

UFO INVESTIGATOR



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EAST COAST REPORTS INCIDENTS OF AIR QUAKE PHENOMENA

NICAP Agent Investigates

Ernest Jahn, NICAP's regional investigator in New York, recently spent several weeks investigating reports of air quakes occurring along the Eastern Coast of the United States. The areas affected experienced loud rumbling sounds accompanied by shaking of the ground. In some cases there were reports of a brilliant yellow flash occurring simultaneously with the phenomena.

DECEMBER 2, 1977 The first incidents of the air quake phenomena were reported. Within a five hour time span, residents from Southern Connecticut to Charleston, South Carolina experienced ground shaking and rumbling sounds with two areas—Toms River, New Jersey and Charleston—reporting the greatest impact.

Scientists at Lamont Laboratories in Palisades, New York estimated the power of the blast as equivalent to the energy of fifty to one hundred tons of dynamite and that it had occurred approximately fifty miles out to sea at an undetermined altitude above the surface.

Previous readings recorded by Columbia University's Air Pressure Measuring Devices found only nuclear explosions registering a larger reading. The current explosions resulted in the reporting of broken windows, crockery and other small items in the Toms River and Charleston areas.

DECEMBER 15, 1977 Five more air quakes were recorded, extending along the same East Coast area. These occurred between 8:30 am and 10:00 am with an intensity that appeared to be less than the

initial blasts but having the same accompanying effects.

DECEMBER 21, 1977 In Toms River, New Jersey, around 2:00 am, a loud rumble accompanied by a bright yellow light and shaking of the ground were again reported. Subsequent reports from the affected areas showed a simultaneous malfunction of A.C. operated smoke detectors and a disruption of street light service. When questioned about the apparent malfunctions, the New Jersey Central Power and Light Engineers revealed that the brief interruption of service was caused by the operation of a protection fuse for a 19,900 volt distribution circuit which services that area. Inspection of the fuse line by a crew failed to find any apparent malfunction which could have caused it to activate. The fuse, however, was changed as a precaution.

One line supervisor did find it odd that although this type of failure has occurred from time to time, it was a far from common problem and especially in the low usage hours of early morning.

In a further attempt to clarify possible causes of this incident, NICAP investigator Jahn conducted an in-depth interview with a meteorologist in the Toms River area in hopes of determining whether the incidents could be weather related. The meteorologist's findings on the weather conditions for that time period were as follows....

Winds were on an East-south-East pattern, 11 miles per hour gusting to 30 miles per hour. Barometric pressure at midnight, December 21, was 29.9 inches. The 2:00 am radar charts and facsimile

reports indicated that no shower or thunder storm activity was reported anywhere in the Ocean County—or immediate—area.

The meteorologist further stated that he had himself visually observed bright yellow flashes stationary and at a high altitude from approximately 1:55 am to 2:15 am on that morning. He gave his professional opinion that the bright flashes or the air quakes were in no way meteorologically connected.

DECEMBER 21, 1977 From Bayville, New Jersey to Stafford, New Jersey, reports were received around 7:00 pm from the general public, by police and Coast Guard Units of tremors occurring in the area. The accounts were fairly well confined within a fifteen mile radius of the New Jersey Coast.

DECEMBER 22 & 23 Additional reports filtered in of air quakes in the Charleston area. A lull then ensued during which time all activity seemed to cease. Then, on January 1, new quake activities followed by successive reports occurred almost daily for a week. Many of the reports received during this time were from aircraft operating off the East Coast and concerned extremely bright flashes in the sky.

The information obtained by NICAP's investigator was the result of many weeks spent interviewing and working jointly with the Center for Short Lived Phenomena in Cambridge, Massachusetts; Scientific Events Alert Network in Washington, D.C.; Lamont Laboratories in New York; and geological surveyors and

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(Air Quakes Cont.)

meteorologists in the affected areas. In his concluding thoughts on the reported accounts, Jahn studied and discounted as probable explanations of the phenomena — nuclear testing . . . meteorological disturbances . . . earth quakes . . . under-sea quakes . . . the possible reentry of

known satellites or meteors . . . sonic booms (commonly caused by super sonic aircraft or the like) . . .

