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## UFO UpDates Mailing List

### Frank Edwards and The Roswell 'Crash'

From: Bob Young <[YoungBob2@aol.com](mailto:YoungBob2@aol.com)>  
Date: Wed, 29 Dec 1999 22:00:05 -0500 (EST)  
Fwd Date: Thu, 30 Dec 1999 04:04:03 -0500  
Subject: Frank Edwards and The Roswell 'Crash'

>From: Bruce Maccabee <[brumac@compuserve.com](mailto:brumac@compuserve.com)>  
>Date: Fri, 24 Dec 1999 00:59:07 -0500  
>Fwd Date: Fri, 24 Dec 1999 08:18:47 -0500  
>Subject: Re: Friedman On History Channel's 'Roswell'

<snip>

>There is, after all, one indisputable fact in this whole story:  
>Col. Blanchard, the Roswell (Army) Air Force commander,  
>did order the release of the story which said a crashed  
>flying saucer had been found on a ranch near Roswell and  
>had been retrieved by Major Jesse Marcel.

Bruce, All:

There are so many parts of this tale which, once introduced, have taken on a life of their own. I assume that you did not have access to the original source, so I offer the following.

The press release issued by 2nd Lt. Warren Haut did not, I repeat, not, say that a flying saucer "crashed" anywhere. It said, "Landed", that it was "stored" and later that, "the disc was picked up", by Marcel.

In 1995 Christopher D. Allan posed this question to me: When was the word "crash" first used in regard to this incident? He pointed out that to his knowledge it was not used in 1947 in the newspapers, the Haut press release, the F.B.I. teletype message, or anywhere else.

The eagle-eyed Mr. Allan had piqued my curiosity 1947 news accounts do not, indeed, use "crash". For example, a July 8 article in the ROSWELL DAILY RECORD mentions a July 2 "sighting" by Mr. and Mrs. Dan Wilmot, but not a crash. The first A.P. bulletin from Roswell (2:25 P.M., July 8) used "landed". (See: Kevin D. Randle & Donald R. Schmitt, THE TRUTH ABOUT ROSWELL, P. 47.)

Government documents from July 1947 do not say crash. The July 8 F.B.I. memo, for instance, used "recovered". THE COMBINED HISTORY 509th BOMB GROUP AND ROSWELL ARMY AIR FIELD, 1 JULY 1947 THROUGH 31 JULY 1947 used "reported to be in possession".

So, when was the word "crash" first used with Roswell?

Frank Scully is often given the blame. But on Oct. 12, 1949, in a VARIETY column he gave his first account from con men Silas Newton and Leo GeBaur of a disc which, "landed", in New Mexico

with 16 charred bodies. A Nov. 23 column told more.

Then, in 'Behind The Flying Saucers' (Henry Holt & Co., Sept. 1950) Scully reprinted "20 Questions" for the Air Force from a previous column, which included, "the flying saucer that landed on a ranch in New Mexico." He also wrote of a 3 1/2 foot high dead body taken from a saucer that had landed in New Mexico (p. 173).

TIME and NEWSWEEK published, in 1950, rumors of dead aliens and crashed saucers in New Mexico, apparently stimulated by the Scully book. But, Roswell was not mentioned by name (Kevin D. Randle, "The Search for the Truth about the Roswell Crash" in MUFON UFO JOURNAL, Oct. 1995, p. 9, and Stanton Friedman, "Roswell Revisited" in MUFON 1995 INTERNATIONAL UFO SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS.)

Early 1950s investigators knew of many crash tales that had been stimulated by Scully's book, which of course had said only that a disc had "landed" (James W. Moseley, 'UFO Crash Secrets At Wright/Patterson Air Force Base', Abelard, 1991, p. 49).

Then, in the spring of 1955, FLYING SAUCER REVIEW, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 3, briefly recounted the experience of entertainer Hughie Green, who said that while driving across the U.S., in June 1947, he had heard a radio announcement that a saucer, "Had crashed in New Mexico." (Jerome Clark, The Emergence Of A Phenomenon, The UFO Encyclopedia, VOL. 2.) The pre-Roswell date could have been due to faulty memory, but no mention of Roswell by name suggests that the Green story may not probably did not intrude the crash element to the story.

In 1966 Brinsley LePour Trench repeated the Green story in his overseas best-seller 'The Flying Saucer Story'. He said it had, "crashed in New Mexico and that the Army had moved in to investigate." Roswell still wasn't mentioned.

It has often been said by skeptics and pro-crash proponents that for three decades, until the late 1980s, the tale of the Roswell saucer lay forgotten and dormant in old newspaper archives. This overlooks what I think was the original and a continuing source for some key elements of the current story.

On April 28, 1956, ex-broadcaster, author and saucer lecturer Frank Edwards, in Q & A after a lecture to a New York City saucer group, said that at Roswell, "A farmer reported that he saw something strike a mountainside and crash". (Public Meeting Of April 28, 1956, New York: Civilian Saucer Intelligence; Ibid., Clark.)

More details were added by Edward's at a Lecture on UFOs at an Indianapolis, Indiana, convention on October 27, 1955 or 56 (Randle & Schmitt, 'UFO Crash At Roswell', p. 27; "1955" in footnote for above on p. 290.) "According to what I was told," Edward's said, "They threw troops in a circle all around that place, and would let nobody in for five days."

Whether these remarks were Edward's' spin on the Wilmots' sighting, were stimulated by the Green tale, or was just something that he had made up to enliven the story is unclear. Christopher Allan has speculated that Edward's might have learned about the incident from a press clipping sent to him by a radio listener. He never claimed to have investigated it.

Then in 1966, Edward's wrote his best-seller 'Flying Saucers - Serious Business' (the first UFO book to sell a million copies). He wrote on page 76, "Then there are such difficult cases as the rancher near Roswell, New Mexico, who phoned the Sheriff that a blazing disc-shaped object had passed over his house at low altitude and had crashed and burned on a hillside within view of the house...We were not told, however... why the military cordoned off the area while they inspected the wreckage..."

The Edward's best-seller was listed in the bibliographies of both 'UFO Crash At Roswell' and the seminal 1980 'The Roswell Incident' (Berlitz & Moore), which many believe broke a 30-year silence on the matter. Yet, oddly neither of these two books, which were devoted entirely to the affair, contained one word about the Roswell claims in Edward's' book, despite their sensational nature.

Frank Edward's seems to have been the first to use the word "crash" with Roswell; was first to offer witness descriptions of the crash (although his witnesses seem to have been the Wilmots, who said something only flew over); was first to describe a cordon of troops, and evidently first to describe a five day quarantine of the site.

It seems clear that Edwards' popular 1950s and 1960s saucer lectures to audiences, some of whom paid to fill large halls, may have been a continuing source for the oral transmission of the "crash" story of Roswell. The role of his 1966 million-seller in perpetuating this tale is also probably unrecognized.

I would appreciate receiving clips or citations from readers of this list who know of any 1940s or pre-1980 use of the term "crash" in reference to Roswell.

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