

PROJECT 1947

UFO Reports - 1948

The New York Times - 1 January, 1948

THE ONCE FLYING SAUCERS

No review of Important Events of the Old Year would be complete without a mention of the flying saucers. At the time they made their appearance, more or less everywhere at once, it was hot enough to melt some of the mountains of snow behind which New York is hiding (and would that it was that hot again, if only for a day or two!).

Looking back to what transpired then, Dr. C.C. Wylie, of the University of Iowa is concerned about the mass hysteria which the saucers brought in their wake. In a report to the American Association for the Advancement of Science he had this to say about the causes of the flying saucers: "In driving west in the morning hours, if an airplane crosses the road some distance ahead, the sunlight reflected from its windows may obliterate the outline of the plane, giving the appearance of a round or oval, and brilliant, spot of light moving about in the sky."

That seems a reasonable explanation. Dr. Wylie notes that a good many pranksters contributed to the saucer legend, one way or another, and that a fanciful literature was built up. He says that the first reports of saucers were not investigated, for the reason that there is no national policy of getting at the real facts behind such phenomena. That, in so many words, is how the mass hysteria came about.

To combat this state of affairs, and to recognize authentic reports of V-2 bombs, high-speed planes or bomb-carrying balloons. In the interests of national defense, Dr. Wylie suggests the formation of a "sky patrol." It is a good idea. The appropriate agencies of the military should add this function to their duties. We do not care too much for unexplained happenings in the skies, unless there is improvement in the feeling among nations.

Louisville Kentucky Courier Journal - 4 January, 1948

Chase for Flying Disk Blamed in Crash Death

Mantell Going Straight Into Sun, Buddies In Air Guard Say; Believe He Blacked Out

Captain Thomas Mantell, Jr., 25, was "climbing into the sun" after what he thought was a flying disk shortly before he was killed in a plane crash near Franklin, Ky., Wednesday.

So reported two of Mantell's buddies in the Kentucky National Air Guard, who were in the air with him at the time. The Air Guard yesterday said Mantell, World War II hero, who lived at 6301 Third, died because he flew too high while chasing an aerial object.

Capt. R. L. Tyler, Louisville operations officer for the Air Guard at Standiford Field, said investigation convinced him Mantell had "blacked out" from lack of oxygen at 30,000 feet. Tyler theorized the plane went into a dive and began to disintegrate at 15,000 feet.

Quit At 23,000 Feet

Two other Air Guard officers who were flying in formation with Mantell in P-51 single-seater pursuit ships told of the high-altitude disk-chasing mission.

Both said they "peeled off" at 22,500 feet with Mantell "still climbing into the sun."

National Guard headquarters have said Mantell and his companions were asked by the Fort Knox radio to "look for" an object resembling a "flying saucer" reported sighted south west of Godman Field.

Only One Had Oxygen Gear

Only one of the trio, Lt. A. W. Clements, 2123 Ratcliffe, had oxygen equipment. Captain Tyler said oxygen had not been issued generally to the guardsman because they were training at comparatively low levels.

The three, along with Lt. Robert Hendricks, were returning from a routine flight to Atlanta. Clements and Mantell apparently picked up the Godman Field radio signal as they neared Fort Knox and changed his course.

Clements and Lt. B. A. Hammond, 3117 Sonora, followed. Hendricks, however, flew on to Standiford Field.

Mantell and Clements were linked by radio, but Hammond's communications set was tuned to a different frequency.

It Looked Like a Star

Clements said Mantell informed him they were to look for something "but didn't seem to know exactly what it was." Soon, Clements related, Mantell shouted through the loud speaker, "Look, there it is at 12 o'clock." Clements said this meant it was "right over our nose."

Clements gazed straight ahead and saw a "bright shining object that looked like a star." He and Mantell started after it.

Hammond who had received no word of the flying saucer, was bewildered.

"At first I thought we were lost," he said. "Then we started climbing and I assumed we were looking for Louisville." Hammond was depending on Mantell and Clements for navigation and went on up with them to avoid losing his bearings.

"I felt a little shaky at 15,000 feet," he declared, "because I realized we were supposed to take oxygen at 12,000."

By the time I hit 22,000 I was seeing double. I pulled alongside Clements and indicated with gestures that I didn't have an oxygen mask. In fact I circled my finger around my head to show him I was getting woozy. He understood the situation and we turned back."

Neither saw Mantell crash. His plane ripped down out of the sky some 80 or 90 miles from where they changed course after learning of the disk, Clements estimated.

