

PASSPORT TO MONIHEYA

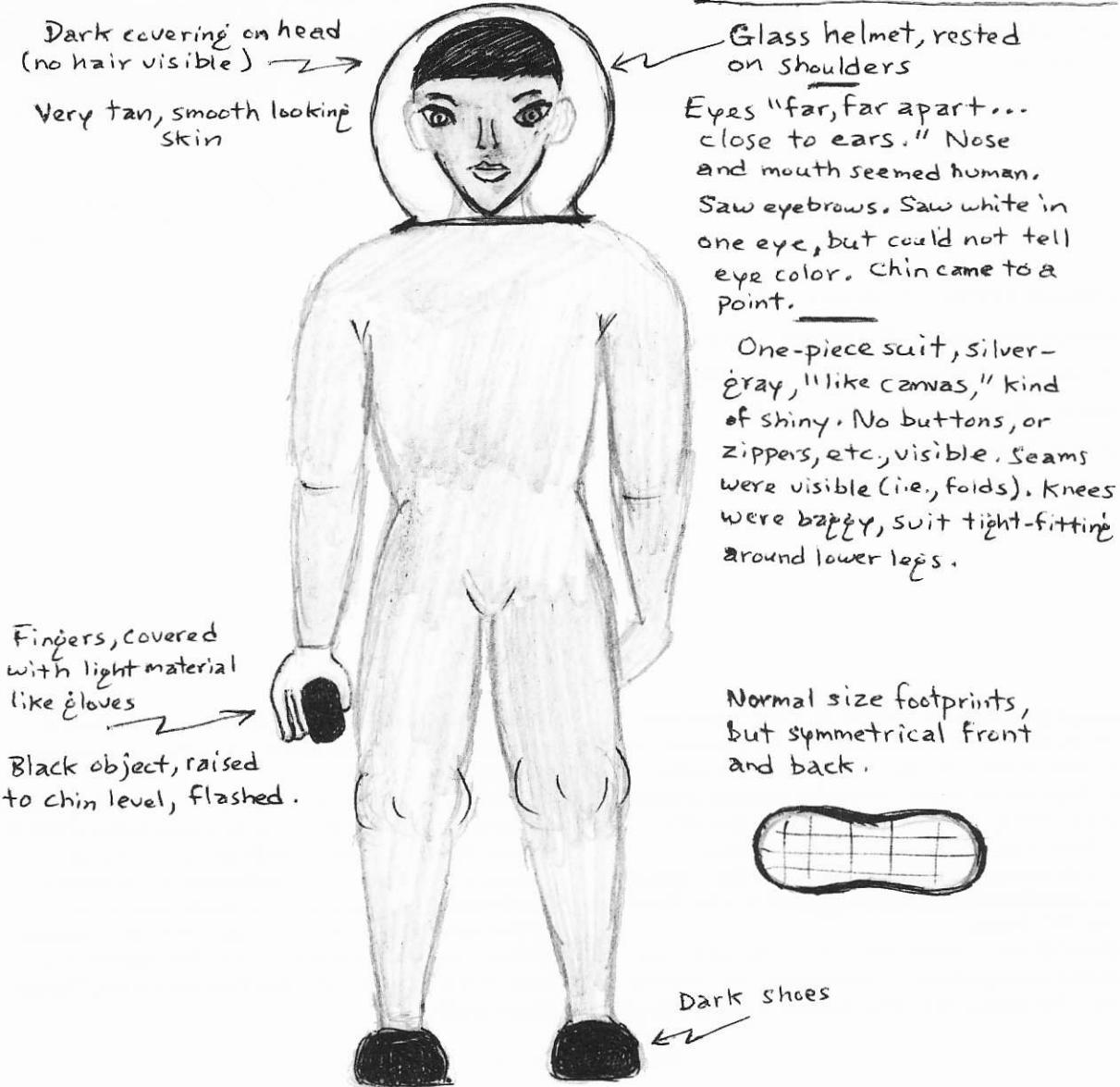
May/June 1995
Volume 20, Number 3

About 5 ft. tall, "looked like a diver." Kind of stocky, like the suit was thick and heavy.
No expression on face, "just stared."
Turned and walked in human fashion when returned to craft. (Tank on back; no visible or audible discharge from it).

March 2, 1965
Brooksville, Fla.

Witness: John Reeves

1:55 P.M.



INTERNATIONAL

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Editor:

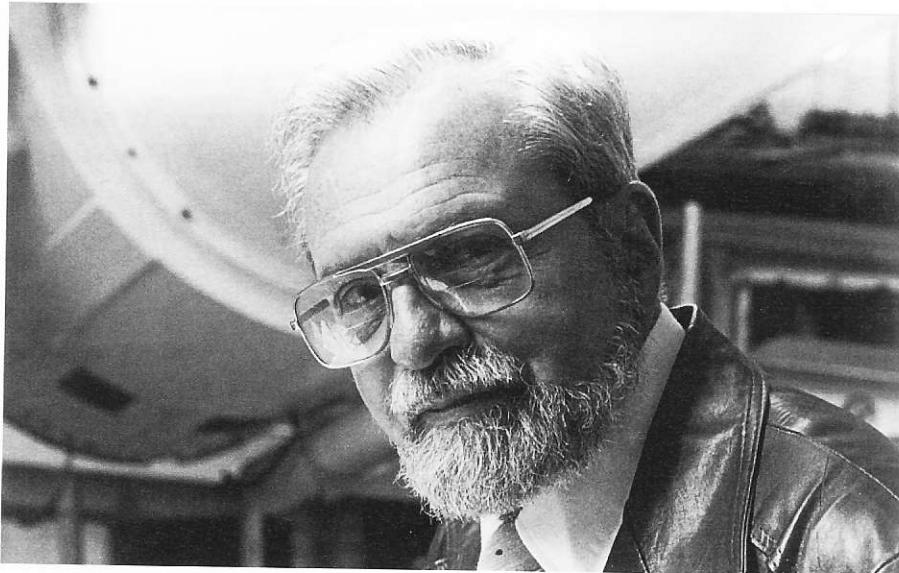
Jerome Clark

Associate Editor:

George M. Eberhart

Contributing Editors:

Bill Chalker
Richard F. Haines
Richard Hall
Kevin D. Randle
Jenny Randles
Mark Rodeghier
Chris Rutkowski
Donald R. Schmitt
Jennie Zeidman


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BESSIE BRAZEL'S STORY

BY KEVIN D. RANDLE

Within the past year several reports have tried to convince the public that a cluster of balloons, radar reflectors, and other equipment was responsible for the debris found near Roswell, New Mexico, in 1947. Specifically, it is claimed that a Project Mogul balloon array was the cause of the debris. (Mogul was a secret project designed to detect Soviet nuclear tests.) These reports were based on the testimony of only a few witnesses, compared to the dozens and dozens of others who support the nonterrestrial nature of the debris and military cover-up that I and others have documented in many articles and several books.

A key supporting witness for those urging faith in the Mogul hypothesis is Bessie Brazel Schreiber, daughter of Mac Brazel, the man who brought the debris to the attention of the Army Air Force. In 1947 Bessie was thirteen going on fourteen. She claims that she was on the ranch with her father during that critical period in late June and early July 1947 when events unfolded.

In the two books I've written with Don Schmitt about the Roswell crash, Bessie Brazel Schreiber was barely mentioned, and we didn't present any direct quotes from our two interviews with her. This is in contrast to the use of several statements from her 1993 affidavit by supporters of the Mogul hypothesis (including the Air Force), or the inclusion by William Moore and Charles Berlitz in their book *The Roswell Incident* of details from an interview with her. Bessie was originally contacted because the July 9, 1947, article about the debris and recovery in the *Roswell Daily Record* stated that she was with her father on the ranch. Given that her account of the discovery and recovery of the debris differs significantly from the account we have developed, it might seem that we have simply been ignoring her discrepant testimony because it didn't fit our scenario.

That is not the case, however. Very early in our investigation, Bessie was interviewed by Don Schmitt twice on the telephone. He learned nothing of importance during those interviews, and we concluded that she was mistaken, so there was no reason to conduct further interviews. In addition, when Don queried Bill Brazel, Bessie's brother,

about the summer of 1947, Bill said, "What's she talking about? She wasn't even there [at the ranch] at the time." We also talked with the nearest neighbors of Mac Brazel, the Proctors, and they remembered that Mac had been alone at the ranch during the days in question. Loretta Proctor claimed that her young son, Dee, had been with Mac when he found the debris, but not any Brazel family members. Another neighbor, Marian Strickland, agreed that Mac was alone at the ranch.

When we examined Bessie's testimony as reported in Moore and Berlitz's book, we called into question the accuracy of her recollection even further. According to the authors, Bessie accompanied her father into Roswell and the next day the military and the press descended on them. She described the material and the "figures" that she had seen on the debris. These details would become critical to those arguing for the Project Mogul hypothesis.

According to *The Roswell Incident*, when asked about the figures she said, "It looked like numbers mostly . . . They were written out like you would write numbers in columns to do an addition problem. . . . What gave me the idea they were numbers, I guess, was the way they were all ranged out in columns."

Still, when asked during that interview if the object could have been a weather balloon, she answered, "No, it was definitely not a balloon. We had seen weather balloons quite a lot—both on the ground and in the air. . . . We had also picked up a couple of those thin rubber weather balloons with instrument packages. This was nothing like that." This testimony is in conflict with the Mogul hypothesis, since much of the debris from a Mogul array was, after all, a balloon.

REEXAMINING BESSIE'S TESTIMONY

Given all of the above, I recently decided to reevaluate Bessie's role in the event and whether she had something important to add that I had overlooked. And, as noted above, skeptics of the Roswell event continue to rely on her testimony, calling her a firsthand witness despite the problems with her account.

Don Schmitt and I arranged for two colleagues, John Kirby and Don Newman, to reinterview Bessie in person in

Kevin D. Randle is the author of A History of UFO Crashes (1995).



Sheridan Cavitt confirmed Jesse A. Marcel's involvement and said that he had picked up debris from the field, directly contradicting Bessie Brazel's story.

the spring of 1995. Much of what follows is based on that interview.

It seems from everything that I have reviewed that Bessie Brazel Schreiber is a very nice woman who clearly tries to help those interested in the case. It is also clear that her memories of the events, as described today or in her 1993 affidavit, do not reflect the reality of the situation in 1947 as described by the great majority of credible witnesses. In fact, she said that "I wasn't that terribly excited or interested in it [the crash] when it happened and I haven't really gotten any more interested in it."

According to her story today, she and her father collected the debris, found by Mac sometime earlier, prior to July 4. On that day, according to her, they were in Capitan because of the Fourth of July celebration held there. Regarding how the debris was gathered, she said, "We had three or four sacks. My dad, my little brother [Vernon] and I were on horseback . . . we stuffed the sacks and tied it to the saddle . . . The house has wooden steps up to the door . . . Dad just stuck it [the debris] under the steps in the sacks."

It was the following week, according to Bessie, that her father took the debris into Roswell. She claims that she accompanied her mother, little brother, and father into Roswell. While he was in the sheriff's office, the family spent time in a small park nearby. "He was there quite a while because it was late afternoon or early evening when we started back to the ranch."

When they returned to the ranch, they were not followed by any military vehicles, according to Bessie. In other words, she claims that neither Major Jesse A. Marcel, the

509th Bomb Group Air Intelligence Officer, nor Captain Sheridan Cavitt, the ranking counterintelligence officer assigned to the base, followed Brazel and his family: "They didn't go with us. They came up, I don't know if it was the next day or a couple of days . . ." But Bessie's testimony here is in conflict with the testimony of both Marcel, Cavitt and the newspaper story, all of which insist that Marcel and Cavitt followed Brazel, who was alone, back to the ranch.

Bessie also said that she knew Marcel was one of the men who came out later because she had seen his picture in the newspaper.

When describing the actual debris, Bessie was asked about the "flower-like" designs on tape. She said that they looked like "Japanese flowers where the petals aren't connected . . . In Oriental art, the petals aren't connected . . . They were very, very light pastel . . . pinks and blues and yellows." According to her, the tape with the flowers on it was "about two inches [wide], an inch and a half . . . It was white, whitish gray . . . [the figures were] kind of random. [The] ribs were not wood, but not really plastic. Tape was over the ribs holding the fabric on the ribs."

