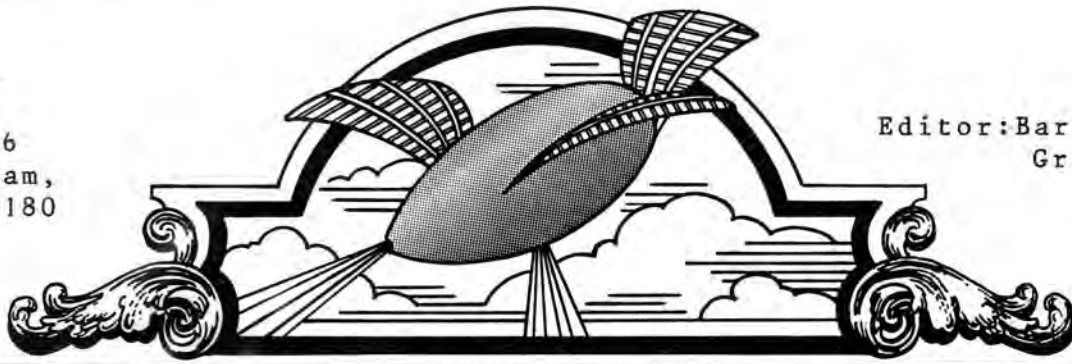


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# U.F.O. HISTORICAL REVUE

EXPERIMENTAL ISSUE

February 1, 1992

*London Times*  
Jan 6 1913

## UNKNOWN AIRCRAFT OVER DOVER.

### REPORTED NIGHT VISIT OF A LIGHTED MACHINE.

It is reported from Dover that a flying machine, which, it is believed, was an airship, passed over that town before daybreak on Saturday morning. The craft, it is stated, was carrying a light and proceeded from over the sea in a north-easterly direction.

According to a Dover Correspondent, it was impossible to distinguish the shape of the machine, but owing to the fact that it carried a light and the noise of the engines it is believed to have been an airship and not an aeroplane. It came in from over the sea and appeared to be going in a north-easterly direction. The wind at the time was very strong from the westward. John Hobbs, a corporation employee, states that he saw the machine about 5 o'clock. His attention was first attracted by the noise of the motors, which is well known at Dover, and on looking in the direction from which the sound came he saw a light moving at a great speed from the direction of the sea. The throb of the engines as the machine passed over the town was very distinct. The noise of motors was also heard by Mr. Langley, a local tradesman, and Police-constable Pierce.

*London Times*  
February 3, 1913

## ANOTHER MYSTERIOUS AIRSHIP.

Captain Lionel Lindsay, Chief Constable of Glamorgan, reports that an airship was again seen over the district on Saturday night.

*London Times*  
Feb 28 1913

## THE AIRSHIP RUMOURS. FIRE BALLOON FOUND IN YORKSHIRE.

While further reports of the appearance of lights in the sky, which are supposed to be those of an airship, continue to be received, it is stated that a fire balloon has been found in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and that this may have accounted for a light seen in the district last week. It is suggested that some one may have been experimenting with fire balloons.

An under-gamekeeper, named Walter Moore, in the employment of Colonel Longdale, of Houghton Hall, two miles south of Market Weighton and about 14 miles from Selby, found a fire balloon on Houghton Moor on Sunday morning. He paid his first visit to Market Weighton for several days on Tuesday, and had not heard of the rumours which associated the lights which had been seen in the district with foreign airships. He then stated that the balloon was the size of a 36-gallon cask and just like those sent up at gales. The cover was marked in blue and yellow stripes, and the fuse when found did not appear to have been long extinguished. The balloon was half-deflated and was resting against a small hillock. He completed the process of deflation, and wrapped up the cover and took it home. It is thought that the light of this balloon may have been that seen on Friday evening.

An airship is reported to have been seen over Portland Harbour on Wednesday night. A postman declares that he saw the clear outline of the airship, which was carrying a dazzling searchlight. It was also seen by a Government official, and the propeller was plainly heard. A night nurse at a residence at Burcleaves says she watched the lights, which were occasionally extinguished, for some time. A coast-guard states he saw lights in the sky near St. Alban's Head, and entered the fact in his log-book.

A police-constable stationed at Hucknall, Nottingham, reported that yesterday morning, about 2 o'clock, he saw an airship with a powerful searchlight travelling from the direction of Nottingham towards Mansfield, and a similar statement has been made by a number of colliers who were leaving work. At Papplewick witnesses state that they watched a light travelling for five minutes, when it disappeared.

The steamer *Oreadia*, on arrival at the Kirkwall yesterday afternoon from the North Isles of Orkney reported that an airship was seen at 5 p.m. off Saturday Isle on Monday night.

## AIRSHIP RUMOURS.

### GERMANY AND THE RECENT REPORTS.

#### AN OFFICIAL DISCLAIMER.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

BERLIN, Feb. 26.