Tyler blamed Mantell's headlong dash after the "saucer" on the fact that Mantell's World War II experience largely was limited to low-altitude flying. From the stories of Hammond and Clements, Tyler surmised Mantell was "climbing at full force at 23,000 feet." Mantell probably lost consciousness seconds later, Tyler said.

Eyewitnesses had reported seeing Mantell's plane arc high in air and Tyler said this indicated Mantell, an expert pilot, was unconscious at the time.

Meteorites May Be Discovered

EUGENE -- (AP) -- The Hart Mountain region of southern Oregon should produce meteorites showered over the area by the explosion of the "Green Dragon" meteor that flashed across the night sky on Dec. 30.

Astronomer J. Hugh Pruett, pacific coast director for the American Meteor Society, reported Monday he had completed studies of 43 detailed reports from witnesses of the spectacle and had plotted the course of the meteor.

Pruett said the meteor broke apart in two bursts at about 150,000 feet altitude, which should have showered the Hart mountain sector with small particles.

Green In Color

The astronomer and Dr. A.H. Kunz, University of Oregon faculty member and an associate director of the Meteor society, have dubbed the meteor which created excitement in southern Oregon and northern California towns a "green dragon meteor". All witnesses reported it appeared green as it swept westward and broke apart.

"There is no doubt that the Hart mountain region is now sprinkled with valuable meteorites," Pruett said. "Since only three meteorites have been found and identified in Oregon, it is to be hoped some of these fragments will be discovered."

Pendleton, Oregon East Oregonian - Jan. 31, 1948

'Flying Discs' Book Declared Closed

WASHINGTON --Remember the flying saucers?

Last July the entire United States was talking about the bewildering phenomenon of the celestial crockery. Dozens of people in 44 states, Canada, Mexico, England, Australia and South Africa solemnly testify that they saw the discs whizzing through the sky.

Military and Government scientific authorities Sunday said that they still have no positive explanation for the flying saucers and, furthermore, had

no intention of doing anything about it.

Theories Advanced

The Joint Research and Development Board, the Government's top scientific body, advanced a number of theories informally. It is satisfied that these theories are the answer to the reported phenomenon that had the nation in a stew last summer.

A spokesman said the board experts dismiss the flying saucers as a mirage induced by mass self-hypnosis.

The scientists declare that the discs were nothing more than optical illusions and say that no evidence has ever been found to show that the saucers were either man-made or products of nature.

Descriptions Vary

Theorizing further, the experts contend that it is possible the flying discs were either a form of natural electricity, the sun mirrored in the clouds, reflections of passing airplanes or flashes of light from the silver weather kites sent aloft all over the country by the Army Air Forces.

The descriptions of the flying saucers varied from the garden-variety of whirling discs to smoking rings and -- the ultimate as reported by a Nebraska farmer -- "flaming straw hats."

Army and Navy experts on such matters as guided missiles, rockets, and buzz bombs, have closed their books on the flying saucers.

Maybe They Were 'Flying Bean Poles'

LA GRANDE-- Shut the doors -- they're coming through the windows! Flying snakes, that is.

The latest addition to a mushrooming list of unlikely objects seen in Oregon skies is the property of Leo C. Bryant. Bryant says what he saw flying over La Grande yesterday looked more like a snake than anything else.

"It was a pencil-shaped object about 100 feet long and flew due east at 2,000 feet altitude," he reported. "I watched it for approximately a minute around 4:30 p.m., before it disappeared into mist east of the city."

Bryant, who operates a music studio at 103 Elm, said the so-called flying snake appeared traveling at aircraft cruising speed. "It had no wings

and no visible engine or other source of power."

"When the sunlight touched it," the teacher said, "there was a metallic reflection. The whole thing seemed to be made of disc-like sections. It followed a straight course at a uniform rate of speed."

"Incidentally," Bryant added, "I'd had nothing to drink but a cup of coffee."

Tucson, Arizona Arizona STAR - July 25, 1948

Super 'Mystery' Ship Sighted By 2 Eastern Airlines Pilots

ATLANTA, July 24. --(AP)-- A strange wingless plane shooting red flame "like a Buck Rogers rocket ship" was described today by two Eastern Airlines pilots. They called it a double-decker speedster making 500 to 700 miles per hour.

The pilot, Capt. C.S. Chiles, and Co-Pilot J.B. Whitted, said they were flying the Houston-Atlanta-Boston run when they sighted the ship southwest of Montgomery, Ala., about 2:45 a.m. (CST).

