

The **FLYING SAUCER** *Mystery*

• • It's six years since they were first called "flying saucers." And in those six years the strange things that people have seen in the sky have ranged from "six-foot discs" to "100ft. space-ships."

Most of the "flying saucer" sightings undoubtedly have straightforward explanations—optical illusions, balloons, high-flying aircraft, meteors or imagination.

But after all straightforward cases have been

sifted from the eyewitness accounts, about 60 remain which cannot be so easily dismissed in any honest analysis.

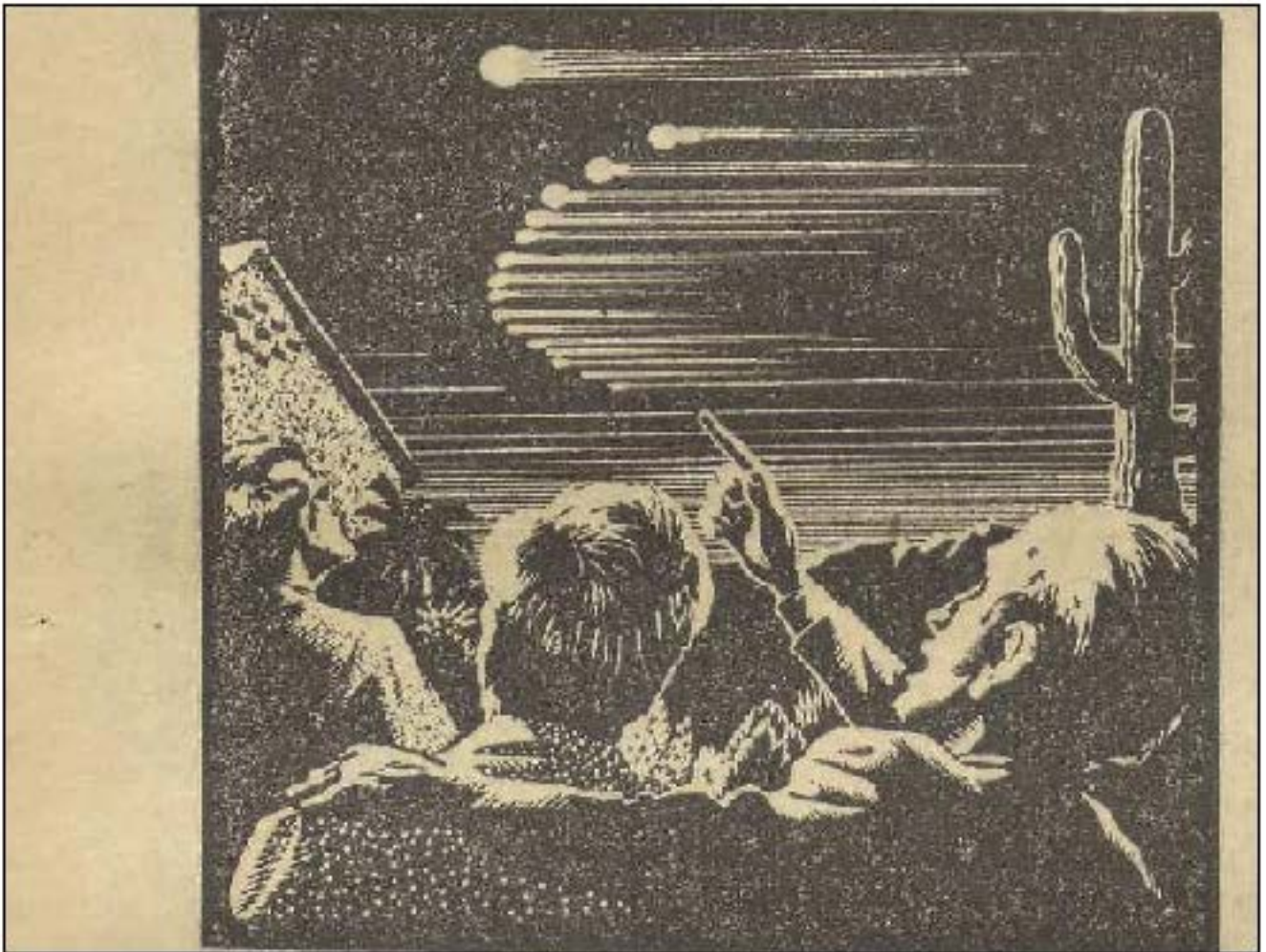
Their possible significance increases when the points from which they were observed are marked on a map. A surprisingly high proportion of the "saucers" seem to have been flying over U.S. defence stations.