In German official quarters it is stated most emphatically that the mysterious aerial apparitions in England cannot possibly have proceeded from Germany. The German Government seems to be really anxious to dispose of all the legends on this subject, and is inclined to treat the matter as a potential peril to Anglo-German relations. The *Cologne Gazette* declares to-night that no German military or naval airship has ever visited England, and that no cruise of a German ship has been the cause of any of the rumours. This is undoubtedly an official denial which ought to be accepted as such.

The writer of the inspired article goes on to prove that a secret cruise to England and back is an impossibility. He observes that the location of all German airships is known, that their movements are published, that thousands of people see every cruise, that any German ship which could be in question would have to pass over the thickly populated districts of Belgium and Holland, as well as of Germany; that, even in winter, a cruise to England and back could not be accomplished between sunset and sunrise, that a ship engaged on a secret mission would not have lights, and that, apart from all the difficulties and risks, Germany could have nothing whatever to gain by such an adventure, which would, at most, provide only material for the agitation against Germany.

It will be seen that these arguments, which doubtless proceed from the German naval and military authorities, coincide almost completely with the observations which I telegraphed last night without any consultation with the German authorities.

As the German authorities are now paying so much attention to the subject, they may do well to observe that it is the German Press which exploits every, either innocent or ignorant, suggestion in England in order to show that England is in a perpetual state of nervousness or panic.

The German Navy airship had an accident this afternoon as it was being brought into its shed at Johannisthal after a cruise. One of the propellers was broken, and further flights will be impossible until the necessary materials can be sent from Friedrichshafen.

A German airman named Bruno Werntgen was killed yesterday near Bonn. He was flying on a monoplane of his own construction and was using a new type of motor, which apparently had not been properly tested and which broke down when the aeroplane was at a height of about 50 metres (160ft.).

A non-commissioned officer named Helferrieder was killed this morning near Mülhausen while accompanying Lieutenant Linke in a trial flight on an Aviatik Pfälz biplane.

#### THE REPORTED LIGHTS.

Further statements were made yesterday as to the bright lights, supposed to be those of an airship, which were seen over various parts of England on Tuesday night. According to some accounts the shape of the vessel could be discerned and the noise of its motor heard.

It is declared in Liverpool that what was believed to have been an airship was seen in the district again on Tuesday night. It will be remembered that a similar report was made about two weeks ago. A resident in the neighbourhood of the Old Swan tramway terminus stated yesterday that he saw a bright light in the sky on Tuesday night. The supposed aircraft was seen from 8.15 to 9 p.m., and disappeared in the direction of Seaforth. The observers declare that they distinctly heard the throbbing of a motor and the whirring of a propeller. When first noticed the vessel was at a great height, and its light was taken for that of an exceptionally bright star. This assumption was, however, completely dispelled when later the form of the vessel could be seen. It circled over the district at a great speed before finally heading away towards the north end of the city.

A Hunstanton message says that about 8.50 on Tuesday night a postman walking from Old Hunstanton saw three bright lights approaching rapidly from the eastward at a considerable height. His statement is verified by numerous residents. The body of an airship was not discernible, but the lights, which attracted considerable attention, remained in view for some 30 minutes. They finally disappeared seawards in a north-westerly direction. Similar lights were observed on Wednesday and Friday last.

At Grimsby, it is stated, numerous persons both heard and saw the airship over the town and port. It was first traced from the Humber by the crew of the steam trawler *Bermuda*, who watched its bright white light pass towards the town, descend, and rise again until it disappeared in the direction of Hull. The fishermen reported the occurrence immediately on entering the port. At Hull the view is expressed that what was seen on Tuesday night was a star, but on the other hand it is pointed out that the light moved. The opinion is also given that the light was the military searchlight at the mouth of the Tees.

London Times  
February 4, 1913

#### THE MYSTERIOUS AIRSHIP.

The servants of Colonel Henry Lewis, of Greenmeadow, Cardiff, state they saw an airship about 10.45 on Saturday night travelling in a westerly direction, and a constable at Aberavon reported that he observed, at 7.30 on Sunday night, an airship going over Swansea Bay and the Mumbles. Several other people declare they observed the outline of an airship carrying a light.

AY, FEBRUARY 26, 1913.

## THE REPORTED VISITS OF AIRSHIPS.

### CAPABILITIES OF GERMAN VESSELS.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

BERLIN, Feb. 25.