"It was in line almost with our flight," Chiles said. "We veered off to the left and this object turned to its left. When it came near to us, its fuselage appeared to be about 100 feet in length and about four times the circumference of a B-29 fuselage.

"It had two rows of windows. Out of the rear of the ship red flames were shooting 25 to 50 feet. There was a blue glow beneath the fuselage. The ship appeared to be doing between 500 to 700 miles an hour, heading toward New Orleans.

"When it got along side of us, it pulled up with a tremendous burst of flame out the rear. Then the ship disappeared into the broken clouds. The ship had no wings. It seemed to have an upper deck and a lower deck and was fully lighted inside. We saw no occupants."

At Montgomery, Maxwell and Dannelly army air fields said they knew nothing about the report. The Civil Aeronautics Administration also said it had no information about the ship. The air force in Washington also could shed no light on the craft.

At Santa Monica, Calif., Gen. George C. Kenney, chief of the Strategic Air Command, said, "The army hasn't anything like that."

"I wish we did," he told interviewers. "I would sure like to see it."

Both pilots live in Atlanta and served in the army air corps as fighter pilots during the war. Chiles, a native of Knoxville, Tenn., has been with EAL nine years and Whitted, from Durham, N.C., two years.

KENNETT SQUARE, Pa., July 24--(AP)--A mystery plane, reported sighted over Montgomery, Ala., by two eastern Airline pilots, was described by a Columbus O., man today as "a flash of cherry red fire."

Clarence L. McKelvie, assistant managing editor of the American Education Press, said he was the only passenger on the Eastern Airlines Houston-to-Boston plane not asleep when the phantom craft was sighted.

"I saw no shape or form," McKelvie said.

"I was on the right side of the plane, and suddenly saw this strange eerie streak out of my window," McKelvie explained. "It was very intense, not like lightning or anything I had ever seen."

The Columbus man said he was too startled, and the object moved too quickly for him to adjust his eyes to it.

Phoenix, Arizona Arizona Republic - July 25, 1948

Eastern Fliers Tell Of Seeing Weird 'Buck Rogers' Fire-Spitting Aircraft

ATLANTA, Ga., July 24--(AP)-- Two Western Airlines pilots who thought they'd seen everything during the war soberly recited today their encounter with a giant, wingless, flame-throwing aircraft straight out of Buck Rogers.

Capt. Clarence Shipe Chiles and his co-pilot, John B. Whitted, corroborated each other's report on the fantastic plane, or whatever it was.

THEY WERE FLYING along serenely in their DC-3 at 5,000 feet about 20 miles southwest of Montgomery, Ala., last night when the thing came at them, they said. It looked, they added, like a B-29 "blown up about four time" and stripped of its wings.

In the seconds during which the mystery craft swooshed past them and shot up into the clouds, it cast a light more vivid than lightning, they said.

They reported they saw two decks of big square windows and "it was a man-made thing, all right."

(In Washington, the air force suggested that the pilots may have seen a radar weather observation balloon which has a square, tinfoil box fastened to

it. The box reflects light and gives strange illusions as it twists and turns, the air force said.

(In Montgomery, the weather bureau reported that such balloons of 10-foot diameter, were sent up every six hours from Maxwell Field but an observer said he didn't think the balloon "could possibly be mistaken" for such an aircraft as described by the pilots.)

"THE PLANE PASSED us on our right," the pilots said. "A 40-foot flame shot out its rear end. A luminous glow like a giant fluorescent light, ran along the belly of the thing."

Whitted, who said he had seen the air forces's best jet planes not on the secret list, estimated its speed as much faster than he had seen before.

Airline officials said they asked authorities at Maxwell Field, Ala., big air force university, about the mystery ship. Officers there said they didn't know anything about it, the airline said. A United Press check at Maxwell brought "no comment."

Arizona Phoenix Gazette - July 26, 1948

'Flying Saucers' Back Again In Several Sizes and Shapes

ATLANTA, July 26, (AP)--The flying saucer--or something--is back again.

Reports from widely separated sections of the country have described "it" over the weekend as:

1. A wingless craft, spurting flame "like a Buck Rogers rocket ship"
2. An aluminum covered balloon.
3. An unusually bright light.
4. A ball of fire.
5. A red and blue flame that burst in mid-air.
6. A flash of cherry red fire.
7. A meteor.

"It" first was reported by two Eastern Airlines pilots, each a fighter pilot during the war, who said they encountered a wingless mystery plane, spurting fire, near Montgomery, Ala., on the Atlanta-Houston flight Saturday.

