

# Marissans Fail To See Flying Saucers

Marissans were either too busy tending their knitting, getting in a late wheat crop or trying to rehabilitate their stunted gardens to watch the sky last week for a glimpse of those mysterious missiles or flying saucers seen by hundreds of people from one end of the country to the other.

In other words a thorough search failed to reveal any Marissan with an upper cup in his cranium.

The atmosphere from coast to coast seemed to be full of flying saucers.

Americans knew all about wars, having fought in seven of them; they even knew a great deal about Fourth of July holidays, having celebrated 171 of them; but they had never heard of flying saucers before and wouldn't rest until they knew more about them.

Perhaps the flying saucers were interplanetary space ships manned by two-headed Martians with radio antennas growing out of their heads. Perhaps they were the new secret weapon of an unnamed foreign power. Maybe they were just the reflections of sunlight glancing off faraway planes, or a new American jet ship, or an advertising stunt like skywriting. Hadn't Hollywood just produced "The Egg and I?"

Whatever they were, the flying saucers actually existed to hundreds of people all over the United States and Canada last week. They had been spotted first along the Pacific Coast, then as far south as El Paso, midland in Arkansas, and as far east as Prince Edward Island. The people who claimed they had seen them were not the kind of people who saw things in their cups. Among them: the lieutenant governor of Idaho, Donald S. Whitehead, although his saucer

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apparently had been resting at the time. "It didn't move," Whitehead said, "but just seemed to go below the horizon with the rotation of the earth."

Usually the things were saucer-shaped, although there was some variation from the original theme that had been set on June 24, when Kenneth Arnold, a Boise, Idaho businessman, saw the first nine saucers—the size of planes—zooming over the Cascade Mountains. The variations:

A doctor in Arizona's Grand Canyon saw "a silver ball." T. L. Huckaby of Pine Bluff, Ark., saw something "about the size and color of a washtub." A woman in Vancouver spotted 'flying teacups' over her house. A Kansas City, Mo., carpenter heard engine sounds and saw "vapor trails." In Augusta, Maine, a radio-station employe said the disks were gray. To an Ohio farmer, they were "reddish." A Seattle woman was graphic: She saw "three blue spots. Suddenly there was a dark spot, round like the opening of a cave, and these strange disks seemed to be converging on that dark spot."

H. S. Gauthier of Ottawa saw one, while he was boating, traveling at 1,200 miles an hour. In San Diego, two navy men saw three of the things doing a mere 400 miles an hour, but they were in close formation as well. A Portland, Ore., flier saw ten saucers go north, and only seven return. En route to Seattle, the crew of a United Air Lines plane followed nine of the disks for "ten to fifteen minutes." Though the pilot blinked his landing lights—the standard warning signal to strange planes—the saucers didn't reply. In Seattle, a Coast Guard yeoman claimed to have snapped a picture of one in flight. (The developed film showed only a blur of light against a dark sky.)

If the eyewitnesses were confused by what they had seen, the experts were even more so by what they had

heard. Punishingly, a War Department spokesman in Washington said the matter "was up in the clouds." Betwixt, an RCAF spokesman in Ottawa challenged: "Catch one and we'll look into the matter." The Los Angeles Daily News guessed it might be the Navy's new "flying flapjack" plane, which is shaped somewhat like a saucer. The Navy, however, said its only flapjack had never left Bridgeport, Conn.

Europeans insisted that Americans had bats in the belfry, not saucers in the sky. In London, the Sunday Dispatch called the flying saucers "America's reply to the Loch Ness monster," the vast serpent who romps around Scotland's Loch Ness whenever the tourist trade starts falling off. "What is it, mass hallucination, or one of those American hoaxes?" inquired a British editor.

Another theory was that the missiles were reflections in the sky of airplanes and looked round at a distance which also claimed to have been seen back in the early part of 1900.

Last Friday, July 4, encouragement for the proponents of the "it's all a publicity stunt" theory came from E. F. Smith of Eugene, Ore., who said he had seen a plane dropping the saucers—each about 2 feet in diameter—from the sky. But he had found none on the ground. In the absence of evidence, those who believed the saucers were visitors from another planet felt reassured. Ole

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