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Author(s): Robert E. Bartholomew
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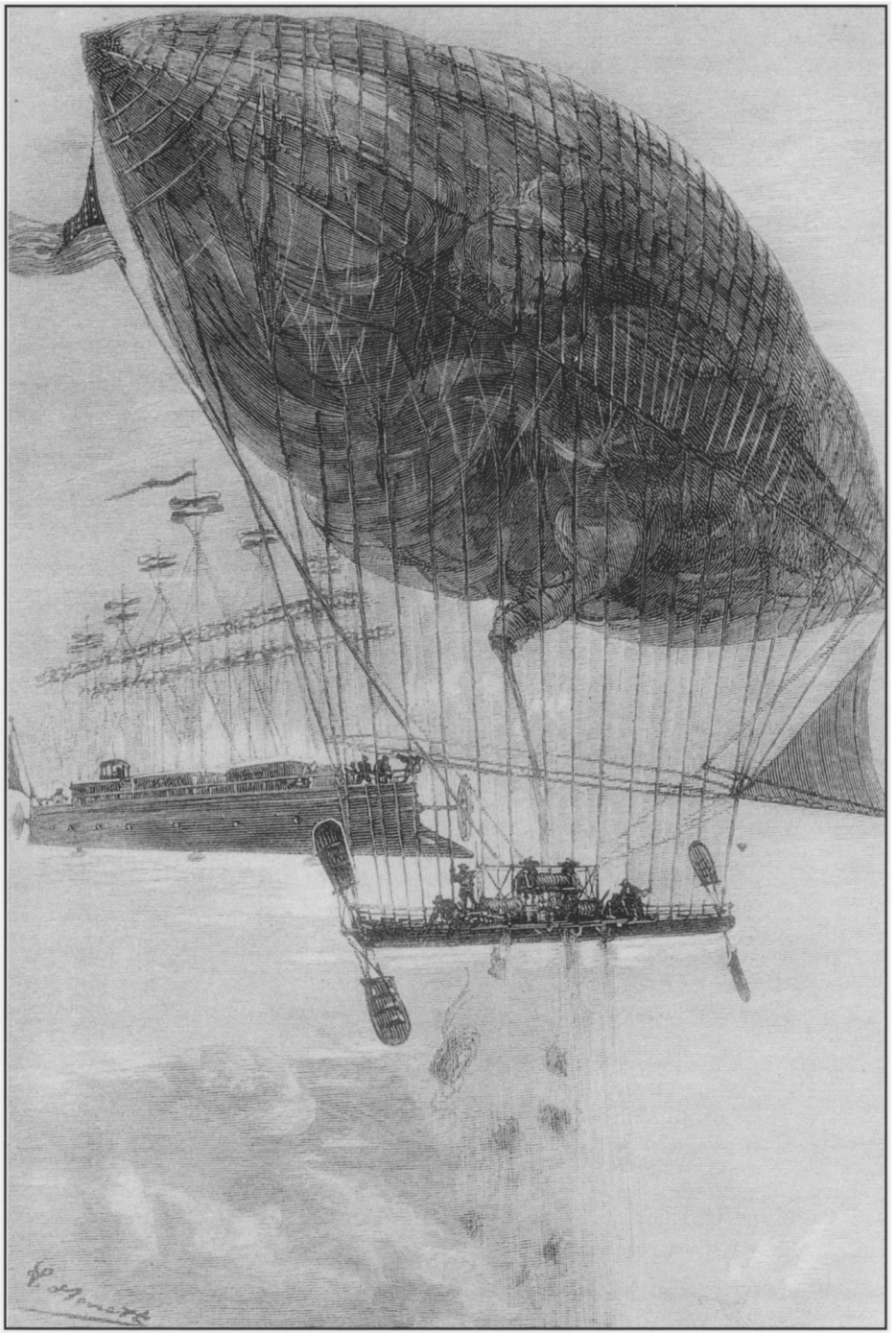


In Clipper of the Clouds, *published in 1886, Jules Verne's hero, Robur, declares that "the future is with the flying-machine." In the novel, Verne described Robur's Helicopter, years before the Wright brothers would invent the first successful heavier-than-air flying machine in 1903. This kind of literature often fueled people's imaginations and may have contributed to sightings of UFOs.*

From Airships to Flying Saucers

Oregon's Place in the Evolution of UFO Lore

By Robert E. Bartholomew

During the last decade of the nineteenth century, amid rumors that an American inventor had perfected the world's first heavier-than-air flying machine, tens of thousands of citizens from various parts of the nation reported seeing an airship. The ship was typically described as oval- or cigar-shaped with an attached undercarriage, a powerful headlight, and giant fans or wings protruding from both sides. Some observers even claimed that the wings slowly flopped up and down like a bird. The airship was almost exclusively seen at night, and its existence far exceeded the technology available at the time (the Wright brothers' attempt at piloted powered flight would not occur until 1903). It is unlikely that citizens were misperceiving a free-flying spherical balloon, as night flight was treacherous and a sudden wind gust could have disastrous consequences. Further, the airship was often seen simultaneously in different states, prompting some observers to comment that there must have been a fleet of vessels. When reports of the sightings appeared in Oregon newspapers, most editors labeled them a hoax. Still, over several weeks, people reported that they had seen an airship, knew the inventor, and in some cases had even talked to the occupants of the craft.

Fifty years later, in 1947, an Idaho businessman searching for a downed plane on the slopes of Mount Rainier in Washington state reported seeing nine glittering objects flying south toward Mount Adams. The *East Oregonian* newspaper in Pendleton interviewed the pilot and reported: "He said he sighted nine saucer-like craft flying in formation . . . extremely bright . . . at an immense rate of speed."

Newspapers across the country picked up the story, and the term "flying saucer" entered the lexicon.

In these ways, Oregon has played an important role in the history of UFO lore and sightings. During the 1896-1897 airship sightings and the 1947 flying saucer episode, the reports by the mass media and in popular culture influenced public reaction to the sighting claims, raising questions about human fallibility and the power of the press in either sensationalizing events or dismissing them. Leaving aside questions about the truth or falsity of such reports, it is important to put such perceptions in the context of their time.[1] During both the late nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries, there was a seemingly boundless faith placed in technology, which added to the allure of and fascination with reports of unidentified flying objects. A look at how Oregonians reacted to those reports presents an opportunity to learn about how those events fit into a broader picture.

During the 1986-1897 airship wave, the first recorded sightings of a heavier-than-air flying machine occurred in Sacramento, California, on Tuesday, November 17, 1896, when hundreds of residents reported seeing an illuminated craft flying low over the city between six and seven o'clock in the evening. Some even claimed to hear voices and music coming from the ship.[2] Railcar operator R. L. Lowry described the craft "as an oblong mass, propelled by fanlike wheels operated by four men, who worked as if on bicycles."[3] Many newspapers supported popular perceptions that a local man had invented the world's first practical heavier-than-air flying machine and was testing it under the cover of darkness.[4]

The airship sightings, which occurred between mid-November 1896 and May 1897, have been described as a classic case of mass hysteria.[5] The episode transpired during a period of rapid technological change, which had fostered a widespread belief that almost any invention was possible. The preceding twenty years had been marked by a series of revolutionary inventions that would permanently alter lifestyles, including the telephone in 1876, the gramophone in 1877, the filament lamp in 1879, the motor car in 1884, the steam turbine in 1884, the diesel engine in 1893, x-rays in 1895, and the radio in 1896. During the same two decades, the American public had also become preoccupied with the popular literature on science and inventions.[6] Of particular interest was the age-old dream of heavier-than-air flight. According to Thomas Bullard, "magazines devoted to science and engineering vied with

"They stopped their team and listened and looked, saw the clear bright light high over their heads, but did not dream that . . . above them human beings were floating."