Next up, Clarence L. McKelvie of Columbus, Ohio., lent credence to the pilots' report by declaring he had seen "a flash of cherry red fire" while a passenger on the plane.

Then an Atlanta hunter stalking game in North Georgia reported "an unusually bright light -- as a lighted room," at about the same time the Eastern Airlines pilots said they saw "it" over Alabama.

"It" was an aluminum covered balloon to observers at Yakima, Wash., where the police station switchboard was jammed with excited calls and inquiries. "It" was reported moving westerly, at a great height and against strong winds.

It was this way last year when someone said he had seen a flying saucer whizzing around. Right away dozens of persons from every which way said they had seen the same thing -- or something.

The Army, as usual, denied any responsibility and simply said in effect, "don't blame us."

Tucson, Arizona Arizona STAR - July 26, 1948

'Mystery' Plane Is Sighted Again

ATLANTA, July 25--(AP)-- An Atlanta hunter told today of observing a strange light in the sky early Saturday at about the same time that two Eastern Airlines pilots reported seeing a wingless mystery plane.

J.V. Morris said that he and a friend, Lindsay Fall, were hunting near Covington, Ga., 30 miles southeast of Atlanta, about 8 a.m. Saturday when they saw "an unusually bright light--as bright as a lighted room."

Morris said it seemed to be speeding westward and disappeared in a few seconds.

At Indianapolis, Ind., a housewife reported she and her son and daughter saw a similar flame-spurting aircraft Thursday night, more than 24 hours before it was seen here.

The Indianapolis woman, Mrs. Thomas L. Sayer, described it as a ball of fire which shot two jets of flame downward at regular intervals. She said she watched it about three minutes after which it flared up, shot out streamers of flame and disappeared.

Mrs. Sayer said she did not mention the experience to anyone until after she read the EAL pilots' account.

Capt. C.S. Chiles, pilot of an EAL Houston-Atlanta plane, had reported that he and his co-pilot, John B. Whitted, saw a huge, wingless craft flying at a very high speed near Montgomery, Ala., about 2:45 a.m.

The pilots described it as shooting fire from the tail and having a double bank of lighted windows.

Clarence L. McKelvie of Columbus, O., a passenger on the EAL plane, confirmed the pilots' story in part. He said he saw "a flash of cherry red fire" but that it did not appear to have a definite shape.

Various military and civilian agencies have denied any knowledge of such a plane.

Chiles and Whitted, however, stuck to their story in spite of the skeptics. Preparing to leave on another round trip flight to Houston, Tex., they took along cameras in the hope of getting a chance to film the mystery craft

The following letter was found on a microfilm file entitled "Public Response to the April 1952 **LIFE** magazine file." The microfilm was presented to Dr. Herbert Strentz for use in his Ph.D dissertation by the head of **Project Bluebook**, LTC Quintanilla. The file was later loaned to UFO historian, Loren Gross, and finally transferred to Barry Greenwood of Citizens Against UFO Secrecy, **CAUS**

EDWARD C. McCANN
507 South Court St
Circleville, Ohio

Aug 27, 1952

Dear Sirs:

Several weeks ago for **The Circleville Herald** I interviewed a local farmer who has decided to tell, for the first time for publication, how he watched a "flying saucer" from a distance of approximately 150 feet one early morning in 1949.

Even in spite of the flood of "saucer" stories I feel sure you'd be interested in hearing his account. We advised him to contact Wright-Patterson but he prefers to have **The Herald** do it for him.

His story is of considerable length, chiefly because it contains details which I believe will make his report worthy of your attention. Suffice to say at this

time that he withheld his information over four years because he feared ridicule.

The man's name is C. Bruce Stevenson, a 53-year old prominent farmer living a few miles from Circleville and very definitely one of the area's most reputable men. His telephone number is Circleville 1918, if you don't mind the terrors of the local phone service here. There are, after all, recorded cases of calls that were actually completed. My home number (in case you're interested and unable to reach Stevenson) is a private line: Circleville 949. And I represent The Herald which has the number Circleville 581.

I served three years in (Army) Air Force intelligence during World War II, am acting head of a post-war veterans outfit (of which Capt. George Bollinger of Air Material Command is a charter member and a close personal friend) and am fully aware of the number of faked or foolish "saucer" stories that have only given you fellows extra trouble in running them down. In fact, we have had other "saucer" versions in this area but I regard only Stevenson's as something truly solid.