Most of the London correspondents of German newspapers continue to make merry over the reports that airships have been seen at night in various parts of England. Their remarks are of no interest as regards the explanation of these mysterious apparitions or as regards the need for aerial defence, but it is probably true that the capabilities of Germany's existing airship fleet are exaggerated in many quarters in England. A secret cruise from any of the places where the German airships are stationed to the English coast—to say nothing of an additional inland voyage—and back to Germany is at the present time extraordinarily improbable. There are, apparently, only three Zeppelin airships which could perform the voyage at all from Berlin or from Baden Baden and back, and none of them could perform it between sunset and sunrise. Even if secrecy could be guaranteed on this side of the North Sea—which is improbable in peace time—the airship would be sighted either in England or at sea. Even if such an adventure were practicable, it would seem to be extraordinarily unattractive, and to involve many risks without offering any gains. It is pretty certain that before, if ever, a German airship visits Yorkshire in the dead of night and the authorities publish either no reports or false reports about its movements there will have been a great deal more cautious practice in harmless oversea cruises.

As regards the new military Zeppelin called Ersatz Z 1, which is at present undergoing trials, especially of her new wireless telegraphy apparatus, there is no reason to doubt that during the whole of Saturday night she was cruising between Baden Baden, Frankfurt-on-Main, and Karlsruhe, being all the time in wireless communication with Karlsruhe. Nor is there any reason to suppose that either the Hansa or the new naval airship has been far away from Berlin. These two ships made flights here this afternoon, and exchanged wireless messages with one another and with the Johannisthal station.

## BRIGHT LIGHTS IN THE AIR.

It is reported from several quarters that bright lights, presumed to be those of airships, were seen in the air on Monday night and last night.

On Monday night, about 8 o'clock, a bright light was seen moving over Gosport. Although no sound of machinery was heard and nothing seen of the envelope of the vessel it is believed that the light was that of an airship which remained at a great height.

Mr. Edgar Moore, who lives in the western part of Ipswich, declared yesterday that with several friends on Monday evening he saw an airship manoeuvring to the west of the town. The airship had a large searchlight, and after various manoeuvres had been executed the vessel proceeded in a south-westerly direction. He added that it was at too great a height for its outline to be clearly seen.

It is also stated that an airship, with a bright light, was seen by the coastguard over Horsea between eight and half-past last night, sailing in a westerly direction.

There was considerable excitement at Hull last night owing to the appearance over the city of what was believed to be the airship which had previously been seen over Horsea. Crowds of people assembled in the centre of the city and outside the Paragon Station and watched the movements of the craft for over an hour, when it disappeared in a westerly direction. The lights of the vessel were easily distinguishable. At times they appeared to be quite bright, while occasionally a patch of red was visible.

London Times

Jan. 21 1913

## AN AIRSHIP OVER CARDIFF.

It is stated that on Friday evening last an airship was seen passing over Cardiff in the direction of Swansea.

Captain Lionel Lindsay, Chief Constable of Glamorganshire, says:—"At a quarter to 5 I noted the object. It was dark and foggy, so that one could not define it. It was much larger and moved faster than the Willows airship and left in its trail a dense volume of smoke. I called the attention of a bystander to the object, and he agreed that it was some large object. It disappeared quickly."

London Times

February 24, 1913

## NIGHT VISIT OF AN AIRSHIP.

About 10 o'clock on Friday night, according to a number of independent reports, an airship was seen in several parts of North-East Warwickshire, including Exhall and Longford. The night was clear, and policemen and colliers on their way from work are positive that they saw the vessel, which came from the direction of Leicester and went towards Birmingham. It is said to have been carrying three lights.

London Times

Jan 28 1913

### AIRCRAFT OVER LIVERPOOL.

It is reported from Liverpool that an aircraft, which it was not possible to identify, has been seen over that city. A resident in the Clulmoor district says that on Saturday night between 7 and half-past 8 o'clock an aircraft was seen overhead (travelling at the rate of about 28 miles an hour. It carried a very brilliant light. There were five persons in the house at the time and they watched it for some time.

It is stated at the Liverpool Aviation School that none of the airmen there were out on Saturday night.

London Times

FEBRUARY 6, 1913.

It is again reported that an airship has been seen in South Wales. Numerous observers at Newport, Cardiff, Neath, and intermediate places stated last night that they observed a dirigible, carrying a bright light, pass overhead and some spectators, including a police sergeant, declared that the outline of the vessel was clearly visible. The night was bright with very little wind. The supposed airship took a north-westerly course.

London Times

Jan. 13, 1848

**AEROLITES.**—The following strange account of a shower of aerolites appears in the *Courrier de l'Isère*. Our cotemporary must not be surprised if the statement should find the world incredulous—*credit Judicus A polli*:—“Towards the end of December two young girls were engaged in picking up leaves in the commune of Lirvet, near Clavaux, when, on coming near each other to fill their bags, they suddenly felt stones falling on them from above, but without injuring them in the slightest degree. They ran home at once, and their parents, not believing the story, but yielding to their assertions, accompanied them back to the spot. The children proceeded to their work, and again, on coming close together, attracted another shower of stones. The parents, taking the hands of the children to take them away, found themselves, to their great surprise, drawn within the sphere of attraction, and perceived the stones just above their heads, which, the moment after, fell on them, and rolled on the ground. They returned home in the greatest astonishment, and related what they had seen. A number of the inhabitants of the neighbouring towns took the children with them to the spot, and all were witnesses of the same extraordinary phenomenon. Amongst them were several of the clergy, and a medical man much respected at Villars, who on holding the hand of one of the children when walking together, received a blow on the cheek from a stone as large as an egg, without, however, experiencing the slightest pain. Only one person, it is said, found his hand slightly swelled from the fall of one of these air-stones. About 60 of them have been picked up, but they present nothing particular in appearance, except that they are of different colours. These phenomena continued for some days only. At first they took place in the morning, then in the afternoon, and at last towards night, after which they totally disappeared.

