

3-31-50

"I am confident of this," Engel said. "If there are such things as saucers, they are ours, not somebody else's. If another country were sending them over, I am sure the subcommittee would have heard about it."

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[At the time UFOs were thought by many to be a secret military project.]

FLYING (Magazine) - July, 1950

THE FLYING SAUCERS --

FACT OR FICTION?

By CURTIS FULLER

Editor of FLYING

When observers as experienced as airline pilots say they've seen strange objects in the sky, they deserve a respectful hearing.

THE night of March 31, 1950, was dark and clear. The Chicago and Southern Air Lines DC-3 had taken off a short while before from Memphis airport for a regularly scheduled flight to Little Rock, Ark. Off in the distance Capt. Jack Adams, 31, a veteran of 7,000 hours and seven years on the airline, could see the glow of lights that meant Little Rock, 40 miles away.

"There was only a small piece of moon showing," Adams said. "Our altitude was about 2,000 feet. Visibility and ceiling were unlimited. We could see 20 or 30 miles easily."

In the right hand seat was Co-Pilot G. W. Anderson, Jr., 30, a 6,000-hour veteran. Anderson and Adams knew the route perfectly, had flown it many times together

At exactly 9:29 p.m. Adams' attention was caught by a lighted, fast-moving object. "My God, what's that?" he asked.

Anderson looked up. "Oh no, not one of those things!" he said.

Unfortunately for his peace of mind it was "one of those things."

The editors of FLYING have followed and investigated reports of "those things" for just short of three years -- ever since Kenneth Arnold, a businessman-pilot and himself a contributor to FLYING, started the great modern flying saucer controversy on June 24, 1947.

Since then we have talked with men who believe they have seen flying saucers, with men who are equally sure they haven't, with Air Force investigators, with psychologists. For nearly three years no editor of FLYING has visited an Air Force base or talked with an Air Force officer without asking "What do you know about the flying saucers?"

The results, as you may suspect, have not been very fruitful. The answer has almost invariably been an unyielding:

"There isn't any such thing."

And yet in the minds of the editors there has always remained an unsatisfied, nagging doubt. If there isn't any such thing, what did Captain Jack Adams and First Officer G. W. Anderson, Jr., see?

Up to the time of issuing its first report about a year ago, the Air Force's Project Saucer had investigated 240 domestic and 30 foreign saucer incidents. **FLYING** has in its own records reports of more than 40 saucer sightings.

Most of the reports are from crackpots and come under what psychologists call "hallucinatory phenomena." But the crackpot reports do not detract from the validity of reports from qualified observers any more than the existence of medical quacks proves that trained doctors are also quacks.

We have in our files enough material to write a book on flying saucers -- a strange compilation, indeed, of "things that don't exist." Several of the accounts are more interesting and inexplicable than those described in this article, but we have confined this to only four reports.

All involve sightings by airliner crews -- in each case by both pilots and co-pilots. We have confined the descriptions of saucer sightings to these four accounts because we know that airline pilots are trained observers. They are used to watching and interpreting sky phenomena and would be less likely to err in their reports than any other group we could think of.

No editor of **FLYING** has ever seen a flying saucer. But we adopt the position of Dr. Frank K. Edmondson, director of the Goethe Link Observatory of Indiana University at Bloomington.

"I have never seen a flying saucer," said Dr. Edmondson, "but after you discount all these explainable reports, there is a residue left that I cannot explain."

The sightings by airline pilots are part of that residue, and the strange craft that Captain Adams and First Officer Anderson saw near Little Rock last March was one of those unexplainable phenomena.

"It was about 1,000 feet above us and about a half mile away," Anderson told intelligence officers. "It zoomed at terrific speed (perhaps as much as 700-1,000 m.p.h.) in an arc ahead and above us, moving from south to north . . .

"This object remained in full view for about 30 seconds and we got a good look. It had no navigation lights, but as it passed ahead of us in an arc we could plainly see other lights -- as though from eight or 10 lighted windows or ports -- on the lower side.

"The lights had a fluorescent quality. They were soft and fuzzy, unlike any we'd seen before. The object was circular, apparently, and the lights remained distinct all the time it was in our view. There was no reflection, no exhaust, and no vapor trail. That's definite."