When asked about whether her father returned to Roswell after the military visited the debris field (it is known he returned because of his interview in the newspaper), she claimed that her father had not gone to Roswell a second time. And she certainly doesn't think that he went there for several days, as other evidence shows. She said, "First place, if we hadn't gone there [to Roswell] with him, and my mom expected him back that evening, and he didn't show up for three or four days, there would have been hell to pay."

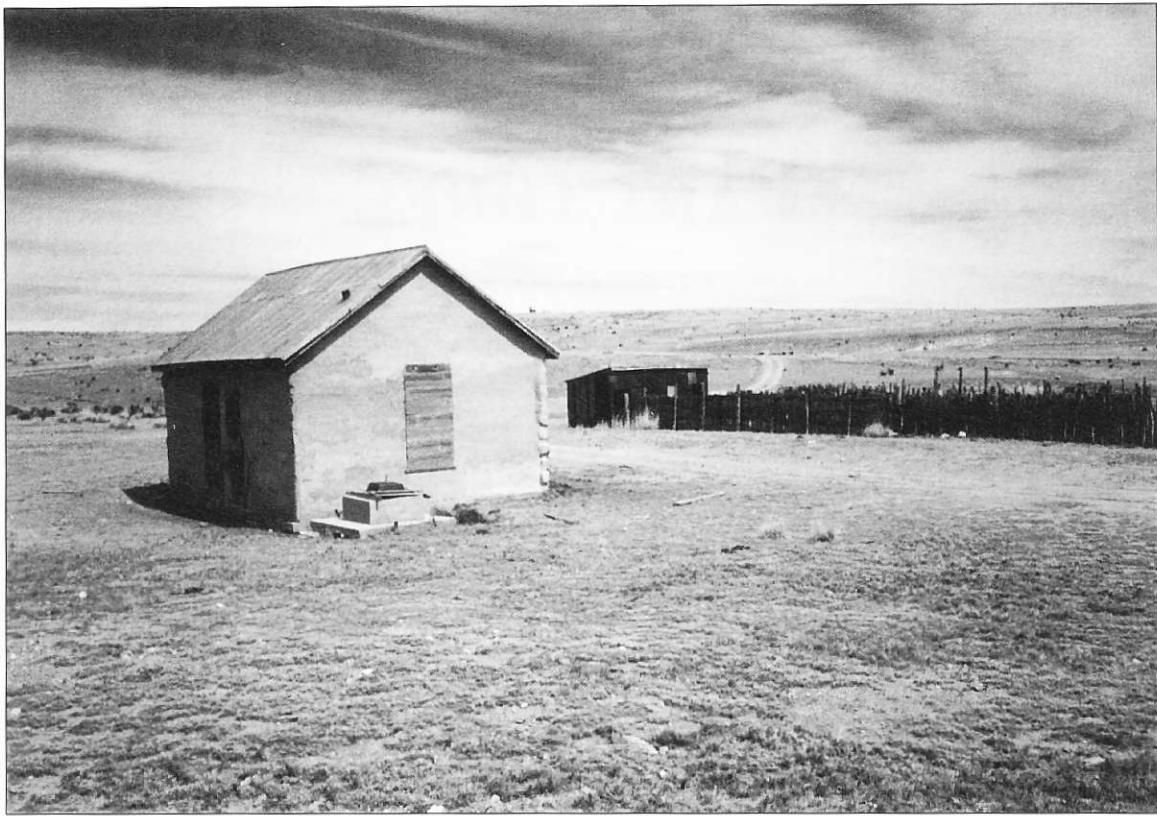
In summary, the story that she tells today does not track with the established facts, the testimony of other witnesses—including the other Brazel children and neighbors—and the documentation that has been discovered. If we accept a portion of her testimony at face value, then a plausible case can be made for the recovery of a balloon array from Project Mogul. It sounds as if she is describing the remains of a Rawin target reflector like those used by the project.

However, nothing is as clear-cut as it might seem. By evaluating all the available evidence, it is easy to show that Bessie is mistaken in many of her recollections or, to put it another way, that the events she is remembering did not occur in June and July of 1947.

THE JULY 9 ARTICLE

Skeptics of the Roswell event rely on Bessie's testimony because she is mentioned in the July 9 article in the *Roswell Daily Record* that I alluded to above. Let's contrast what was printed in that article with the testimonies of those involved, including Bessie.

In the article, Mac Brazel is quoted as stating that on June 14, "about 7 or 8 miles from the ranch house . . . they came upon a large area of bright wreckage made of rubber strips, tinfoil, a rather rough paper and sticks." According to



The Hinds' house where Brazel, Marcel, and Cavit spent the night. Bessie Brazel claimed that the military did not follow them back to the ranch, but this contradicts Marcel's testimony.

the story, at the time Brazel wanted to finish his rounds and didn't pay attention to the debris. But on July 4, he mentioned it to the family and they all, Vernon, Bessie (misidentified in the newspaper as Betty) and his wife (Maggie) went back to the spot to gather up the debris.

Of course, this information contradicts a portion of Bessie's testimony. On July 4, according to her, the family was at the Fourth of July celebration in Capitan. This is something they did every year. And Bessie doesn't remember that her mother was involved in picking up the debris. It is impossible to consider both the newspaper story and Bessie's account accurate regarding these details.

There is another point to be made. The article stated that Brazel and his son Vernon found the debris on June 14, yet Brazel waited to clean it up with his family until about three weeks later. But Bessie said: "It [picking up the debris] wasn't what I would consider an exciting chore. It was just something that had to be done because we had sheep in that pasture and the debris was close to what we call a surface tank. The sheep wouldn't get in there to drink with this stuff laying around. That's why we had to clean it up to start with."

It is apparent from this testimony that Mac Brazel would not have left the debris in the field for three weeks because it was in the way of his animals. Veterinarians routinely travel to ranches to remove metal and other debris from

cattle stomachs. Leaving that material scattered about only invited trouble with the livestock.

Bessie's description of the debris field is reasonably consistent with that in the July 9 article, but it does not match the description provided by others, including Major Marcel, who said that it was 200 to 300 feet wide and more than three-quarters of a mile long. Bill Brazel said there was a gouge about 500 feet long through the center of the debris field, a report confirmed by Brigadier General Arthur Exon and Robin Adair, who said that he had flown over two distinct crash sites.

As for Bessie's claim to have accompanied her father to town, all other sources state that Brazel came to town alone, not with his family. For example, Marcel, in all the interviews he granted before his death, never mentioned that Brazel had his wife or children with him.

Finally, if Brazel's family had been at the ranch, why weren't they concerned when he was held by the military for several days? We know, based on the testimony of Major Edwin Easley, the 509th Provost Marshall, Marian Strickland, Loretta Proctor, and Bill Brazel, that Mac was held by the military for a number of days. Why didn't anyone try to find him? As Bessie said in her recent interview, if he had disappeared without the family knowing it, "There would have been hell to pay."

continued on page 24

THE ARNOLD PHENOMENON:

PART THREE

BY BRUCE MACCABEE

On June 24, 1947, a second witness saw the same objects Kenneth Arnold had observed. At the time of this witness' observation, Arnold was losing sight of them near Mount Adams, Washington.

Late that summer the Air Force received an unsolicited letter dated August 20. It read as follows (the errors in the original are preserved; I have emphasized certain important statements):

Sir,

Saw in the portland paper a short time ago in regards to an article in regards to the so called flying disc having any basis in fact. I can say am a prospector and was *in the Mt Adams district on June 24th* the day Kenneth Arnold of Boise Idaho claims he saw a formation of flying disc. And *i saw the same flying objects at about the same time*. Having a *telescope* with me at the time i can assure you they are real and noting like them I ever saw before they did not pass verry high over where I was standing at the time. plobly *1000 ft.* they were *Round about 30 foot in diameter tapering sharply to a point in the head and in an oval shape.* with a bright top surface. I did not hear any noise as you would from a plane. But there was an object in the tail end looked like a big hand of a clock *shifting from side to side like a big magenet.* There speed was far as i know seemed to be greater than anything I ever saw. Last view I got of the objects they were *standing on edge Banking in a Cloud.*

Yours Respectfully,

(Fred Johnson)

(The Project Blue Book file page which contains this letter is labeled "A TRUE COPY" authenticated by Lt. Col. Donald Springer. I assume that the mistakes in this letter were in the original and were not simply errors in copying.)

At this point during the summer of 1947, the FBI was actively investigating sightings, at the request of the Army

Bruce Maccabee, Ph.D., a physicist, contributes frequently to IUR and other publications. This is the final installment of a series that began in the January/February issue.

Air Force, to determine whether or not any such reports could be related to subversive activities carried on by enemies of the United States. (The FBI ended these investigations, having found no evidence of subversion, in the fall of 1947.) Therefore, at the request of the Air Force, an FBI agent interviewed Johnson. He sent his report to FBI headquarters in Washington, D.C., where a copy was found filed with other reports under the heading "REPORTS OF FLYING DISCS, SECURITY MATTER -X" (presumably the *real X Files!*). These reports came to light when the FBI responded to a Freedom of Information Act request made in 1976 for any UFO-related documents. The bureau found well over 1000 pages of material concerning the Air Force investigation, internal memoranda, and sightings reported to the FBI. The FBI report on Johnson's sighting reads (again I have emphasized important elements):

Fred Johnson, resident of First Avenue, Portland, Oregon, reported without consulting any records that *on June 24, 1947*, while prospecting at a point in the Cascade Mountains approximately *five thousand feet from sea level, during the afternoon* he noticed a *reflection*, looked up, and saw a disc proceeding in a *southeast-erly direction*. Immediately upon sighting this object he placed his *telescope* to his eye and observed the disc for approximately *forty-five to sixty seconds*. He remarked that it is possible for him to pick up an object at a distance of ten miles with his telescope. At the time the disc was sighted by Johnson it was *banking in the sun*, and he observed five or six similar objects but only concentrated on one. He related that they did not fly in any particular formation and that he would estimate their height to be about *one thousand feet from where he was standing*. He said the object was about *thirty feet in diameter and appeared to have a tail*. It made no noise.

According to Johnson, he remained in the vicinity of the Cascades for several days and then returned to Portland and noted an article in the local paper which stated in effect that a man in Boise, Idaho, had sighted a similar object but that authorities had disclaimed any knowledge of such an object. He said he communicated with the Army for the sole purpose of attempting to add

credence to the story furnished by the man in Boise.

Johnson also related that on the occasion of his sighting the objects on June 24, 1947 he had in his possession a combination compass and watch. He noted particularly that *immediately before he sighted the disc the compass acted very peculiar, the hand waving from one side to the other, but that this condition corrected itself immediately after the discs had passed out of sight.*

Informant appeared to be a very reliable individual who advised that he had been a prospector in the states of Montana, Washington and Oregon for the past forty years.

Johnson's letter indicates that he was in the right area at the right time to see the objects Arnold reported. Just as Arnold had, Johnson stated that his attention was drawn to them by a reflection, presumably a flash of light on the rocks he was examining. He reported only five or six, but it is likely that he missed seeing the others as he concentrated on his telescopic view of a single one. (Also, he was recalling the event almost two months after it occurred, so he may have forgotten some details, such as the exact number of the objects.) Adding his estimated distance of the objects above him, 1000 feet, to his estimated altitude, 5000 feet, yields an altitude for the UFOs of about 6000 feet, which is consistent with the altitude indicated by Arnold's claim that they were traveling "in and out" of the mountain peaks south of Mount Rainier.

Johnson claimed that he watched one disc for 45 to 60 seconds. Assuming that they were traveling at the speed calculated previously, about 1700 mph, in 45 seconds they would travel about 20 miles. Though it may have been possible that Johnson could see the objects over a distance of 20 miles from his location, it seems more likely that he saw them for less time. But even if it was only for 30 seconds with his telescope, we may assume that he was able to discern many details Arnold couldn't see, such as the point on the front and the "tail" waving side to side "like a big magnet" in the rear. (Here I presume Johnson is comparing it with the magnetic needle in a compass which swings left and right before reaching equilibrium.)