"In the absence of any reaction to seismographic instruments which register normal earth quake activity," Jahn concludes, "it is clearly felt that this phenomena can be identified as something

which is occurring well above the earth."

Jahn fully intends to continue his investigations into the air quake phenomena both in the United States and abroad where information of possible similar occurrences has been found. NICAP will keep its readers informed on any new developments in this case.

PRE DAWN SIGHTING EYE OPENER FOR MYSTIFIED METRO WASHINGTON

It could have been a UFO. It could have been a "fireball" (meteor). As of this date the evidence is not completely analyzed. But whatever appeared on Thursday, January 26 in Washington D.C.'s predawn sky, led a lot of people, well over 40 of them, to believe they saw something extraordinary.

Forty years of flying prepared retired Air Force Col. Stephen Yednock to keep eyes alert, head cool and judgement sound. It did not, however, prepare him for the "molten metal-like white projectile" that he and a driving companion were witness to on their way to work that morning in Herndon, Virginia. It was 6:09 am and Col. Yednock had an unobstructed view of the sky. His account of the occurrence was concise and no non-sense in attitude.

"I'd estimate the object was in about a 2:30 o'clock position from my vantage point, moving between 700 and 800 knots. Total visibility time was approximately 3 seconds before the object seemingly disappeared into the trees. From its trajectory, I'd guess it augered in (flying parlance for impacted) within 10 or 15 seconds somewhere near the Montgomery County/Potomac River area."

Machinist P.C., also on his way to work, was driving from Bryans, Maryland. He first noticed a brilliant light source which appeared much like a cloud lit up by lightening. It was 6:10 am. Seconds later he was able to identify the light source as coming from a ball-like object with a long bluish tail. He estimated the object moved at a much greater speed than jet aircraft on a straight trajectory.

"I was stunned," he said. "I've seen shooting stars before but never anything like this."

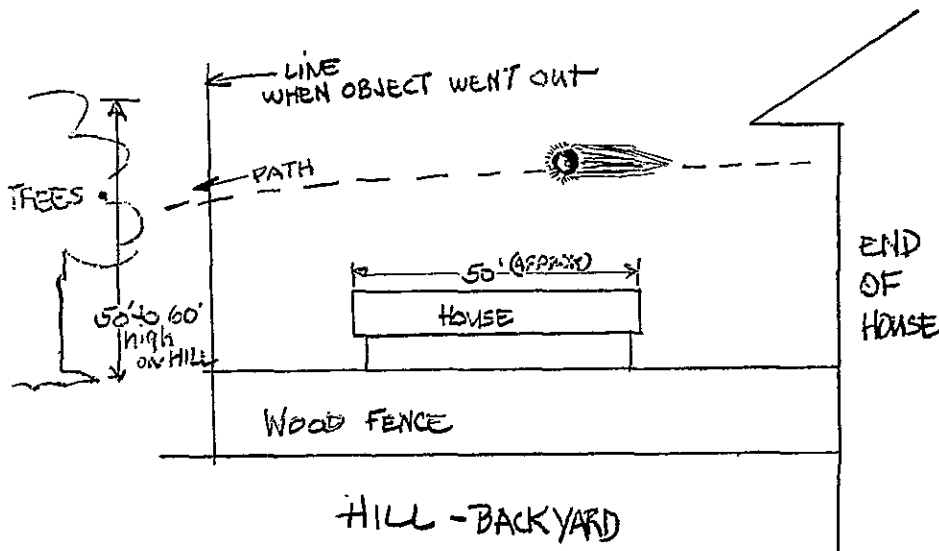
Others concurred. At least 90% of those reporting the sighting to NICAP claimed they had seen an object similar in description. Differences in the reports were minor. One account from a witness in Loretto, Virginia pictures the object as "huge, tearshape [and] brilliant green in color." Another had it coming in at an angle, then veering sharply and reascending.