London Times

Sept. 4, 1895

### REMARKABLE METEORIC (?) APPEARANCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—On Saturday evening last (August 31) I was walking northward on the eastern pavement in St. Giles's, Oxford, and, having just passed the entrance of St. John's, was still within the enclosed area in front of that College when my eyes were arrested by a brilliant luminous body which suddenly emerged over the tops of the trees before me on the left and moved eastward across the sky above and in front of me. Its appearance was, at the first glance, such as to suggest a brilliant meteor, considerably larger than Venus at her greatest brilliancy, but the slowness of its motion, as it sailed or floated majestically across the field of vision, as if driven by a strong wind, made me doubt whether it was not some artificial firework. Expecting to see it explode or go out, I watched for a second or two till it neared its culminating point and was about to be hidden from me by the lofty College building, on which I sprang over the corner of the low stone wall of the enclosure, and, walking sidewise and backwards across St. Giles's, I was enabled to see it through the space between the old and new buildings of the College, as it continued its course toward the eastern horizon. It did not explode, emit any spark, or leave any train or track; but it became rapidly dimmer and fainter as it approached the horizon, and finally disappeared behind a tree seen through the space in question, leaving me quite uncertain as to its nature. The fact that it so perceptibly grew fainter as it receded seems to imply that it had not a very great elevation, and so far favours a terrestrial origin, though I am quite unable to conceive how anything artificial could present the same appearance. On the other hand, if a meteor, its course was many times slower than that of any meteor I have ever seen. I was too much taken by surprise, and too intent upon watching its behaviour, to note at the moment its apparent course among the stars; but on observing the heavens after its disappearance I concluded that its apparent path from my point of sight was from near Alloth on the tip of the Bear's tail, close under the Pole Star, through Cassiopeia, towards Andromeda. I hope that if any other of your readers saw it they will give an account of its appearance to them, which may at least settle the question of its meteoric character. I am sorry not to be able to give the precise time, as I had just left my watch at a watchmaker's for repair; but I think (subject to correction) that it was a few minutes before 8.

Oxford, Sept. 2.

J. A. H. MURRAY.

London Times

Sept. 30, 1870

### A METEOR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—As I was last night examining the constellation Lyra through my 4½-inch achromatic, with a power of 46, I observed a luminous object, with a distinct comet-like tail, pass slowly through the field of my glass, apparently starting from Vega and falling in the direction of Epsilon Lyra. The hour by my watch was 12 1/8 Berlin time. The time occupied by this object in its transit across the disc of the glass was about 30 seconds, but before it had reached its edge it disappeared suddenly from view. I at first thought it was a falling star, but on reflection it appeared to me that a falling star would never have remained so long visible in the telescopic field.

If any of your readers saw this curious phenomenon perhaps they will enlighten me as to its cause.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,  
Berlin, Sept. 27.  
BRABAZON.

London Times

Aug. 19 1910

### REPORTED EXPLOSION OF A BALLOON.

A somewhat mysterious disappearance of a balloon is reported from Dessau. A number of labourers who were employed in the forest to the east of the town state that while at work yesterday evening they observed a balloon which was passing some distance away suddenly burst into flames and the car fell into the forest. They at once informed the Chief Forester of the occurrence and a search on a large scale was organized. According to telegrams from Dessau this afternoon no trace of the balloon has yet been found. This may, however, be explained by the fact that the forest is of very large extent. But since the various aeronautical societies of whom inquiries have been made state that none of their balloons is missing, the explanation has been put forward that the supposed balloon was nothing more than a large toy balloon filled with hot air heated by burning spirit.

London Times  
March 6, 1855

Katon-square.

### THE MYSTERIOUS FOOTPRINTS IN DEVONSHIRE.

The interest in this matter has scarcely yet subsided, many inquiries still being made into the origin of the footprints which caused so much consternation on the morning of the 8th ult. In addition to the circumstances mentioned in *The Times* a little while since, it may be stated that at Dawlish a number of persons sallied out armed with guns and other weapons for the purpose, if possible, of discovering and destroying the animal which was supposed to have been so busy in multiplying its footmarks. As might have been expected, the party returned as they went. Various speculations have been made as to the cause of the footprints. Some have asserted that they are those of a kangaroo, while others affirm that they are the impressions of the claws of some large birds driven on shore by stress of weather. On more than one occasion reports have been circulated that an animal from a menagerie has been caught; but the matter at present is so much involved in mystery as ever it was.