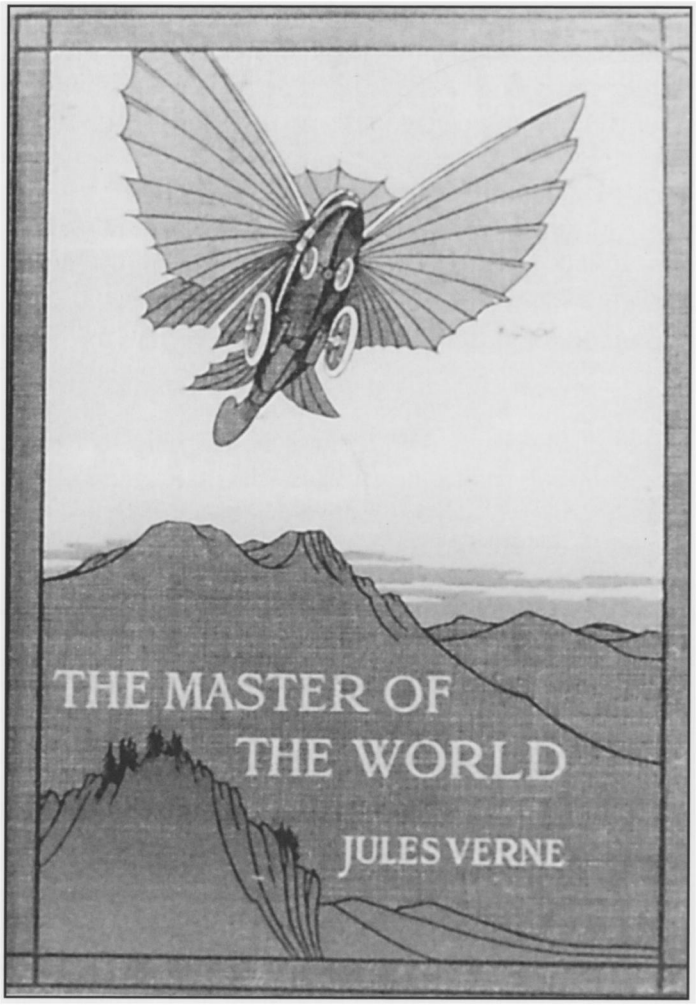
Jules Verne's *Robur the Conqueror* and other fictional publications to describe the flier who would soon succeed." The voluminous literature on aviation "fed the public a steady diet of aeronautical speculation and news to prime people for the day when the riddle of aerial navigation finally would receive a solution."[7]

Mass sightings across California began on November 19, as a mysterious light was reportedly seen near Eureka. The next afternoon the airship was spotted near Tulare. That evening, numerous Sacramento residents observed what appeared to be a light "attached to some aircraft." Witnesses in Oakland claimed the aircraft had huge fan-like propellers, and others said they saw giant wings attached to each side of the craft. On November 22, between five and six o'clock in the evening, hundreds of Sacramento residents watched what they thought was an airship with a brilliant arc lamp pass to the southwest.[8]

During the last week of November and the first week of December, airship sightings were reported in several California communities, and scattered sightings in Oregon, Washington, Nevada, and Arizona received minor press coverage. The wave was primarily confined to California, however, where widespread sightings continued until dramatically declining by mid-December.[9] An interesting feature of the California episode was several reports of close encounters with terrestrial airship pilots or crew who typically offered to give the witness a ride in the vessel. One encounter even involved a meeting with what were reportedly Martians.[10]

Ordinary citizens reported that they had met occupants of an airship. One observer claimed an airship pilot had invented "perpetual motion."[11] A Harrisburg, Arkansas, resident reported that airship occupants discussed with him the possibility of using an anti-gravity invention. The craft carried a newly perfected weapon and gravitational control device, he claimed, and an airship occupant reportedly told him:

> Weight is no object to me. I suspend all gravitation by placing a small wire around the object. You see I have a 4-ton improved Hotchkiss gun on board, . . . we only have to pour the cartridges into the hopper and press a button and it fires 53,000 times per minute . . . place my wire across this 4-ton gun and hold it out with one hand and take aim.[12]



By the time Jules Verne published Master of the World *in 1904, a heavier-than-air flying machine was no longer a technological dream. In this novel, Verne describes an even more advanced machine, shown here on the cover of the 1914 Lippincott edition—an automobile, ship, submarine, and airplane that used wheels, propellers, and retractable wings.*

Amid intense public interest, newspaper editors published a barrage of articles speculating about whether someone had invented the world's first practical airship. Publisher William Randolph Hearst scoffed at the suggestion, writing in the *San Francisco Examiner* that he could not recall a clearer example of "fake journalism . . . than the persistent attempt to make the public believe that the air in this vicinity is populated with airships. It has been manifest for weeks that the whole airship story is pure myth."[13] During November and December 1896, the *Examiner* adhered to a strict editorial position of deriding the existence of an airship. At the same time, however, Hearst's flagship newspaper in the eastern United States, the *New York Journal*, was publishing sensational

accounts proclaiming that the California airship was real. Hearst was notorious for exaggerating or fabricating news stories in order to sell his papers, and his seemingly contradictory positions on the airship were typical of his efforts to exploit situations in order to increase sales. A bitter rival of Hearst's at the time, the *San Francisco Call*, took great relish in pointing out this conspicuous discrepancy, which it said proved the "Jekyll and Hyde features of 'Little Willie's' journalistic character."[14] The *Examiner's* skeptical position on the California airship was almost certainly in response to claims made in the initial reports in the *Call*, which suggested that the airship was real. Other editors attacked the sensationalism of the airship rumors and the sightings reported by some California newspapers.[15]

The extensive press coverage and the public enchantment with aeronautics may have influenced those who had seen something unusual in the sky in the weeks prior to the first publicized sightings and who were now reinterpreting what they had originally seen.[16] One typical newspaper account described an Oakland, California, woman who said she had observed a strange object in the sky six weeks earlier. Because she saw "a powerful headlight," *The Call* concurred with her conclusion that an airship was the most likely explanation.[17]

On many occasions, even vague noises or voices in remote areas were attributed to an airship's engine or occupants. The following account is typical:

> Mr. Johnson, foreman of the Haggin ranch, in company with another gentleman, was driving across the bare plains adjacent to the city last Tuesday night, when they plainly heard a merry chorus of human voices. The thing was uncanny and unreal. They were entirely alone and on all sides stretched bare fields without a brush or fence, no human being was visible, . . . and yet the merry chorus rang out distant, but faint. They stopped their team and listened and looked, saw the clear bright light high over their heads, but did not dream that . . . above them human beings were floating.[18]

Many people reinforced the existence of an airship by speculating about the inventor's identity. Amateur backyard inventors of the period were typified as independent, wealthy eccentrics, and state newspapers such as the *Weekly Visalia Delta*, *Tulare County Times*, *Woodland California Daily Democrat*, and the Sacramento *Evening Bee* scrutinized their activities. The *San Francisco Chronicle*, for example, found Elmer Benjamin's behavior suspicious enough to write:

This gentleman is six feet in height, about 40 years of age, and as far as his mysterious habits are concerned [Mr.] Keiser said last night: "We have had him in the house for two years and don't know any more about him than on the day he came in. He goes away every little while on trips to Oroville, Sacramento and Stockton, sometimes staying a few days, sometimes a month. He has plenty of means and fills his time when at his room experimenting with various metals, principally aluminum and sheet copper.