He said the objects were "round" and also "oval," thus generally agreeing with Arnold's description of nearly round objects, and he estimated that they were 30 feet in diameter, a value that is smaller than Arnold's estimate and smaller than the previously calculated value (80 feet or more; see part one of this series), suggesting that Johnson underestimated the size. He also stated that the speed was "greater than anything I ever saw," which is consistent with the speed calculated from Arnold's sighting. He heard no noise. He observed that while the objects were in sight, the needle of his compass waved from side to side. The waving stopped after the objects were out of sight.

Aside from the apparent confirmation of Arnold's sighting, Johnson's is unique in being the first to mention an apparent electromagnetic effect.

MENZEL'S HAMFISTEDNESS

Astronomer and Air Force consultant J. Allen Hynek, who reviewed all the sightings for Project Grudge in 1949, offered no explanation for Johnson's sighting. Harvard University astronomer Donald H. Menzel, on the other hand, declared that he had found the solution while analyzing the early sightings for his 1953 book *Flying Saucers*.

Menzel wrote that the sighting occurred on the same day as Arnold's but nowhere mentioned that it took place at the same time in the afternoon. He also neglected to report that Johnson was near Mount Adams at the time and thus in the area where Arnold last saw the objects (flying past Mount Adams). Thus the reader of his book would not have known, as Menzel had to have known (since he had access to the Air Force files), that Johnson said he saw the objects reported by Arnold.

Menzel accepted Johnson's sighting as real—in other words, not the product of a hoax or a hallucination—but explainable. After pointing out that Johnson observed the objects through his telescope for nearly a minute, Menzel offered his explanation: "The behavior of the saucers . . . is distinctive enough to label them as probably a true sighting. Bright reflections from patches of clouds were the most likely cause."

How, one wonders, could Menzel seriously suggest that Johnson would fail to realize that the objects were merely clouds after he had viewed them for many seconds through a telescope as they traveled by rapidly and were last seen *banking into a cloud*? Menzel also dismissed the wobbling-compass effect, arguing that in his excitement the witness was unable to hold the compass steady. This is essentially saying that Johnson, who had 40 years of prospecting experience at the time, did not understand that the compass would wobble if he didn't hold it steady.

It is no tribute to science that Menzel's book was enthusiastically accepted and purchased by libraries everywhere. It became a major reference in the Soviet Union where Menzel was remembered for his participation in an eclipse expedition in the 1930s. Soviet scientists referred to Menzel's work as "the solution" to the flying-saucer puzzle for many years afterwards. Menzel's work went undisputed because he was seen as an authoritative source and because no one took the time to review the Air Force records of the sighting Menzel claimed to have explained.

Menzel's ham-fisted attack on Johnson's sighting evidently failed to persuade the Air Force analysts, however. They left the sighting unexplained. In fact, the sighting holds a unique place in the Blue Book records. Out of approximately 13,000 reports collected between 1947 and 1969, the Air Force claimed that only about 700 resisted explanation. Johnson's is the first of these unexplained sightings. ♦

BLUE BOOK PEARLS: GREENVILLE, S.C.

BY WILLY SMITH

The bird hypothesis for UFOs, as one of the many causes advanced by the Air Force to explain the phenomenon, has some peculiarities that attract the attention of the analyst. For starters, it is a cumbersome hypothesis, as it mandates, since all of those incidents occurred at night, that the birds fly rather low and in the proximity of lights strong enough to cause a reflection from their feathers. Yet, during its "bird period" from August 1951 to August 1952, the Blue Book files list no fewer than 10 sightings, a density difficult to understand as this explanation hardly appears at other times.

Secondly, 50% of the listed incidents were in the state of Texas, a remarkable coincidence. In addition, when analyzing the incidents in detail, it becomes clear that while some of them undoubtedly were birds (Flint, Mich., April 20, 1952;¹ Fargo, N.Dak., April 25, 1952²), others certainly were anything but birds (Lubbock, Tex., August 25, 1951³; Tremonton, Utah, July 2, 1952⁴). In spite of the considerable existing evidence (photos and movie film) they are considered to this date controversial.

A legitimate question is whether other cases identified as birds by the Air Force are really so. To press the point, I have selected a rather obscure incident, witnessed by well-qualified civilian observers, under well-defined and detailed circumstances amenable to analysis.

THE INCIDENT

The night of May 13, 1952, was clear and quite ideal for astronomical observation. A group of amateur astronomers on the campus of Furman University, at Greenville, South Carolina,⁵ set up their instruments in an appropriate location where there were neither nearby ground lights nor haze—a dark area essential for good astronomical observing. The group was composed of four individuals, typically not well-characterized by Blue Book, where we find the narratives provided by three of them. All we know is that one was a "responsible adult citizen," another a "local lawyer," and a third a senior high school student. At any rate they were all particularly well-qualified to observe and assess lights moving in the sky.

At 10:33 p.m. EST, when almost ready to retire, one of

them (James Richardson) called the attention of the others to four objects flying in a diamond formation. The depositions in the Blue Book files are very consistent in describing the objects, which were flying about 10 to 15 degrees from the zenith at an unknown altitude on a heading of about 300 degrees. They were going on a straight course, oscillating slightly. The distance separating the objects was about five times the width of each. The objects were "self-illuminated," of oval shape, brownish orange, and dull glowing in appearance. Their size was estimated as that of a half dollar at arm's length quarter turned, and they were in sight for a length of time estimated by the individual witnesses from three to ten seconds, disappearing from view behind some trees approximately 30 feet high and 150–200 feet away from the observation point. There was no noise, "no trail or sparks or any other illumination other than the glow of the objects themselves." This sighting, admittedly, has a low information content, and its main merit is the quality of the witnesses, who were not only reputable members of the community but amateur astronomers as well, trained in the observation of the skies and less prone to misinterpret what they were seeing.

Nonetheless, the report refers to some concrete items important to the analysis, which are:

(1) Four silent objects were observed flying in a diamond formation.

(2) In the absence of local sources of light, the objects were luminous, or in the words of the witnesses, "self-illuminated," "possibly translucent."

(3) They presented an angular size described in similar terms by three of the observers, and, as determined below, equal to 0.0323 radians.

(4) The time of observation was between 3 and 10 seconds, with a well-defined field of observation, allowing an accurate estimate of their angular velocity.

Any credible explanation must take into account all of the above.

DISCUSSION

Although the investigating officer evaluated the case initially as "unknown," an anonymous hand wrote "WHY?" next to it in the official records, and the incident is now listed as "possible geese." This is not surprising in view of many similar episodes for which the stimulus was indeed a flock

Willy Smith, Ph.D., is head of the UNICAT Project, a database for high-quality UFO events.

of birds. Biased by this knowledge, whoever did the determination was indeed misguided by some statements of the witnesses, such as:

"Motion was similar to heavy winged birds in flight."
 "I would say the objects were similar to the 'Lubbock Lights' as reported in *Life* magazine."
 "Each the shape of a goose without neck or tail."

These are simply analogies aimed at better describing what the observers had seen. Nowhere in the depositions can one find the statement quoted by the investigating officer (1st Lt. Arthur Palmer of Air Force Intelligence): "one observer was inclined to believe these were geese," which the later reviewer modified to read "two." As pointed out by Loren Gross, in all fairness to Lt. Palmer, he pursued the problem beyond the acceptance of the bird hypothesis, not only remarking that there were no nearby ground lights, but also writing that:

It is not known how much light a bird will reflect, but it seems logical that a relatively bright ground source of light would be needed.

To which he added:

The objects appeared to wobble in their flight and being oval-shaped appeared to be flying sideways.

This is exactly what one would expect if the unknowns were discs. The insurmountable difficulty for the bird hypothesis is that we know that birds are not self-illuminated as reported, and in addition, there were no ground lights, powerful or otherwise, in the surrounding area. In one of the witness's words:

We found the atmosphere to be unusually clear... it was the first time in several weeks that we had been able to separate the rings from the planet [Saturn]. Conditions were such that it appears physically impossible for the objects to have been illuminated from ground lights or other sources.

As the report tells us the angular size of the objects, we can make some order of magnitude estimates of distances and sizes. The basic formula to use here is:

$$\beta = \frac{a}{d}$$

where β = subtended angle and
 a = linear dimension at distance d

From Fowler's *MUFON Field Investigator's Manual*, the angular size corresponding to a half-dollar at arm's length (26 inches) is $2^{\circ}37'$, which corrected for a quarter turn and reduced to radians yields:

$$\beta = 0.03229 \text{ radians}$$

A reasonable size for a migrating bird, say a goose or a duck, is 2 feet. Using the same formula again we find the distance to be 62 feet. At this distance, on a clear and quiet night, the flopping of the wings of a heavy bird would have been quite noticeable and easy to recognize.

From the report we learned that the objects, first noticed overhead, disappeared behind some 30-foot trees located at a distance of 150–200 feet from the observers. Taking the more conservative value of 200 feet, the angle subtended by the trees was $8^{\circ}32'$ ($\approx 8.5^\circ$), and the total angle traveled by the objects while in view was 81.5 degrees ($= 1.42244$ rad). This took an amount of time estimated between three and ten seconds, and again, assuming a value of five seconds, the average angular speed is:

$$\frac{d\beta}{dt} = \frac{81.5}{5} = 0.2845 \text{ rads/sec}$$

While directly overhead, the distance was 62 feet, and thus the linear velocity is:

$$v = 62 (0.2845) = 17.638 \text{ ft/sec} = 12 \text{ mph}$$

The average flying speed of Canada geese has been very precisely measured to be 30 mph.⁶ Higher velocities have been observed (45 mph), but lower values like the one calculated will result in the bird stalling. The bird hypothesis has become untenable.

To see if another interpretation of the data is possible, consider the statement of one of the witnesses:

Altitude I would say was below 1,000 ft. if they were about the size of geese.

The actual dimension of geese is of the order of two feet, as assumed before, and at 1,000 feet their angular size would be:

$$\alpha = \frac{2}{1000} = 0.002 \text{ radians}$$

This is quite different from the value obtained using the half-dollar estimate. To get a feeling for this number, one should keep in mind that it is equal to the angle subtended by two pennies on edge at a distance of 4 feet.

The angular velocity is still the same as determined before (0.2845 rad/sec), but if we assume a distance of 1,000 feet, the speed of the objects would be:

$$v = \frac{Rd\beta}{dt} = 1,000 \text{ (ft)} \times 0.2845 \text{ (rad/sec)} \\ = 284.5 \text{ ft/sec, or:} \\ v \approx 200 \text{ mph}$$

Finally, for a subtended angle $a = 0.0323$ radians, the actual size of an object at a distance of 1,000 feet is:

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PASSPORT TO MONIHEYA

BY JEROME CLARK

A man so obscure as to be barely known to most other residents of the rural area where he lived, John F. Reeves, 66, became the focus of international attention in 1965 when he reported an encounter with a UFO and its occupant. Reeves further claimed to have pieces of paper containing messages in what appeared to be an alien language. From any point of view, the episode, though now largely forgotten, is among the more bizarre in the history of high-strangeness UFO claims. Like other, comparable cases, it is riddled with ambiguities and features that confound confident conclusions about what did or did not take place.

Reeves lived in a partially finished house on the slope of a hill in a remote, barely accessible location known as the "scrublands." His residence was six miles west of Brooksville (pop. 6000), some 45 miles north of Tampa and a few miles east of the Gulf of Mexico. A longshoreman on a disability pension, Reeves moved to Brooksville from New York with his wife and son in 1961. He opened a trailer park but lost it in 1963. According to local businessmen, the soft-hearted Reeves was disinclined to demand rent from tenants who tended, like many other people in the region, to be poor. Moreover, one resident later told UFO investigators, he "often bought groceries for his trailerite tenants if he thought they were in need." His wife moved back to New York, and his son entered the Navy. Since then Reeves had been living alone.

Around mid-afternoon on Tuesday, March 2, 1965, Reeves walked into a service station-grocery store next to his house. He told John (Red) Wells, the owner, that he had just seen a flying saucer land. He said that probably no one would believe him. Still, maybe they ought to call Channel 13 (WTVT, the Tampa television station), he thought. But no such call was made, and Reeves went to his house. Wells, who knew Reeves well, had no trouble believing his story. He later claimed that "after the story got out, three different people came to see me and said they'd seen it too, same time,

Jerome Clark, editor of IUR, is at work on a multivolume encyclopedic history of the UFO phenomenon. This article has been adapted from his forthcoming High Strangeness: UFOs from 1960 Through 1979—The UFO Encyclopedia, Volume 3, to be published by Omnigraphics.

same locality."

