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Part 7: *Inside Saucer Post ...3-0 Blue*

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After the destruction of the zeppelin Von Hindenburg over Lakehurst, New Jersey, in 1937, investigators told of a 'ball of fire' - possibly St. Elmo's Fire - maneuvering near the airship. Their guess is that the fireball (UFO?) somehow ignited the hydrogen."

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December 22, 2006 Albuquerque, New Mexico -



An official publication of Civilian Research, Interplanetary Flying Objects (CRIFO) © 1957 by Leonard H. Stringfield.

THE WITCH HUNT FOR EVIDENCE

I gave never seen a down-to-earth spaceship. I have never been to Mars and back. Therefore, I cannot say that flying saucers are spaceships from Mars. Yet, without seeing or feeling these "irrefutable proofs," I believe that an unknown percentage of the UFOs on official and CRIFO file are actually interplanetary vehicles - maybe from Mars.

It's a matter of interpretation, I suppose. Seems easy when you have an archive of "evidence," like CRIFO's, at your fingertips. This, plus a studious knack at ratiocination - the patience to put the myriad loose ends into a pattern - can usually make the "saucers from Mars" image look excitingly clear. That is, for some people. Perhaps it was ratiocination that changed the mind of Henry J. Taylor about saucers.

In 1949, Taylor, then radio commentator, said he was sure saucers were secret U.S. weapons. But on May 4, 1957, it was announced that Taylor, newly appointed ambassador to Switzerland, had told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that at least 10% of flying saucer reports are "very disturbing." He said the average 10th case has to be taken seriously because it "had been seen by too many sober-minded people, with photographic and other evidence." Added Taylor, "...It is very difficult to deny that something is happening around us that we just don't quite understand. ...I just don't think that we know all the secrets of the universe yet."

But others, perhaps less informed or less ratiocinative than Taylor, wanted their evidence

Earthfiles, news category.

in the form of hardware. Through the years, I have collected more than my share of it. It has come to me in assorted sizes, shapes, weights, colors - and odors! Some of it so precious that I was allowed only to fondle. Others of it so secret I knew of only through whispers. I am told that the Air Force has tons of hardware all fenced in under tarp and guarded at Wright-Patterson. At least two sources told me they saw it being hauled there under tarp and being escorted by military police in 1953. Another well-informed source in 1955 went further, claiming he saw a saucer at Wright-Patterson. It was made of something like plexiglas, he said, only sturdier. When I tried for more details at a later date, my informant was in New York. At least a half dozen more attempts always found him out of town.

Then there was the Maury Island affair of June 21, 1947, known to all saucerites. It, too, had its mysterious metals and slag. John Otto, a private researcher, showed me a prized specimen of the slag when I visited Chicago in 1954. He got it from Ray Palmer, who while Editor of *Fate* magazine, received it from Harold Dahl and Fred Crisman. Those two men, according to their testimonies, were involved in a weird sea-going escapade. This, however, was later "exposed" as a hoax with Dahl and Crisman since having vanished from the scene of saucers. Then there is the story and the mystery about the small radioactive lead disc found in Colorado with a curious inscription that read "undark," which baffled both Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and FBI.

[**Editor's Note:** Fred Crisman (July 22, 1920 - December 10, 1975) was allegedly a federal agent who operated under many guises as writer, educator, minor political provocateur, broadcaster and self-described "disruption agent" from Tacoma, Washington.

Wikipedia: "In the mid-1940s, his name appears in the pages of pulp magazines, reporting on his own Shaver Mystery experiences via letters to the editor, warning of the threat from subterranean-dwelling 'Deros,' or 'detrimental robots.' He claimed to have encountered the beings while fighting as a commando in Burma during World War II, and wrote that he sustained injuries from a futuristic laser weapon.

"His name next pops up as a key player in the strange Maury Island Incident, an early UFO encounter. Crisman claimed to have seen the objects in question, and to have collected debris.

"He next turns up in Tacoma in the late 1960s, railing against the city's city manager form of government. He hosted a conspiracy-themed radio talk show under the pseudonym 'Jon Gold,' and wrote a self-published book, *The Murder of a City, Tacoma*. He was also appointed by the mayor to serve on the Tacoma Public Library board.

"During this time period, he was subpoenaed by Jim Garrison to testify in the case against Clay Shaw in the John F. Kennedy assassination. When Shaw was arrested, apparently Crisman was the first person he called. Various conspiracy theories place Crisman on the grassy knoll, possibly as a radio operator, or as one of the three tramps taken in to custody near Dealey Plaza. His Grand Jury testimony is now public, and in *Murder of a City, Tacoma*, Crisman claimed no knowledge of a conspiracy, and he was not called as a witness in the actual trial. Documents that indicate a Crisman link to the Kennedy assassination may have been fabricated by Crisman himself, as they are written in an idiosyncratic style reminiscent of Crisman's own."

Crisman died in 1975, but his name continues to resonate in the shady world of conspiracy theories. Michael Riconosciuto was a key player in the Inslaw flap of the 1980s and 1990s, which may have led to the untimely death - some would say murder - of journalist, Danny Casolaro, who was working on a book entitled *The Octopus*. Riconosciuto was a young electronics whiz from Tacoma who was a close acquaintance of Crisman's, and who helped Crisman sweep for (and possibly plant) electronic eavesdropping devices during the years he was writing *Murder*.]

