

R.A.A.F. Officer Investigates Strange Lights In Sky

An officer from Mallala, PO R. A. Badams, of No. 34 Squadron, Mallala, yesterday flew to Port Pirie to investigate reports of strange lights seen in the sky there during the last few nights.

A spokesman for the RAAF said that the trip was a routine investigation of reports of strange objects seen in SA, and had been combined with a normal training flight for the officer, who would prepare a report.

He added that it was believed that the planet Venus was responsible for most of the strange lights in the last few nights.

The strange, multi-colored light seen in the south-western sky on recent nights by several people at Port Pirie, Salisbury and Moonta might be Venus, the president of the SA Astronomical Society (Professor L. G. H. Huxley) said yesterday.

Professor Huxley said that it was impossible to say what the light was without having observed it but the fact that it had appeared in the evening in the south-western sky sug-

gested "that it had an association with Venus".

It would be helpful, he said, if observers of the light looked for Venus at the same time it appeared.

Venus, seen on the horizon through the mist at night, closely resembled a star.

Venus was very bright until about 9 o'clock this week, Professor Huxley said.

Two constables and a groundsman in charge of the Port Pirie airport discount any possibility of a brilliant light seen in the south-western sky last night being the planet Venus.

The men with the aid of a prismatic compass plotted the course of the light from the time when it first became visible at 8 p.m. until the time it disappeared at 9.27 p.m.

They were Constables J. H. Sykes and E. W. A. Philp, and Mr. A. L. McHugh.

As they observed the light, it moved from left to right and changed color from orange to white, until 10 minutes before it disappeared when it became a brilliant

when it became a brilliant red.

The light dropped 18 degrees in elevation in 80 minutes, they said.

At 8.23 p.m. it dropped from 18 degrees to 12 degrees in two minutes and then took another hour to drop 12 degrees.

They added that it appeared to be moving in a southerly direction and gradually became smaller.

Eight observers from Whyalla saw nothing strange in the sky last night although they were spread over the town.

However, at 9 p.m. and at 1 a.m. molten slag from the furnaces at Port Pirie

is tipped out, and it is possible that it was the reflection on cloud of 25 to 30 tons of molten slag which was seen.

At Port Augusta observers saw a very bright star in the western sky which disappeared about 9 p.m.

Men watching at Moonta and Wallaro reported a clear sky and no lights.

Mr. F. Adams, of Mitcham avenue, Mitcham, said he saw a bright light in the western sky about 8.30 which appeared to vary in intensity.

Observers from the roof of "The Advertiser" saw what appeared to be a very bright star low in the wes-

bright star low in the western sky at the same time.