The man offers to take an oath on what he saw and I for one am convinced he actually saw what he describes, or at least something very close to it. He's certain it was a material object and not a trick light reflection. Since he watched it drift slowly over one of his farm buildings on a clear moonlit night, he is able to give estimates as to size and describe coloring -- a "peculiar silvery underbody topped by a glowing amber dome" in which the light went out before the object disappeared. He also mentions "pits or holes" (vents?) in the bottom section around which "something seemed to whirl silently while the bottom remained in position". And so on. If you want, I can give you the full account -- or you can get it direct from Stevenson.

Sincerely,

/s/

Edward C. McCann

THE CIRCLEVILLE HERALD.

This recent article provides more details of the Stevenson sighting. **Note;** The article states the incident occurred in February 1948, while McCann wrote that it took place in 1949.

America's First Classic Close Encounter

by Pete Hartinger

[Pickaway Quarterly, Fall 1996, pp.11-13]

EDITOR'S NOTE: Pete Hartinger is a member of the Pickaway County Historical Society and a director of the Roundtown UFO Society based in Circleville. He is a lifelong resident of Circleville and a retired MSgt, Ohio Air National Guard.

While a senior at Circleville High School in 1959, the students were asked in public speaking class to give a speech on a controversial subject.

I chose "Flying saucers" (as they were popularly called back then) because of my personal interest in doing research. I discovered that a prominent Pickaway County farmer, Bruce Stevenson, as a ground observer, had an impressive flying saucer sighting in February, 1948. As part of the assignment, I found him to be a very credible, honest person.

The following is an account described in the **Circleville Herald** March 1957 about his sighting which is considered a very historical event by ufologists.

"After keeping his own story within his circle of friends and relatives for several years 'because nobody in those days seemed to consider the saucers anything but jokes,' Stevenson revealed full details of his experience to the Herald in 1952. That was the year of the big wave of UFO sightings, including Washington, D.C. overflights in July. Bruce's story led to widespread discussion here on the subject of 'saucers, and also attracted a fair amount of good natured kidding.

"He felt so deeply on the subject that he still offered to 'swear on the Bible that I saw what I say I did.' He felt this way: 'They can believe whatever they want to believe, and I know what I saw on my farm that night.'

"That night' happened to be a bitterly cold one in February 1948. Glancing out a window while taking a drink of water about 2 a.m., Stevenson noted a bright glow all over the vicinity of his farm buildings and hurried outside expecting to find them afire. Instead, he relates, he saw a large 'flying saucer' gliding very slowly over the vicinity of his hog house and tool barn. "It was so close to the roof of the tool house that I was afraid it was going to knock off the large flue," Stevenson said. "From where I watched it, it moved without a sound along the roof of the tool house. I'd say I was only about 100 feet from it. The moon was very bright and the ground was covered with snow making it seem all the brighter". Standing in the **Herald's** front office one day recalling his memorable night, Stevenson said it seemed as though the 'saucer' was only about as far away as the balcony on the Elks building directly across Court St.

"Stevenson has told his story many times over since he first unfolded it for the public in the **Herald**. He says he remembers very clearly how:

"(a) The strange disc maintained its very slow speed and low altitude until it faded from sight far off to the farmer's left, while Stevenson stood in frank amazement, too startled in the brief interval to run and awaken other members of the household.

"(b) The dazzling orange-amber glow which originally attracted his attention was suddenly reduced to a 'dull amber glow' inside the 'dome' of the 'saucer' just a moment after he came outside and began watching the eerie visitor.

"(c) The whole object was shaped much like a broad dinner plate turned upside down with a deep sauce dish or cup -- also inverted -- as its 'dome.'

"(d) The 'dome' was of something that looked like plexiglass and the broad edge -- which was pretty wide -- was of shiny silver, blinking or flashing all around the edge as though a silent propeller or something was whirling.

"(e) The diameter of the base of the 'saucer' looked about 60 feet, the 'silver' edge about 12 feet wide, and the 'dome' about eight feet, rising pretty steep from the shiny silver part.

"(f) The position of the 'saucer' did not permit a view of the under-section.

"(g) A wide silvery brim section had 'little holes of some kind' along the edge.

"And lastly, how within a mile or two of the Stevenson farm, there have been apparently authentic reports of 'saucers' or strange lights in the sky at least twice since Stevenson had the experience 'I'll never forget as long as I live.'

In the 1957 news article, Stevenson, a highly successful farmer deeply respected for his persona [sic] integrity, denounced as "crackpots" those public spokesmen who scoff at the "saucer" reports without making a serious effort to study their validity (It still goes on today).