And there is the incident involving a lady saucerite. A firm believer in contact stories, she claimed in all seriousness to have had her own contact with a spaceman - on more intimate grounds. However, nine months have since passed and I've heard nothing yet about the bouncing evidence.

But being reminded of the contact element and their "slight-of-handling" the evidence, I always think of Truman Bethurum. In the summer of 1954, Ric Williamson and other Soulcrafters gathered suddenly at my home, mainly to discuss business for their proposed lecture in Cincinnati. During the discussion about who would do what, I managed to slip in a word to Bethurum on a point which had bothered me since I read his book, *Aboard A*

Flying Saucer © 1954. It concerned the paper on which Aura Rhanes, the "Scow's" captain, had graciously written a message for Bethurum. Thinking of evidence, I asked him if he had thought of having the paper analyzed chemically. But Bethurum evaded the question and rejoined the clamor about lecture ticket sales. When I tried again later, a sympathetic Soulcrafter intervened. He explained that an analysis of the paper would prove nothing, since paper manufacturers on Clarion used pulp from trees just like those on earth!

And the poor mailman! If he only knew what he was sometimes carrying inside a package to my door. A piece of flint, a chunk of quartz, Christmas tree tinsel, and the funniest of all - three pink-colored, but well solidified, dog droppings. Said a note enclosed from the female sender: "I found these in my garden the next morning." She described the saucer flying over her house the night before. While I can figure out the droppings, I'll never know how they got pink. A joke maybe?!

Another mystery item was a chunk of metal of crystalline structure that weighted about nine pounds. Shaped like a teardrop, it showed external evidence of having been exposed to great temperatures. The metal was found by Mrs. Ila Arthur in an abandoned gravel quarry near Lafayette, Indiana - at a site remote from industry. While the lone piece of metal could not be traced to a UFO, or to any past UFO activity in the area, Mrs. Arthur was of the opinion that it came from the sky. Not overlooking the extraterrestrial answer, she gave her trophy to her son-in-law, Frank Gallagher. He broke it up for examination and sent me several sizeable fragments. I took a specimen to the University of Cincinnati. But although geologists and metallurgists there were able to describe its elements spectroscopically, they could offer no solution as to its identity or source.

Ruled out, however, was a meteorite. Ruled in was industrial slag. I later submitted samples to ATIC, Wright-Patterson AFB. After their analysis, they replied in part:

"A thorough, critical analysis naturally required a certain amount of small destruction of the metal fragment. ...All material submitted is 'man-made' or 'man-fabricated.' Samples were found to be ferro-chromium and magnetic and not radioactive. The composition obtained for those samples was:

Chromium, 67 - 71%
Silicon, 0.1 - 1.0%
Ni, Co & Mn, 0.2%
Mg, Ca & Al, 0.5%
Iron, Balance

"The crystalline structure and non-oxidized condition of these samples points directly to the fact that a high temperature such as would be encountered by one of meteoric origin has not been imposed. Both the common appearance and the analysis of these strongly suggest that they have come from the bin of either a steel mill or steel foundry where chromium in this form is customarily added to steel melts."

Although this analysis might be correct, the official opinion as to origin of the object might be nothing more than presumption. Other consultants, who considered all the anomalies of the case, could not offer so pat an explanation.

More confounding to the experts were specimens of "hot rock," collected by Norbert Gariety, which looked much like the Maury Island specimen. It was dull black, minutely crystalline, obdurate. Gariety, now editor of S. P. A. C. E., was on vacation and had the good fortune to stop over in Erie, Pennsylvania, where he chanced to read an item in the August 12, 1956 Dispatch, which described the experience of George Traut. The item told how Traut and his companion, Bud Buzar, driving on a lonely road at 12:45 a.m., Saturday, had been forced to halt by a huge rock, which, with a smaller one, obstructed their path. Traut said, "They were too hot to handle with bare hands, so I pushed them off the highway into the berm." Saturday morning, Traut returned to the road site with a truck and took the rocks home.

Commented Gariety in S.P.A.C.E., "I called the Traut residence and made an appointment. ...I found the Trauts cooperative ... filling me in on details not carried in the newspaper. I made photos of the find and carried away several small pieces."

Before returning to Florida, Gariety visited the Stringfields and left one of the specimens with me. I made arrangements through an intermediary to have it examined at the University of Cincinnati. Interest was high. But unexplainably, it was months before the rock was returned to me, minus analysis. Said the intermediary, "Probably slag." According to Gariety, another piece of the rock was sent later to M. K. Jessup, author of four UFO books. Jessup promised to send a sample to the Smithsonian Institute, but nothing more was heard. Gariety also gave a sample to Dr. Virgil Sleight, geologist at the University of Miami.

Sleight concluded that the specimen:

- 1) contained no nickel, probably not meteorite;
- 2) did not look like any rock that he had ever seen;
- 3) suggested slag - yet was more coarsely crystalline and heavier than most slag.