"He is a dentist by profession, I think. I know he has friends and one relative in Oroville who are experimenting on some invention or other, but what it is I don't know. He has told me once or twice that attorney Collins does his law business for him, and I have often wondered what law business a dentist in a small way would be likely to have."

"Dr." Benjamin's name is not in the directory, nor in the list of dentists in the city. Nobody could be found last night who had ever heard of him practicing his profession. His room contains very little to show what his real business is. There are a few drawings and charts scattered around bearing trigonometrical figures, two very ancient teeth on the mantle shelf and a litter of aluminum and copper shavings all over the carpet.[19]

In Nevada, the *Virginia Evening Chronicle* reported that George Cummings, an unsuccessful candidate for governor, was rumored to have hidden a 150-pound, gas-powered, cigar-shaped vessel in a house and had secretly test-flown it at night on two or three occasions.[20]

Reports of sightings and speculation about inventors soon moved from California to nearby states and eventually across the country. One of the first sightings in the Pacific Northwest occurred on the night of November 24, 1896, in McMinnville, Oregon. McMinnville's *Telephone-Register* referred to the incident with a brief two-sentence story: "Tuesday night several of the boys about town saw the Sacramento air ship sail over this city, at least they saw lights in the heavens. This they swear to."[21] A deluge of airship sightings ensued across the Pacific Northwest—except, that is, in Oregon. The McMinnville sighting appeared to be a fluke. This prompted the Portland *Evening Telegram* to remark, "It is news to say that the ship has not been seen in Portland" and had nearly missed the state altogether.[22] The apparent immunity in Oregon to what some people labeled "airshipitis" was, according to some analysts, a result of the cloudy weather, responsible journalism, and an almost universal resentment by the Oregon press of the widely perceived avant-garde lifestyle in California.

Oregon newspaper editors labeled the affair a hoax and attributed

the sightings to sensational California journalism designed to sell newspapers. The November 28, 1896, *Dalles Times Mountaineer* called the sightings "California's Fake," and the November 30 *Roseburg Plaindealer* echoed those sentiments, calling the reports "Aladdin's Lamp stories" that were akin to sea serpent tales. On November 26, the Albany *Weekly Herald-Disseminator* described the reports as "an entirely sensational piece of fiction." In a lengthy article that was both humorous and acerbic, the editor of the *Oregonian* savaged the California press, noting that "California has proved the richest American soil for propagation of the 'fake'—a noxious weed introduced into the country within the present generation by what is called modern journalism." In defining this term, it was observed that "the fake at its best is a lie well told; that is, a piece of pure fiction dressed with an air of probability and presented as truth."[23] When a display of aerial lights caused by trolley cars lit up the Portland sky on the evening of December 1, one press account emphatically assured readers that it was not airship-related, even though "one man came into a store on East Burnside street, with wide-distended eyes, and vowed he had seen the searchlight of the famous California airship turned on the town."[24] The Marshfield *Coos Bay News* advised: "If it was a genuine flying machine, there would be no need for it to meander around in the heavens under cover of night."[25]

The *Eugene Register* judged that the flying machine story "reminds one of the old saying that California has the largest trees, smallest matches and d—nest liars of any place on earth." Following several reports of sightings near Alturas, the *Lake County Examiner* speculated: "Alturas has several well-developed cases of 'airship.' Wonder what kind of whisky they have down in that section." When a mysterious light was reported hovering above Knox's Butte, someone at the Albany *State Rights Democrat* quipped: "It is in order for the *San Francisco Call* to come up here and make a night flying machine out of it."[26] On December 2, the Portland *Evening Telegram* printed part of a letter from a former Portland man who had moved to California, where he claimed to have met the airship inventor through a mutual friend and had been given several rides in the vessel. The *Telegram* reported:

YOU MAY NOT BELIEVE THIS
AN EX-PORTLANDER WRITES ABOUT THE AIRSHIP
Says It Is Operated by a Combination of Compressed Air and Electricity

A letter received here from an ex-Portlander, now engaged on one of the San Francisco newspapers, vouches most seriously for the existence of the California airship, conspicuously advertised by the San Francisco press, but which elsewhere is being stigmatized as a "fake." . . . The letter is penned in a

confidential strain to a friend which is the only circumstance precluding the announcement of the writer's name. . . .

"Through the medium of a mutual friend," continued the sanguine newspaper man, "I personally met the inventor of this airship—a man destined by his creation to revolutionize our entire social fabric . . . in the Redwoods of San Mateo County, Ca., about 10 days ago. There he also saw the airship in which he himself, his friend, and the inventor took a flight that night. . . ."

"The airship in which I made my ascent is 23 feet long, 7 feet of beam, as we would term it in nautical parlance, and 7 1/2 feet high from the ground. It is merely a rough model for experimental purposes, devoid of all the elegant and comfortable interior fittings later airships planned after this model will contain.". . . the most remarkable feature in connection with this marvelous invention is an apparatus by means of which the breathing atmosphere may be normalized. For instance, at a height of 10 miles or more above[,] the air inside the ship, can be made as dense as it is on the earth's surface. Again, the ship may plow through space at a speed of 500 miles an hour, and the normal breathing of those within the ship will not in the least be discomforted.

The night herein referred to, the writer and his friends went to Los Angeles and returned, at an altitude of five miles, as shown by the air meter, and when they came back to the starting point, they felt as buoyant and refreshed as if they had a good night's rest.

At the end of this story, the newspaper reported, "While no one in Portland, well acquainted with the writer would for a moment question his truthfulness, yet none here will believe in the existence of that marvelous airship until he or she sees it, and that in full operation, too."

Reports of crashed alien craft often accompany reported sightings. During the 1896-97 airship wave, there were numerous claims that an airship had crashed. On the night of December 3, 1896, for example, a wrecked airship was reportedly found in the gully of a cow pasture in a San Francisco suburb, after dairy farmers heard a loud bang followed by cries for help. Rushing to the scene, the two men said they found two dazed occupants staggering near a forty-foot-long cone-shaped tube of galvanized iron with broken wings and propellers. After causing a local sensation, and under cross-examination by those inspecting the "wreckage," the alleged pilot, J. D. deGear of 538 Fulton Street, confessed that the "ship" had been pulled to the hilltop on a wagon and pushed over. The spot was chosen for its proximity to a nearby saloon, which enjoyed a brisk business during the spectacle.[27]

Reports of crashed alien craft are not new.[28] Months after the first airship sighting in Sacramento, the May 2, 1897, *Houston Post* published a letter from John Leander, who wrote that an elderly sailor from El

"I personally met the inventor of this airship—a man destined by his creation to revolutionize our entire social fabric."

Campo, Texas—identified only as "Mr. Oleson"—claimed to have been shipwrecked on a tiny uncharted Indian Ocean Island in 1862. He said that during his ordeal, an immense airship sporting gigantic wings crashed into a rock cliff. Inside were the bodies of twelve-foot-tall creatures with dark, bronze skin. Fifty years later, in July 1947, a flying saucer supposedly crashed in the desert near Roswell, New Mexico, killing or critically injuring its crew. Those who believed the report charged United States military personnel with confiscating the evidence and engaging in a cover-up.[29]

There were also theories of government cover-ups during the airship wave. The April 29, 1897, *Galveston Daily News* argued that airship reports were secret U.S. government experiments, noting: "A profound secrecy has been maintained as to what has been accomplished, even army officers themselves only getting vague inklings of what is going on." The same article claimed that airships were being built and hidden in U.S. military installations, including Fort Sheridan near Chicago and Fort Logan in Colorado.