A check by NICAP officials of local weather, FAA, aerospace and related agencies indicate the sightings were not of any expected phenomena or planned aircraft mobility. Also discounted were reports of rocket launches or flares from area military installations. No direct reports were made to these agencies nor did they observe the object themselves.

Still reports kept pouring in. A newspaper in Annapolis phoned the NICAP offices requesting details of the Thursday sightings for a feature story. A witness reading the account in the paper's afternoon edition called for more information, then reluctantly admitted that she too had seen the bright blue-white sphere but had been chary of reporting it for fear of being ridiculed. An airport control tower logged a call from a pilot who claimed he had actually flown over the object. Later queries failed to turn up either the pilot, his airline or the control tower technician who allegedly received the call. Another witness wanted to know if an air base located near her home had reported a crash that morning. She had seen what appeared to be a blue-white flash leaving a shower of sparks in its wake.

"It was so bright," said one observer, "that I couldn't definitely describe its

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Observer Bernard Bower supplied NICAP with this interpretation of his sighting on Thursday, January 26. Trained in architectural design and drafting, Bower attempted an approximation of the object's size and proximity to his home and an estimation of its outbound trajectory.

UFO RELATED INFORMATION FROM THE FBI FILES

by Dr. Bruce S. Maccabee
(Conclusion -- Part III)

(Note: the next "good" report in the portion of the FBI file that I have is in early 1948, and then reports "picked up" again in 1949.)

Although in a few of the above cases the brevity of the description mirrors the brevity of the report, in most cases the above descriptions do not do justice to the details which were recorded. Most of the above cases are in the Project Blue-book listing in the National Archives. However, the following cases are not listed: July 7, Southern Wisconsin; July 8, Norfolk, Va.; August 6, Myrtle Creek, Oregon; August 13, Redmond, Wash.; Sept. 6, Shouns, Tenn.; and Sept. 11, Portland, Ore. (Note: the absence of a listing at the beginning of the Blue Book file does not necessarily mean that a case does not exist somewhere within the microfilm record at the National Archives; cases could be filed in the Office of Special Investigations section of the microfilm, which does not have a listing of cases.)

Most of the 59 cases listed above were sufficiently detailed and reported by sufficiently reliable witnesses that it would be difficult to conclude that nothing unusual was being seen. Especially impressive, for example, was the 7/8/47 sighting at Muroc AFB in which several military observers signed statements saying that they and others saw two flights of objects, first a pair of silver round or disc-like objects followed by another single object. Unfortunately the AAF investigation was typically brief so that

there was a lot of potential information (such as angles of sight from various observers so that altitudes could be estimated) that was not obtained.

The portion of the FBI file that I have obtained contains very few entries for the year 1948, but it picks up again with some very interesting information provided by the Air Force in 1949. This and other information obtained from the FBI file will be presented in the next part of this paper.

CORRECTIONS

Several omissions were made in the text of the November, 1977 issue of the *UFO Investigator*. On page one, column three, paragraph one of Dr. Bruce Maccabee's article on UFO's, the last sentence should read "As for myself we would understand the whole UFO phenomenon." On page three, column three, paragraph five, sentence five should read "The explicit

reason why the investigations were ended will be presented in the next installment of this series" And on page four, column one, paragraph one, the first sentence should read "In General Schulgen's view, the FBI would investigate mainly (or only?) those reports in which hardware was retrieved. By the time that the FBI entered the investigation"