That evening, feeling the need to talk with a friend, Reeves visited another neighbor, Estes Morgan, a young man who worked as foreman at a nearby lime rock quarry. Morgan recalled that Reeves "was all shook up. I'd never seen him in such a state before." As he related, with difficulty, his UFO encounter that afternoon, he showed Morgan two pieces of a tissuelike paper with writings on them. "I didn't believe him, not really," Morgan said, "until he showed me the two tissues. I held them up to the brightest light in the house and gave them a good going-over. I wasn't so much impressed by the writings. After all, there are lots of strange languages. But I was very much interested in the tissue material itself. Never in my life had I touched anything like it, so filmy, yet so tough, and containing very long, very fine, dark purple veins or threads. The tissues gave off a strong, acrid smell that I couldn't identify, either. Nothing around here smells like *that*."

Morgan took it upon himself to call Channel 13, which was neither interested nor polite about its lack of interest. He then suggested that Reeves speak to the *Brooksville Sun-Journal*. So the next morning Reeves went to the office of the local weekly newspaper and talked with reporter Miriam Gant, who recalled, "Reeves related his story with great sincerity and concern. His account did not sound like it had been rehearsed." The Brooksville city clerk also looked at the tissue paper and its alleged alien writings. Someone encouraged Reeves to see William Johnson, owner of Brooksville's radio station WWJB.

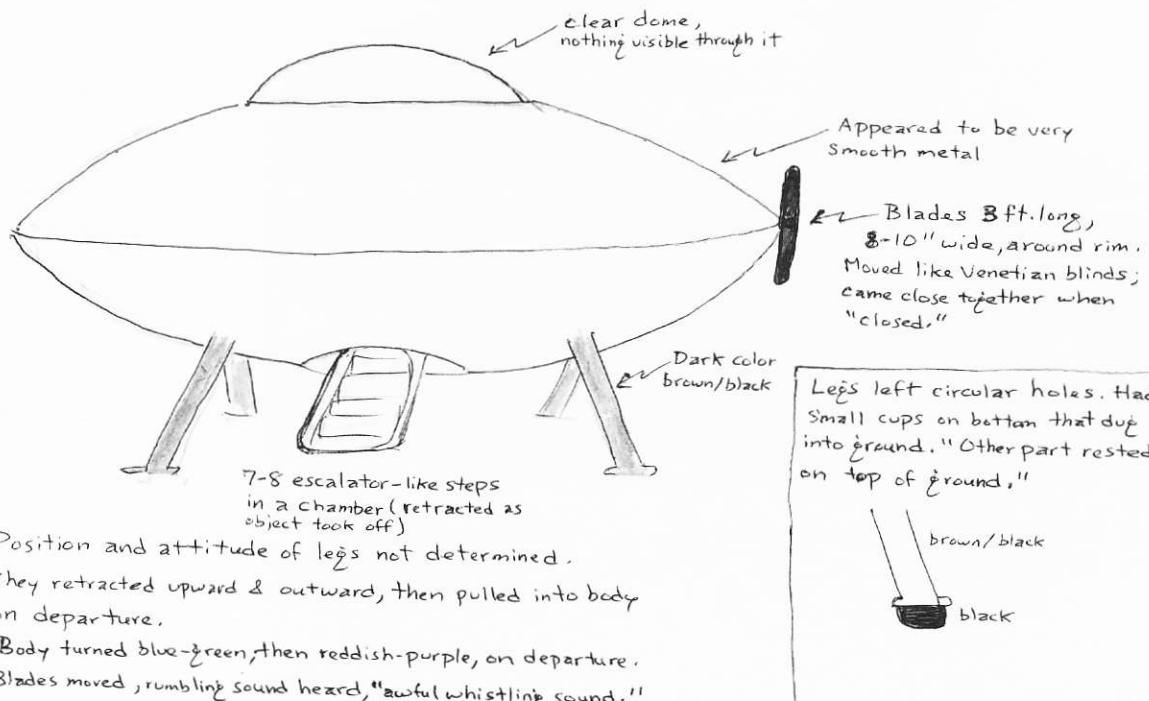
"I never met John Reeves until the morning of March 3, when they brought him over here from the newspaper office and sort of turned him over to me," Johnson told investigators Robert Snyder and Robert S. Carr a few days later. "I knew vaguely who he was and couldn't help noticing his place out on Highway 50. I heard about his going broke buying groceries for tenants who couldn't pay their trailer rent. I never heard anything bad."

After hearing Reeves's strange story, Johnson called MacDill Air Force Base, which promised to send out investigators as soon as possible. Then, accompanied by his son Wally, Reeves, and photographer Frank Fish, he went out to the site. Meanwhile someone from the *Sun-Journal* phoned a St. Petersburg radio station, WLCY, which quickly aired

Diameter: Est. 30 ft.
 Thickness: 6 ft. ("It was thick.")
 Legs : 4 ft.

March 2, 1965
 Brooksville, Fla.
 Witness: John Reeves

1:55 p.m.



Sketch of landed UFO allegedly encountered by John Reeves near Brooksville, Florida, on March 2, 1965.

a report about a landed UFO, its "robot" occupant, and the alien writings. Evelyn Anderson of St. Petersburg heard the report and notified another St. Petersburg UFO enthusiast, E. R. Sabo. Sabo phoned Robert Snyder, a Clearwater man who headed Florida Unit #2 of the Washington-based National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP). The world was about to descend on Brooksville.

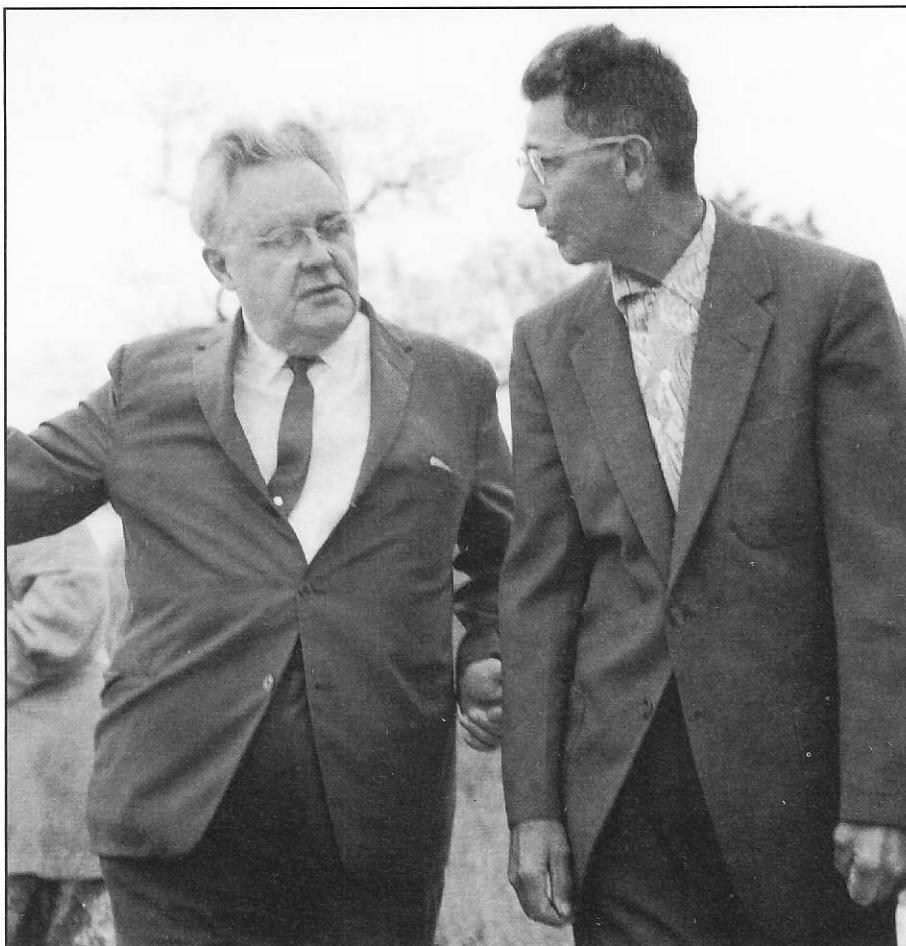
REEVES'S STORY

Early in the afternoon Reeves had been wandering through the woods above Highway 50 in search of snakes. He frequently hunted snakes, captured them alive, and shipped them to his son, who was interested in the reptiles. Leaving a one-track road used by the U.S. Forest Service, he went deeper into the scrublands until, about two miles from the highway, he spotted a "big flying saucer" sitting in an open clearing on top of a sandhill. Reddish-purple and bluish-green in color, it rested on four legs and was six feet high and 20 to 30 feet in diameter.

Fascinated but not frightened, Reeves sneaked to within 100 feet of the craft, then crawled into dense bushes to watch it further. He glanced at his watch. It was 1:55. Suddenly he saw something moving on the far side of the object and heading in his direction. As it walked past the UFO, he was able to observe what it was: a "robot" with a glass dome or space helmet over its head. It spotted Reeves even as he tried to hunker down deeper into the bushes, and it came within 15 feet of him.

Though Reeves would persist in calling the figure a "robot"—reasoning that "anything that isn't human has got to be a robot"—he described an essentially humanlike being with a darkly tanned face, five feet tall, clad in a silver-gray canvas material. It had thin white gloves on its hands and metallic-looking boots on its feet. Its eyes were a little farther apart, closer to the ears, and its chin a bit more pointed than a normal person's, but he thought it at least conceivable that these were distortions from the glass. It had a "cylinder" on its back and was wearing a skull cap.

It stood watching him for about a minute and a half.



Robert S. Carr (left), NICAP member of Clearwater, Florida, and John Reeves (right), at the site on Route 50, four miles northeast of Weeki Wachee Springs, on March 6, 1965.

Then it reached to its left side and produced a round, black object, six or seven inches in diameter. It lifted the device to its chin, and it flashed twice. Panicking, Reeves got to his feet and tried to run, but he tripped and fell back down into a sitting position facing the figure, which flashed the round object at him one more time. Reeves thought it was taking his picture.

The figure now walked toward the object. Beneath the craft Reeves could see a small spiral staircase made up of round steps. The being walked up these and into the ship. Once it was inside, Reeves told NICAP investigators, "a lot of little blades around the rim of the saucer started to move in unison like the slats of a venetian blind. They opened and closed. Then the rim started going around counterclockwise. It made a whooshing and rumbling sound as it speeded up its spinning. The staircase pulled up inside. . . . Then the four stilts or legs retracted, and the saucer went straight up with that whooshing sound. I watched, and it was out of sight in less than 10 seconds in the cloudless sky."

At the clearing where the UFO had rested, Reeves found a large number of footprints. They were round at the heel and

toe areas but narrow in the arch. The being had apparently walked in the immediate vicinity of the craft but had at no point gone any distance from it. Four holes left by the landing gear stood in a square area, each 10 feet or so from the other. Each hole was cup-shaped, four inches wide and four inches deep. In the middle of the square, at the spot where the staircase had been, Reeves noticed a wad of loosely folded paper. When he picked it up, he discovered that it consisted of "two sheets of very strong but very thin tissue, unlike anything I'd ever touched before. Both were covered with strange writings or marks that looked like Chinese."

Not knowing what else to do but feeling that he should tell somebody, he went to his friend Red Wells's store and spoke briefly with him. Then he went home to study the writing on the tissue.

INVESTIGATIONS

Early on the afternoon of the third, 1st Lt. Edward R. Goettl and three enlisted men arrived in Brooksville from MacDill AFB. They met Reeves and Johnson at the latter's radio station. After an hour's worth of interviewing, they drove the witness to the encounter site, spoke with him further, and took photographs of the markings, prints, and paper. In his official report, written later that day, Lt. Goettl remarked, "The paper Mr. Reeves claims he found at the landing site is similar to silk span paper used to build model airplanes." The officer judged Reeves to be of "doubtful" reliability. In any case, Reeves had willingly handed over the paper for analysis, which presumably would settle the question of whether or not he had had some kind of unearthly encounter.

