

SOUTH LINES



U.F.O STUDY
GROUP

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 1971

October 1971.

Sighting Reports.

August 25th. 1971. Report by Audrey Sands.

At approximately 9 o'clock some friends with a touring caravan at Heacham, noticed a large object, like a very bright star in the sky south, and went for their binoculars. It was stationary and looked like a saucer full circle, yellow, about two miles away, angle 30 degrees. It had a rainbow coloured halo around the edge. They viewed it for 5 to 10 minutes. They couldn't make out what it was, it stood out against any other object. A neighbour who also saw it remarked to them that they - "Shouldn't be looking through glasses at it" - as it was very bright.

Man Describes UFO Chase. Peterborough Evening Telegraph. 7.9.71.

Another Unidentified Flying Object has been sighted in the area.

A Crowland man - Mr. Stimpson, of 17 Crease Drove, - claims he saw a UFO near his home on Friday morning at 1.15am.

He was a passenger in a friend's car in which they were travelling to Liverpool, when suddenly they saw above them a round, cloud-like formation, much darker in the middle.

"Suddenly, one end of the cloud dispersed and it accelerated away" said Mr. Stimpson. They gave chase but the "thing" eluded them after 15 minutes.

A Peterborough couple and a schoolboy also saw a UFO in the area on Thursday night.

Experts Clash In UFO Mystery. Leicester Mercury. 8.9.71.

While police stations, Army posts and newspaper offices up and down the country buzzed with fresh reports this morning, experts clashed about the truth behind last night's great UFO scare.

This morning, as puzzled scientists tackled the piles of conflicting eye-witness reports, Professor Jack Meadows, of Leicester University's Department of Astronomy, claimed that the sightings in Leicestershire added up to one probable explanation - a rare cloud effect.

A typical description came from Mr. Clifford Chevins (58) of King Street, Scalford, a railway signalman at Frisby. He was one of seven signalmen on the Syston to Oakham line who sent in reports.

Mr. Chevins saw "an object shining behind a considerable amount of atmosphere producing a brilliant aura about the size of a football". When it disappeared it looked like a light fading", he said.

Professor Meadows said: "The most likely explanation is that it would be a noctilucent cloud".

Professor Meadows based his comments on a description given him by one of his students who described "a patch of whitish light in the sky about the same size as the moon."

"One can rule out artificial satellites or something like Mars", said Professor Meadows, adding that from a satellite one would expect to see a point of light and not a patch.

"Occasionally clouds are seen very much higher than ordinary clouds. They are rare in this country. One sees them more often further north.

"They move fairly slowly usually and they appear as a patch of light, usually whitish. They are illuminated by the sun."

These were so high in the sky that we could see the reflected sunlight, although the sun was below the horizon, said Professor Meadows. He pointed out that they would be seen a few hours after sunset, and this tallies with most of the reports.

Backing for the noctilucent cloud theory came from the Ministry of Defence, but a spokesman at the Royal Observatory at Herstmonceux, Sussex, challenged the idea.

He said that the most likely causes were a "fireball" - a meteorite burning up on entry to the earth's atmosphere - or a re-entry satellite. A report from Weybridge, Surrey, had said that the object moved across the sky with flames coming from it.

The spokesman said: "This would rule out the theory of a noctilucent cloud. Anyway, they are normally seen earlier in the year and at higher latitudes."

Professor Meadows said that the fireball explanation was "not possible"

based on the local sightings, which consistently emphasised the size of the object and the fact that it was stationary for periods up to half an hour or moving slowly.

"The difference is the speed of travel. If the thing was moving slowly it cannot be a fireball," he said, adding that a fireball would be visible for five minutes at the most.

Most local sightings were similar to Mr. Chevin's, although there were exceptions.

Mr. John Riley at Buckfields Farm, near Burton-on-the-Wolds, said: "I can see two objects through my binoculars. One is over Leicester the other over Nottingham. The colour of them changes from green to red and then to yellow. They have been there 20 minutes." This was at 9pm.

The picture was complicated by a scientific rocket fired from Benecula in the Hebrides at about the same time. This could not have explained all the sightings in the south, but may account for the fact that earliest reports did come from Scotland.

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said that another possibility was sunlight catching a scientific radio-sonde balloon some of which rise to 100,000 feet.

8.9.71. A Halifax paper.

Hundreds of people all over Britain were baffled last night by a mysterious light in the sky.

Scientists today said it was probably a noctilucent cloud. These are brilliant clouds in the higher atmosphere occasionally seen at night in summer months. They can be high enough to reflect the sun's light. But a Bradshaw family who watched the phenomenon claim the light came from a star.

They say it was not a shooting star. It burst and gave out a green luminous effect, which seemed to hover for about an hour, gradually descending, and eventually disappearing.

It was first seen by 19 year old Brenda Salt, of Cloth Hall Farm, who told the rest of the family, who went out to watch in a field.

"We knew it was not a cloud, but could not see clearly what it was even with binoculars." she said.

Scientists and Whitehall officials are piecing together eye-witness reports of the 'thing'.

First reports came from Scotland, where Glasgow weather centre had a number of phone calls telling of a "bright object travelling westwards". A spokesman said: "The general description was of a white object or a bright light with a bluish colour becoming rather fuzzy."

The London weather centre also received reports of sightings in Southern England.

This object was also seen by many people in South Lincolnshire. Stamford police received calls from Carlby, and Bourne. They contacted Midland Radar at RAF North Luffenham who had no objects on their radar over 5,000 feet.

Boffins Probe UFO Seen over Lincs. Scunthorpe Evening Telegraph. 8.9.71. Scientists and Whitehall officials were today piecing together eye-witness reports of a 'thing' in the sky over Britain during the night. First reports came from Scotland, where Glasgow weather centre had a number of phone calls telling of 'a bright object travelling westwards'. In Scunthorpe, two separate mobile police units both reported a glow in the sky to the west of the town at about 9.30pm.

The object was also seen by people in the Isle of Axholme. One of them was Mr. Brian Hastings, geography teacher at the North Axholme School in Crowle.

He said his attention was drawn to it by the school secretary and her husband Mr. & Mrs. Jack Briggs who live in Wharf Road, Crowle.

Mr. Hastings who runs a weather station at the school, watched it with his wife and sister from their bungalow in Wharf Road.

He said it was like a circle of white diffused light on the north west horizon. It moved slowly in a westerly direction, at an angle of about 40 degrees to the ground.

"It was the first time I have seen anything which could remotely be classed as a UFO," he said, "there was definitely something there."

Mr. Hastings contacted RAF Finningley, but the duty observer there failed to see it, possibly, Mr. Hastings said, "because the station was in a built up area."

He then went to Northern Radar at RAF Lindholme to see if they were tracking anything on their screens. He said he was expecting them to call today. Continued next month.