London Times  
May 1 1821

The ghost whose vagaries we noticed in our last, continues at intervals to annoy the inhabitants of the house in Carlew-street, used as a depot for arms of the Cornwall miners, by throwing stones, which have broken the few panes of glass in the only window that was not barricaded, and damaged the things in the room; the adjoining house to the right, occupied by the sergeant-major, has likewise been occasionally attacked, whilst the hand that directs these missiles has continued invisible, nor has the precise spot from whence they come been ascertained. It appears to be the object of this persevering assailant to compel the occupiers of these two houses to quit them. The windows of the house on the left of the depot have wholly escaped. The people in the neighbourhood declare their perfect conviction that the stones are directed by supernatural agency, as it is impossible that any human being could elude the vigilance which has been exerted to unravel the mystery. How long this hoax will continue it is impossible to conjecture.—*West Briton.*

London Times  
April 14, 1838

"Spring-heeled Jack" has, it seems, found his way to the Sussex coast. On Friday evening, between 9 and 10 o'clock, he appeared, as we are informed, to a gardener near Rose-hill, "in the shape of a bear or some other four-footed animal," and having first attracted attention by a growl, then mounted the garden wall, covered as it was with broken glass, and ran along it upon all-fours, to the great terror and consternation of the gardener, who began to think it time to escape. He was accordingly about to leave the garden, when Spring-heeled Jack leaped from the wall, and chased him for some time; the dog was called, but slunk away, apparently as much terrified as his master. Having jumped himself for some time with the trembling gardener, Spring-heeled Jack scaled the wall, and made his exit. The fellow may probably amuse himself in this way once too often.—*Brighton Gazette.*

London Times  
February 16, 1855

the district would never have been known.

EXTRAORDINARY OCCURRENCE.—Considerable sensation has been caused in the towns of Topsham, Lympstone, Exmouth, Teignmouth, and Dawlish, in the south of Devon, in consequence of the discovery of a vast number of foot-prints of a most strange and mysterious description. The superstitious go so far as to believe that they are the marks of Satan himself; and that great excitement has been produced among all classes may be judged of from the fact that the subject has been decried on from the pulpit. It appears that, on Thursday night last, there was a very heavy fall of snow in the neighbourhood of Exeter and the south of Devon. On the following morning the inhabitants of the above towns were surprised at discovering the foot-prints of some strange and mysterious animal, endowed with the power of ubiquity, as the footprints were to be seen in all kinds of unaccountable places—on the tops of heaves and narrow walls, in gardens and courtyards, enclosed by high walls and ceilings, as well as in open fields. There was hardly a garden in Lympstone where these footprints were not observable. The track appeared more like that of a biped than a quadruped, and the steps were generally eight inches in advance of each other. The impression of the foot closely resembled that of a denary's shoe, and measured from an inch and a-half to (in some instances) two and a-half inches across. Here and there it appeared as if eleven, but in the generality of the steps the toes were conspicuous, and, from the snow in the centre remaining entire, merely showing the outer crust of the foot, it must have been convex. The creature seems to have approached the doors of several houses, and then to have retreated, but no one has been able to discover the standing or resting point of this mysterious visitor. On Sunday last the Rev. Mr. Mangrove alluded to the subject in his sermon, and suggested the possibility of the footprints being those of a kangaroo; but this could scarcely have been the case, as they were found on both sides of the estuary of the Exe. At present it remains a mystery, and many superstitious people in the above towns are actually afraid to go outside their doors after night.

London Times  
Oct. 5, 1877

MYSTERIOUS LIGHTS.—From time to time the West Coast of Wales seems to have been the scene of mysterious lights. In the 15th century, and again on a larger scale in the 16th, considerable alarm was created by fires that "rose out of the sea." Writing in January, 1604, the rector of Dolgellay stated that 15 ricks of hay and two beams had been burnt by "a kindled exhalation which was often seen to come from the sea." Passing over other alleged appearances in March, 1876, a letter by the late Mr. Pictou Jones appeared in "Bye-gones," p. 198, giving an account of curious lights which he had witnessed at Pwllheli, and now we have a statement from Towyn that within the last few weeks "lights of various colours have frequently been seen moving over the estuary of the Dyfnwal River and out at sea. They are generally in a northern direction, but sometimes they hug the shore, and move at a high velocity for miles towards Aberdovey, and suddenly disappear." Can any authorities upon natural phenomena furnish further information on the subject?—*Wrexham Advertiser.*

London Times

Apr. 24 1871

**STORM OF INSECTS.**—Early on Saturday morning a storm of insects fell in the neighbourhood of the Midland Railway station at Bath, and a large number remained on the platform and were examined by scientific men during the day. The insects descended in the form of a glutinous drop, about the size of a large pea, and many of them soon developed into a worm-like chrysalis, about an inch in length.