The airship sightings occurred at a time of tremendous optimism in America, a time of rapid advancements in science and technology, and for many the penultimate invention would be a successful heavier-than-air flying machine. There was also the hope that a flying machine would be the solution to long-standing social problems. In 1893, for example, Octave Chanute characterized the mood when he said: "let us hope that the advent of a successful flying machine . . . will bring nothing but good into the world; that it shall abridge distance, make all parts of the globe accessible, bring men into closer relation with each other, advance civilization, and hasten the promised era in which there shall be nothing but peace and good-will among all men."[30]

Fifty years would pass and Americans would endure two world wars and a depression before a similar optimism re-emerged. The immediate post-World War II period in the United States was also typified by a belief in "magical" technology where almost all things seemed possible. This *zeitgeist* helped foster the emergence of a symbol far exceeding the power and function of the airship: the flying saucer.

On Tuesday, June 24, 1947, businessman Kenneth Arnold, who owned the Great Western Fire Control Supply of Boise, Idaho, was installing equipment at the Central Air Service complex in Chehalis, Washington. While working, he and another pilot talked about the possible crash site of a missing C-46 Marine transport plane, believed to have been lost in the vicinity of Mount Rainier, Washington. Relatives of those on board had offered a $5,000 reward to anyone who could locate the crash site. Even though his next planned flight was to Yakima, Washington, Arnold decided to re-route over the search area in hopes of spotting the wreckage. Shortly before three o'clock on the afternoon of June 24, Arnold was flying his private plane near the Cascade Mountains when he saw what he later identified as nine glittering objects flying in an echelon formation from north to south near Mount Rainier. He reported that he kept the rapidly moving objects in sight for about three minutes before they traveled south over Mount Adams and were lost to view.[31]

Worried that he may have observed remote-controlled Soviet guided missiles, Arnold tried reporting what he saw to the Federal Bureau of Investigation office in Pendleton, Oregon. Finding the office closed, he went to the offices of Pendleton's only newspaper, the *East Oregonian*. The paper's deadline was fast approaching, so two reporters, Nolan Skiff and Bill Bequette, only had about five minutes to listen to Kenneth Arnold's story. Skiff took notes and wrote a brief story, which Bequette managed to fit onto the front page of the June 25 edition under the headline, "Impossible! Maybe, But Seein' is Believin', Says Flier." The article read:

> Kenneth Arnold, with the fire control at Boise and who was flying in southern Washington yesterday afternoon in search of a missing marine plane, stopped here en route to Boise today with an unusual story—which he doesn't expect people to believe but which he declared is true.
>
> He said he sighted nine saucer-like air craft flying in formation at 3 p.m. yesterday, extremely bright—as if they were nickel plated—and flying at an immense rate of speed. He estimated they were at an altitude between 9,500 and 10,000 feet and clocked them from Mt. Rainier to Mt. Adams, arriving at the amazing speed of about 1200 miles an hour. "It seemed impossible," he said, "but there it is—I must believe my eyes."
>
> He landed at Yakima somewhat later and inquired there, but learned nothing. Talking about it to a man from Ukiah in Pendleton this morning whose name he did not get, he was amazed to learn that the man had sighted the same aerial objects yesterday afternoon from the mountains in the Ukiah section!
>
> He said that in flight they appeared to weave in an [*sic*] out in formation.

Bequette later remembered that he then hurriedly keyed in a second, similar report to the Associated Press (AP). "We were only minutes from 'putting the paper to bed,'" he said, "so we didn't have much time to give him [Arnold]."[32] Arnold had described the objects as crescent-shaped, referring only to their movement as "like a saucer would if you skipped it across the water," but Bequette's AP account emphasized the saucer-like appearance of the objects.[33] That account appeared in scores of newspapers across the country.

Photograph courtesy of the *East Oregonian*, Pendleton

Kenneth Arnold

Because member papers were required to provide the AP with local teletype transmission reports that editors considered had wider regional or national interest, Bequette was obligated to file the AP story. He later recalled that Oregon papers belonging to the AP cooperative were linked by the "C wire," which meant that "other papers were free to use stories from the C wire and the AP bureau took whatever stories the Portland editors thought had . . . [broader] interest and transmitted them on the AP's main, or trunk, wire." Bequette filed his AP story on the C wire, but he said it was picked up on the main wire. By the following morning, "almost every newspaper in the country published the story on page 1."[34] The story appeared on teletype machines as follows:

PENDLETON, Ore., June 25 (AP)—Nine bright saucer-like objects flying at 'incredible speed' at 10,000 feet altitude were reported here today by Kenneth Arnold, Boise, Idaho, pilot who said he could not hazard a guess as to what they were.

Arnold, a United States Forest Service employee engaged in searching for a missing plane, said he sighted the mysterious objects yesterday at three p.m. They were flying between Mount Rainier and Mount Adams, in Washington State, he said, and appeared to weave in and out of formation. Arnold said that he clocked and estimated their speed at 1200 miles an hour.

Inquiries at Yakima last night brought only blank stares, he said, but he added he talked today with an unidentified man from Utah, south of here, who said he had seen similar objects over the mountains near Ukiah yesterday.

"It seems impossible," Arnold said, "but there it is."[35]

In the June 26 *East Oregonian*, Bequette described Arnold as having seen "nine mysterious objects" that were "somewhat bat-shaped." Near the end of the account, he added that Arnold had "also described the objects as 'saucer-like.'" On the same day, Arnold appeared on Pendleton radio station KWRC, where he was interviewed by announcer Ted Smith. During the interview, Arnold reported that the objects looked "like a pie plate that was cut in half with a sort of convex triangle in the rear."[36]

The June 27 *Oregon Journal* referred to Arnold as having seen "nine shiny crescent-shaped planes" and quoted him as saying they "were half-moon shaped, oval in front and convex in the rear." But many other newspapers, including the *East Oregonian*, continued to use a variety of descriptions that reinforced the "flying saucer" motif. For example, the June 26 *Oregon Daily Journal* in Portland used such terms as "Flying Disk," "mysterious objects," and "shiny, 'piepan' shaped objects." The front page of the June 27 *Idaho Statesman* used the term "flying saucers." Bequette's use of the word "saucer" provided a motif for the worldwide wave of flying saucer sightings during the summer of 1947 and for other waves since.[37]

This story was not technically responsible for the first use of the term "flying saucer." After an examination of press clippings from June 25 and June 26, 1947, Herbert Strentz, a journalism professor at Northwestern University, contends that the use of the term "flying saucer" is the collective product of American headline writers and cannot be traced to any one person.[38] Still, the AP report filed by Bequette was the proto-article from which the term "flying saucer" was created. Of key importance was his use of the term "saucer-like" in describing Arnold's sighting. The term "flying saucer" placed "seemingly inexplicable observations in a new category," according to historian David Jacobs.[39]

The "flying saucer" story also had greater effects, encouraging those who had observed mysterious aerial phenomena to report their sightings and heightening fears of a Soviet attack. A significant factor in the importance Bequette and others gave the story was the public's recent memory of the 93,000 Japanese Fugo balloon-carrying incendiary bombs that had been launched into the Jet Stream during 1944 and 1945. The balloons had been sent in the direction of the Pacific Northwest in hopes of setting fire to forests and farmland. Only 297 were known to have reached the United States and Canada, and they caused relatively minor damage, but their threat struck widespread fear into coastal residents.[40] Memories of the secret Japanese weapons were still vivid in 1947, and some speculated about whether the flying saucers were "an indication of a similar activity on the part of the Soviet Union."[41]

In the year immediately prior to the saucer wave in the Pacific

The term "flying saucer" placed "seemingly inexplicable observations in a new category."