Gariety then approached Dr. Raymond Parks, radiologist of Jackson Memorial Hospital. Said Parks, "We have no physical measurement other than those for radiation. ...Therefore, we have no information whatsoever, except to state that it dose not emit gamma, beta or energetic alpha particles."

Next to examine the rock was Dr. Russell Williams, astronomer. He said, "Whatever it is, it's not part of a meteorite - and I certainly do not think it could be furnace slag." Finally, specimens went off to the A. & G. Refining Co. of Miami, Florida. There, two metallurgists said the rocks were composed of "chromium, Tungsten, vanadium, iron, copper and molybdenum."

To those who insist that the rock was slag, Gariety reports, "Please I pray thee do tell - what in the world would anyone be doing out hauling red hot furnace slag at 12:45 a.m. Saturday night?" There is one other possible answer. Remembering that 130 miles is but a short hop for a saucer, we note that an object described as "a bright steel-gray ship," was reported by the *Pittsburgh Sun Telegraph* as hovering over the city for more than two hours later that same Saturday morning when Traut had found the "slag."

THE 'SOFTWARE' DEPARTMENT

In the "software" department is "angel hair." Purportedly a saucer by-product, it is variously described as looking like cobweb or spun glass fluff. Curiously, it seems to have a predilection for falling to earth during the month of October. The unofficial record speaks for itself, compiled by *Fantastic Universe* magazine and its contributors such as Ivan Sanderson, naturalist.

Date of UFO "Angel Hair" Incidents // Locality // UFO in Area

October 14, 1797 // Osaka, Japan // Unknown
November 10, 1949 // Depues Ferry, Pa. // Yes
October 1950 // Paradise, California // Unknown
October 17, 1952 // Oloron and Geronce, France // Yes
October 27, 1952 // Gaillac, France // Yes
1953 // Onga Onga, New Zealand // Unknown
1953 // Gisborn, New Zealand // Yes
April 15, 1953 // Auckland, New Zealand // Unknown
May 30, 1953 // Pelmerston North, Christchurch, N. Z. // Yes
October 9, 1953 // Melbourne, Australia // Unknown
October 13, 1953 // Pleasant Hill, California // Unknown
November 16, 1953 // San Fernando Valley, California // Unknown
February 1, 1954 // Puente; San Fernando Valley, California // Yes
October 19, 1954 // Fort Wayne, Indiana // Unknown
October 22, 1954 // Marysville, Ohio // Yes
October 28, 1954 // Rome, Italy // Yes
October 28, 1954 // Florence, Italy // Yes
November 1954 // Tucson, Arizona // Yes
November 1954 // Kankakee, Illinois // Yes
November 4, 1954 // Nelson, New Zealand // Yes
December 12, 1954 // Christchurch, New Zealand // Yes
February 21, 1955 // Horseheads, N. Y. // Unknown
July 29, 1955 // Sacramento, California // Unknown
October 1955 // Port Augusta, Australia // Yes
October 2, 1955 // Uhrichsville, Ohio // Yes
October 10, 1955 // Cincinnati, Ohio; Northern Kentucky // Yes
October 27, 1955 // Whitsett, North Carolina // Yes
August 19, 1956 // St. Louis, Missouri // Unknown
September 25, 1956 // Cincinnati, Ohio // Yes
September 30, 1956 // Cherry Valley, Illinois // Yes
October 15, 1956 // Indianapolis, Indiana // Yes
October 16, 2006 // Fond du Lac, Wisconsin // Unknown
April 28, 1957 // Christchurch, New Zealand // Unknown

It is beyond the scope of this book to describe each incident, but of special interest is the bizarre affair in Oloron in which a dentist, Dr. Balestra, became ensnared by filaments

"like a trapped animal caught in a huge spider web." According to the report, the dentist finally freed himself and joined others in watching the threads "re-gather and slowly rise in the air."

Another incident involved a mystery substance, possibly in the class of angel's hair and was described in *Flying Saucers*, edited by Harold Fulton and published by Civilian Saucer Investigation in Auckland, New Zealand. The report said that an Air Force freighter, No. 5911, gathered a "strange sticky substance" on its windscreens and front fuselage during a night flight over Kaitaia on February 26, 1955. During the flight at 6,000 feet, the crew heard "dull thuds" on the aircraft just before the appearance of this substance on the screen. Simultaneously, the aircraft compass "went wrong" and the crew was forced to return to base at Whenuapai early. The substance did not disintegrate on touch and when rubbed, it "smeared like grease."

More rare, however, is the UFO incident which involves two types of software. The following describes both angel hair and a plastic-like ribbon, the latter found clinging to the parked automobile of Mr. and Mrs. L. L. Leonard of Cherry Valley, Illinois, on September 30, 1956. By letter, in which a sample of the ribbon was enclosed, Mrs. Leonard related: "...Looking overhead and slightly East, I thought I saw a jet. But it was going so fast that I changed my mind when I saw a few more of the same white objects. My husband got the binoculars, 7 x 50, and through them the objects appeared white and half the size of a pea at arm's length. The objects traveling very fast suddenly ejected long white streamers, which floated in the air, hanging absolutely perpendicular. One of these round, white 'things' came just a little lower than our treetops and I ran after it, trying to see where it landed. But I lost it. On one of our evergreens there was something that looked like spider webs, but on picking off a strand and handling it, I thought it had the consistency of spun glass. As we were watching these white 'things' explode, we looked up at a section of the southwestern sky and there was a concentration of these silver streamers, which looked like stationary silver rain. It was a most eerie sight."