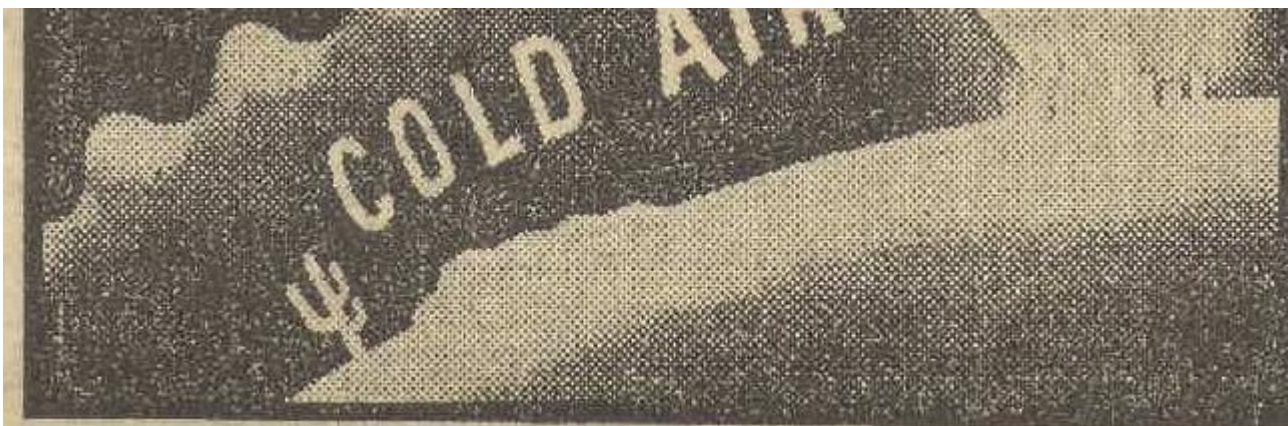
In this analysis, top flight feature writer Chapman Pincher and artist Lewis endeavour to put the mystery back into proper perspective.





◆ EYEWITNESS REPORT 1: U.S. flier Thomas Mantell and two other fighter pilots sighted, on January 7, 1948, an object "like an ice-cream cone" (left). Mantell followed it up to 20,000ft., and his body and the scattered wreckage of his plane were found later. EXPLANATION: The object was a skyhook (right) — a huge plastic balloon used by scientists for research on cosmic rays. Mantell may have collided with the balloon. A skyhook is cone-shaped until it reaches rarefied air, when it expands to a 100ft. globe. IN-QUIRY NOW CLOSED.