Northwest, there were mass sightings of mysterious aerial objects, especially in Scandinavia and occasionally in Europe, and observers almost exclusively described them as resembling guided missiles or German V-rockets, with the most common descriptive term being "ghost rocket." These sightings occurred in a post-World War II political landscape when many in northern Europe believed that remote-controlled German V-rockets confiscated by the Soviets at the close of the war were being test-fired as a form of political intimidation. Russian forces had occupied Peenemunde, the former center of German rocket science, and they controlled much of northern Europe during this period, and it was unclear how much Scandinavian territory they might claim in the political uncertainty following the war.[42]

The KWRC interview with Arnold provides an example of an apparent atmosphere of excitement and Cold War urgency. Announcer Ted Smith closed the interview with these assurances:

> I know that the press associations . . . [have] been right after you every minute. . . . It has been on every newscast over the air and in every newspaper I know of. . . . I understand United Press is checking on it out of New York now, with the Army and also with the Navy, and we hope to have some concrete answer before nightfall. . . . And we urge our listeners to keep tuned to this station because any time this afternoon or this evening, that we get something . . . we'll have it on the air.[43]

It seems clear that the global flying saucer wave is a social construction of reality that is unique to the twentieth century, with the image of the "saucer" manufactured and propagated by the mass media.[44]

Respected UFO researcher Jerome Clark, an associate of the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies in Chicago, Illinois, reported that "there were at least 20 other sightings on the twenty-fourth [of June 1947], all but two in the Pacific Northwest."[45] One such report was received on August 20, 1947, by Lt. Col. Donald L. Springer, an intelligence officer with the Headquarters of the Fourth Air Force at Hamilton Field in California. He received a letter from prospector Fred M. Johnson of "106 No. West 1st Ave" in Portland, Oregon, who claimed that he was prospecting in the vicinity of Mount Adams on June 24 when he observed several UFOs. He said that he "saw the same flying objects [as Arnold had] at about the same time." Johnson continued: "Having a

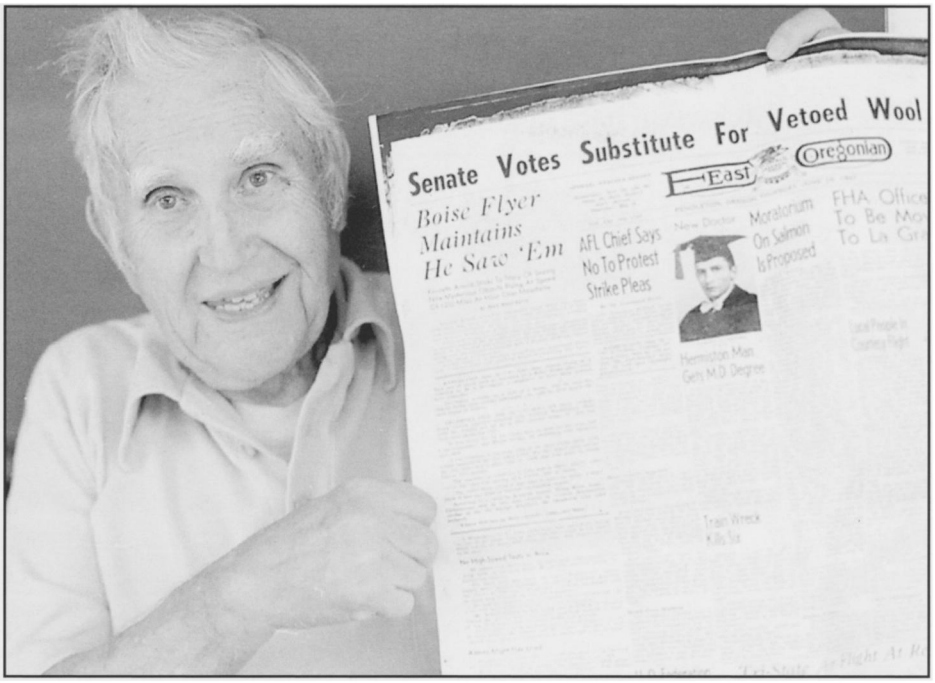
telescope with me at the time I can asure [*sic*] you they are real and noting [*sic*] like them I ever saw before [and] they did not pass very high over where I was standing. . . ." Johnson said the objects were noiseless, moved at tremendous speed, flew about a thousand feet high, and he could discern "an object in the tail and looked like a big hand of a clock shifting from side to side like a big magnet."[46] None of these reports appeared before Arnold's and are typical of UFO sighting waves, when an initial spectacular sighting triggers subsequent reports. Typically, others who may have seen ambiguous objects in the sky prior to or at about the time of the initial sighting redefine and connect it to the initial sighting.

Hundreds of UFO reports occurred in the weeks and months after Arnold's sighting. On July 4, 1947, at 1:05 p.m., for example, a Portland City Police Department patrolman, Kenneth A. McDowell, reported seeing five "disc-shaped" objects moving at great speed. McDowell was on duty and feeding pigeons in a parking lot behind Precinct #1 when he noticed them become excited and fly off. In looking for the source of the disturbance, he spotted "5 large discs in the air east of Portland: two discs flying south and three discs in an easterly direction." He said "they were dipping in an up and down oscillating motion."[47]

From the time of Arnold's sighting at Mount Rainier until 1950, observations of missile-like aerial objects were still recorded, but by 1950 the missile motif had virtually disappeared, with most people reporting disk- or saucer-like objects. Ted Bloecher's 1967 *Report on the UFO Wave of 1947* catalogues a minimum of eight hundred sightings during this wave alone. Of these, approximately two-thirds were saucer-shaped.[48] Interestingly, virtually no one during the 1947 saucer wave believed that the mysterious objects were of extraterrestrial origin. Instead, the American obsession with the Cold War and possible atomic conflict were evident in the sighting explanations.

On August 15, 1947, only a few weeks after Arnold's sighting, a Gallup Poll revealed that 90 percent of Americans surveyed were aware of flying saucers, and 16 percent believed they were U.S. or Russian secret weapons.[49] "Nothing [in the poll] was said about 'alien visitors,'" one study reports, "not even a measurable 1% toyed with the concept."[50] During the several weeks after Arnold reported his sighting, the FBI was seriously concerned that many reports were disinformation spread by Soviet agents who were attempting to promote fear and panic, and at least until late July, local Bureau offices conducted background checks on saucer witnesses.[51]

Photograph courtesy of the *East Oregonian*, Pendleton



Bill Bequette is shown here on the fiftieth anniversary of the* East Oregonian's *June 25, 1947, issue, which carried the story that he and Nolan Skiff wrote about Kenneth Arnold's sighting of unidentified flying objects near Mount Rainier.

Two incidents reflect the social paranoia in the United States over the Communist threat. After someone soaked a twenty-eight-inch "saucer" with turpentine and set it alight on top of a Seattle, Washington, house on July 15, 1947, one person claimed he could see a hammer and sickle on the disc, causing FBI and military bomb experts to rush to the site. Eight days later, the 400-foot-long Salmon River Bridge in Oregon was destroyed by a fire, and the FBI investigated the possibility of Communist sabotage to the wooden structure. The ambiguous nature of the fire and its occurrence near the peak of a UFO wave led to speculation that flying saucers were responsible.[52] Also during this period, the U.S. Air Force was concerned that the stimulus for some sightings may have been unconventional Soviet aircraft intended to "negate U.S. confidence in the atom bomb as the most advanced and decisive weapon in warfare," "perform photographic reconnaissance missions," "test air defenses," or "conduct familiarization flights over U.S. territory."[53]

By 1950, public perceptions seemed to have changed as the extraterrestrial hypothesis had become the leading explanation for UFO sightings, when McMinnville, Oregon, would become the scene of one

Telephone Register

At Long Last--Authentic Photographs Of Flying Saucer[?]