Captain Adams added that "there was a bright white light flashing intermittently from the top of the thing. The speed attracted our attention first, that and the blinking light. It was the strongest blue white light we've ever seen.

As the object passed, its underside apparently was then exposed to the pilots because the blue-white light was obscured. The object then continued in a straight line and disappeared.

"I've been a skeptic all my life, but what can you do when you see something like that?" Adams said. "We both saw it and we were flabbergasted."

The night was so dark that neither Adams nor Anderson could detect any dark or solid outline to the object. They assume that it was circular only because the lighted "portholes" were arranged in a circle.

The two pilots told a Memphis **Press-Scimitar** staff writer:

"We tried not to be too fantastic in making our report. We sort of figured on the short side of everything. We never had been interested in these things before. In fact, frankly, we did not believe in them.

"The thing was not a shooting star or a comet. We know a comet, and we see shooting stars between Memphis and Houston all the time."

* * *

7-48

It was 2:45 early one July morning in 1948. An Eastern Airlines DC-3 piloted by Capt. Clarence Shipe Chiles and co-piloted by John B. Whitted, was tooling along at 5,000 feet about 20 miles south-west of Montgomery, Ala., en route from Houston to New York.

The moon was bright and there were scattered light clouds. Thunderstorms had been reported en route and Chiles and Whitted were watching faint flashes of lightning way up ahead.

"We had our eyes focused on the point from which the thing came," Chiles told Louis Blackburn, of the Houston Press. "From the right and slightly above us came a bright glow and the long rocket-like ship took form in the distance.

"It's a jet job," I said to Whitted.

"Then it grew larger and pulled up alongside. It appeared to be about 100 feet long with a huge fuselage three times as large as that of a B-29.

"It's too big for a jet, but what the devil is it?" said Whitted.

"There were two rows of windows and it appeared definitely to be a two-decker. The lights from the side were a ghastly white, like the glow of a gas light -- the whitest we'd ever seen.

"There was a long shaft on the ship's nose that looked like it might have been part of radar controls. The ship acted that way too, for just after it pulled alongside us it whipped quickly

upward at a very sharp angle."

Both craft veered to their respective left. The mystery ship passed about 700 feet to the right and above the airliner. "Then, as if the pilot had seen us and wanted to avoid us, it pulled up with a tremendous burst of flame from the rear and zoomed into the clouds, its prop wash or jet wash rocking our DC-3."

The wingless craft gave the impression of having a pilot's cabin at the front of a cigar-shaped fuselage. The cabin was brightly lit but the fuselage itself approximated the brilliance of a magnesium flare.

"We saw no occupants," Chiles said. "From the side of the craft came an intense fairly dark blue glow that ran the entire length of the fuselage like a blue fluorescent factory light. The exhaust was a red-orange flame, with a lighter color predominant around the outer edges."

Both Chiles and Whitted agreed that the exhaust flame extended 30 to 50 feet behind the object and became deeper in intensity as the craft pulled up into a cloud. They estimated its speed as being about 1/3 faster than ordinary jets -- that is 700 to 900 m.p.h.

Immediately after the ship disappeared, Chiles turned the controls over to Whitted and rushed into the cabin to find out if any passengers had seen the object. He found all the passengers asleep except C. L. McKelvie of Columbus, O.

"I remembered saying to myself 'That's the queerest lightning I've ever seen,' and I pressed myself closer to the window to see it," McKelvie said. "I was amazed at the brilliance of the flash of light."

McKelvie realized it was not lightning when the "light" flashed past in an unbroken line to disappear in a cloud. "It was much redder in color than lightning," McKelvie said. He did not, however, see any form of a ship.

The light from the object was so brilliant, indeed, that it caused "lightning blindness" to both pilots. They had to turn up their cockpit lights to read the instruments.

* * *

Nine circular disc-like objects were sighted by a United Air Lines plane west-bound from Boise, Ida., to Seattle Wash., on July 4, 1947 -- just a few days after Kenneth Arnold reported the first chain of "discs" over the state of Washington.

There had been many other reports of "flying saucers" in the northwest but most persons were skeptical. "I'll believe 'em when I see 'em," said Capt. E. J. Smith of United Air Lines Flight 105. The plane took off at 9:04 p.m. and was only eight minutes out of Boise when Smith and his co-pilot, First Officer Ralph Stevens, saw five disc-like objects in "loose formation."

