



## Moving Contrail Makes 90 Degree Turn Near Three Rivers, Michigan on April 22, 1999

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**June 10, 1999 Three Rivers, Michigan** Alan Otterson is 47-years-old and has lived in the Three Rivers, Michigan region all his life. Early in the morning of April 24, 1999 while he and his wife were driving toward Battle Creek, they were so surprised that a moving contrail suddenly made a right angle turn that they pulled over into a parking lot to take the photograph shown here.



April 24, 1999, Three Rivers, Michigan, 90-degree angled contrail.  
Photograph © 1999 by Alan Otterson.

Later, after the Ottersons got back on the road, they stopped again to take a photograph of an S-shaped contrail shown below.



April 24, 1999, Three Rivers, Michigan, S-shaped contrail.  
Photograph © 1999 by Alan Otterson.

## **Interview:**

**Alan Otterson, supermarket employee, Three Rivers, Michigan:** "I've always been interested in the sky. I'm an amateur astronomer. Cloud formations and things like that have always interested me. And we've lived in the flight path of O'Hare to Detroit, Michigan. We see regular contrails every day. But these were extremely different.

We (with wife) were on our way to Battle Creek, Michigan that Saturday. And driving towards, we had to go through Three Rivers and just before Three Rivers, I noticed this right angle contrail. We were driving along and I noticed the contrail being formed and I thought, 'Boy, that's pretty weird!' So, we pulled over into this parking lot and just by habit I had my camera with me all the time now.

**IT JUST HAPPENED TO BE FROM YOUR LETTER, THAT WHAT YOU ARE SEEING AT THIS POINT IS A CONTRAIL THAT IS COMING FROM THE ZENITH DIRECTION COMING STRAIGHT SORT OF DOWN.**

Right. Right. And then it abruptly made that turn. And I thought, 'Wow!' and we pulled over and I got out. I grabbed my camera and took a couple of pictures of it.

**IT'S ALMOST AS RIGHT AN ANGLE AS ONE COULD DRAW ON A PIECE OF PAPER. COULD YOU SEE ANY KIND OF A VEHICLE THAT WAS MAKING THIS RIGHT ANGLE CONTRAIL?**

No, I could just see the tip of the contrail, but I could not see any shining light or like from wings or anything like that.

**DID YOUR WIFE? COULD SHE SEE ANYTHING?**

Yes, she could.

**COULD SHE SEE ANY VEHICLE MAKING THIS?**

No, she didn't see any vehicle. She just saw the contrail itself.

**DO YOU THINK IT'S UNUSUAL THAT YOU COULD NOT SEE SOME KIND OF AERIAL VEHICLE MAKING THIS CONTRAIL?**

Yes, because usually you can see either the shining sunlight hitting off the vehicle, whatever it is - in this case we didn't. I don't know if it was because it was in the eastern part of the sky as the sun was coming up. But we didn't see any shape of object or anything like that.

**DID YOU TRY TO CALL ANY AIRPORT OR AUTHORITIES TO ASK THEM WHAT COULD BE MAKING A RIGHT ANGLE CONTRAIL THAT YOU COULD STILL SEE IN THE PHOTOGRAPH?**

Well, I know that near that area is the Battle Creek International Airport and they have a national guard based there. But as far as I know, all they have is A-10s and helicopters.

**YOU SAW THE CONTRAIL MOVING DOWN AND YOU AND YOUR WIFE WATCHING, BOTH OF YOUR PAIRS OF EYES ARE WATCHING, AND YOU SAW WITH YOUR OWN EYES THE MOMENT AT WHICH WHATEVER IS MAKING THE CONTRAIL DID THE SHARP 90-DEGREE TURN?**

Yes.

## **WHAT WENT THROUGH YOUR MIND WHEN THAT OCCURRED?**

I said to myself, 'Wow, this is really amazing!' I'm fairly familiar with different types of aircraft and what they can do and can't do. And this just jumped right out at you.

## **WELL, WHAT DO WE HAVE THAT COULD MAKE A 90-DEGREE CONTRAIL LIKE THIS?**

The only thing I can think of is some type of remote-controlled vehicles that we are experimenting with.

## **THAT'S A GOOD IDEA, A REMOTE-CONTROLLED VEHICLE.**

You know, the unmanned.

## **YES. AND IF WE ARE EXPERIMENTING WITH REMOTE-CONTROLLED VEHICLES, WHY DO YOU SUPPOSE THAT WHOEVER IS EXPERIMENTING WITH THEM WOULD MAKE IT SO OBVIOUS THAT IT WOULD EMIT CONTRAILS?**

I'm not sure on that. I don't know whether it was intended for someone to see, or it was just by accident.

## **SOME PEOPLE HAVE SUGGESTED THAT SOME OF THESE CONTRAILS MAY NOT BE MADE BY HUMANS AT ALL.**

That's another possibility. And I firmly believe there are other forms of life and things like that - you know, some other odd things happen. I'm sure they are not all, shall I say, human engineered by themselves.

## **LET'S MOVE TO THE OTHER PHOTOGRAPH THAT YOU SENT WITH THE RIGHT ANGLE AND IT IS THE SAME DAY. COULD YOU PLEASE EXPLAIN WHAT WAS HAPPENING AND WHEN YOU TOOK THIS ONE IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE RIGHT ANGLE THAT SHOWS THIS VERY CLEAR S-SHAPED CONTRAIL.**

OK, we were moving further on down the road and we were a few miles from Battle Creek. My wife happened to notice this S-shaped contrail. And she called me and I looked at it and said, 'Wow, that's really neat.' So we stopped and handed her the camera as we were driving the vehicle. I pulled over and she took the picture.

## **THIS IS AFTER THE RIGHT ANGLE.**

Right. And I'm wondering if it could be the same vehicle doing them both. I thought something really strange is going on and it's not anything normal or anything that was intended to really be seen. I think it was just by chance that we saw it."

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## **More Information:**

For more photographs and information about unusual contrail formations in North America since March 17, 1999, please see The Contrail Connection.

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## **Websites:**

<http://www.contrailconnection.com>

## Credits

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