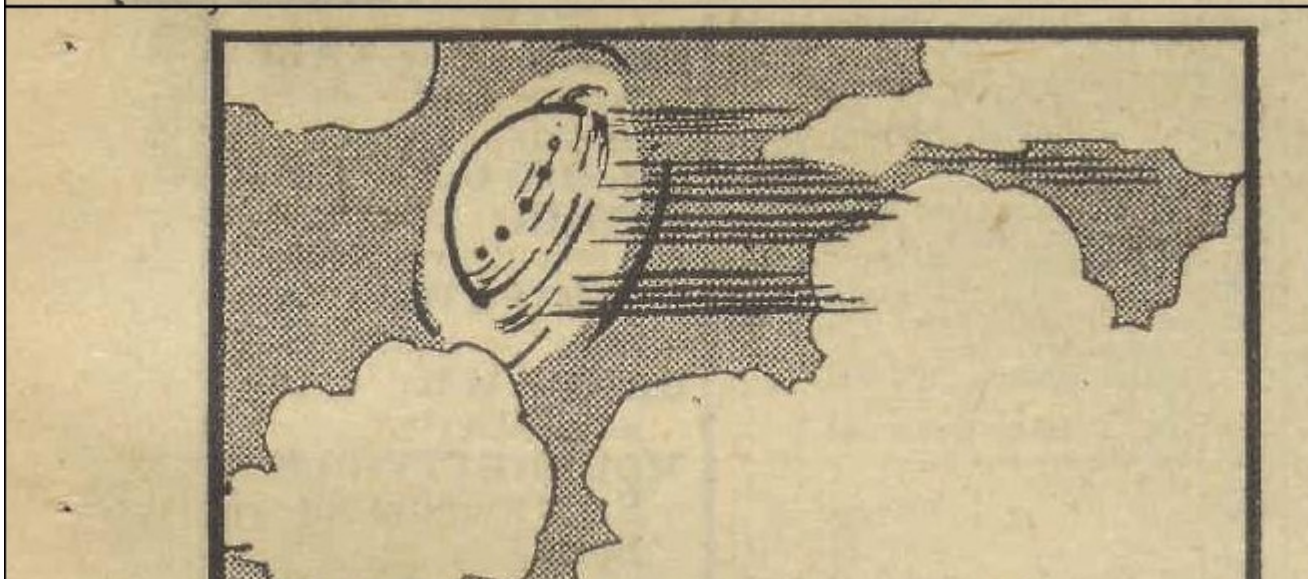


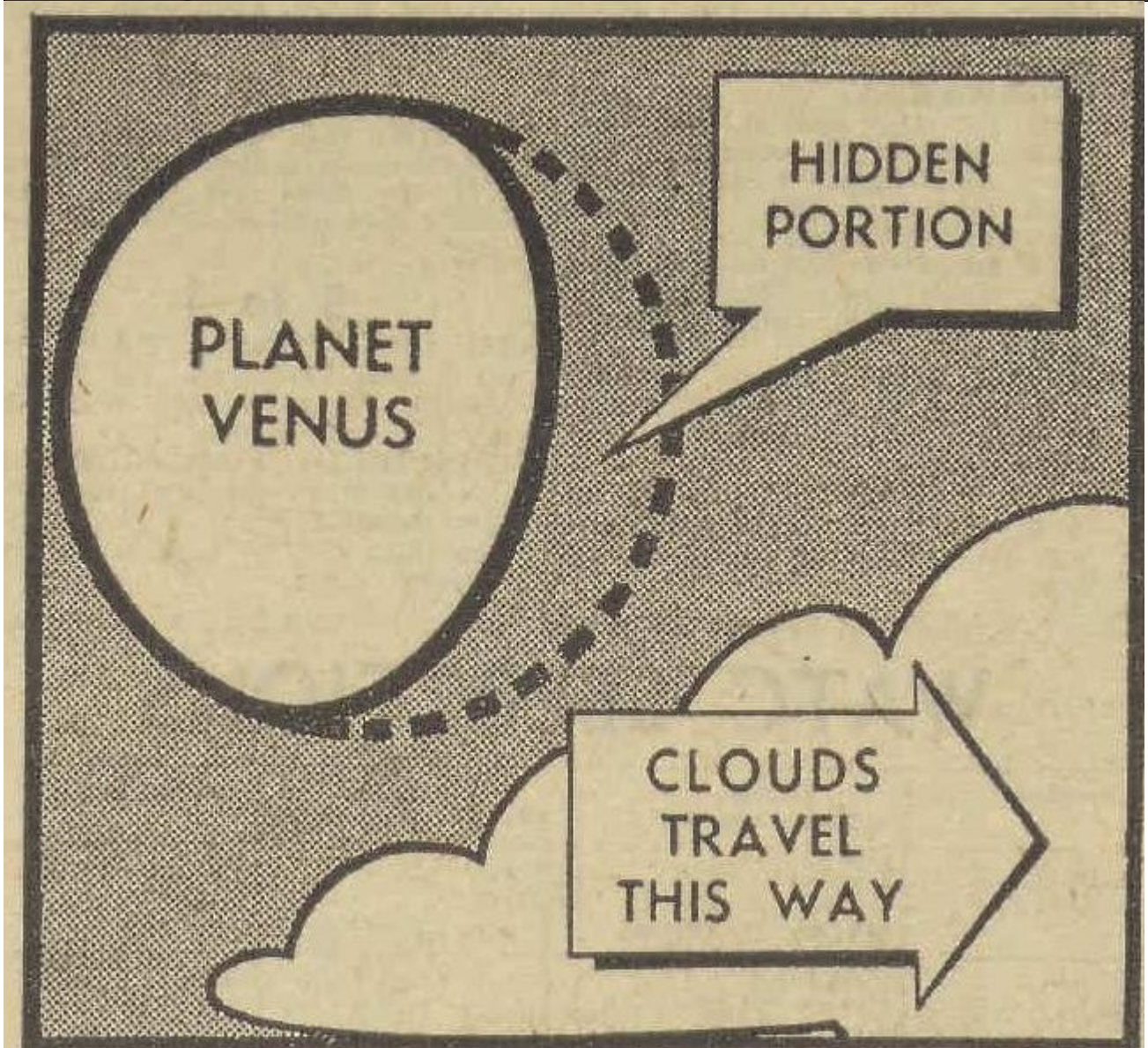
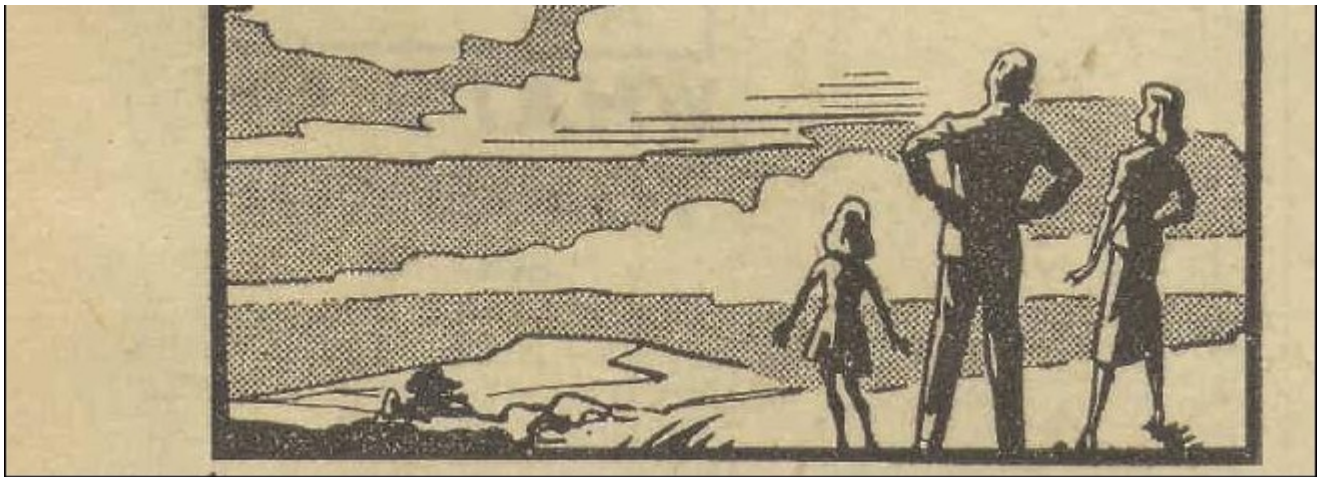
◆ **EYEWITNESS REPORT 2:** On August 25 last year, three scientists in Texas saw a formation flight of lights (left) move swiftly and noiselessly across the sky. Many more such flights were seen later and photographed. **EXPLANATION:** The lights were a mirage. The ground cools rapidly at night in desert areas, forming a layer of cold air overlaid by a wavy layer of warm air (right). Light beams from a city could be bent along the wavy zone showing up as separate spots miles away. Winds would make the spots race across the night sky. **INQUIRY CLOSED.**





◆ **EYEWITNESS REPORT 3:** Radar operators have detected mysterious objects flying in precise formation at night (left) when no aircraft were in the area and no noise could be heard from the sky. **EXPLANATION:** The spots on the radar screens were caused by wild geese migrating (right). One wartime scare off the Norfolk coast is known to have been caused by wild geese flying to the Humber estuary. The warning spots on the radar screens that night were so like the signs of enemy aircraft that invasion alarms were sounded. **INQUIRY CLOSED.**





◆ EYEWITNESS REPORT 4: Many observers have reported seeing shining objects (left) hanging in the sky on sunny days. They describe them as shaped like saucers, tops, bananas and crescents. Most seemed motionless; a few moved slowly. EXPLANATION: All were due to chance glimpses of the planet Venus, which can sometimes be plainly seen in daylight (right). The fact that Venus goes through phases like

which can sometimes be plainly seen in daylight (right). The fact that Venus goes through phases like the moon explains the various shapes. Clouds travelling across the sky gave the optical illusion of movement. INQUIRY CLOSED.

Tomorrow: 3 cases science cannot yet explain