7/11/47	Codroy, Newfoundland	0030	several people reported rapidly moving glowing object with a trail
7/12/47	Elmendorf Field, Alaska	1830	several officers observed grey object following land contours for several minutes
7/20/47	Steamship near Newfoundland	2015	silvery reddish flashes seen as object apparently travelled and changed course numerous times
7/20/47	Frostburg, Maryland	0915	circular whitish object flying above broken clouds making a noise
7/23/47	Harmon Field, Newfoundland	2345	flashing reddish light travelling rapidly at high altitude for 3 minutes
7/29/47	Canyon Ferry, Montana	1205	bright disc travelling rapidly, then hovering and fluttering and finally "melting into thin air"
7/29/47	Hamilton Field, Calif.	1200	AAF officers observed two objects travelling faster than P-80 aircraft; milky white; second zig-zagged behind first
7/?/47	Ft. Richardson, Alaska	—	Two Army officers reported to the Intelligence Director seeing round rapidly moving silver object under clouds for 20 seconds
8/?/47	Near Los Angeles	1000	while hiking in mountains; observer reported a small object on the ground that took off and "knocked him to the ground" (letter to the FBI)
8/3/47	Hackensack, N.J.	1945	observers saw round black object moving "too rapidly to be a balloon" (FBI interview)

8/4/47	Near Boston	1600	Air Line Captain and Navigator saw bright orange cylindrical object blunt at both ends
8/4/47	Bethel, Alask	2200	(daylight in Alaska) pilot and copilot saw object like flying wing but no propellers or jet exhaust (FBI interview)
8/6/47	Philadelphia	2230	many observers saw object like a "giant fire-cracker" travel at an apparent speed of several hundred mph (FBI interviews)
8/6/47	Myrtle Creek, Oregon	1815	former Navy pilot and student saw round aluminum-like object from their aircraft on two occasions about 10 minutes apart (FBI Interview)
8/7/47	Ocean Lake, Oregon	2330	bright disk sighted
8/13/47	Redmond, Washington	0900	Brummet and Decker reported two bright objects travelling very fast; seen eight seconds
8/13/47	Near Twin Falls, Idaho	0930	county commissioner and ex-sheriff reported two discs and great height and a roaring noise
8/13/47	Snake River Canyon, Idaho	1300	A.C. Urie and sons reported structured dislike object flying within the canyon (FBI interview)
8/14/47	Placerville, Calif.	1600	object seen that travelled rapidly and disappeared in a puff of smoke
8/14/47	Guam	1040	enlisted men saw crescent shaped objects on a zig-zag course twice as fast as a plane
8/19/47	Twin Falls, Idaho	2130	residents and police officers reported groups of objects flying over city under overcast sky; very fast and glowing (FBI interviews)
9/3/47	Oswego, Oregon	1215	lady and children saw "two dozen" round silver objects; platter shaped (FBI interview)
9/6/47	Shouns, Tenn.	---	two observers reported football shaped object turning end over end in air; seen against overcast sky
9/8/47	Logan, Utah	2240	three flights of "saucers" seen by several people; yellowish-white objects circled city rapidly; seen against overcast (FBI interview)

(Pre-Dawn Continued)

shape, but I could see bright orange — sparks I guess."

Bernard Bower, a government employee trained in architectural design and drafting and an ex Air Force man, was looking from a window in his home trying to assess wind damage to his roof and stove stack. At first, he says, he thought it was aircraft coming in for a landing with all its lights on. Then,

"[I] saw orange tail and halo. [The] object became bright and traveled very fast . . . at that moment I knew it was a UFO, [then] object was gone."

Mr. Bower was so impressed with the sighting — he professed to have been

"very calm" throughout — that he provided NICAP with his own depiction of the object's approximation to his home as well as a detailed map of the sighting area.

Even the small discrepancies of the sightings lead to greater speculation as to exactly "what" it could have been. Interestingly enough, although most of the accounts came from within the same time frame and were almost concentrated in area (90% came from immediate Metropolitan Washington, D.C. surrounds in Maryland and Virginia) there were at least two reports of sightings from as far away as Pennsylvania and Southern New Jersey. Both reports estimate time of

occurrence as between 4:30 and 5:30 am with the object moving in an E-W direction. Investigators are currently seeking to determine whether these were isolated incidents or whether the sightings were on a more widespread basis.

Many confident, and highly reputable, observers of the Thursday sightings are certain that they saw something extraordinary, that they were having a "once in a lifetime" experience. Whether that something was a meteor or unidentified flying object is still open to speculation and investigation. But whatever it was, all agree it was spectacular to behold. The *UFO Investigator* will keep its readers informed of any future findings.