A similar description of a substance falling from the sky over Campinas, Brazil, in December 1954, was described in the July - August 1957 issue of *UFO - Critical Bulletin*, published by J. Escobar Faria of Sao Paulo, Brazil. Faria wrote:

"...Three UFOs crossed the skies of Campinas. They dropped waste material, which was seized by the Brazilian Air Force. But before the FAB Intelligence collected the stuff, a sample was analyzed by Dr. Visvaldo Maffei, a professional chemist, who stated to newspapers that the material had shown a strange alloy. Dr. Maffei assured that the chemical examination resulted in an alloy of tin together with it and other unknown metals. The composition was a high amount of tin in great pureness (88.91%), "unusual on this planet because the tin had not the common impurity in presence of leads, antimony, iron and other ores."

Faria then describes the reported UFOs: "...Such odd contrivances were round of gray color and exhibited two parts. One of them turning around incessantly. At the moment in which they crossed the city at moderate speed, they dropped the stuff in a liquid form on the garden of a lady. A neighbor, Benedito Gonzales de Nascimento, said it looked like 'silver rain.' The filaments, when touching the ground, transformed rapidly in solid silver-colored rectangles intensely heated.' The substance subsequently was sent to Prof. Charles Maney, physicist at Defiance College in Ohio. Extensive tests were made and when I phoned Prof. Maney in July of 1957 regarding his analysis, I learned that he and Prof. Nathan Meltz, a chemist, had confirmed the earlier Brazilian tests."

Mrs. L. L. Leonard continued her description: "We didn't see the phenomena without the glasses. These silver streamers must have been of an enormous length. My car was parked in the garage with the double door opened all the while. When I took it out the next morning, a long piece of 'something' was plastered on the fender. ...It seems that there were two kinds of the streamers: some were like spider webs and others were the ribbon type."

The 'life' of angel hair on earth is almost ephemeral. According to numerous reports, it dematerializes of its own accord, and more quickly at the touch of human hand. Getting samples is therefore not easy, even when it falls close to some, as it did on October 10, 1955, over western Cincinnati and parts of northern Kentucky. During this incident, the fluff came down in sheets and streamers, draping over housetops, trees, bushes and automobiles. To the wrath of one lady, some fell over her freshly hung laundry - but not one authentic sample was obtainable! No UFOs were reported during this daylight fall. But the night before, Harlan Grimes had seen a bright disc over Bromley, Kentucky, going north toward western Cincinnati. About the same time, another observer reported a low-flying red, luminous ball zoom up through a wooded ravine near Hooven, north of

Bromley.

Grimes, alerted by the UFO he had seen and upon hearing of the angel hair fall, tried to follow up several reports. Near one site, he found a small mass of cobweb-like matter clinging to a screen door. Not sure of its nature, he wound it around a straw and brought it to my office. Suspecting cobweb, I later put this in a vial and sent it to Prof. Charles Maney at Defiance College, who was making a special study of the phenomena. Prof. Maney later informed me that the sample was too small for proper analysis, but he wrote an article about the "angel hair" for the November - December 1956 issue of Britain's *Flying Saucer Review*.

Then lo and behold, it happened right in my own front yard! On September 25, 1956, shortly before 5 p.m., my wife, Dell, watched "something" white waft down in the gentle breeze and finally alighting on the lawn. Deftly, she gathered the gossamer-like filaments on a stick and put the collection into a large glass jar. While she was screwing on the lid, one of the filaments somehow caught on the metal surface. Thus, the stick on which was wound the balance of the substance, was left to hang in the jar supported only by the filament. Pretty tough material, I thought. The filaments seemed sensitive, Dell said, having a tendency to curl when touched - which she did only briefly. Otherwise, she said, the substance behaved quite unmagically. No, she did not see a saucer!

Examining the filaments through the glass, I noted that their appearance was different from those that Grimes had collected. But, remembering a photograph of the Puente specimen, which appeared with an article on this topic in the November 1954 *Pageant* magazine, I was impressed by the similarity between the Puente substance and ours.

In view of the unique manner in which the specimen was preserved, I wondered next what to do with it. Mailing it was out of the question, which eliminated the possibility of a civilian analysis out of the city. But I soon found the answer. During this period, I was deeply involved with the Air Force on a matter which concerned UFO reporting. So, when I phoned Captain G. T. Gregory at Section 4E4, Wright-Patterson, regarding my problem, I also informed him of the angel hair. Capt. Gregory, keenly mindful of all Air Force regulations, expressed interest and promised to send a man to my home to pick up the specimen.

On October 12, 1956, M/Sgt. Oliver Hill arrived. Calmly, Hill took pictures of my front yard, of the glass jar in which hung the mute evidence, and an inadvertent shot of my daughter, Denise, riding her bicycle in front of me while I held the jar. Then away went the jar to Dayton.

