

"An Object On Its Edge"

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Canadian UFO Report Notebook

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As editor of Canadian UFO Report I was sometimes asked of all the cases we had written about, which one impressed me most?

That was a question that should have become tougher as time went on. In fact, as we moved into our tenth and final year of publication, it might have happened that some of the earlier cases were all but forgotten, no matter what impression they made at the time.

But that did not occur, for to answer that question I still choose a case that was one of the first I investigated (CUFOR vol. 1, no. 4, p. 9). Perhaps that is partly the reason I do remember it so well, and perhaps it is because the scene of the incident was a mountainous logging area visible from our house. Consequently I am reminded of it every time I look in that direction. Even so, although no humanoid or abduction was involved, I think the case in its own modest category was exceptional.

When his rare experience was about to unfold one cold clear March day in 1966, Albert Kershaw was at the top of a hill checking the brakes of his fully loaded logging truck before starting down the steep road ahead. If his brakes failed on that road he might be facing the end of his fairly young life.

"So I was crouched down beside the wheels on the right-hand side when something shiny by those trees over there caught the corner of my eye," he said, pointing to fir trees by the road about 200 yards away. "I stood up and looked at it and at first I thought it was a plane trying to make a crash landing, although I couldn't hear anything. It was so low it was below the top of the trees."

The sight was even more dramatic than Kershaw had supposed. Quickly he realized that the craft, about 100 feet long and resembling a large pontoon, had no wings or tail. The front and back ends were a glowing orange, while the body shone like metal polished to a degree Kershaw had never seen before. The fuselage was completely smooth except for two squares up front which Kershaw thought may have been panels.

Moving slowly across the road toward another clump of trees, the object then gave Kershaw another shock. As it approached higher ground it sprayed two puffs of black dust from its nose as if to gain altitude and it rolled over, revealing a shape more discoid than tubular. Travelling on its side, it moved easily between the trees like a giant flying wheel until it was out of sight in the woods.

As soon as he had unloaded his logs at the waterfront far below, Kershaw hunted urgently about for a pilot who could take him back up to examine the site where the strange object had disappeared. He figures it might have landed on the ice of a small lake up there. But he could find no one to make the flight and felt so badly about it that he took up flying himself to make sure he was never caught like that again.

And so another life was changed by a UFO incident. So, too, was launched a little specialty of my own, which is looking for 'matching cases', . . .

In issue no. 4 we reported that in March, 1966, a strange event occurred over the logging slopes of Vancouver Island, B.C. when a long thin-looking object flew low between the hills and crossed a road directly in front of Albert Kershaw who had stopped to check the brakes of his logging truck.

While Kershaw watched in amazement, the object seemed to flip over edgewise as it approached trees on the other side of the road, revealing a somewhat circular shape, and travelled slowly along a trail in the woods like a giant airborne wheel until it disappeared from view. Somehow the picture of this huge craft, possibly weighing many tons, weaving its way easily on edge at less than tree-top altitude struck as one of the most vivid UFO reports we had ever heard of.

We read of the other matching incident when, going through our files, we happened to find an old copy of the 'Saturday Evening Post' carrying an article by Dr. J. Allen Hynek, the eminent astronomer who became a ufologist after investigating cases for the U.S. Air Force.

After describing the case of a UFO picked up visually and by radar over a missile base in North Dakota in August, 1966 - note the same year - Dr. Hynek continued:

"What makes the report especially arresting is the fact that another incident occurred near the base a few days earlier. A police officer - a reliable man - saw in broad daylight what he called 'an object on its edge floating down the side of a hill, wobbling from side to side about 10 feet from the ground. When it reached the valley floor, it climbed to about 100 feet, still tipped on its edge, and moved across the valley . . . ' "

From then on there was no particular similarity to the first incident. In the second case the object appeared to flatten out disclosing a small dome on top, a feature which was definitely absent in the Kershaw sighting. Also Kershaw figured the object he saw was about 100 feet in diameter, while the width of the second UFO was estimated at about 30 feet.

Being different in shape and dimension, the two were obviously not the same craft but they did have that remarkable characteristic in common - the ability to travel a few feet up, on edge, and follow the profile of the ground. While the capacity of UFOs for free unorthodox flight is well enough known, we have seen considerably less of their astonishing low-level control - involving, as it must, a sharp perception of obstacles ahead - while operating in seemingly awkward positions.

In cases like this where detail is so important, everything depends on the accuracy of the witnesses. While we know nothing of the police officer in the first instance, except he was described as reliable, we did interview Kershaw closely and are convinced he saw exactly what he claimed. In fact, his experience made such impact on him that he afterwards took flying lessons and obtained a pilot's licence. He reasoned that if ever again such a thing was seen around those hills, he must be in a position immediately to track it down himself.

Putting these two cases together, we have a small but substantiated detail about UFO operation: they can "see" within immediate radius of their shell for operating at any angle through and over obstacles. We wonder about the sensation of the occupants as they skim the ground tilted sideways but we do not wonder too long. Having presumably travelled vast distances through the violent hazards of space, they might consider it boring or, at best, a bit of mild fun.