

Fighters were in pursuit, a
showdown was near—then an
ace pilot went too close

HE CHASED

A FLYING SAUCER
AND MET DEATH





NINETEEN forty-eight was only a week old—the second year of

the second year of the Disc Era—when death took its first toll.

Before we go into that story let us remember one thing—of great importance. These "trespassers"—if we should so call them—have been meticulously careful "to observe the amenities."

They may have been observing us, but certainly they have not pressed their curiosity to any impertinent lengths.

any impertinent lengths.

There is no evidence that they have ever made any motion towards landing. They have always tried to get out of the way.

It is of the utmost importance that we should remember that fact when we are reading this tragic story.

For terrible as the encounter proved, the "encountered," the visitor, *did everything within its remarkable powers to avoid a contact.*

[I]T happened on January 7, 1948. Fort Knox, in Kentucky (famous as the place where the biggest heap of gold ever accumulated in all history is kept buried), was the centre of the scene of action.

A showdown had been carefully planned. It was getting on for three in the afternoon—the light was very good.

Scores of people had reported seeing something. A very big, bright object travelling through the sky at a vast speed. It was evidently making its way towards the air force field, Godman Base.

So the airfield was alerted. Its control tower was manned

the control tower was manned with the field's leading personnel.

The commanding officer, Colonel Hix, was there in control. He was using binoculars. Suddenly, through a break in the clouds, appeared something which showed that the warnings sent ahead had not been exaggerated.

The whole group of expert and responsible people—as competent a bunch as could be found in all the world—saw it.

IT WAS HUGE. AT LEAST 500 FEET ACROSS BY ORDINARY CHECKING. IT SHOT OUT BLASTS OF RED FLAME.

Three fighting planes were already up and racing every moment higher to come up with the intruder.

Soon the scouts, hidden high above the clouds, began to speak clearly by telephone to the group in the tower. At least, the man in command of the flight of three was now speaking. He was Captain Mantell.

His report was good. He had the quarry in view. He was on its tracks.

And there had been no exaggeration. It was of "tremendous size." It looked, too, as though it were metallic.

THEN the voice from far up in the sky went on: "The thing is climbing."

"The thing is climbing."
The next phrase was hopeful.
**"It's going only half the speed
of the pursuit."**

Yes, he'd try to close in. But after five minutes, when the loudspeaker again took up its tale, it was not so certain.

The monster had evidently taken fright. It had shown its mettle—it was now climbing at close on 400 miles an hour.

When the speaker again addressed the tower group the voice was from one of Mantell's companions. Both he and his fellow plane had seen the ob-

ject. But they had lost sight of it now and of Mantell.

For he had gone on up after it and had disappeared in still higher cloud.

At a quarter-past three Mantell's voice was heard again. He was holding on and up. But the thing was still rising above him and maybe increasing the gap between them.

Still he'd track it as far as he could go—he thought he could stand up to 20,000 feet altitude. Then, if that didn't bring him at least to a better view and a close-up he'd give over.

Then silence. The wreckage of his plane was picked up over a wide area.

How Mantell actually met his

How Mantell actually met his death no one could say for sure—but dead he was.

When his voice could no longer be heard on the loud-speaker, the commander ordered one of the other scouts to search. He went up over 33,000 feet.

He swung over hundreds of miles of skyscape. But he saw not a glimmer of the immense

IS ANOTHER WORLD WATCHING?—Part 2

By Gerald Heard

thing they had all seen rolling above them.

There was a rumor that at Columbus, Ohio, at the airfield there, as the sun was setting on that fatal day, a disc rushed overhead, and this disc had a big, flaming, flue-blast trailing out behind it.

So came the first saucer casualty.

The sacrifice didn't add to our knowledge, but at least we had some evidence of a new species of disc.

No disc of that size had been noted before—though some may have been as big, but too high to be gauged. But what, none before had shown was this

before had shown was this great flare of incandescence from the stern.

Come now to October, 1948. The case that follows, though important and puzzling, did not end in tragedy, only in further bewilderment.

It was the night of October 1 over the North Dakota town of Fargo.

A National Air Guard lieutenant, George Gorman, a man of some importance in the town, was coming in from a practice flight in a fighter.

He was the last of his group, and had just received the O.K. that it was clear and safe for him to land. But, looking

him to land. But, looking below, he saw, moving very fast, a light between him and the ground.

IT was moving at an unwise speed, considering how close he judged it to be to the earth, for he took it to be the tail light of a plane.

Naturally, he told the landing control below to make sure again that all was clear. They told him there was only one other plane in the district, and as it happened he could pick up its outline—well out of his way.

It was nowhere near the patrolling light.

Further, as the light circled about Gorman saw no body, no structure of any sort round it—there was just a flame without a holder, a moving light without anything to move it, or carry it.

Then the tower control man caught sight of the light. He had, of course, night binoculars—so he could see far better than Gorman. But, like Gor-

man, he could see just the light and nothing round it.

Gorman decided on a bold thing. He was above the light.

thing. He was above the light. So he swooped on it. And that apparently caught its wandering attention. It paused, and then, quick as a toreador with a charging bull, side-stepped.

As Gorman swooped past he could see it more closely. It was only a foot or so in size, a white globe.

Gorman decided to dive at it again.

FOR 20 minutes this skilful flier dived and ducked at this queer, enigmatic opponent—an opponent who certainly knew how to play the game, and who, in boxing terms, could show some pretty footwork.