Dayton Bridge Contract Let

No Yellow Basket Needed For City's New Phonerogam

Farmer's Camera Captures Movement Of Flying Object

Road Ballot Not In Sight

Thrills On Tap For Race Meet

Fire Boss Holds Graybeard Status As Oldest Chief

Council Okehs Rat Control

On May 11, 1950, the McMinnville Telephone Register *published two photographs taken by Paul Trent, who reported seeing flying saucers at his farm about nine miles outside of town. The story, written by local reporter William Powell, was headlined, "At Long Last—Authentic Photographs of Flying Saucer?"*

of the most famous cases of the modern UFO era. On May 11, 1950, Evelyn Trent, at her farm about nine miles outside McMinnville, reported seeing a saucer-shaped object of metallic appearance move slowly from the north or northeast at about 7:30 p.m. On June 8, photographs that had been taken by Trent's husband, Paul, were published in the *McMinnville Telephone Register* with an accompanying story entitled "At Long Last—Authentic Photographs of Flying Saucer?" written by local reporter William Powell. Within two days, the story had made headlines around the world. The photos were even featured in *Life* magazine on June 26, 1950, under the title "Farmer Trent's Flying Saucer." The case later became a focal point for flying saucer proponents after publication of the Condon Report in 1969, which concluded: "This is one of the few UFO reports in which all factors investigated, geometric, psychological, and physical appear to be consistent with the assertion with an extraordinary flying object, silvery, metallic, disk-shaped, tens of meters in diameter, and evidently artificial, flew within sight of two witnesses."[54]

There is still the lingering question of what people saw during the 1896-1897 airship wave and the 1947 saucer sightings. Two separate astronomical events may have captured initial public interest and focused extraordinary attention on the skies, which in turn may have led to misperceptions of various prosaic objects, such as stars or planets. A compelling explanation for both events is offered by *San Francisco Examiner* science writer Keay Davidson, who observed that November 17, 1896, was the peak date of the Leonid meteor shower. He concluded that the description of the object sighted that evening in Sacramento "sounds very much like a meteoric fireball."[55] During the early 1990s, at the suggestion of aviation writer Philip Klass, Davidson began researching the possibility that Arnold had seen a disintegrating meteor on June 24, 1947. Arnold's observation resembled previous fireballs, Davidson concluded. Even though Arnold said the objects were in view for up to three minutes, Davidson notes that time estimates under stress are commonly overestimated, and internal evidence suggests that Arnold further overestimated the duration of the sighting by confusing the meteor fragments with the resulting contrail, which could have persisted for a number of minutes. Davidson pointed out that Arnold described the objects as glowing tadpoles that would pulsate and flutter. "That sounds like chunks of a disintegrating meteor that glow, then dim as they cool," said Davidson.[56]

UFO researcher Brad Sparks of Irvine, California, later found indirect evidence for the meteor hypothesis. At almost exactly the same time as Arnold's sighting, Idaho Lieutenant Governor Donald Whitehead and a Boise judge, J. M Lampert, described "an object that bears a strong resemblance to a meteor contrail." Whitehead said the object resembled a comet, was in view for about twenty minutes, and "had a brilliant head and a filmy smoke for a tail."[57] Davidson also found that on June 24, "a huge system of bad weather covered much of Canada and the United States east of the Cascades," which prevented the rest of the country from seeing the shower.[58]

When we compare the events of the 1896 airship episode with the 1947 flying saucer sighting wave, the similarities are striking. Both periods were characterized by waves of claims and public discourse about the existence of a technology far exceeding the era. Both waves began after an initial sensational sighting was given prominent publicity, which resulted in intense scrutiny of the skies for further sightings. This triggered yet more press reports involving hoaxes and misidentifications and the appearance of science fiction stories, all of which further heightened public interest. What people claimed to observe and experience reflected popular social and cultural expectations of each period.

An examination of the events and circumstances surrounding these two episodes can also provide valuable insights into the origin and nature of modern-day UFO reports. Human perception is unreliable and is greatly influenced by one's mental set or perceptual outlook at the time of the observation. The sky becomes a Rorschach inkblot reflecting the popular consciousness—everything from political perceptions to recent events, technological advancements, and popular literature. Stars and planets can appear to move, change colors, and flicker, and misidentifications of stars and planets—especially Venus—are the most common explanation for both airship and modern UFO reports. Many early airship reports were triggered by illuminated kites or fire balloons set aloft by pranksters, and similar devices are not uncommon today. Popular fire balloons—paper balloons with candles attached near the opening—were commonly available at shops selling pyrotechnics. All of these could lead people to believe they had seen a UFO.[59]

The airship delusion occurred over a hundred years ago as humanity stood at the dawn of the twentieth century, amid great enthusiasm for rapid technological progress and trepidation over the potential for misuse of these new machines. As we enter the twenty-first century, enthusiasm over an impending technological revolution led by computers characterizes the present period, along with concerns over how it will affect social life. While sightings of airships and flying saucers are likely to tell us little about extraterrestrial life, they can tell us much about the creative capacity of the human mind and its search for meaning.

Notes

I am indebted to Dr. Thomas Bullard of the Department of Folklore at Indiana University at Bloomington and Clas Svahn and Anders Liljegren of Sweden, who provided me with many of the press accounts used in this article. I am also grateful to UFO historian Robert C. Girard of Port St. Lucie, Florida, for allowing me access to a wealth of UFO-related material and to Jan Aldrich of Canterbury, Connecticut, for making available to the public several 1947 UFO press reports and declassified U.S. government documents related to 1947 UFO sighting claims. I wish to thank French sociologist Pierre Lagrange along with Keay Davidson and Brad Sparks for sharing advice and information. Finally, I am thankful to Hal McCune, news editor of the *East Oregonian*, for granting permission to reprint press clippings.

1. Most UFO sightings and encounters have prosaic explanations, and the long-standing dispute between believers and skeptics is over the origin and nature of the few reports that defy conventional explanations. For examples of how social studies of UFOs can contribute to our understanding of human consciousness and myth-making, see Robert Emerson Bartholomew and George S. Howard, *UFOs & Alien Contact: Two Centuries of Mystery* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus, 1998); and Robert Emerson Bartholomew, *UFOlore: A Social Psychological Study of a Modern Myth in the Making* (Stone Mountain, Ga.: Arcturus Books, 1998).

2. *Sacramento Evening Bee*, November 18, 1896.

3. *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 22, 1896.

4. *The Call* (San Francisco), November 20, 1896; *Oakland (California) Tribune*, November 23, 1896; *The Call*, November 24, 25, 26, 1896; *San Jose (California) Daily Mercury*, November 26, 1896.

5. For a detailed discussion of this event as a case of mass hysteria, see Robert Emerson Bartholomew, "The Airship Hysteria of 1896-97," *The Skeptical Inquirer* 14:2 (1990): 171-81; idem and

George S. Howard, *UFOs & Alien Contact: Two Centuries of Mystery* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1998).