The Air Force men took Reeves back to the radio station around 4 p.m. By this time reporters from Tampa, St. Petersburg, and elsewhere were waiting. With Johnson acting as a sort of combination agent/protector, Reeves answered questions until well into the evening. The next morning, Thursday, there were more reporters and curiosity-seekers. By evening the throngs of gawkers had obliterated most of the alleged "robot" footprints at the site. What little remained was washed away in a rain shower that night.

The circus continued through the weekend. Even so,

amid all the hoopla, a few of those who were flocking to Brooksville came with serious purpose. On Saturday, March 6, investigators arrived separately from the Air Force and from NICAP. The two teams arrived on the scene with opposing predispositions. The Air Force strongly suspected a hoax, and NICAP's representatives clearly were prepared to collect evidence for a real-life extraterrestrial encounter.

The Air Force team consisted of Lt. Goettl, a sergeant, and a civilian scientist named C. W. Bemiss. As a member of the technical staff of Pan American Airways, a major Air Force contractor, Dr. Bemiss worked at the Air Force Eastern Test Range, headquartered at Patrick AFB in Florida. After reading accounts of the Brooksville incident in the press, Bemiss offered his services. Specifically he offered to test the site for traces of radiation. His request was speedily approved, and early on the afternoon of the sixth, he and the MacDill investigators examined the location. Bemiss detected no evidence either of radiation or of disturbance in soil, grass or leaves. "This type of litter," he wrote in his official report six days later, "is very loose and could be easily moved by a moderately strong air flow." The fact that it hadn't been struck him as suspicious, unless "if a 'sighting' did actually take place, the unknown vehicle must have included a form of propulsion unknown to our science." Bemiss also thought the irregular spacing of the four holes allegedly left by the landing gear raised questions. One would expect, he remarked, that "the support legs of a circular vehicle would be equally spaced or at least the diagonal distance spacing would be similar." The Air Force

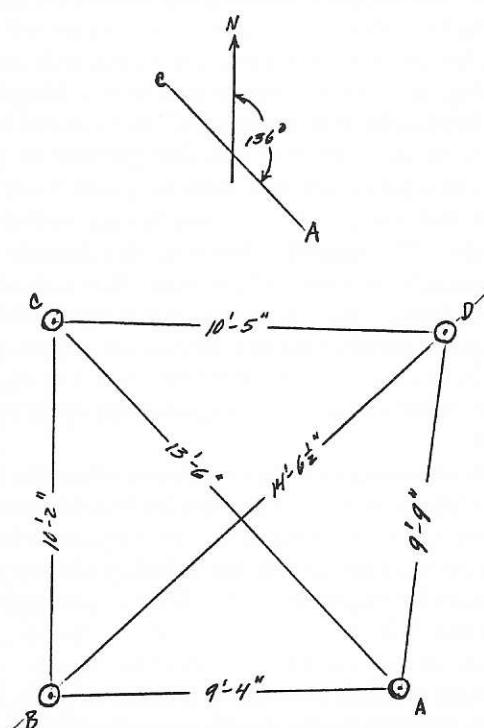


John Reeves and Robert M. Snyder, Clearwater, Chairman of the West Coast Chapter of NICAP, at the site, March 6, 1965.

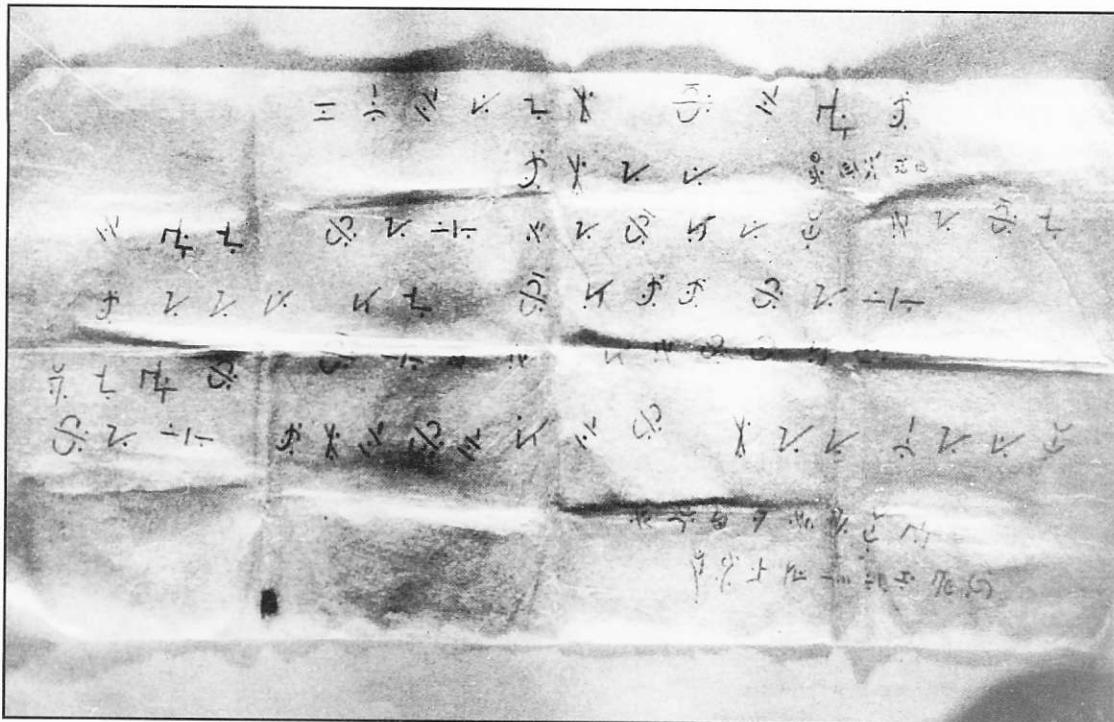
men did not speak with Reeves that day, but Robert M. Snyder and Robert S. Carr of NICAP spent a great deal of time with him. On the third Carr had called MacDill about the case and been stonewalled by six departments. Finally Capt. Richard Henry, the base's public information officer, reluctantly acknowledged that MacDill already had investigators on site. Carr prevailed on Henry to give him the name of the individual who had alerted the base to the incident, and Carr called William Johnson immediately. Work commitments kept Carr from going to Brooksville that day, but he sent his wife, who purchased a set of photographs, including ones depicting the alien writings, from Frank Fish. The next morning Carr placed the negatives in his safety deposit box, apparently out of concern that the Air Force might try to suppress this evidence.

The next day, in a series of phone conversations, Carr and Snyder advised Johnson, with whom they had managed to establish a rapport, to be cautious in his dealings with would-be exploiters. For example, Tampa's WTFT, now intensely if belatedly interested in Reeves's claims, wanted to have him hypnotically regressed on live television. The NICAP men urged Johnson to shelter Reeves from the press until they could get there themselves. Johnson hid Reeves on Fish's farm.

Meanwhile, on the fifth, Miguel Acoca, chief of *Life*'s Miami bureau, contacted Carr. Carr, whose wife Katherine was a former executive with the magazine, suggested Acoca



Four-hole array at the site, drawn by C. W. Bemiss on March 9, 1965.



This script on thin tissue paper was allegedly dropped by a "spaceman" in the Brooksville incident.

accompany him and Snyder to Brooksville the next day. He made the suggestion, Carr later told NICAP, "thinking this might prove a good way to shape to NICAP's benefit whatever might appear in *Life* magazine." Carr soon would learn how wrong he was.

At 10 a.m. Saturday, Snyder, the Carrs, Acoca, and *Life* photographer Burton McNeely showed up at Johnson's radio station. Johnson told them, "It was the tissue material, as much as anything Reeves said, that made me feel this case was a real one. I examined the tissues closely. I have never seen or touched anything like them: very light, yet very strong, veined with a long threadlike fine dark lines, and almost impossible to tear. I took scissors and clipped off a corner to see if it would burn. It did."

The group then repaired to Fish's farm east of town and spoke with Reeves for two hours. According to Snyder and Carr, "All later agreed that Reeves created the impression of an honest, simple, uneducated, guileless man who had had a very great surprise, a profound experience, which he felt he ought to tell all who asked questions, because it was too big to keep to himself." He appeared to be in a "mild state of shock, as though a deeper state of shock were wearing off."

Afterwards the group went to the landing site, only to find that little remained there. Reeves invited the investigators to his house, where he talked about his life and showed them copies of musical scores he had composed a quarter of a century earlier. In his youth, he said, he had written songs which were sung at roller-skating rinks in New York. Much interested for reasons Reeves gave no sign of suspecting, the investigators examined the sheet music carefully, and Carr stepped outside with Fish so that the latter could photograph

one sheet. Everybody but Reeves grasped at once that they now had samples of Reeves's writing which they could compare with those on the tissue materials. Subsequently they concluded that there was no obvious resemblance. They may not have stopped to consider that someone's handwriting is likely to change over a 25- to 30-year period.

In the course of this trip and others made in the next few days, Snyder and Carr interviewed Wells, Morgan, and other Brooksville-area residents. All spoke well of Reeves. The investigators learned that *Life* planned to subject Reeves to a polygraph test. Johnson asked Snyder if he thought that was a good idea, and Snyder replied in the affirmative. He suggested, however, that Johnson record the polygraph interview without telling Reeves that he was doing so. It is not clear what Snyder had in mind, but the tape would prove useful to the ufologists in the dispute about to erupt. In any case, on March 9 Johnson set up recording equipment in the office of Tampa polygraph operator David Allison.

Allison's analysis of the test convinced him that Reeves was not telling the truth. When Snyder heard this two days later from *Life* reporter Acoca, he was so upset that he drove almost at once to Brooksville and picked up Johnson's tapes. That night he played them for NICAP associates, who agreed that Allison had done a poor job. In the pre-test interview he had asked Reeves about his background and forced him to recall a traumatic incident of years before, when he had witnessed a murder committed by waterfront gangsters. Thus, once he had been hooked up to the polygraph machine, Snyder and Carr reported to NICAP headquarters, "John Reeves was in such a pitiable condition that

the instrument showed confusion, fear, and guilt registering on every question asked—not merely the ‘catch’ questions.”

So the ufologists arranged for a polygraph examiner more to their liking, fellow NICAP member E. J. Edwards. Edwards, a resident of Orlando, spoke with Reeves and Johnson in Brooksville. Once having familiarized himself with the story, he brought Reeves to Orlando on the thirteenth and gave him a polygraph test. Edwards concluded:

... John F. Reeves has answered all pertinent questions truthfully, regarding the experience he had when as he stated he saw a UFO and occupant on March 2, 1965 at Brooksville, Florida. A further and most significant point of interest is at the conclusion of the tests, Mr. Reeves first remarked, “[N]ow would you like to see the place where I saw the saucer?” The usual reaction of a guilty subject with respect to not answering truthful [sic] would have more likely been, “[W]ell how did I make out?” There was in Mr. Reeves a complete unconcern about the Polygraph test outcome. It is my opinion therefore, that he was truth-telling in all respects.

TISSUE OF LIES?

Meanwhile the Air Force’s Project Blue Book, which had the tissue papers in its possession, sought to have them analyzed. On March 16 Maj. Hector Quintanilla, Jr., head of Blue Book, wrote the Institute of Paper Chemistry, Appleton, Wisconsin, and asked if it would give immediate priority to an examination of the material. On the twenty-fourth, in a four-page reply, T. A. Howells, chairman of the institute’s Technology Section, wrote, “The sample is composed of bast or leaf fibers from any one of a number of plants. Although these fibers are a minor part of the raw material of the paper industry, their use in some segments of the industry is not uncommon.” Later in the letter he noted:

We have made no attempt to analyze the ink or other marking material on the specimen because we have had no special experience in this area and feel there are other laboratories that are more competent. After brief microscopic examination, however, we feel that the markings probably were placed on the specimen by printing or stamping under light pressure rather than by marking with a pencil or ballpoint pen which probably would cause more disruption of the fibrous surface.

In summary, we see no reason to believe that this material came from outer space; it is composed of fibers which are not uncommon in this country and in foreign countries. The fiber composition, as well as the general nature of the specimen, correspond to lens and stencil papers made both in this country and abroad on continuous machines and also in small-scale hand operations. It is possible that the exact nature of the fiber could be determined more closely by additional study of fiber morphology and dimensions but without further advice from you we are not convinced that such efforts would be worthwhile.