In a statement written on August 27, 1972, Edward C. McCann, former editor of the **Circleville Herald** wrote:

"Before coming to Circleville and meeting the well known farmer, and during the 20 years that have elapsed since that time, I have been concerned many times with "flying saucer" stories, but I feel the same today as I did after Bruce told -- and often retold -- of his sensational sighting. I believe that, in the general substance of his description, he actually saw what he claimed he saw".

Since high school I have continued to do research and investigate the UFO phenomena. Without a doubt, Bruce's sighting can be referred to as

a classic because of it being documented in several books on ufology (scientific term for the study of the UFO phenomena). The time period, February 1948, is important because it happened just seven months after the famous Roswell, New Mexico incident of 1947 and other sightings occurring at that time.

Major Donald E. Keyhoe, a former Marine, was one of our country's earliest and most respected ufologists. He was also Charles Lindbergh's aide in the early years of Lindbergh's fame. Stevenson's sighting was the first of its kind in the nation or possibly in the world. I give much credence to this last statement because of his sighting reported in Keyhoe's book **Flying Saucers: Top Secret**. Keyhoe writes (in referring how close someone had come to "saucer" without any bad effects) "within one hundred feet. We got the report through Professor Tom Haber of Ohio State University. The sighting was made by his brother-in-law, Bruce Stevenson. He owns a big, modern farm near Circleville, Ohio. This sighting was made in the early hours of February 1, 1948."

Up to the time of Stevenson's sighting, using the definitions of J. Allen Hynek (former chief scientific consultant to the U.S. Air Force) about close encounters, none had come that close. Other books have also told of Stevenson's experience. They are Jacques Vallee's **Anatomy of a Phenomenon**: [and] Lillian Crowner Desquin's book **Unidentified Flying Objects, Fact or Fiction?** describes the case in detail. It was her first investigative sighting report. She was very impressed by his sincerity. Desquin investigated UFOs for more than 40 years.

In later years, Stevenson still stuck to his story. Many local residents who are still living recall Bruce as being a very sincere, honest person. One of the earliest persons he told of his sighting was Jim Lemaster of Ashville. Lemaster worked for Stevenson in the late 1940s. Lemaster says that he has no doubt that Stevenson saw something very strange. Lemaster was honored a few years ago on his birthday by his many friends, relatives, and church members. Like Stevenson, Lemaster's honesty and sincerity speaks for itself.

Bruce Stevenson passed away in 1976 at the age of 76. One of Bruce's daughters, Grace Richards, recently stated that an Air Force officer visited her father after the sighting was reported to the media in 1952. The visit occurred after the officer retired from the military. His job had been to investigate UFO sightings. He told Stevenson that his sighting report was the most detailed description ever recorded and that it was sent to other world governments.

Stevenson was also told that he was thoroughly investigated in the local area and that the investigators could not discredit his character, integrity or loyalty. No one in the community knew this was being done.

Grace told that her Dad wondered if the "flying saucer" was attracted to the hog house because of new ultra-violet lights he had recently installed that shone through the windows. Carolyn Stevenson, Bruce's wife, was interviewed lately and reported that she believed without a doubt that her husband told the truth on what he had seen. He retold the same story until he died. A few remarks she added were that Bruce, while watching the object, realized it was perfectly silent; he almost wanted to walk under a portion of it but then thought differently; and a sighting form was filled out for the U.S. Air Force and sent in. No official reply was ever received.

Since then other sightings of UFOs in Pickaway County have given the Stevenson case even more credibility. Some have made the local **Circleville Herald**, including a sighting by fishermen in the early 1950's. This sighting took place close to where Darby Creek empties into the Scioto River. The strange light was seen at night hovering among some trees.

In May 1958, Lockbourne Air Force Base sent interceptor airplanes aloft to check on a large bright object traveling at a high rate of speed. A deputy sheriff saw the object from East Ringgold, the highest spot in Pickaway County.

Darbyville was the scene of a strange sighting in July 1972. A man and his wife were driving into Darbyville at night when they saw a UFO following their car. They excitedly drove to a house where they got the couple from inside to come out and see the object.

During a wave of national sightings in October 1973, Circleville had one of its own. Four witnesses, including two police officers, saw a light make strange maneuvers over the south end of town, before speeding off. All of these cases remain unexplained.

There have been other sightings of strange looking craft over the years that continue to this day. It is a conservative estimate that only one in ten cases are ever reported as the fear of ridicule still prevails. Some of these cases which are known to the Roundtown UFO Society are as follows:

In February 1958 a strange looking craft was seen flying over Circleville late at night. Years ago a UFO followed a couple in their car from northern Pickaway County to their home near Ringgold and then it hovered outside while they went in their house.