At first they mistook the objects for aircraft and blinked their lights as a warning. It was a dimly twilighted sky and they could see the objects silhouetted clearly. The two pilots called Marty Morrow, stewardess, to the cockpit to certify that they were actually seeing the discs

and she too saw them.

Then they caught sight of four more of the objects, three clustered together and a fourth flying "by itself, way off in the distance."

"The discs were flat and roundish," Smith and Stevens said. "They definitely were not aircraft. But they were bigger than aircraft."

* * *

The most recent "flying saucer" sighting by an airliner was on the night of April 27, 1950, when occupants of a Trans-World Airline plane en route to Chicago saw a "round glowing mass" in the air as they flew over South Bend, Ind.

Capt. Robert Adickes, the pilot, and First Officer Robert Manning had the object in sight for six or seven minutes as it overtook their plane at about 2,000 feet and cruised along a parallel course. Adickes has been flying for 13 years and has been a TWA captain for six years.

He is a cautious man and is reluctant to say that he saw a "flying saucer." To him it was an "object" or a "guided missile."

"I had just had my dinner and was wide awake," says Adickes, "when this object flew alongside. It was definitely round, with no irregular features at all, and about 10 to 20 per cent as thick as it was round. It was very smooth and streamlined, and glowed evenly with a bright red color as if it were heated stainless steel. It was so bright it gave off a light. It left no vapor, no flame. It appeared to fly on edge, like a wheel going down a highway.

"I went back to show the passengers. Most of them saw it but they couldn't see it as clearly as we [pilot and co-pilot] did because cabin lights were on and their eyes weren't adjusted to darkness.

"I called South Bend air traffic control and asked if they had any record of unusual craft in the vicinity. They didn't."

Adickes banked north in an effort to get a closer look. "It appeared to be controlled by repulse radar," he said. "As I'd turn toward it, it would veer away, keeping the same distance.

"When I turned directly toward it, it took off at a speed judged to be about 400 m.p.h., twice my speed. It went down to 1,500 feet and streaked out of sight northward over South Bend."

Adickes had talked with other pilots who claimed to have seen strange sky phenomena before he saw the object over South Bend. He is careful to say that he did not see anything that could not be explained by physics, radar, or known aerodynamic principles. He examined it as well as he could and even opened the cockpit window on the right side so that he wasn't looking through glass. Because there was nothing to compare it with he hesitates to estimate its size or distance, but compares it in size and color with an orange about 20 feet away.

"It looked something like a spinning exhaust, all aflame," said passenger Jacob Goelzer. Another passenger, C. W. Anderson, an International Harvester plant superintendent from Springfield, O., said "It looked like a big red light bulb, fading off fast. It was moving very fast. I didn't notice any details of the red ball."

* * *

There is a surprising correlation in all these four sightings. There is the feeling by several pilots that the objects are under a kind of repulse radar control. In the two seen closest there appear to be lighted openings or "portholes."

All the objects have been seen at night, except the United Air Lines group which was seen at twilight and showed no lights. Otherwise, all objects are associated with lights, two of them with exceptionally bright white or blue-white lights, and also with softer fluorescing lights.

Three of the objects were round and disc-shaped. The fourth, that of the Eastern Airlines pilots was cigar-shaped -- yet it is obvious that a disc seen on edge throughout its flight would also look cigar-shaped. None of the three disc-shaped objects showed any evidence of reaction propulsion. That of the cigar-shaped object did.

The attitude of scientist everywhere is in almost universal agreement -- there are no such things as flying saucers. It is a striking fact that astronomers and physicists universally discount their existence on the grounds that they are hallucinations, but that psychologists are inclined to credit them on the grounds that they cannot be hallucinations.

Dr. Harlow Shapley, director of Harvard Observatory, says: "No evidence that flying saucers are other than natural neurotic phenomena has been received at the Harvard Observatory."

Dr. I.S. Bowen, director of Mt. Palomar and Mt. Wilson observatories says: "We have not observed objects in the air that could not be explained as natural phenomena." And Dr. Robert H. Baker, professor of astronomy at the University of Illinois in Urbana declares: "I would say it's hysteria. I never saw a saucer, and know of no astronomer who has."