John Reeves, contact claimant.

At the end of March, Blue Book issued a press release announcing its conclusion that Reeves had hoaxed the story. Among other suspicious features it noted, “The holes which were purportedly caused by the landing gear were straight and appeared to have been scooped or dug as opposed to indentations caused by an object of any sizeable weight.” When deciphered, according to Blue Book, the “hieroglyphics” on one page read, “Planet Mars, are you coming home soon? We miss you very much. Why did you stay away too long?”

The Florida NICAP representatives disputed the accuracy of what Blue Book had called a “simple substitution code.” Carr claimed to have shown copies of the writings to a “wide range of specialists” who found them unfamiliar and puzzling. Snyder and Edwards complained that the Air Force had one word represented by two different symbols.

On March 31 Reeves wrote Maj. Quintanilla and asked politely for the return of the tissues. Two captains from MacDill delivered them personally to Reeves on the morning of April 13. If this method of transmission was intended to assuage any fears that the Air Force was trying to cover up evidence of extraterrestrial visitation, it failed. The officers had barely driven away before Johnson was on the phone to the NICAP people in Clearwater. The papers the Air Force had returned, he said, were not the ones it had been given.

When Carr met with him on May 1, Johnson produced a sheet of lens tissue which he had just purchased in a local camera store. It was exactly the same as the paper the Air Force had turned over. “Had the originals been on lens tissue,” he said, “I would not have believed Reeves, as I still do. The writings look the same, but now the materials are completely different.” Reeves’s friend Estes Morgan also



Footprints of the robot reportedly observed by John Reeves.

claimed that the tissue material he had seen prior to the Air Force's first visit was "completely different . . . absolutely not the same ones Reeves showed me."

Snyder and Carr would, however, part company in their analysis of what this meant. Snyder thought the Air Force had substituted ordinary tissues and kept the real ones. Carr was sure, on the other hand, that the ordinary tissues were the "real" ones. In his interpretation Reeves had had an authentic UFO encounter, but after speaking with Wells about it and expressing the opinion that no one would believe him, he went home, brooded on the matter, and finally decided that he would produce his own "proof." Carr speculated as follows:

Too smart to write a Martian message on ordinary tablet-paper, Reeves chose the lens tissue over one of his many sheets of printed music paper[.] using the lines beneath as guides, he began to invent an alphabet, drawing upon the only "other language" he knew, the symbols of musical notation, from which the Brooksville writings seem to me to be derived, with variations.

On the first sheet, he invented symbols for our alpha-

bet, from A to I, in order, then at random, to have plenty to choose from. On this first sheet, he used musical bar-lines to separate every four to eight characters.

Then he took his second sheet of lens tissue and in a larger hand, omitting the bar-lines, he hastily and thoughtlessly composed a message curiously similar to his roller-skating song lyrics: the most banal sentiments, in the simplest of English words, grouped into short but complete sentences, like the lines in his song lyrics. The 19-word message contains only 19 letters, used 68 times.

Four hours have now elapsed. Night is falling. Armed with his weird-looking "proof," Reeves walks up the slope to visit Estes Morgan, the nearest thing to a "best friend" Reeves has. Morgan sees Reeves is "all shook up," because he is truly in a state of shock from his *real* experience. The strong emotions evoked by the true story he now tells in full for the first time, to Morgan, carries [sic] over by "transubstantiation" to the fabricated tissues, which grow steadily more "authentic" to him, as time passes. He fails his first lie-detector test, having a sense of guilt about the tissues, but passes his second test, by which time he has completely absolved himself of guilt.

Another reason I think Reeves faked the tissues is the way he de-emphasized them. . . . He never says the spaceman handed them to him . . . or even that he saw the spaceman *drop* them. He merely says he *found* the tissues on the ground *after* the UFO flew off. Reeves' tissues have all the earmarks of an AFTER-THOUGHT, and one that he does not want to be prosecuted for, in case it is exposed. . . .

If John Reeves had the tissues with him when he emerged from the scrublands about 3 p.m., March 2nd, why did he not show them to his friend and neighbor, Red Wells? Because he decided to make the tissues AFTER talking to Red Wells. . . .

The Air Force returned the same lens tissues they took from Reeves. However, the appearance, texture, strength and all physical characteristics of the tissues had been radically altered by much handling and intensive testing, which may have included the application of heat and certain chemical vapors. This soft rice paper absorbs skin-oils, sweat, and any other moisture. It deteriorates more quickly than used Kleenex.

On June 15 Elizabeth McCarthy, a Boston-based document expert who had examined the writings on the tissues, reported to NICAP investigator Owen Lake:

It is my opinion that these symbols were made with a

common type of pencil of the hard variety. The color and condition match the condition of the writing line and match rather closely that of a No. 4 pencil, such as Mongol 482, Saphir 200 of A. W. Faber or Dixon Oriole 287.

To MONIHEYA

"I don't care what anybody says about me," Reeves told a correspondent on April 2. "All I know, I saw the flying saucer and it's [sic] robot pilot. That's my story, and they are stuck with it."

That story, however, had begun to expand, or so it seemed to some. Several months later he wrote the same individual:

There is a lot more to that story than what I told the news reporters. Something happened back in the woods that no one knew about. . . . [T]he robot, after he took the second flash . . . didn't go over to the saucer. He came over by me, and put his hands on my shoulders three times, tapping me on the shoulders. Something happened there that wasn't to get out, something I knew about. That space craft came back in [sic] twenty nine days later. I knew it was going to come back. There was [sic] three of us that saw it. We got a picture of it, but the picture didn't come out too clear. We had to do some running from under the trees to get out in the opening. The ship came down to about a thousand feet, and about a half mile away. From what I understand, there was a jet chasing it. So I was told by this other party. . . .

When the robot came over to me, he pointed to the sun. Then he pointed to the East, then to the West[;]; then he pointed to himself, then to the saucer[;]; then he pointed to the sky. As he did this, he made his hand go around in a circle like[;]; as he pointed to the ground, he was trying to tell me that the sun would rise and set so many times. That was the number of days that would pass [sic] that he would be back again. I understood what he was trying to tell me. I have the paper he made the dots on. After what he done [sic] he put his finger on my lip like and then held his hand out afterwards and closed his hand up like a fist, meaning I shouldn't let any one know that he was coming back here again.

There is some reason to believe this was not subsequent confabulation but a part of Reeves's story from the beginning. During their initial interview with him, Air Force investigators noticed that at one point he stumbled, as if he were about to say something which he then decided to keep to himself. Perhaps significantly, the stumble happened precisely at that point in the narrative at which, as he would later assert, the being touched him. The Air Force men thought the hesitation indicated that he was lying.

On October 26 the *Tampa Tribune* reported:

Two people confirmed the March 2 saucer sighting saying that they had seen one on that day in the area. On March 31 a Brooksville man and his wife went with Reeves to the woody landing place to await the saucer return and reported that they did see it approaching in the sky from the north and then an Air Force jet approached and the disc-shaped object flipped over on its rim and disappeared. A Pinellas Park resident also reported seeing an unidentified flying object the same afternoon.

Reeves claimed that on October 21 he found footprints and holes at a site about 400 feet from the original landing spot. The footprints, apparently made by two or three individuals, were two inches longer—12 inches as opposed to 10—than those at the first site had been. Reeves allegedly witnessed a landing in the early morning hours of December 4, 1966. A group of UFO enthusiasts led by *Saucer Scoop* editor Joan Whritenour who arrived a few hours later found traces and footprints.

To commemorate his UFO experiences, he constructed a 23-foot obelisk, at the top of which he placed a crescent moon and a replica of earth, and displayed it in his front yard. Elsewhere on his property he put a large wooden saucer. He began wearing a jumpsuit and mounting displays of UFO-related materials such as clippings and photographs at local shopping malls.

In 1968 Reeves came forward with a story so outlandish that it shocked his supporters into silence. As he told the tale, at 2 a.m. on August 5 he awoke with a strong urge to go into the woods. He managed to resist it by drinking a glass of milk and falling asleep again. The feeling continued during the day, and finally at 3 p.m. he headed for the trees. There he met two men, one shorter than the other; both wore spacesuits and carried helmets under their arms. "Where are you fellows from?" he asked. Pointing skyward, they replied, "From up there." At this juncture Reeves tried to run away, but the men overtook him and gently guided him to a flying saucer waiting on the other side of a nearby lake.

Inside the spaceship he saw six other humanlike occupants, all working in a glass room full of instruments, including three-dimensional television screens. He was introduced to the leader, whose name sounded something like Josh. He also met a beautiful young woman, Detzee, who was clad in a brown jumpsuit and who had, he said, "light brown hair and blue eyes."

He was placed in a chair opposite a chair where Josh sat. As Josh manipulated levers, Reeves passed out. "Apparently the acceleration was too much for me," he said. The next thing he knew, he was waking up, and Detzee was telling him he would be all right. The saucer people otherwise were not forthcoming. Asked where they were from, they said another galaxy and nothing more. They did inform him that he was being taken to the moon.

After six hours in space, the ship landed on the moon's surface. Reeves stepped outside with several others and walked around for a time. He did not have to wear a spacesuit

because the moon had air that was breathable though thin. He returned to the ship, which flew around the moon's dark side at a low enough altitude that Reeves could see human inhabitants. "As we flew over the ground at about 300 feet," he told a reporter, "I counted 18 people along a stream flowing down the side of a low mountain."

At one point he was fed a delicious dinner of some unknown delicacy. It was followed by a glass of a liquid resembling crystalline ink but tasting like water.

Before they dropped him off, the space people told him they would come back and take him to their home planet. He would be gone a couple of weeks, so if he disappeared for a time, no one should worry about his whereabouts. "They were friendly," he said, "and we got along great."

True to their word, the space people returned two months later and took him to their world, which they called Monihuya and which earthlings call Venus. (Apparently they were fibbing earlier about being from "another galaxy.") He returned home with a Venusian flag. Where the ship had landed he erected a plaque with this inscription: "The spaceship that took John F. Reeves to planet Monihuya, millions and millions of miles from planet Earth, landed here October 5, 1968."

In 1980 Reeves was forced to sell his property to the state to pay off back taxes, and he moved to a trailer in Brooksville. The state destroyed both house and monuments, ignoring protests from some Floridians. Interviewed by Canadian writer Douglas Curran in the early 1980s, Reeves expressed regret that his ambition to be buried at the foot of the obelisk would never be realized. The stone was to bear these words: "In this tomb lies the body of John F. Reeves, one of the greatest men of our time, the greatest of them all. Outer space traveller to other planets of our galaxy."

DREAMS, LIES, AND ANOTHER ENCOUNTER

In some ways the Reeves episode reminds one of the Eagle River, Wisconsin, CE3 of April 18, 1961. In both instances older men, separated from their wives, living alone in the country, and regarded as honest by friends and acquaintances, supposedly encountered humanlike, dark-featured UFO occupants with whom they communicated via gesture. The claimants also produced what purported to be alien artifacts ("pancakes" in the Eagle River incident), and in both cases scientific analyses proved the artifacts to be disappointingly terrestrial in nature. Witnesses also reported apparently confirmatory sightings at or around the time of the alleged encounters. In neither instance were these sightings properly investigated. All we know of them is what we read in brief press references, and therefore their value as evidence is slight.

There are also some important differences between the two cases. Even Blue Book, which often showed no such scruples, could not bring itself to accuse Eagle River claim-

ant Joe Simonton of conscious hoaxing—the pancakes notwithstanding. Moreover, Simonton related only one story. However many times he told it, that story remained the same. His UFO never returned and he never went to Venus, or even to Milwaukee, aboard it.

Reeves's March 2, 1965, story has no shortage of credibility problems. Yet those who knew him were sure he was sincere, and they were uniformly of the opinion that he had had some kind of experience. In the end this is virtually the *only* positive evidence, though that does not make it trivial. Reeves *acted* as if he believed his story to be true. Nonetheless even the initial encounter is dubious on its face. The image of a camera-toting extraterrestrial tourist rings false, and nothing like it appears in other, more ostensibly plausible accounts of close encounters of the third kind.