There have been strange interactions also with some UFO sightings. In October 1982, a local plant had a power failure while three witnesses saw a UFO hovering over the power transfer station. There have been different instances where there were car engine failures while a UFO was close by.

On April 2, 1984, two Chillicothe women were startled when a brightly lit circular object followed their car along Route 104 in Pickaway County. On April 2, 1985, strange lights were seen hovering near the ground before shooting skyward. These were seen by a couple driving east of

Williamsport. On August 21, 1994, a large triangle shaped craft was seen flying over the county. It also was unidentified. In a couple of cases daylight sightings of strange craft have been seen over Circleville.

These are just some of the county sightings that are known about. Hopefully, as the acceptance level of ufology increases more witnesses will overcome their reluctance and report their sightings to the local group. It is import [sic] to collect this data and turn this information over to interested scientists. We want scientists to investigate the unexplained and not explain the uninvestigated. RUFOS does not have any predetermined notions of UFO origins. There could be a number of explanations. The society was founded in January 1989. Our hotline telephone numbers are 477-6252 or 332-1268. Or you can write to us at Roundtown UFO Society, PO Box 52, Circleville. There is no question that there is a UFO phenomenon and its been around for quite a long time. Compared to the rest of the country, Pickaway County has had its share of unknown sightings with one of the earliest and most impressive occurring here. Also, Pickaway County has a connection with the famous Roswell, New Mexico incident of July 1947. But that is another story in the history of ufology for our country.

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Edward McCann's Statement (former Herald editor), August 27, 1972.

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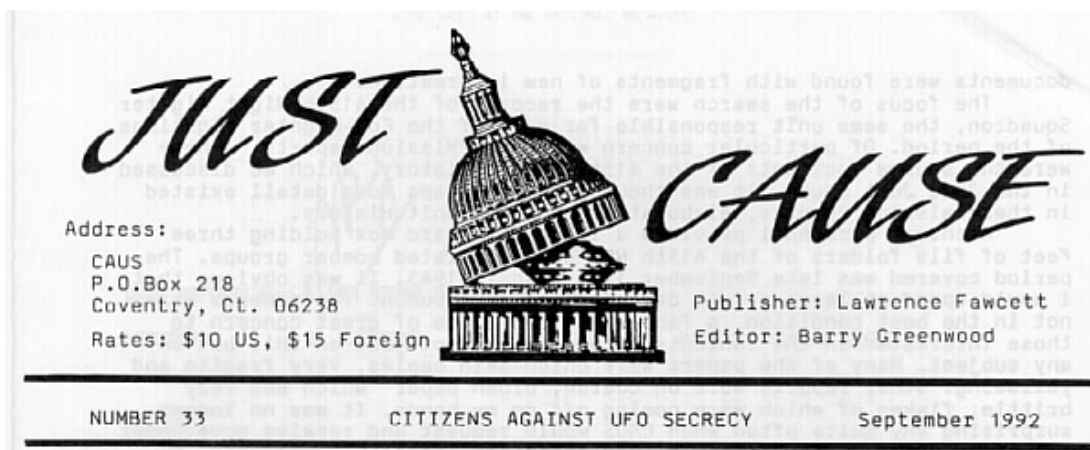


**Excerpt From Speech given by former Major Dewey Fournet,
Pentagon UFO Monitor, 1952, at the Fort Smith UFO Conference, 1975.**

The original project was code named – was nicknamed – “Sign.” It actually wound up oh, for all practical purposes in... late 1948 or early [?] 1949. And an estimate of the situation was prepared by at least two officers that were part of the project. I had a copy of that estimate in my files when I was project [Blue Book] monitor.

And many of you have heard that there was a conclusion in this estimate that these were indeed of extraterrestrial origin. It was based on 200 observer reports of assorted value, nothing like the fully investigated reports that we covered later. And certainly, nothing like the type of investigation that we can produce on our reports today. Even though, I never met the two officers, I deduced more by instinct, I guess than anything else, that they were not necessarily convinced that this was the answer. But what they wanted to do was shake the tree pretty good and see if it couldn't acquire some kind of respectability within the Air Force. To this day I believe that.

I therefore advise you to take with extreme caution anybody who points to the fact that this was in an official Air Force document and says that was the answer. I can say to you that as a successor to that project that it was not! This was not an official Air Force conclusion. And never was during that time.