London Times

January 2 1867

**A METEOR.**

**TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.**

Sir,—On the evening of the 6th of November, having gone into my balcony as usual to take my coffee, I saw what at first I took to be a lamp hung from the tower of the cathedral which is nearly opposite this Consulate. My flagstaff was in a line with the light from where I sat, and while I was wondering why a lantern should be so placed the light passed the staff. Thus I knew it must be in motion, but so fixed was my first impression that I thought it had merely swung with the wind. It, however, floated away steadily in a north-west by north direction till the roofs of intervening houses hid it from my view. It was of the magnitude, colour, and brilliancy of a ship's red light as seen at a distance of 200 yards.

I immediately ran out to an open space beyond the walls, where I could get a good view of the heavens, but no trace of the luminous body was visible. The sky was cloudy and the night dark.

The motion of this (to me) extraordinary object resembled that of those fireworks which are sometimes exploded from rockets, and float in the air till they are consumed, only it was of far greater size and brilliancy. It threw, no rays in any direction, appeared to be descending, and was in my sight, from first to last, about three minutes.

Nothing in the nature of an asteroid has been reported to have fallen in the neighbourhood.

I have seen falling stars of great splendour in the East, and also on this coast, but nothing that in any way resembled this "light."

I may add that it was seen by a friend who was in my house at the time, and who agrees in this description of it. It could not have any artificial origin.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

**A. DE G. DE FONBLANQUE.**

British Consulate, Cartagena, U. S. Colombia, Dec. 2.

London Times

August 4, 1857

**EXTRAORDINARY METEOROLOGICAL PHENOMENON.**

**TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.**

Sir,—I beg to inform you, for the benefit of your scientific readers, that a block of pure crystalline ice, weighing nearly 25lb., was discovered on Monday last in a meadow belonging to Mr. Warner, in this neighbourhood. On the day prior a storm passed over the spot. Mezeray, in his *History of France*, mentions a block of the weight of 100lb. that fell during a thunderstorm, in the year 1510.

I beg to remain, Sir, your obedient servant,  
Cricklewood, July 30.

S.

London Times

Nov. 9 1858

**MYSTERIOUS PHENOMENON.**

**TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.**

Sir,—Never having seen in the public journals any notice of a phenomenon which three years ago excited great interest in this neighbourhood (the north of Cardiganshire), and which has to-day been again observed, I have determined to write the facts as they came under my own observation, and if you should think fit to give publicity to this letter it may be the means of drawing the attention of the scientific world to what at present is utterly mysterious and inexplicable to the unscientific natives of these wild Welsh hills, and of also ascertaining if anything similar has been observed in other localities.

In the autumn of 1855 the people on the hills and coast of the upper part of Cardiganshire heard constantly in still weather low, sullen reports, as of heavy artillery firing at a great distance. Generally it was in the west, the sound coming over the sea, and so distinct that it was often taken for ships in distress. But it was heard in other quarters; in the north-east very frequently. Two or three reports usually followed rapidly, and often for an interval of 20 minutes it would not be heard again. It was much louder at times than at others, and some of the explosions had a strangely subterranean sound. A person who frequently heard it described it as exactly resembling the proving of large ordnance in a proof-house, heard at a distance. These sounds were heard at intervals of days, and sometimes weeks, through the winter of 1855-56, and ceased to be observed in the following spring. On the hills, far inland, it was heard as loud as nearer the sea; and at first the people on the hills often supposed it to be some unusual blastings in the lead mines of the neighbourhood. There was much excitement about it at the time. To-day, between 2 and 3 p.m., the weather slightly hazy, with a light breeze from the south-west, I distinctly and repeatedly heard again these strange sounds, at first in a southerly direction, and afterwards coming due west over the sea. They seemed to me louder than I ever remember them three years ago. Apologising for trespassing so far on your valuable space, I remain yours respectfully,

Nov. 5,

T. M.

August 20.

Account of a remarkable PHENOMENON which appeared in the Firmament on Monday, August 18.

About nine o'clock at night, a body of fire, or some other luminous matter, took a horizontal direction from north to south, across the firmament, and in its transit, which seemed to continue about four seconds, emitted light, nearly as vivid as the rays of the sun at noon-day; it was not circular, but of an irregular form, and had a tail something resembling a kite, with variegated colours; the reflection was so powerful, that it affected some people's eyes like a flash of lightning. Such a sud-

den

den and uncommon phenomenon created much astonishment in all that saw it. It was seen very distinctly all over the city, and several miles round, and many people were so deceived, that they thought they saw it fall, some at one part, and others at another part of the town.