Perhaps the key point to be considered is that Reeves also acted as if he believed he had been to the moon and Venus. From the latter he brought back a Venusian flag which we may safely assume he, and not Venusians, manufactured. Given that, it requires no leap of imagination to deduce that he could also have manufactured alien writings, footprints, and traces.

Though we will never know with certainty what did or did not happen that afternoon in 1965, one reasonable hypothesis might run as follows:

Suffering from undiagnosed psychiatric problems, Reeves hallucinated a UFO encounter. After relating the experience to Red Wells, he left determined to silence scoffers with "evidence." Instead of going to his house as announced, he returned to the site to concoct prints and traces. He then went to the house and created the alien writings. The attention he received only hastened his departure from consensus reality, and Reeves came to occupy a fantasy world in which he was a space traveler and the "greatest man of our time." In a case such as this, dreams and lies may have become indistinguishable even to the one who was dreaming and lying.

And yet . . .

On Friday, March 5, the *Orlando Sentinel* picked up UPI's article on the Brooksville incident. That afternoon a tourist, retired Chicago milkman Harvey Keck, stopped at the newspaper office and related an interesting story. A month earlier, he said, he had seen the same kind of being Reeves was reporting. At the time he had been walking along an isolated stretch of Lake Michigan beach at sunrise. He had not reported the incident then because he was sure no one would believe him. Even his wife told him he must have dreamed it.

"I'd say the one I saw was about the same size, five feet tall and stocky, just like the one in Brooksville," he stated. "He also had dark tan flesh, the same glass dome helmet, and his eyes were farther apart than normal. He even had the same pointed chin as this one in Florida. And that description of the saucer was right on the button. About six feet high and the same four-legged landing gear."

There were some differences, however. His UFO occupant had not carried a camera. Nor, he said, had it handed him paper with writing on it.

If any portion of Reeves's testimony is in any way authentic, we can only regret that he seems to have done everything in his power to hide that fact.

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The Saas Fee photo

On the afternoon of July 26, 1975, three Dutch tourists, hiking near the village of Zwischbergen, Switzerland, observed a circular object several meters in diameter hanging in the sky between two hills. One of the tourists captured the object on a color slide.

Throughout the years the "Saas Fee photo" (so named after a well-known ski resort 15 kilometers southwest of the spot where the photo was taken) has received worldwide publicity. Dr. J. Allen Hynek once referred to the photo as "one of the best ever made." UFO photoanalyst William H. Spaulding, after conducting a computerized image evaluation in 1977, concluded that the object's size was 25-30 feet in diameter and about one half mile distant.

The report on this photographic incident—as well as additional testimony and another photograph taken at the same time only 49 kilometers away—has been published (in English) in an excellent monograph by Wim van Utrecht and Frits van der Veldt entitled *Unidentified Aerial Object Photographed near Zwischbergen, Switzerland, on July 26, 1975* (226p. Caelestia, 1995). Included in the report are transcripts of interviews with two of the witnesses, astronomical and meteorological data, a historical survey of disc-shaped aircraft, and a summary of all the analyses conducted on the photos.

Van Utrecht and Van der Veldt tentatively conclude that the first photo is a hoax and that the second is of doubtful relevance.

To find out why, send \$27.00 (postpaid) by International Postal Money Order or cash to: Wim van Utrecht, Caelestia, Kronenburgstraat 110, B-2000 Antwerpen, Belgium.

UFO FLAP IN ZIMBABWE

BY CYNTHIA HIND

Wednesday, September 14, 1994, was an exciting night for southern Africa. Between 8:50 and 9:05 p.m., a pyrotechnic display of some magnificence appeared in the almost clear night skies of this part of the continent.

The first sighting seems to have been made from Kempton Park, near Jan Smuts Airport in Johannesburg. Radio 702, the commercial radio program in this area, was receiving phone calls from people near to the airport, but in actual fact, the lights in the sky were so brilliant and so clearly visible that sightings started pouring in from Botswana, Zambia (in the southern area) and Zimbabwe, covering a time period of approximately 10–12 minutes.

I first became aware that *something* was going when on I heard a loud explosion at 9:04 that night. I went outside immediately, but saw nothing, and a little later on, when my phone started ringing with excited reports from all over the country, I drove in my car with Maria Sullivan and my granddaughter Ianthe around the northern suburbs of Harare, to see if anything was happening. But all was quiet and orderly—even the dogs were not barking as furiously as they usually do. Later I learned that it was a sonic boom as pieces of debris entered our atmosphere.

Shortly after arriving back home, I called the night editor of the local paper. Had he heard any reports and what did he think? He told me that there were dozens of calls coming in, but they had already resolved the problem.

It was a meteorite shower of some magnificence and, of course, it was being seen from several countries.

I use the *MUFON UFO Journal's* column, "The Night Sky," given monthly in advance by Walter Webb, for reference and there was certainly no indication of a spectacular meteorite shower in September. Still, UFO investigators are far lesser mortals than amateur astronomers, so I accepted what I was told. However, almost immediately afterwards and certainly for several days running, the reports continued to come in to me. And if meteorites they were, what strange and unconventional behavior!

The general consensus of opinion was that the lights

were preceded by a ball of fire which seemed to have a point to it, with a long tail of sparks. It was of a white or golden color and lit up brilliantly in the sky. Some people saw three huge lights at the front, with smaller lights behind; the count of the smaller lights varying from 8 to 20. Many reported that the objects were travelling very fast from north to south; others that it moved slowly, and one man actually walked along with it for more than a hundred meters.

There were definitely a great variety of reports—in fact, so varying that I have decided to pick out some of the more graphic ones from reliable witnesses and record them here. Mainly, because I feel that not all the reports referred to the same objects. And if there was more than one object involved, how do we account for the others? What disturbed me most was that if a report was made by an amateur astronomer, air traffic controller, or newspaper reporter, it was many times more acceptable than if it was made by a private individual, however reliable and acceptable that person might be.

For instance, the identification of it being a meteorite shower was made by an amateur astronomer in Harare who said, "It was the most spectacular shower of several I have seen." At first, he said, he saw only single meteors but then it hotted up with at least two showers. Bigger chunks were breaking up and scattering their fragments.

Dr. Euen Nisbet, a Zimbabwean who is professor of geology at London University, was working in the Mberengwa area with his colleague, Ms. Kathy Silva. They took bearings on the largest light (which he thought was a meteorite at the time) from their camp in Zvishavane. He said the largest light rose above the horizon due north of them and disappeared over the horizon about 20 degrees east of south. It was about 65° to 70° above the east horizon at the highest point of its path. From the bearings the two were able to plot a rough trajectory that showed the shower was moving along a path angled about 10° away from the north to south line. It took about a minute to cross the sky although it seemed longer. The event started a few minutes before 9:00 p.m. The fireball of the large flame was about one-fifth the moon's diameter and the whole shower was contained in a band several moon diameters long and one to two moon diameters wide.

The two scientists thought the sonic boom was two to four minutes later (it was 9:04 p.m. on my watch in Harare). This would suggest the debris was at least 50 km high and could have been even higher. Dr. Nisbet saw the debris as

Cynthia Hind is the editor of *UFO Afrinews*, published in Harare, Zimbabwe, and a diligent investigator of African UFO reports. This article has been excerpted from *UFO Afrinews*, no. 11 (February 1995). For more information, write to *UFO Afrinews*, P.O. Box MP49, Mt. Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe.

white, turning orange as the path neared the horizon, while Ms. Silva saw definite shades of deep orange. They both said the light faded abruptly and this made them wonder if the meteors could have skipped out of the Earth's atmosphere. (This information appeared in *The Herald*, Harare, Zimbabwe, September 17, 1994.)

By this time I had received dozens of calls and the stories made me rethink the meteor identification, particularly the calls from Lake Kariba, the largest man-made lake in southern Africa. This is situated in the northwest corner of Zimbabwe, and apart from forming a series of wonderful holiday resorts for local people and tourists, it also provides a lucrative fishing industry, supplying fresh fish (freshwater bream and kapenta—a small fish not unlike a sardine, which is sundried and an excellent source of protein for the people). There are many boats on Kariba, from small powered speedboats to large passenger pleasure craft. Many of the sightings were made from the decks of these.

One person, in charge of a radio nerve center for most of the boats on Kariba, said that the kepanta fishermen who operate at night had seen a very bright light with two side lights, travelling slowly. There was no sound. The light was orange-red with "tails" trailing behind. The movement was to the south-southeast.

The warden-in-charge at Matusadona National Park said the light was above the treeline, and he watched it for 2 1/2 minutes. Steve Edwards, of Kariba Bream Farm, took a video of the light but it still did not reveal its true identity.

Alexander L. saw the object from the Cutty Sark Hotel at about 9:00 p.m. Appearing over the horizon, he saw an object moving from north to south. There was a group of lights with orange streamers or tails behind them. There was a dark, almost black center with about 14 lights flashing around it. It was the size of Alexander's thumbnail when held at arm's length and took more than a minute to pass over, travelling very fast. He could feel a definite vibration from the object.

Other people thought it was an aircraft on fire, flying very low as though about to crash. The lights were extremely bright and moved slowly, similar to the speed of a Boeing 747. These observers involved an aircraft pilot and the medical doctor for a large Zimbabwean company.

A friend of mine, Jo Hensman, was on shore when she decided to go aboard the family sailboat. They had been having a barbecue on the beach alongside their boat, when Jo borrowed her husband's powerful flashlight to go aboard. It had a complicated mechanism for the on-off switch. As Jo moved towards the boat, she could suddenly see this light in the sky; it looked like a small plane, but what shook her most of all was that it was coming directly towards her. She could feel the panic rising; realizing that her flashlight was still on and that she couldn't switch it off quickly, she was sure that the object was attracted by the brilliant light in her hand.

Immediately, she hid it behind her back and watched with relief as the object turned away and, following the treeline, went off along the lake shore. At this stage she could

see it was enormous, several times bigger than a Boeing 747. She saw it lift over some hills, and she breathed a sigh of relief.

There were many reports of the object flying at treetop level (which *might* have been an optical illusion). There were also numerous reports of the lights moving slowly.

An excellent observation was made by Rex Taylor of Kariba Yacht Safaris, from the deck of the Cutty Sark Hotel. Taylor said: "It appeared in the northern sky at about 8:15." (I am amazed at the discrepancy in times. Either watches were not working properly, which I find difficult to believe, or else UFOs were somehow affecting local time.) Taylor continued:

At first it seemed like a rocket, but in seconds I could see it was not. The fiery tail emitting sparks and a faint trail was accompanied by a row of green lights and a second smaller rocket.

The green lights were in a regular pattern, almost like a series of windows lit from within. There was no noise. The object was traveling on an approximate heading of 195° (magnetic)—say 188° true. It was 20° east of the vertical. As the object hurtled south, the larger burning "rocket" burnt and flared as it disappeared into the distance. As it was almost overhead, its apparent size covered an arc of about 30° from "nose to tail" and about 1/5 of that from "top to bottom."

I made these measurements mentally at the time and checked out the heading the following morning with an accurate compass; I used my arm (600mm) to estimate the "size," fore and aft, 300mm. It was impossible to guess at the altitude. There were two aviators in the group with me, and we concluded that because there was no noise, it had to be on the very edge of our atmosphere. This was borne out by the information we heard the following day that it had been seen as far south as Johannesburg.

I can only guess at its speed at the time of being seen. From the time I first saw it to the time it disappeared, it was about 15 seconds.

Assuming it subtended an angle of 30° on the edge of the atmosphere, say at 88,000 ft or 24 km; then the object was 12 km long and 2 1/2 km wide. The mathematicians can calculate its speed. My calculation ran out of digits, so I'll say it was "very fast." It was by my approximate estimate over the latitude of 20° South (Masvingo). If anyone further south could estimate its angle above the horizon, or from the vertical, we could pinpoint its position and height.

The incredible point to me is that although most of the reports are similar, it seems that the witnesses were viewing two or three different objects. The main sighting seems to be a cone-shaped object, or perhaps more than one, followed by numerous smaller lights like stars. (One possible candidate is the reentry of a Russian nose cone that was jettisoned over southern Africa on September 14.) ♦

LETTERS

ARNOLD AND MENZEL

To the editor:

In "The Arnold Phenomenon" (*IUR*, January/February and March/April) Bruce Maccabee seems so eager to dismiss the work of skeptic Donald H. Menzel regarding that famous sighting that one wonders if he has ever actually read the astronomer's books.