THE ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION

Readers of UFO history will at one time or another have come across mention of an Air Force document called the "Estimate of the Situation." "Estimates" were prepared by the Air Force during the early years of the UFO controversy to cover a wide variety of topics, most of which were not UFO-related. However, one was prepared in 1948, according to former Project Blue Book head, Captain Edward Ruppelt, addressing the Issue of flying saucers. Ruppelt said that if one had something to say about a vital issue, an Estimate was written.

The document was said to be a thick document with a black cover, printed on legal-sized paper, it was stamped "Top Secret." Written sometime in mid-1948, shortly after the famous Chiles/Whitted saucer incident of July 24, 1948, over Alabama, the authors of the report (personnel at Project Sign, the Air Force's first official UFO study) had concluded that after a year of study flying saucers were interplanetary. The Estimate was sent on its way upwards through the chain of command for Inspection. It was eventually rejected by the Air Force Chief of Staff, General Hoyt Vandenberg. Vandenberg declared that the report lacked proof and ordered it declassified and destroyed. Reportedly, a copy of the Estimate survived until at least 1952, when it was seen by both Ruppelt and Major Dewey Fournet, the Air Force's Project Monitor for Blue Book, the Air Force's most well-known incarnation of UFO investigation.

With these two named individuals the only ones identifiable who had seen the document outside of the original official line of command, they were the best source of post-1948 information about the Estimate. Ruppelt died in 1960, but Fournet is still living and was recently interviewed about the Estimate by CAUS associate, Jim Melesciuc.

Fournet explained that the report was discovered in the files that he had inherited as the Air Force's UFO project monitor at the Pentagon. He had virtually stumbled across it while researching other UFO background material.

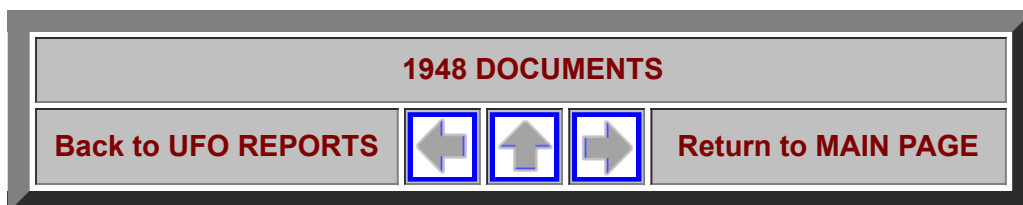
The report, he said, was not especially thick, maybe 20-30 pages, and it still had the security marking on it, though it was supposed to have been declassified. It reviewed all of the apparently unexplained reports received by the Air Force up to the time the Estimate was written. Logical explanations were explored for the cases used, but in the end the extraterrestrial explanation was regarded as the answer. Fournet was very explicit in stating that the Estimate contained no confirmation of artifacts having been recovered from flying saucers.

There was, according to Fournet's recollection, deplorably little UFO sighting data available when the report was written, and that the extraterrestrial conclusion was the result of "extreme extrapolation." It was felt that the Estimate's purpose was to create enough interest in Air Force Intelligence with such a premature conclusion so as to motivate a more organized and complete investigation than had been done to that time.

"I've never given that Estimate much weight in the overall USAF UFO program simply because it occurred too early in the investigation," Fournet said.

It is a certainty that the Estimate of the Situation once existed. We think there is a very good chance that it still exists, in a file box buried with millions of other documents at a government warehouse. While it may not settle the UFO controversy, this "Holy Grail" of UFO documents will be a challenge to find. Whether it is found or not it will still stand as a dusty relic of an earlier time when a piece of the power structure in government, perhaps for the first time ever, really believed that we were being visited from the stars.

For more on The "Estimate Of The Situation," see:
[Background to 1948 UFO DOCUMENTS](#)



CASE #015[Playwright Render](#)

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CONTEXT FROM ORIGINAL DOCUMENT

Note: This finding was never delivered to Congress in an open forum in the decades that followed despite it likely being relevant to Congressional inquiries into the origin of UAP after World War II.

(PUBLIC DOMAIN) - 1948 — An anonymous retired Col. states a UAP crash occurred this year near Laredo, TX. he states when he arrived it was under a canopy and witnesses were sworn to secrecy.

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Retrievals of the Third Kind presented at MUFON 1978, Leon Stringfield, p7

(PUBLIC DOMAIN) - 31 January 1948 — The Research and Development Board, a key recipient of UAP data at the time (see 23 September 1947) attempts to debunk flying saucers as a “mirage” the result of “mass self-hypnosis.” The RDB statement circulates in newspapers.

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