On November 15, 1956, ATIC sent me the following: "The ample purported to be so-called 'angel's hair,' reportedly a volatile by-product of the fuel in 'flying saucers,' was given both chemical and microscopic tests. Without doubt, it is cuprommonium rayon, which is more commonly called 'Bemberg Rayon' in the United States. This material, after exposure to the air for 72 hours in the Materials Branch, did not volatilize. This is the type of industrial or waste product 'lint' that might be ejected into the atmosphere by certain manufacturers of textiles, in this case rayon. Incidentally, there appears to be no basis whatsoever for the assumption that the material was other than the industrial waste product described."

While I am willing to accept the Air Force explanation, I can't help wondering who manufacture Bemberg Rayon in Eastern Cincinnati?

CRIFO files are full of reports describing software oddments, but the one that struck me as the oddest of all was a whatzit that fluttered to earth like a bird. Upon landing, it burned a hole in the pavement. The stupefied witness, Harold Taylor of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, described the "thing" as a "mass of filthy, denim-like cloth." According to the Patriot News, March 7, 1955, Taylor was looking out of his office window and saw what appeared to him to be birds - like crows, he said - flapping their wings, then gliding for awhile about 200 feet above Front Street. Five minutes went by and there was another. But this one was gliding downward and landed near the top of a tree back of the YMCA.

"It hung there for perhaps half a minute and then floated to the ground like a bird," said Taylor. "As it hit, though, it seemed to lose its substance and became a mass. I forgot about it for a while and when I went out for lunch at noon, I looked at the spot where the 'thing' had landed. It had been depressed into the asphalt."

Taylor, wary of telling anyone what happened, ate his lunch and returned to the office. But he couldn't keep it to himself and confided in Meade Hager. Together, they went out with a shovel and dug 'it' up. "The smell was terrific," he said. "Something like the gas which escapes from a faulty refrigerator. It got so bad we had to take it outside."

At State Police Headquarters, chemical analysis experts looked over the cloth. They ruled coincidence. Just guessing, but "coincidence" was probably no more the answer for the Taylor mystery than the easy-out explanations provided for other freakish events believed

to be associated with saucers.

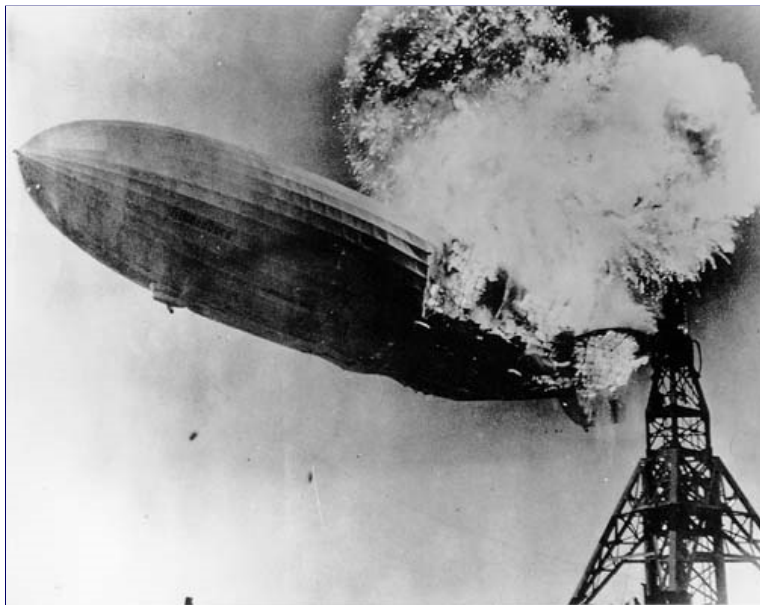
FIREBALLS AND ODDBALLS

Particularly interesting in this Fortean department of freakish events is not hardware, software or yard goods, but their effects and who or what caused them. [Editor's Note: Fortean refers to Charles Fort, who wrote books in the 1930s about unexplainable phenomena before the modern age of disc "saucers."] Usually the only evidence is the verbal testimony of man, should he survive, who might relate the details of his experience or the testimonial impairment to an inanimate body.

In many cases, the culprit is a fireball. But to begin with, we must understand that the name "fireball" covers quite a large family of fiery phenomena, ranging from the mysterious Kelly green variety down to the mischievous little spray of light called St. Elmo's Fire. While the latter might scoot up the mast of a ship or pirouette around a church steeple, other so-called fireballs have inflicted damage and death, according to reports.

May 6, 1937, Hindenburg Explodes Over Lakehurst, New Jersey

After the destruction of the zeppelin Von Hindenburg over Lakehurst, New Jersey, in 1937, investigators told of a 'ball of fire' - possibly St. Elmo's Fire - maneuvering near the airship. Their guess is that the fireball (UFO?) somehow ignited the hydrogen.



Above: Moment of Hindenburg explosion at 7 p.m. ET, Lakehurst, New Jersey, on May 6, 1937, captured by a newsreel photographer. **Below:** Colorized film frame after Hindenburg lay burning on the ground. Thirty-five people died.