6. Ivan Frederick Clarke, "American Anticipations: The First of the Futurists," *Futures* 18:4 (1986): 584-96.

7. Thomas Edward Bullard, "Mysteries in the Eye of the Beholder: UFOs and Their Correlates as a Folkloric Theme Past and Present" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, Bloomington, 1982).

8. *Western Watchman* (Eureka, California), November 21, 28, 1896; *The Call*, November 21, 22, 1896; *Sacra-mento Evening Bee*, November 23, 1896.

9. *Red Bluff (California) Daily People's Cause*, November 24, 1896; *Riverside (California) Daily Press*, December 2, 10, 1896; *Weekly Antioch (California) Ledger*, November 28, 1896; *Morning Chronicle-Record* (Chico, California), November 25, 1896; *Weekly Visalia (California) Delta*, November 26, December 3, 1896; *Ferndale (California) Semi-Weekly Enterprise*, December 1, 1896; *Daily Colusa*, December 1, 3, 1896; *Tulare County Times* (Visalia, California), December 3, 1896;. *Merced (California) Express*, December 4, 1896; *Fresno County Enterprise* (Selma, California), November 27, 1896; *Sutter County Farmer* (Yuba City, California), December 4, 1896; *Telephone-Register* (McMinnville, Oregon), November 26, 1896; *Tacoma (Washington) News*, November 28, 30, 1896; *Carson City (Nevada) Morning Appeal*, November 26, December 6, 9, 1896; *Reno (Nevada) Evening Gazette*, December 3, 5, 1896; *Territorial Enterprise* (Virginia City, Nevada), December 12, 1896; *Central Nevadan*, December 10, 1896; *Carson City Weekly*, December 7, 1896; *Arizona Gazette* (Phoenix), December 4, 1896.

10. *San Francisco Call*, November 23, December 3, 5, 1896; *San Francisco Examiner*, December 2, 1896; *Oakland Tribune*, December 1, 1896; *San Luis Obispo (California) Tribune*, December 11, 1896; *San Jose Daily Mercury*, December 1, 1896; *Marysville Daily Appeal*, December 2, 1896; *Evening Mail* (Stockton, California), November 27, 1896.

11. *Cincinnati Enquirer*, April 25, 1897.

12. *Harrisburg Modern News*, April 23, 1897.

13. *San Francisco Examiner*, December 5, 1896.

14. *The Call*, December 5, 1896. For a discussion of yellow journalism, see Ray Eldon Hiebert et al., *Mass Media: An Introduction to Modern Communication Media* (New York: David McKay Co., 1974), 209-10; John Tebbel, *The Life and Good Times of William Randolph Hearst* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1952); Ben Proctor, *William Randolph Hearst: The Early Years, 1863-1910* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

15. San *Luis Obispo Tribune*, December 18, 1896; *San Francisco Examiner*, December 6, 1896; *Merced Express*, December 4, 1896; *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 5, 1896.

16. See, for example, *Calaveras Prospect* (San Andreas, Calif.), November 21, 1896; *Oakland Times*, November 25, 1896; *Woodland Daily Democrat*, November 24, 1896; *Silver State* (Winnemucca, Nev.), November 23, 1896; *The Call*, November 25, 1896.

17. *The Call*, November 22, 1896.

18. *The Call*, November 23, 1896.

19. *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 23, 1896.

20. *Virginia (Nevada) Evening Chronicle*, November 25, 1896; *The Dalles Times-Mountaineer*, December 12, 1896.

21. *Telephone-Register*, November 26, 1896.

22. *Evening Telegram* (Portland, Oregon), December 1, 1896.

23. *Oregonian* (Portland), November 29, 1896.

24. *Evening Telegram*, December 2, 1896.

25. *Coos Bay (Oregon) News*, December 2, 1896.

26. *Eugene (Oregon) Register*, December 11, 1896; *Lake County Examiner* (Lakeview, Oregon), December 3, 1896; *State Rights Democrat* (Albany, Oregon), December 11, 1896.

27. *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 4, 1896.

28. S. Friedman and D. Berliner, *Crash at Corona* (New York: Paragon House, 1992); K. Randle, *A History of UFO Crashes* (New York: Avon, 1995); M. McGhee and B. Dickeson, *The Gosford File: UFOs over the N.S.W. Central Coast* (Kogara, New South Wales: INUFOR, 1996).

29. Carl Sagan, *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark* (New York: Random House, 1996).

30. Quoted in C. H. Gibbs-Smith, *Aviation: An Historical Survey from Its Origins to the End of World War II* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1985), 221.

31. Pierre Lagrange, "'It Seems Impossible, But There It Is,'" in *Phenomenon: Forty Years of Flying Saucers*, ed. John Spencer and Hilary Evans (New York: Avon, 1989), 26-45; Kenneth Arnold, *The Flying Saucer As I Saw It* (Boise, Idaho: n.p., 1950); idem and Ray A. Palmer, *The Coming of the Saucers: A Documentary Report on Sky Objects that Have Mystified the World* (Amherst, Wisc.: n.p., 1952); *Boise (Idaho) Statesman*, January 22, 1984; Jerome Clark, *The UFO Encyclopedia: The Phenomenon from the Beginning* vol. 1, 2d ed. (Detroit: Omnigraphics, 1998), 139-43; Martin Gardner, *The New Age: Notes of a Fringe Watcher* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1988); Brad Sparks to the author, February 1, 2000. Sparks said that Arnold's total time estimate varied

from under two minutes to as many as four minutes.

32. Bill Bequette, interview by Pierre Lagrange, transcribed, July 1988. In 1998, French sociologist Lagrange made available his personal correspondence with Bill Bequette. A small portion of Bequette's replies were in the form of face-to-face conversations in July 1988, when Bequette was living in Washington's Tri-Cities.

33. Martin Gardner, *Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science* (New York: Dover, 1957), 56; Ronald Dean Story, *The Encyclopedia of UFOs* (New York: Doubleday, 1980), 25; Margaret Sachs, *The UFO Encyclopedia* (New York: Perigee, 1980), 207-8.

34. Ibid., 1.

35. This description of Arnold as "a United States Forest Service employee" is incorrect. See *East Oregonian*, June 26, 1947.

36. "Transcript of KWRC Radio's Interview with Kenneth Arnold at Pendleton, Oregon on June 26, 1947 at 12:00 P.M," 2, Center for UFO Studies, Chicago, Illinois. Located, transcribed and made available to the public by Pierre Lagrange, who found the tape while examining the papers of Ray Palmer. Brad Sparks (in correspondence) observed that Arnold referred to "saucer" shapes in his retellings of his story, adding to the confusion surrounding the term "flying saucer."

37. Years later, Lagrange reported that Bequette could not recall "whether or not Arnold used the words 'saucer-shaped craft,' but I am inclined to credit his version [that he only spoke of objects moving like a saucer if you skipped it across the water]." Bequette interview, 1. See also DeWayne B. Johnson, "Flying Saucers—Fact or Fiction?" (M.A. thesis, University of California at Los Angeles, 1950); Bullard, "Mysteries."

38. Herbert J. Strentz, "A Survey of Press Coverage of Unidentified Flying Objects, 1947-1966" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., 1970). Brad Sparks is skeptical about Strentz's claim because he provides no supporting details. See Sparks conversation. His suspicions may be well founded. After searching hundreds of newspapers for UFO reports during the time of Arnold's sighting, Jan Aldrich has located only a single press report, dated June 26, 1947, that uses the term "flying saucer." Aldrich, one of the most knowledgeable and respected UFO researchers in the world, lives in Canterbury, Connecticut, and has a B.A. in history from the University of Maryland. He is the coordinator of Project 1947, an ambitious effort to collect and analyze government, military, and civilian documents, especially press reports, dealing with 1947 UFO reports.