They danced this night sky duet above the airfield. Some of the turns made by the light were so sharp that they made Gorman go almost as black in consciousness as the night outside.

This touch and touch again of the grim danger of blacking-out made Gorman think fast. The thing was behaving humanly, but could it be human and flick round corners and make turns like that? Could any human brain stand such spinning and sudden twisting?

That problem of whether humans can turn as quick as discs turn is going to turn up again. We had heard that...

... was going to turn up again. We had best, then, note it well now. For a lot may hang on that one queer fact.

The facts of human anatomy are stubborn things. We weren't meant to function above a certain rate and pressure and power of spin. Go over that and you'll be very lucky if you don't find yourself laid out for good.

When at last Gorman, by a quick stroke, seemed for a moment as though he might actually get in the light's path, it seemed to lose patience. It suddenly swung—but not away—straight on to Gorman.

The two, Gorman and the light, were now diving right into each other. Gorman dipped, and the light sailed over him.

Then Gorman made another dash for it. Again they came head on. But this time—as it must be owned the discs always seem to do—it took to its good manners and used its full powers—it just hopped right up into the air, as the old bull fighters used to leap right over the charging bull.

Gorman wouldn't let it go. By that time, however, the Thinking Light had evidently tired of playing ball with its rather clumsy human pick-up.

Gorman came on, panting up behind it. But the light rushed up to 14,000, and then (after Gorman's plane had coughed

Gorman's plane had coughed

but got its wind again and taken him to 17,000 feet) the Light shook itself free of its hanger-on, sailed up into the night, and was gone.

This unequalled joint performance of man and mystery was watched by a group of people in the tower.

The moving body—if it can be called a body—had no trail. And no one heard any sound come from it.

One question must arise: Surely that Light was being "projected"?

There must have been someone high aloft who was directing this little bright "bait," directing it on the flying field to see what the men-minnows in the bottom of the earth-atmosphere pool would do.

The "person" far, far above played with the one "minnow" that rose. But, and this is vitally important, though the minnow, like any other mindless minnow, dashed at the bait and tried to capture it, the high, hidden "fisherman" was, thank heaven, much more a patient naturalist than a sportsman wanting to land a catch.

He played with the poor little creature, which was only able to swim as high as the water of its pool extended (and so at 17,000 feet could be let slide back to mud level).

He took some time to

He took care to learn as much as he could of the minnow's power of not only manoeuvre, but of mind — tested to see what turns it could take, what tactics it was capable of, what its resistance to strain, what its inventiveness to sudden movement might be.

There is, then, no escaping the conclusion—as all who were in on that play agreed—that there was an intelligence guiding that Light.

That is interesting, if perhaps a little too much so. What is not only interesting but heartening is that that intelligence showed itself considerate — it wanted to learn about us, *and* it was not only clever in the way it did so, but considerate.

AS to the tragic Mantell case—again, what else could be expected? The huge thing he chased scuttled away from the silly gnat that kept on rushing after it.

No one knows how near Mantell got. The current explanation is that as he hadn't got oxygen with him, above 20,000 feet he "blacked-out" (to be expected), and that while he was in a swoon his plane got out of control.

A crash from that height has happened before from that cause, and the crash will do all for the victim and his plane

for the victim and his plane that the account of that plane's break-up bore out.

But Mantell may have got right into the danger zone—and by that is meant, right near the wash of this terrible thing's inconceivable engines.

And such facts as we have seen point to one thing—these "ships" command some sort of prodigious energy the like of which is just under the horizon of our speculation.

There are two reports from observers who say they watched discs flying over a forest on a still day; and what struck them most was that the tops of the trees, as the discs passed high above them, twisted and

lashed as though a small typhoon were passing over them.

Finally, there was a report that Mantell's plane fragments did show signs of such "handling." There were grooves in the metal, driven right through it.

Taking for granted the size and power of this, the greatest of all sky visitors yet viewed (with any accuracy), we can only conclude one thing.

THESE searchers and explorers from the sky are considerate—indeed, there is every reason to suppose that they are as wise as they are clever, as gentle as they are ingenious.

In this case they were seen

In this case they were escaping so fast that they thought they had left the "gnats" safely behind.

Then one got close enough—close enough to hit that intense "wake" of discharging atom-force, radiation energy, needed to drive this artificial island up into the airless sky, out into space, maybe.

The rods of force, the jets of energy flashing out from that stern would be more penetrating than any bullet, than any jet from an oxy-acetylene torch (which drives its darting tongue of flame through steel as though through butter).

The accident would be hopelessly unavoidable—the kind of pathetic thing when a poor wild animal steps on a live wire and is instantly killed.

What then are the only reasonable conclusions with which the evidence leaves us?

First and foremost we need not become panicky. The visitors have behaved with wonderful consideration.

We can watch and wait, and above all refrain from being belligerent toward those who have shown no abruptness with us.

WE can conclude that the fighter plane approach is both silly—for it was quite impractical — and dangerous, for surely it would be hard not to misunderstand it.

It seems that the visitors are

iv.

If every time I go into a field a bull charges me. I may be forgiven for assuming that he does not want to be in friendly relations with me, or even to study impartially my behavior.

But what can we do? No one likes being looked down on, and being spied upon by someone above. That is why the next reports are so important. For they carry us a step on; not merely do they give us more evidence about the discs—they show us a new approach to them.

**TOMORROW: Chilean
Navy photographs a
"saucer."**