[Editor's Note: The Hindenburg was named after Paul von Hindenburg (1847-1934), the President of Germany (1925-1934). It was to have been named the Adolf Hitler but Hugo Eckener, director of Luftschiffbau Zeppelin, would not permit that because of his anti-Nazi politics. The Hindenburg was originally intended to be filled with helium, but a United States military embargo on helium led the Germans to modify the design of the ship to use flammable hydrogen as the lift gas. This also gave the craft approximately 8% higher lifting capacity.

Explosion on May 6, 1937, at 7 p.m. ET in Lakehurst, New Jersey. The

Hindenburg had arrived from Europe - a luxurious flying hotel, faster than any ocean ship. The pride of the Third Reich prepared to land, and hundreds of onlookers gathered to watch. Then suddenly flame burst forward of the upper fin. In a matter of seconds, the largest airship ever built fell in a fiery mass.

35 people died in the flames - and nobody knew why. Sabotage? A bolt of lightning? The mystery surrounding the disaster has never been resolved - until now. In many years of research, a NASA scientist at Cape Canaveral has found proof that neither the hydrogen in the hull nor a bomb was to blame, but the fabric of the Hindenburg's outer skin and a new protective coating. A single spark of static electricity was enough to make it burn like dry leaves. The "infallible" German engineers had designed a flying bomb just waiting to explode.]

Aircraft were also earmarked for similar fates. From my files marked "Aircraft Disasters," which include a library of statistical data supplied by my colleague, Richard Hall, I note that several aeronautical mishap have been due to mysterious meteorological or fireball phenomena. One incident occurred on April 11, 1955, datelined Bombay, India. Eleven communists were carried to their death in the China Sea. Associated Press reported that surviving crew members said "...the crash was preceded by a 'muffled explosion. This was followed by fire emanating from an extraneous source wholly unconnected with the structure of the aircraft.'" One expert guess was that "lightning or some other meteorological freak had caused the crash."

Although not a disaster and possibly less mysterious was another report, which occurred on July 27, 1957, over Knoxville, Tennessee. A ball of fire burned a small hole in the tail of an American Airlines plane flying through a thunderstorm. While the airline's spokesman said he believed it was caused by static electricity, he also stated that all aircraft have short wires, which are designed to carry static electricity away from the body of the plane.

Down to earth again, another trouble-making fireball - possibly a "thunderbolt" - caused near-panic in Sydney, Australia, in October 1954. The story is quoted from *Flying Saucers*, the publication issued by CSI of New Zealand.

"Pandemonium broke out in the Sydney suburb of Belmore when a fireball shot across three closely settled streets during a severe electrical storm. Bursting over homes, it snapped electric wires, strewed them in the street and set gas mains on fire. Dozens of screaming women and children had miraculous escapes from death. The fireball cut a mile-long swathe of destruction as it shot through the area with a mighty explosion. Bricks, tiles and fences were shot up in the air. Police went from door to door offering to help distressed families, some of whom were hysterical with terror."

Another freak fireball, probably ball lightning, was reported in the *Jerusalem Post* on April 20, 1957. The item was sent to me by Herman Rovner, a long-time correspondent, whose sharp eyes for Fortean data have contributed greatly to CRIFO's library. The item stated, "Fireball lightning, resembling a disc in shape and with an estimated electrical tension of millions of volts, struck the transformer of Kfar Shamai at 4:20 this morning. The transformer was severely damaged and the insulators melted, turning into a solid block of glass. The remains were sent to the Palestine Economic Corporation laboratories for tests. The transformer near the Hadassah Hospital was also hit and the power supply broke down for 90 minutes."

Nor is man immune. A report dated February 10, 1955, from Auckland, New Zealand, tells of a groundskeeper walking onto the green of a bowling club. Bending over to begin his work, he was shocked to see a fireball, bright red, ranging in from a clear sky and landing inches from his feet. Said the groundskeeper, "I ran for my life across the paddock, but it was gone when I turned around." Later investigation showed *no mark* on the green grass.

Another incident was a "fireball" that struck a woman dead. It was mentioned in an article by Erna Bence in the *Tacoma News-Tribune* on April 2, 1957. The article is chiefly a description of another fireball seen by a high school student, Jim Geise, landing near a roadside. But Geise is also quoted as saying that the Air Force Intelligence officers who investigated told him that a woman walking along a road in Florida had been transfixed with fear by the sight of a fiery object hurtling silently toward her. She was knocked to the ground. Witnesses ran to help, but found her dead with severe burns on her body.

When I wrote to the Air Force Press Desk to ask about this Florida incident, their terse reply evaded the issue, suggesting that I write directly to Geise.

Similarly grotesque was an incident reported by the *Saucerian Bulletin* in Clarksburg, West Virginia, concerning four teenage boys on June 25, 1957. While driving to Greenest, Indiana, the boys were attracted to a huge red light in the sky. They parked to get a better look. When they stopped the car, the red light moved over them and descended to about 200 feet. Curious, the boys flashed the car spotlight on the object. According to their story,

it then closed in rapidly and discharged a small object which entered the car window, hit the floor and bounced up, exploding in one of the boys' face. In the meantime, the parent object shot upward at great speed and "turned north like a bolt of lightning." When the boys were later questioned, they said the explosion sounded like a loud handclap. Corroboratively, other reports of a similarly described object came into police headquarters from the northwest part of the county.