The following is the only course of it that we have yet received on unquestion-

able authority:—Exactly at nine o'clock the ball was seen, near Chelmsford in Essex, to break from a cloud in the N. W. quarter, in appearance about the size of a full moon, and to take its direction horizontally towards the S. E.; several smaller meteors, of different colours, shooting from it at various times in its course, and the whole hemisphere so illuminated by a blue irradiation, that objects were visible at many miles distance. It passed over Ingatestone, Brentwood, and Rumbold, a few minutes after, and over the metropolis about a quarter after nine, having the same appearance, and was seen a few minutes after by some Gentlemen on Sunbury Common, who say, they saw it fall with great velocity on the said common, bound to some distance, and not rise again. What makes this phenomenon the more remarkable, is, that the evening was remarkably serene, immediately before and after its appearance, without thunder, lightning, or rain.

London Times

January 9, 1866

London Times

Sept 24, 1875

**A GUST OF WIND.**—The *St. John's* (Newfoundland) *Chronicle* gives an account of the loss, in August, of the fore-and-after *Mary*, Captain John Moran, of Fermuse, bound from Cape Bolland to Cape Race Cove, for bait. "At midday, when off Chance Cove, with only a light air of wind hardly enough to stay, she was violently struck by a sudden and terrific gust of wind, coming directly from the heavens, was lifted out of the water, dashed back again on her bilge, and without a moment's warning went to the bottom stern foremost in 16 fathoms of water. At the time of being struck the *Mary* was surrounded by a number of fishing craft, of various sizes, none of them, however, being nearer than about a quarter of a mile. Not one of these boats felt any wind whatever, beyond the light air which they had before the accident, and, indeed, so little wind had they that in going to the rescue of the *Mary's* crew they took down their canvas and used their oars, so as to reach the men in the water more quickly. The *Mary* had six hands on board, viz. —Captain Moran, Michael Moran, John Prim, Peter Kavanagh, Michael Ryan, and Pierce Power, of *St. John*, all good and steady men. When the craft struck, Kavanagh and Power were in the fore-castle. Power, his strength no doubt greatly augmented by his sense of danger, kicked out the bulk-heading, and through the opening he and Kavanagh crawled out, the latter much injured about the head by the water-cask, which struck him while his body was half in and half out of the fore-castle. They sank together, but presently came up, and supported themselves by the aid of some hatchets until they were rescued by a boat. Kavanagh, although much injured himself, refused to be rescued until our informant, Ryan, was taken on board, saying, 'Save the other man, he is more hurt than me,' Ryan having also received some injury. Prim got into the punt, which was towing astern of the *Mary*, but had no knife to cut the painter, and would have been carried down, but a knife was thrown to him, with which he cut the line, and he was then enabled to rescue Michael Moran, whose father, the skipper, had already been picked up. The men were all pretty much exhausted when rescued, but have recovered."

**FALSE LIGHTS ON THE DURHAM COAST.**—A good deal of discussion has been going on in shipping circles on the Tyne and Wear during the past month, with regard to the numerous and mysterious wrecks of vessels which have occurred during the winter on the Durham coast, near Whitburn, about equidistant from these two important commercial ports. From whatever cause, there can be no doubt that the majority of vessels that have been stranded have been allured ashore by a light or lights resembling the flashing light upon Tynemouth Point at the mouth of the Tyne. It was bruited abroad a good deal in shipping circles that vessels had been decoyed upon the rocks by false lights; and the shipmasters whose vessels had been stranded, in accounting for the loss of their vessels, were all most positive that lights had been exhibited, and that they had been allured ashore by them. The subject was submitted to the London Trinity-house, and an inquiry was made by Admiral Collinson at Sunderland about a fortnight ago, and from the evidence of various persons no doubt was left on the minds of most persons that false lights had been exhibited, and that vessels had been led ashore thereby. But as it was left in doubt whether the exhibition of those lights was wilful or accidental, the question was in a sense left an open one. Within, however, the last two or three days it has again been brought under the notice of the Tyne Pilotage Commission. Mr. Lyall, the clerk, said that the Nautical Committee of the Commissioners had examined some of their pilots with regard to the lights said to have been exhibited at Whitburn. Benjamin Peel stated to them that he had seen a light exhibited at Whitburn. The light was occasionally seen as a bright intermitting or revolving light. The light, to the best of his judgment, was about the village of Whitburn. Thomas Tynemouth said he saw a bright light to the north of Souther Point, on the night of the 22d of December. It bore W.S.W., and appeared to be a revolving light. It is a rocky desolate shore. There are no dwellings in the neighbourhood, and the light seemed to be considerably elevated above the land. John Skee Blair, a pilot's apprentice, gave similar testimony. The Clerk to the Commissioners suggested that the Board of Trade should be asked to offer a reward for the discovery of the persons exhibiting this light. The Nautical Committee was requested to continue its investigations, and report to the next meeting of the Board. There is a strong feeling in the north that the Board of Trade should make a searching inquiry into the causes of the appearance of these mysterious lights, as much for the character of the fishermen as in the interests of the navigation of the North Sea; for if these lights have been exhibited accidentally a proper light should be put up at once on Souther Point about which there could be no mistake. If the lights have been wilfully shown to allure vessels on shore, this is a crime that has heretofore been totally unknown upon the north-east coast, and people can hardly believe it.

