceptions, the Air Force knows nothing about the subject that it is not telling.

2. Project Blue Book was given no orders from above about "handling the saucer problem." The story that we were a bunch of dupes, reciting whatever the top echelons told us to say, is a lot of nonsense. We briefed the echelons above us, not vice versa. I once made a personal report to Secretary for Air Thomas Finletter at the Pentagon. He was accompanied by a full squad of advisers and technicians. He thanked me when I was through. I gave him no information that is not in this account.

3. We had no evidence whatever that the saucers are some supersecret U. S. development. On the contrary, we had specific disclaimers of this from top Air Force, Army, Navy and Department of Defense officials. Ordinary horse sense is against this theory. If the U. S. has flying saucers that can perform the way saucer-sighters describe them, why would the government be pouring billions of dollars into conventional—and inferior—planes?

4. We also had no evidence that the saucers are of foreign manufacture. Again, logic opposes such a belief. The chief suspect in the "foreign saucer" theory is Russia. Why would Russia try out such a revolutionary device over the U. S. when it has vast stretches of land behind the Iron Curtain, where the test could be conducted in complete secrecy? Any man-made device is certain to fail sooner or later. The more complex the device, the higher the failure probability. Yet in seven years, with thousands of saucer sightings, not one has been known to have crashed.

These four points may bring you to the possibility that the saucers are craft from outer space. As staggering as the implications may be, to my mind this is the most acceptable theory—if the saucers exist. There is no other alternative.

What is the argument that they are nonexistent? It has some stubborn facts on its side.

First, the residue of unknowns shows no common characteristics. Their shapes, performances, times of appearance, colors, locations showed the same bewildering variety as the 80 percent that we were able to explain. The 434 unknowns in-

cluded little lights, big lights, multicolored lights, disks seen by day, cigar shapes, orbs and dots of lights. To argue that the hard core of unknowns are all "saucers" is inaccurate. They include a variety of dissimilar objects. This variety gives strength to the theory that the unknowns are merely the same known objects as the 80 percent of sightings we were able to explain. There is a strong belief in the Air Force that the unknowns are "unknown" only because we lacked sufficient data on them. This belief is supported by the fact that our percentage of explanations rose with the intensity of our investigation.

Secondly, there were no bursts of unknowns. Over the years, they roughly followed the total number of sightings, rising and falling with the volume of reports. In general, there was no geographic clustering of unknowns. For a time, there were more sightings around certain atomic installations and defense areas. This concentration was not large enough, in our opinion, to have significance. Residents of such areas are more security conscious than people living in a nonsensitive area, and quite possibly we got more sightings from atomic and defense sections because more people there were scanning the skies.

Some theorists have figured that another planet sending emissaries to the earth would dispatch them at the point where their orbit would bring them closest to earth. Assuming a set travel time, this would bring their craft into our ken at a regular time. For several years there was a sharp rise in saucer reports during the month of July. But in 1953, the sightings in the month took a sharp drop.

Thirdly, in the seven years there has been no physical evidence of the existence of saucers. The Air Force has found no evidence that a saucer has ever crashed or landed. It has seen no photographic evidence that it can credit. It has seen no "hardware" that it cannot explain as man-made.

Against these arguments stands the testimony of hundreds of people. They have seen something incredible. They include hundreds of people who scoffed at flying saucers until they saw something that bore no relation to anything they had ever seen. They include hard-bitten airmen familiar with all the hallucinations of flying, sober scientists who applied every natural explanation—and stubbornly insisted, "It was something else."

Among these sightings have been a small number that have been confirmed by radar. Whatever the object was, it was not a hallucination. And frequently, it outperformed any craft known on earth.

The fact that the unknowns show a variety of shapes and sizes might be explained by two things. One is the unreliability of witnesses. A saucer described as "50 feet in diameter" may be 150 feet—if it is farther from the observer than he believes. The variety in sizes of the unknowns could be explained by misjudgments in distance, a common error. If more accurate data were available, the unknowns might well show a greater consistency in size.

The same is true of shapes. A disk traveling broadside to the witness would appear to be an orb. As its angle tilted, it would become football-shaped and finally take on the appearance of a cigar.

The sightings of lights at night may have no relevance to the actual size of the craft that carries them—just as a navigation light on a plane gives no hint to the size of the ship.

The absence of physical evidence—such as crashed saucers—supports the theory that they are not of this world. We have reliable data on the failure factor of man-made devices. If the saucers were made by Americans or Russians, their imperfections would have brought them down by now. But if they are interplanetary, they may be contrived by a civilization so far advanced as to have reduced the probability of failure to near zero. Or they may utilize a principle of flight unknown to us. A craft capable of traversing the vast distances of space might fly almost endlessly in the relatively tiny confines of our air envelope without failure.

The Air Force has never ruled out the possibility that we are being visited from outer space. It says only that it has no evidence to support this possibility.

—Captain Edward J. Ruppelt, USAFR

A True Book-Length Feature