Additional information came from C. W. Fitch of Cleveland, Ohio. He told me during an August visit that he personally interviewed the boys in Greenest and believed their story. Investigation by recognized authorities earlier, he said, had dismissed the case as a hoax. But he believed "the discrepancies in the boys' stories could have been due to their state of excitement at the time when narrating their experience." Fitch also learned that the object witnesses was "cigar-shaped" and not "kidney-shaped," as described by Barker. This mix-up occurred when the boys were describing the shape of a fragment of the object, which entered the car's window. According to Fitch, one of the boys described the color of these fragments as "red with silver flecks or fibers in its surface."

After Fitch's visit with me, I phoned Mr. Kenneth Bennett who is Editor of *The Putnam County Graphic*. I asked his opinion of the incident, which involved his son, George. The elder Bennett admitted he took stock in it because the boys came to him utterly amazed at what they had seen. Regarding the fragments, which he said he had misplaced, he stated they were a yellow shade with purplish hues. He added that the substance was a "cross between a plastic and a glossy paper."

Similar to the Florida and Greencastle incidents is one taken from the August 1957 issues of *A. P. R. G. Reporter* of Seattle, Washington. Dated Lake Tahoe, California, July 22, 1957, this incident follows:

"Two girls, 12-year-old Karen Zunino and 14-year-old Judy Banks, both of Millbrae, San Mateo County, were standing near the boat landing at the trout fishing harbor near Stateline on the south shore of Lake Tahoe when something that 'looked like a ball of fire suddenly zoomed down at the twosome.' Harold Rauch, operator of the boat rental, stated that he saw the ball of fire knock the girls down. The girls were unconscious for five minutes, but the attending doctors reported no injuries."

Baffling Mystery of Kelly Green Fireballs



"This is a scrupulously accurate eyewitness painting of a mysterious green fireball rushing through the night sky over New Mexico by Mrs. Lincoln La Paz." Drawing reprinted in *Life* magazine, April 7, 1952.

My files covering freakish fireball phenomena are extensive. Still, the most baffling to scientists is the Kelly green variety, which plagued the skies over the Baltic in 1948 and the U. S. Southwest in 1949 to 1950. These aerial concentrations have given rise to the belief that their points of origin were respectively Russia and the U.S. Stating this opinion is Dr. Leon Davidson, who wrote to CRIFO on October 23, 1954, the following:

Leon Davidson, Ph.D., October 23, 1954: "It should be clear that the 'green fireballs,' or 'green lights,' as they were called in New Mexico when I lived there, are very different objects from the round, or oval, 'flying saucers.' The saucers typically are seen to hover, make sharp turns, vary their speed and maneuver a great deal. The 'fireballs' travel in straight lines without making turns, always travel at high speed, never hover and last only a few seconds. We might compare the saucers to flying-wing type aircraft of circular shape and compare the 'green fireballs' to meteors or 'falling stars.'

"The Air Force has not made public any analysis of the numerous reports of

'green light' sightings in the Southwestern United States. However, in the Air Force's final official 'Project Grudge' report, issued by Air Material Command headquarters in August 1949, Prof. J. Allen Hynek of McMillin Observatory in Columbus, Ohio, stated in his personal opinion that the green fireball reports were caused by some secret U. S. research activity being conducted in the Southwest. This statement, of course, has not been widely publicized by the Air Force.

"An explanation of this 'secret research activity' can be found in the unclassified and openly published article, 'The First Night-Firing of a V-2 Rocket in the United States' by Dr. Fritz Zwicky in the publications of the *Astronomical Society of the Pacific*, Vol. 59, page 32, February 1947. This describes the start of a U. S. Government-sponsored program for producing artificial meteors (fireballs) at White Sands, New Mexico. Such *artificial meteors* would have appeared at about the times and places at which 'green lights' were reported and would have had the same appearance. ...It is significant that the Air Force has never said one word about the work described by Zwicky, although it has been often asked to comment on the 'strange coincidence.'

"In case the 'worldwide' appearance of green fireballs is considered to rule out the above explanation, it should be noted that the foreign sightings before Zwicky's work started were in the *Baltic Sea* area. Now this just happens to be the *only other place in the world* where V-2 rockets were being fired at that time by the Russians and their captured German rocket scientists. It seems quite probable that they were conducting their own upper-atmosphere research using 'artificial meteors' produced by methods similar to the one described in Dr. Zwicky's article.

"An amateur astronomer at Los Alamos, New Mexico, who had himself witnessed eleven green fireballs from December 1949 to April 1950, stated at a meeting of the Los Alamos Aerophysical Association in 1950 that, in his opinion, the 'green lights' were not natural meteors. His reasons were:

- a) the 'green lights' lasted about five seconds each, whereas natural meteors last about one second only.
- b) the brilliant green color would be rather unusual for a natural meteor.
- c) the 'green lights' traveled horizontally, while the natural meteors usually have a vertical direction.
- d) the 'green lights' traveled in North-South or South-North directions, while natural meteors would tend to move toward the East or West more frequently. (Incidentally, White Sands is south of Los Alamos.) Other observers at Los Alamos had reported seeing the 'green lights' break up into a shower of red sparks on occasion.