If you enjoyed the contents of this experimental issue, do get in touch with any remarks or submissions of "new" old information. We will only print facsimiles of original clips but other info will be welcome as well. Only data prior to June 24, 1947 will be relevant to this publication.

B. G.

London Times  
Nov. 3, 1871

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—Observers of total eclipses of the sun seem to pay but little attention to the fact that probably there exists a hitherto unknown planet which revolves in an orbit interior to that of Mercury. Such a body, if it does exist, could be well detected during the progress of a total solar eclipse, if the region of the sky in the neighbourhood of the sun was very carefully examined. It may be in the recollection of some of your readers that on the occasion of the eclipse of August 7, 1869, a bright object was seen by several observers in close proximity to the solar orb, and it is not improbable that this was actually the planet which Lescarbault saw on March 26, 1859, witnessed in transit. It is true that observations made of late years with the special object of detecting this suspected planet in transit over the sun's disc have been unsuccessful, no object presenting an analogous appearance to a planetary body having been observed passing over the solar surface. This fact, however, does not prove the non-existence of the planet, and it is advisable that observers of the forthcoming eclipse carefully scrutinize the neighbourhood of the sun at the time of totality, so that it may be rediscovered if possible. Several observers of note have on various occasions witnessed the partial transit of opaque planetary bodies across the sun, and it does not seem altogether improbable that these bodies are intra-mercurial planets, which from their proximity to the sun could never be discerned except when in transit or at the time of a total solar eclipse. It is to be hoped that at the time of the approaching eclipse this fact will be considered, and a rigorous search made for the supposed planets, so that they may be discovered and an increase to our knowledge effected.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,  
WILLIAM F. DENNING, Hon. Sec. Observing  
Astronomical Society.  
Hollywood-house, Cotham-park, Bristol, Nov. 2

Hazard's Register of Pennsylvania

MISCELLANEOUS. 4 (1829) 48

[JULY

Mr. Editor:—A meteor of rather singular character made its appearance in the heavens last night, between the hours of eleven and twelve o'clock. As a great number of your readers, owing to the lateness of the hour, had not an opportunity of observing it, I shall endeavour to give some description of it.

It arose apparently from the neighbourhood of the Schuylkill, and passing over Kensington and the river Delaware, finally disappeared behind the woods of Jersey. A long trail of light, like that of a shooting star was seen to follow it in the beginning of its ascension; large sparkles separated themselves from it and descended slowly, were distinctly visible until hidden from view by the tops of the houses. Its motions were rapid, irregular, and wavering, like the fluttering of a kite or the rocking of an air balloon. Its appearance was of a deep red colour, and remarkably brilliant, seemingly of about half the size of the moon. It arose until it crossed the Delaware; when it appeared but an inconsiderable speck scarcely discernable, and then descended with astonishing velocity until within a short distance of the horizon, where it remained stationary for a few moments. Suddenly it became exceedingly large and brilliant, sparkles again separated from the main body, and descended as before. It soon after became dim and disappeared behind the trees. Altogether, I should suppose it was visible about fifteen or twenty minutes.—*Aurora.*

Friday morning, July 11th, 1829.

London Times  
Sept 29 1885

#### A LOST BALLOON.

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—The enclosed, which I cut from the *Bermuda Royal Gazette* of the 8th inst., may serve to account for one of the balloons which have made an ascent this year in England or France, and not been subsequently heard of. It is evident from the description that the car had become detached, and that the balloon itself was but a shapeless bag, barely able to float. It is, however, if my conjecture be correct, the first authentic instance of a balloon crossing the Atlantic at all. I am, &c.,  
September 26. J. H. LEFROY.

"For the *Royal Gazette*.

"A Balloon Passed Bermuda.

"Mount Clare, Southampton, Aug. 27, 1885.

"Sir,—Thursday morning, about 8 30 a.m., there was observed by Mrs. Adelina D. Bassett a strange object in the clouds, coming from the north. She called the attention of Mrs. L. Lowell to it, and they were both somewhat alarmed by the phenomenon. However, they continued to watch it steadily for some time, and as it drew nearer they observed that it was of triangular shape and about the size of one of our pilot boat's mainsails, with chains attached to the bottom part of it. When crossing the land it appeared to descend, but as it went to the sea it ascended and so continued until it went from their sight in the clouds south.  
"ROBERT T. BASSETT."