Among physicists, Dr. Arthur Jaffee an atomic scientist of the University of Chicago, suggested: "Maybe the people who see things have motes in their eyes." Dr. James Arnold, former Manhattan Project worker and a chemistry professor at the University of Chicago: "There's no evidence. People can see a lot of things -- some real and some caused by the power of suggestion."

And here's what Dr. Erwin Angres, a psychiatrist replied: "Pilots, who are trained observers, are not going to be fooled very often. There may be something to the stories."

There is a striking similarity between the attitude of scientists and newspapers toward flying saucers, and toward man's first attempts to fly.

People simply would not believe that the Wright Brothers had flown. The most important reason they would not believe it was that they had been told by scientists for years that heavier-than-air flight was impossible. Dr. Simon Newcomb, the distinguished astronomer

and the first American since Benjamin Franklin to be made an associate of the Institute of France, declared just a few years before the Wrights flew that flight without gas bags would require the discovery of some new metal or a new unsuspected force in nature. Rear Adm. George W. Melville, then chief engineer for the U. S. Navy proved convincingly in the **North American Review** that the attempts to fly heavier-than-air craft were absurd.

During 1904 and 1905, the Wright Brothers conducted numerous experimental flights at Simms Station, eight miles from Dayton. They flew from Huffman Field, alongside the interurban line, and people who watched the flights from the interurban cars used to flock into the **Dayton Daily News** office and demand to know why there was nothing in the newspaper about them.

Dan Kumler, city editor, explained in 1940 why they didn't publish the stories. "We just didn't believe it. Of course you remember that the Wrights at that time were terribly secretive."

He was asked: "You mean that they were secretive about the fact that they were flying over an open field along the interurban line?"

Kumler hesitated and replied, "I guess the truth is that we were just plain dumb."

All the evidence suggests that orthodox scientists don't believe there can be such things as flying saucers because they don't behave in accordance with the conventional physics they know -- just as the Wright Brothers plane did not accord with the physics of Simon Newcomb and therefore couldn't exist either.

FLYING does not have any secret sources in the Government who are able to give us confidential reports on how the saucers are powered, and who is behind them, such as one national magazine has published.

We are convinced that they have nothing to do with the Chance Vought V-173 configuration pictured on the cover of **FLYING**, nor with the Chance Vought XF5U (Flying Pancake) as stated by another national magazine. Only one of each of these airplanes was ever built, and the XF5U never even flew. The V-173 did fly but had no performance comparable with that attributed to the mysterious objects described here.

We do not believe that the saucers are a Soviet development. If the Russians did have anything so revolutionary they would hardly risk their secret by conducting training flights over the United States.

Are they then a United States development?

Airline pilots and businessmen pilots who do a lot of flying, and who talk with pilots who have seen strange objects in the sky, generally believe that they are. But if so, note these contradictions:

1. If they are indeed a secret U. S. development, that secret has been better kept in peacetime than the atomic bomb was in wartime.
2. They seem to involve a revolutionary type of fuselage, of flight theory, and also

perhaps even a revolutionary type of propulsion. This seems to be the reason the physicists questioned do not believe they exist. The editors of **FLYING** keep well abreast of late aviation developments and know of no airframes or power plants, atomic plants included, that perform as these objects are reported to perform.

3. Like the Russians, it hardly seems likely that U. S. researchers would be experimenting with the saucers at random spots all around the country where there would always be the danger of their secrets becoming known.

4. The Government itself does not just evade answers on flying saucers. In every case it denies they exist. While certain denials are to be expected, it seems to the **FLYING** staff that the type of denials are fairly conclusive.

Before **Project Saucer** was "officially" terminated it reported that "no definite conclusive evidence is yet available that would prove or disprove the possibility that a portion of the unidentified objects are real aircraft of unknown or unconventional configuration."

This, it seems to us, is an evasion. Even taking the four reports cited here, it is obvious that skilled pilots, trained observers of sky phenomena, saw something. If they saw it, it must exist. They are not all victims of hallucinations despite the ready explanations of the physicists.