39. David Michael Jacobs, *The UFO Controversy in America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), 37. See also Joseph A. Blake, "UFOlogy: The Intellectual Development and Social Context of the Study of Unidentified Flying Objects," in *On the Margins of Science*, ed. R. Wallis, Sociological Review Monographs 27, 315-37.

40. Henry Stevenson, "Balloon Bombs: Japan to North America," *British Columbia Historical News* 28:3 (1995): 22-3. Stevenson also recounts the only recorded deaths from a Fugo balloon, which occurred in a tragic incident in Oregon on May 5, 1945, when five Sunday school students and a woman on a picnic on Gearhart Mountain suffered horrific injuries and died shortly after approaching an object buried in the snow.

41. Donald Howard Menzel and Ernest Henry Taves, *The UFO Enigma: The Definitive Explanation of the UFO Phenomenon* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977), 7.

42. B. Sundelius, ed., *Foreign Policies of Northern Europe* (Boulder, Colo: Westview, 1982). It is within this context of long-held Russian invasion fears and post-war political ambiguity about Russian claims on Swedish territory, that plausible rumors began circulating about potentially hostile Russian intentions. See *New York Times*, September 4, 1946; *Svenska Dagbladet*, August 7, September 4, 1946; *Ny Dag*, August 6, 1946; *Halsingborgs Dagblad*, July 26, 1946; *Aftonbladet*, August 7, 1946; *Smalands Folkblad*, July 27, 1946; Robert Emerson Bartholomew, "Redefining Epidemic Hysteria: An Example from Sweden," *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavia* 88 (1993):178-82; Anders Liljegren and Clas Svahn, "Ghost Rockets and Phantom Aircraft," in *Phenomenon: Forty Years of Flying Saucers*, ed. John Spencer and Hilary Evans (New York: Avon, 1989).

43. "Transcript of KWRC Radio's Interview," 2.

44. There are a few scattered historical references to disc-shaped objects, but no consistent pattern emerges until 1947. Before 1947, only a few witnesses had actually used the word "saucer" to describe mysterious aerial objects. The first known instance occurred on January 22, 1878, when John Martin observed an orange object "about the size of a large saucer" near Denison, Texas. See *Denison (Texas) Daily News*, January 25, 1878. In that instance, Martin referred to the size, not the shape, as saucer-like. See also Herbert Hackett, "The Flying Saucer: A Manufactured Concept," *Sociology and Social Research* 32 (1948): 869-73. No one can be certain what Arnold actually observed on June 24, 1947, but various naturalistic explanations have been offered by astronomer Donald Menzel in *Flying Saucers* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953); idem and Lyle G.

Boyd, *The World of Flying Saucers: A Scientific Examination of a Major Myth of the Space Age* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, 1963).

45. Clark, *UFO Encyclopedia*, 141.

46. Fred M. Johnson to Donald L. Springer, August 20, 1947. Springer was an assistant chief of staff, A-2, at the headquarters of the Fourth Air Force at Hamilton Field, California. In a confidential letter dated August 25, 1947, Springer told the special FBI agent in charge at the U.S. Justice Department in Room 422 of the Federal Office Building in San Francisco that "a possibility exists that Mr. Johnson might have read some of this in the newspapers when Arnold was published re this matter." Credit Jan Aldrich for making both letters available to the public. Declassified FBI document released to the public under the Freedom of Information Act.

47. A previously classified U.S. Air Force investigation report (referred to as Incident #5) was made public by Jan Aldrich with assistance from Barry Greenwood and Ed Stewart. Aldrich states he Air Force concluded that the stimulus for this incident was "chaff" or "windows"—aluminum strips designed to confound radar. This document appears in the files of Project Bluebook, the U.S. Air Force investigation into UFOs from 1952 to 1969, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

48. Ted Bloecher, *Report on the UFO Wave of 1947* (Washington D.C.: n.p., 1967); Bullard, "Mysteries," 259.

49. George Gallup, "Nine out of Ten Heard of Flying Saucers," *Public Opinion News Service*, Princeton, N.J., August 15, 1947 (press release).

50. Loren Eugene Gross, *UFOs: A History* vol. 1 (Scotia, N.Y.: Arcturus Books, 1982), 30.

51. Bruce Sargent Maccabee, "UFO Related Information from FBI file: Part 1," *The UFO Investigator* (November 1977), 3; Gross, *UFOs*, 16. The *Investigator* was the official publication of the now defunct National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena, a nonprofit UFO research organization with no government or military affiliation.

52. Gross, *UFOs*, 29, 37; Arnold and Palmer, *The Coming of the Saucers*, 188-9.

53. Declassified formerly top secret United States Air Force Air Intelligence Report produced for the Directorate of Intelligence in Washington, D.C. on April 28, 1949, entitled, "Analysis of Flying Object Incidents in the U.S., Summary and Conclusions," No. 100-203-79, CY. No. 102 of 103, 2, Project Bluebook, National Archives, Washington, D.C. This document was made available to the public by Jan Aldrich.

54. Philip Klass, editor for *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, and Robert Sheaffer, a former computer systems programmer at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, showed discrepancies in the witnesses' accounts, concluded that the photos were taken at a time different from that claimed by the Trents, and have suggested that the case was hoaxed. This view is supported by former Harvard University Astronomer Donald Howard Menzel. American physicist and photographic expert Bruce Maccabee and UFO researcher Jerome Clark, however, dispute this claim. See Edward Uhler Condon, *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects* (New York: Bantam, 1969), 396-407; Robert Merrill Sheaffer, *The UFO Verdict: Examining the Evidence* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1981); Philip Julian Klass, *UFOs Explained* (New York: Random House, 1974); "Farmer Trent's Flying Saucer," *Life Magazine*, June 26, 1950, 40; Menzel and Taves, *The UFO Enigma*, 109-10; Bruce Sargent Maccabee, "The McMinnville Photos," in *The Spectrum of UFO Research: The Proceedings of the Second CUFOS Conference, Held September 25-27, 1981, in Chicago, Illinois*, ed. Mimi Hynek (Chicago: J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, 1988), 13-57; Clark, *The UFO Encyclopedia*, 600-2.

55. Keay Davidson, *Carl Sagan: A Life* (New York: John Wiley, 1999), 440.

56. Keay Davidson, "Flying Saucer Saga," *San Francisco Examiner Magazine*, June 1, 1997, 12-13.

57. Keay Davidson to Robert Bartholomew, January 24, 2000; Davidson, *Carl Sagan*, 440; *Idaho Daily Statesman* (Boise), July 3, 1947.

58. Davidson, *Carl Sagan*, 13.

59. Elizabeth F. Loftus, "Reconstructing Memory: The Incredible Eyewitness," *Psychology Today* 8 (1974): 116-19; idem, *Eyewitness Testimony* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979); David Ross et al., *Adult Eyewitness Testimony: Current Trends and Developments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Robert Buckhout, "Eyewitness Testimony," *Scientific American* 231 (1974): 23-33; James E. Alcock, *Parapsychology: Science or Magic?* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1981), 73-4; Gary L. Wells and J. W. Turtle, "Eyewitness Identification: The Importance of Lineup Models," *Psychological Bulletin* 99 (1968): 320-9; Edward Uhler Condon, *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects* (New York: Bantam, 1969); Fred L. Whipple, "Introduction," in *The UFO Enigma*, by Donald H. Menzel and Ernest H. Taves (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977), xiii-iv.