He believes, "Menzel never retreated from his published opinion that sightings by credible observers could all be explained as meteorological phenomena." It would be helpful if Dr. Maccabee could offer a citation from Menzel's writings for this view. I have been unable to find one.

In the second sentence of the preface of his first book, *Flying Saucers* (1953), Menzel answers the question "What are flying saucers?" by noting many dozens of causes exist. These include, according to him, distant planes, jets, vapor trails, balloons, newspapers, kites, birds, peculiar clouds, spider webs, insects, feathers, and so on. By the time he presented his paper "UFOs—The Modern Myth" at the 1969 symposium of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (reprinted in *UFOs—A Scientific Debate*, edited by Carl Sagan and Thornton Page, 1974), he had expanded this list to include more than 100 nonmeteorological causes.

Maccabee accuses skeptics of modifying, rejecting, or simply ignoring some information to make their explanations fit the sighting. Alas, in his analysis of the Arnold sighting, Maccabee demonstrates that this only too human failing is still alive and well. He thinks that at 3 p.m. on June 24, 1947, the sun must have been nearly overhead because it was only two days past the summer solstice. The sun was actually 57 degrees high, less than two-thirds of the way to the zenith. In any case, a surface sloped 62 degrees from the horizontal (a steep mountainside?) could cause a reflection at the angle required.

Why does Maccabee accept some of Arnold's estimates, such as his distances, while choosing to consider his size estimates to be an "exaggeration"? Mirage images can appear to be *larger* at greater distances from their source. (See how in Menzel's appendix on mirage theory in his 1953 book, p. 309.) This apparent contradiction, dismissed by those who wish Arnold's objects to be acceptably sized spaceships from another world, gives more credence to a mirage explanation. A most beautiful example of such a magnified image of a mountainside can be found in Alistair Frazer and William Mach's "Mirages," *Scientific American*, January 1965, page 102.

Robert R. Young
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Bruce Maccabee responds:

Robert Young has pointed out an error in my interpretation of Menzel's explanations of UFO sightings. The statement in question should more properly read (italicized words inserted into the original): "Menzel never retreated from his position that sightings by credible observers could all be explained, *many as misunderstood* meteorological phenomena."

It is true that Menzel offered several types of explanations for UFO sightings and that as he grew older he conceived of more phenomena, mostly nonmeteorological, which he claimed could account for UFO reports. An example of a nonmeteorological "explanation" is his last attempt at solving the Arnold sighting by suggesting that Arnold might have seen water drops on the windshield of his aircraft. This explanation fails, as do many (or most) of his explanations.

As for the location of the sun in the sky, I did not mean to imply that it was directly overhead. It was high in the sky but about 30 degrees down from the zenith (actually at 58 degrees elevation and 230 azimuth according to the *Expert Astronomer* PC program). This fact does not alter my conclusion that meteorological phenomena such as Menzel suggested could not have produced bright flashes of sunlight. Young correctly points out that a surface sloped at about 60 degrees to the horizontal, if the surface were about the same altitude as Arnold's plane, could reflect sunlight toward his plane. This observation is irrelevant, however, because there were no manmade or natural surfaces in the vicinity which could cause a mirrorlike reflection of sunlight toward Arnold's plane. Young's reference to a "steep mountainside" notwithstanding.

Young complains that I accepted some of Arnold's estimates, such as the distance to the object, "while choosing to consider his size estimates to be an exaggeration." Evidently Young did not understand what I was saying because I did not suggest that Arnold exaggerated his size estimate. In fact, I suspect that Arnold underestimated the size. Arnold suggested that the objects were 40–50 feet in size, whereas my estimate is that the size was 80 feet or more. What I did say, and what evidently confused Young, is that Arnold probably exaggerated the *ratio of the length to the thickness*. (I also pointed out that generally people incorrectly estimate length to width ratios. This is especially true when the ratios are large.)

Young contends that the exaggerated "size estimate" is an "apparent contradiction" which "gives more credence to a mirage explanation." The logic of this statement escapes me, I must confess. First of all, Arnold did not exaggerate the apparent size of the objects (just the opposite; see the above paragraph). Second, Young has not told us what might be the source of the suggested mirages or how they could appear to

move laterally at high speed while creating bright reflections of the sun and also appearing to travel behind a mountaintop.

Anyone who believes—or hopes—that the mountaintop-mirage theory can explain this sighting should consider that Arnold claimed to see the objects between himself and the main body of Mount Rainier. Since the top of Mount Rainier was about 5000 feet above Arnold and about 20 miles away, the angular elevation to the top of the mountain was more than 2 1/2 degrees. A mirage, however, occurs at angles that are considerably less than one degree above (or below) the horizon of the observer. Had Arnold been flying at a much higher altitude—13,000 feet, for example—then the top of the mountain would have been within one degree of his horizon, and he may have been able to see a mirage at the top of Mount Rainier. Of course, there would have been only one mirage, it wouldn't have reflected sunlight, and it would have stayed above the mountaintop. But at Arnold's altitude the top of Mount Rainier was too far above his horizon to be the source of a single mirage, to say nothing of nine mirages, and moving ones at that.

Let me note here that an error in publication distorted the meaning of one of the sentences. In the March/April *IUR*, page 13, third paragraph, a sentence reads: "This first explanation by a scientist with Menzel's stature is unconvincing. . ." The sentence should read, "This first explanation by a scientist with

Menzel's stature may seem convincing. . . ."

Young remarks that I seemed "so eager to dismiss" Menzel's work that "one wonders if he has ever actually read the astronomer's books." One may also wonder where I would have learned of Menzel's explanations if I hadn't read his books. Menzel wrote well. Unfortunately he pushed his explanations to the limits of credibility and beyond. Part of my alleged eagerness to criticize his explanations comes out of my personal discovery, many years ago, that Menzel had not played fairly with the available evidence. Such unfair play was not confined to the Arnold case. Perhaps the most egregious example is the April 27, 1949, Charles Moore sighting where Menzel effectively altered quantitative data (viewing angles determined using a theodolite) to shoehorn the sighting to fit his dubious theory. For details, see my paper "Still in Default" in MUFON's 1986 symposium proceedings.

Because it was the first widely reported sighting and because it was so well reported, Arnold's sighting has achieved an enormous degree of importance. As *IUR* editor Jerome Clark, who chose the title for the series (borrowing a phrase suggested years ago by Jacques Vallee), has noted, the whole UFO phenomenon could be called the "Arnold phenomenon."

HILLEKOETTER'S LETTERS

To the editor:

In his article about Admiral Hillenkoetter's apparent change of attitude regarding UFOs (*IUR*, March/April 1995), Christopher Allan demonstrates good reason to reject any MJ-12 connections between the admiral and astronomer Donald Menzel. This perhaps drives one more nail into the MJ-12 documents' coffin. Beyond that, I'm not sure that Allan's other conclusions are accurate.

The most striking problem is that Hillenkoetter's "skeptical" letter to Menzel is dated September 19, 1963, while his "apologetic" letter to Keyhoe bears the date of January 8, 1965. To claim, as does Allan, that "by 1963 Hillenkoetter had become a virtual skeptic" overlooks the apparent about-face demonstrated in the letter to Keyhoe. This is awkward. It implies that Adm. Hillenkoetter was misrepresenting himself in one of the letters. Which one? What other evidence does Allan have that allows him to choose the letter to Menzel as the true reflection of Hillenkoetter's UFO position? On the face of it, these letters illustrate only that Hillenkoetter simply told his correspondents what they wanted to hear.

Allan also fears that the lack of an endorsement by Hillenkoetter of NICAP's ETH statements further underscores the admiral's disenchantment with the UFO group. It would be just as reasonable to assume that Hillenkoetter was being cautious. It's an old trick for a public figure to say anything, so long as a signature is not attached to a written document. This establishes for the ex-CIA chief a plausible

Pat Packard dies

Pat Packard, 44, died on June 2, 1995, after a brief illness. He was one of the good guys. Pat's enthusiasm for the UFO field was well known and he had a great many friends in the community. He was MUFON's assistant state director for Ohio.

Pat was driven by a need to know the truth and followed the truth wherever it took him. He wasn't interested in the various agendas held by many, and was not afraid to question all theories, leaders in the field, and even the skeptics. His thirst for knowledge was genuine, and he was not led to conclusions but found them himself. It is a rare quality in the UFO field where the cult of personality is often sufficient to sway opinion.

I was fortunate to count Pat as one of my friends. I spoke to him only a few weeks before he died. He called as I was on my way out the door, but I'm glad that I took the time to talk with him. He was trying to collect information about some aspect of the field and wanted to know if I had anything that would help him.

There are too few people like Pat in the field today. The loss of his wit and wisdom is tremendous, for he was one of the few unpretentious people in the community. The best we can do now is learn from his example. That is his legacy and it is one for which he should be proud.

Goodbye, Pat. We'll all miss you.

—Kevin D. Randle

denial should the occasion arise and brings us back to the letters—they cancel each other out quite neatly.

Terry Endres
Cleves, Ohio

BESSIE BRAZEL—continued from page 5

RELIABLE SOURCES?

What should we conclude from the above information? First, as emphasized before, Bessie Brazel's testimony is in conflict with key statements in the July 9 article in the *Roswell Daily Record*. Both her testimony and the article cannot be accurate. I long ago concluded that both sources are in error—the article because Mac Brazel was telling a story he had been ordered to relate by the Army Air Force, and Bessie because she is misremembering the incident. Neither the article nor Bessie's story can be used as corroboration with other witnesses. There is too much other reliable testimony that contradicts both the article and Bessie's account.

In fact, the article contains information that is logically inconsistent. The article said that Brazel came to town on Monday, July 7, to sell wool. He told the sheriff, talked to men from the base, went back to the ranch with Marcel and "a man in plain clothes," picked up pieces of the debris, and tried to "reconstruct it" with the two other men. That's an awful lot of activity for one day, considering how long the drive was from the ranch to Roswell. Regardless, the article said that after Marcel left the ranch, Brazel heard no more about it "until the story broke that he had found a flying disk," which could have been no earlier than the afternoon of the next day, July 8. However, how did Brazel hear about it and get back to Roswell in time to do the interviews with the press that we know he did on July 8? He had no radio or telephone on the ranch, and even if someone went to get him after the story broke, it would have taken quite some time to drive to the ranch then back to Roswell.

The problem is that the story Brazel gave to reporters was untrue in almost every detail, including the date of his trip to Roswell. We know he came to town on Sunday, July 6, not Monday. The former date allows plenty of time for Marcel and Cavit to get to the ranch and back, since they had to stay overnight with Brazel. Either the cover story that Brazel was given was inconsistent, or Brazel got it wrong in the telling. No one noticed this at the time because they had no reason to doubt the military.

The Project Mogul balloon hypothesis will have to rely on much better evidence than Bessie Brazel Schreiber's testimony or the newspaper story of July 9 for it to be accepted as having any bearing on the nature of the debris that was found in New Mexico in 1947. ♦

PEARLS—continued from page 9

$$a = d\alpha = 1,000(0.0323) = 32.3 \text{ feet, or}$$
$$a = 32.3 \text{ feet}$$

It must be noticed carefully what has been done. When we assumed we had birds (with $a = 2$ feet) and that the angular size of a half-dollar was a correct estimate, we arrived at an impossible situation. But later, when we conjectured that the distance information (1,000 feet) was also correct, we obtained results consistent with a 32-foot craft moving at a speed of about 200 mph.

In retrospect, the analogy with geese flying at 1,000 feet is more natural and less contrived than using the apparent size of a coin at arm's length, which takes for granted that the witness is familiar with somewhat abstract mathematical concepts.

CONCLUSIONS

The bird hypothesis assumes that we are dealing with self-illuminated birds, flying silently below the minimum speed required to provide adequate lift. Since such birds do not exist, it follows that the objects observed by the amateur astronomers were not birds. From the revised calculations the objects could have been conventional planes, except for the fact that planes are not self-luminous, oval and noiseless, thus failing to satisfy basic conditions (1) and (2). At this point, it has become evident that the initial evaluation of "unknown" made by Lt. Palmer was correct.

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