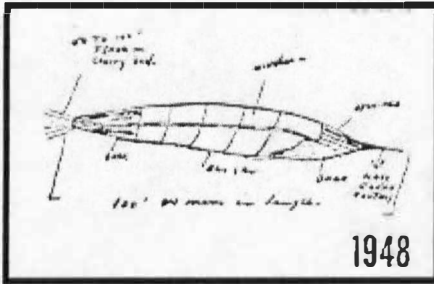
But what the strange phenomena are, the editors of **FLYING** do not pretend to know.

We can only say what they are not. They are not anything the glib radio commentators and the sensational magazines say they are. They are a mystery and a contradiction, and we know little more about what they are than when we started our investigation. But it's been interesting, hasn't it?

AIRLINE PILOTS' OWN SKETCHES OF WHAT THEY SAW

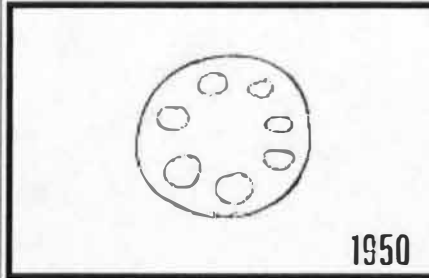
CAPT. C. S. CHILES

This strange object seen by Eastern Airlines Capt. Chiles is the only one reported by airline pilots that had the traditional rocket shape and appeared to have jet exhaust.



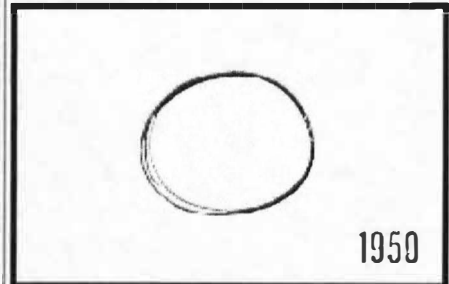
CAPT. JACK ADAMS

C.&S's Pilot Adams would not swear that the ship he saw had circular shape indicated, but the circular arrangement of "portholes" seemed to indicate that it was a disc.



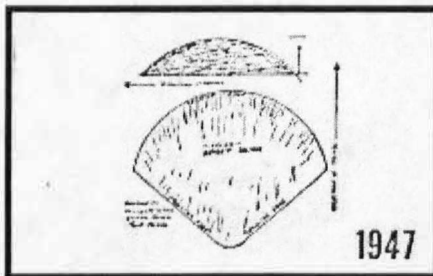
CAPT. ROBERT ADICKES

Imagine a disc, 10 to 20 per cent as thick as it was round and the size of an orange at 20 feet -- that describes the object observed by TWA's Adickes.



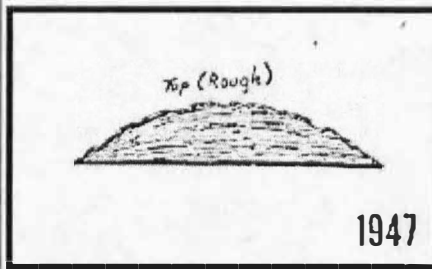
KENNETH ARNOLD

Idaho businessman-pilot attracted nationwide attention in 1947, with his reports of "flying discs" seen over the Cascades. All but one of discs Arnold saw were shaped like the drawings below.



CAPT. E.J. SMITH

United Air Lines captain saw nine strange objects in air near Emmett, Idaho. Sketch below by Kenneth Arnold is based on Smith's description of the objects. Note similarity of profile with that on the left.



The Great Falls, Montana **TRIBUNE** for 5 September 1950 contained the following report of an unusually maneuvering UFO:

Odd Objects Reported Seen Over City

Two Great Falls air force veterans were pondering today just what the strange objects were which they saw over the city Monday night [4 Sep].

9-4-50

Homer Pike and Vic Kunesh reported they spotted six amber colored objects flying over the city at about 9:40 Monday night. They were flying in a westerly direction and seemed to be

passing each other at alternate intervals.

Both Pike and Kunesh agreed they looked like colored balloons except for their high speed.

'They were faster than any jet planes I've seen,' Kunesh said.

The objects were visible about five seconds and were flying at about 5,000 feet. They apparently made no noise.

'They were doing quite a bit of maneuvering and seemed to fly directly over Gore field,' Pike remarked.

Pike first spotted the object as he and Kunesh were loading a truck with tools. He called Kunesh's attention to the sight.

Pike put in five years' service in the air force and Kunesh completed three years.

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