

U.S. Navy shatters the flying saucer



It is a balloon

NEW YORK, February 13 (A.A.P.).—Flying saucers sighted in the last three and a half years were huge new plastic balloons used in cosmic ray studies by the United States Navy.

This explanation has been given by Dr. Urner Liddel, chief of the Nuclear Physics Branch of the Naval Research Office, Washington.

Reports of flying saucers started in 1947. The Navy at that time began to use a new 100ft. plastic balloon to carry electronic instruments aloft for studying cosmic rays and other phenomena of the atmosphere.

Dr. Liddel said that flying saucer reports coincided roughly with the number of balloons sent into the sky.

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"Sky hooks"

The balloons sometimes rose to a height of about 19 miles, said Dr. Liddel. They were swept along by winds of 200 miles an hour, or stronger.

The balloons, nicknamed "sky hooks," were released at many points in the United States, and were free to travel unlimited distances.

Dr. Liddel said that dusk on a summer evening would be the best time to see a "saucer." A study of reports showed that many flying discs were seen at this time. "Lateral rays of the sun at dusk illuminate the base of the balloon," he explained.

The Navy project was kept a secret, in line with Government policy on research bearing — however indirectly—on atomic developments.