"At least one triangulation of the height and speed of a 'green light' was carried out, using reports from two New Mexico cities a number of miles apart. This triangulation was in the official files and it proved that the fireball was at about ten miles altitude and traveling at a speed of several miles per second. This is about what would be expected of 'artificial meteors' as described by Dr. Zwicky in his article in *Ordnance* magazine, July-August 1947. (Natural meteors usually are much faster, traveling at speeds of about five to twenty miles per second.) ..."

While Davidson presents a convincing argument, the years since the suspect concentration in the U. S. Southwest have witnessed the Kelly green fireball from areas as geographically remote as Tasmania and Thule. The Thule incident occurred in 1954 - a green fireball observed from a military plane. The Tasmanian cases were described in the April 1955 issue of *Orbit*. The worldwide nature of the Kelly green fireballs would tend to rule out the experimental earth made "meteor" theory. So, we must either explain it away as an unknown meteorological phenomenon or accept it with other saucer-like phenomena as having a common origin from outer space.

Meade Layne of BSRA in San Diego calls them "wipers" as if they are sent to earth to erase the radioactive poisons from the atmosphere. On the other hand, Major Donald Keyhoe once conjectured that they were ranging missiles. Whatever the explanation, we must then be reminded of the words of General John Samford, who as Director of Air Force Intelligence in 1952 said: "There have remained a percentage of the total of 20% of the UFO reports that have come from credible observers of relatively incredible things."

More Information:

For further information about Leonard Stringfield's UFO Status Reports, please see reprints below from the **Earthfiles Archives**:

Status Reports I

- 10/25/2005 -- **Final** Part 6: Retrievals of the Third Kind - A Case Study of Alleged UFOs and Occupants in Military Custody
- 10/13/2005 -- Part 5: Retrievals of the Third Kind - A Case Study of Alleged UFOs and Occupants in Military Custody
- 10/05/2005 -- Part 4: Retrievals of the Third Kind - A Case Study of Alleged UFOs and Occupants in Military Custody
- 09/30/2005 -- Part 3: Retrievals of the Third Kind - A Case Study of Alleged UFOs and Occupants in Military Custody
- 09/26/2005 -- Part 2: Retrievals of the Third Kind - Kingman, Arizona Crash
- 09/25/2005 -- Part 1: Retrievals of the Third Kind - A Case Study of Alleged UFOs and Occupants in Military Custody

Status Reports II

- 09/19/2005 -- **Final** Part 9: The UFO Crash/Retrieval Syndrome: Status Report II - New Sources, New Data
- 09/17/2005 -- Part 8: The UFO Crash/Retrieval Syndrome: Status Report II - New Sources, New Data
- 09/14/2005 -- Part 7: The UFO Crash/Retrieval Syndrome: Status Report II - New Sources, New Data
- 09/06/2005 -- Part 6: The UFO Crash/Retrieval Syndrome: Status Report II - New Sources, New Data
- 08/22/2005 -- Part 5: The UFO Crash/Retrieval Syndrome: Status Report II - New Sources, New Data
- 08/17/2005 -- Part 4: The UFO Crash/Retrieval Syndrome: Status Report II - New Sources, New Data
- 07/20/2005 -- Part 3: The UFO Crash/Retrieval Syndrome: Status Report II - New Sources, New Data
- 07/14/2005 -- Part 2: The UFO Crash/Retrieval Syndrome: Status Report II - New Sources, New Data
- 07/12/2005 -- Part 1: The UFO Crash/Retrieval Syndrome: Status Report II - New Sources, New Data

Status Reports III

- 07/05/2005 -- **Final** Part 15: UFO Crash/Retrievals: Status Report III - Amassing The Evidence
- 06/20/2005 -- Part 14: UFO Crash/Retrievals: Status Report III - Amassing The Evidence
- 06/17/2005 -- Part 13: UFO Crash/Retrievals: Status Report III - Amassing The Evidence
- 05/10/2005 -- Part 12: UFO Crash/Retrievals: Status Report III - Amassing The Evidence
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- 02/14/2005 -- Part 2: UFO Crash/Retrievals: Status Report IV - Fatal Encounter At Ft. Dix-McGuire
- 02/13/2005 -- Part 1: UFO Crash/Retrievals: Status Report IV - Fatal Encounter At Ft. Dix-McGuire

Status Reports V

- 02/07/2005 -- **Final** Part 3: UFO Crash/Retrievals: Status Report V - Is The Cover-Up Lid Lifting?
- +++ 02/04/2005 -- Part 2: UFO Crash/Retrievals: Status Report V - Is The Cover-Up Lid Lifting?
- 01/30/2005 -- Part 1: UFO Crash/Retrievals: Status Report V - Is The Cover-Up Lid Lifting?

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- 12/15/2003 -- Part 1 - UFO Crash/Retrievals, Status Report VII by Len Stringfield

Websites:

Majestic-12 Documents: <http://www.majesticdocuments.com>

American Presidential Knowledge: <http://www.presidentialufo.com>

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