

Flying Saucer Myth Had Many Versions

**By A STAFF
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AT last we know—"flying saucers" do not exist.

After three and a half years of rumour, report, explanation and counter-explanation, we learn that the "saucers," "flying poles," "flying eggs," "torpedoes," "tadpoles," etc., which the imaginative claim to have seen in the skies were, in fact, U.S. Navy balloons sent up to search out the secrets of cosmic rays in the atmosphere.

The U.S. Navy blew the top off a mountain of conjecture yesterday. (See page 1.)

Its scientists must have had many a laugh at the spate of stories which swallowed up thousands of columns of newspaper space, and even prompted the publication of a series of articles by Mr. Gerald Heard, who has written books about the universe.

Mr. Heard's articles sought to prove that our atmosphere was being

visited by insect men from another planet.

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"I affirm that the 19th century, and still more the 20th, can knock the 15th into a cocked hat in point of susceptibility to marvels and miracles and saints and prophets and magicians and monsters and fairy tales of all kinds."

Who will say now that Shaw was wrong?

The "flying saucer" tales began in 1947.

Australia has produced her share of them.

People at Bondi and Maroubra said they saw a flying saucer as recently as December 17.

A few days earlier one was reported over Maryborough, Queensland, flying at between 400 and 500 r.p.h.

Later, two Melbourne visitors to Sydney said they believed they had seen one flying over Sydney Domain.

In April, last, plans of what ex-

perts considered could be "working flying saucers" were found in the Commonwealth Patents Office at Canberra.

The plans which had been approved by the Patents Office in 1930, 1932, 1936 and 1938, included one Australian design, one Japanese, one English and one French.

Other reports of flying saucers over Australia came from Adelaide, Canberra, Fairfield (Sydney) and Lake Illawarra.

One of the first variations of the "flying saucer" was a "moon-sized blob," said to have been seen over Washington in July, 1948.

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A farmer said he saw it and so did five airline pilots and five civil aviation employees.

It was thought the mystery of the "saucers" had been solved, when a U.S. Air Force officer discovered two strange, dilapidated and unidentified aircraft near Baltimore in August, 1949.

The officer said the two "aircraft" were prototypes of "flying saucers," and he believed their inventor had moved to some other part of the country.

On: fantastic report came from Vancouver last April.

Officials at an airport said they had seen a flying "ice-cream cone," travelling at 700 m.p.h.

Fantastic Story

The most frightening story about "saucers"—published in Sydney, London, and other cities—was that they were carrying men from another planet, possibly Venus, who had already made exploratory trips to the earth and were expected to make a mass landing last December or January.

This report came from Silas Newton, a geophysicist, of Denver, Colorado, who considered that "flying saucers" were operated by midget men, no more than 37 inches high.

He said that some of the machines, which had crashed, contained the mummified bodies of strange creatures.

Other explanations about saucers were:

● They were a new American "secret weapon" (these theorists were nearer to the truth).

● That the Russians were experimenting with new aircraft.

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Some scientists, from whom the most likely theory might have been expected, were further from the truth than anyone. They blamed "spots before the eyes," and imagination.

The briefest, most expressive—and, as it turns out, most accurate—comment on "saucers" came from an Australian Civil Aviation Department official a few months ago.

He described them as "Hooy."