

Science & Mechanics

EXCLUSIVE!

MAY 35c

AMERICA'S MOST AWESOME UFO MYSTERY-

THE WANAQUE, N. J. SIGHTINGS

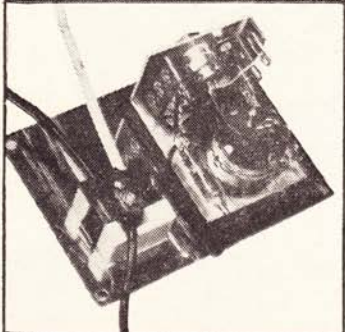
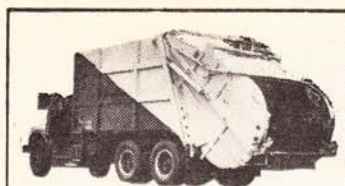
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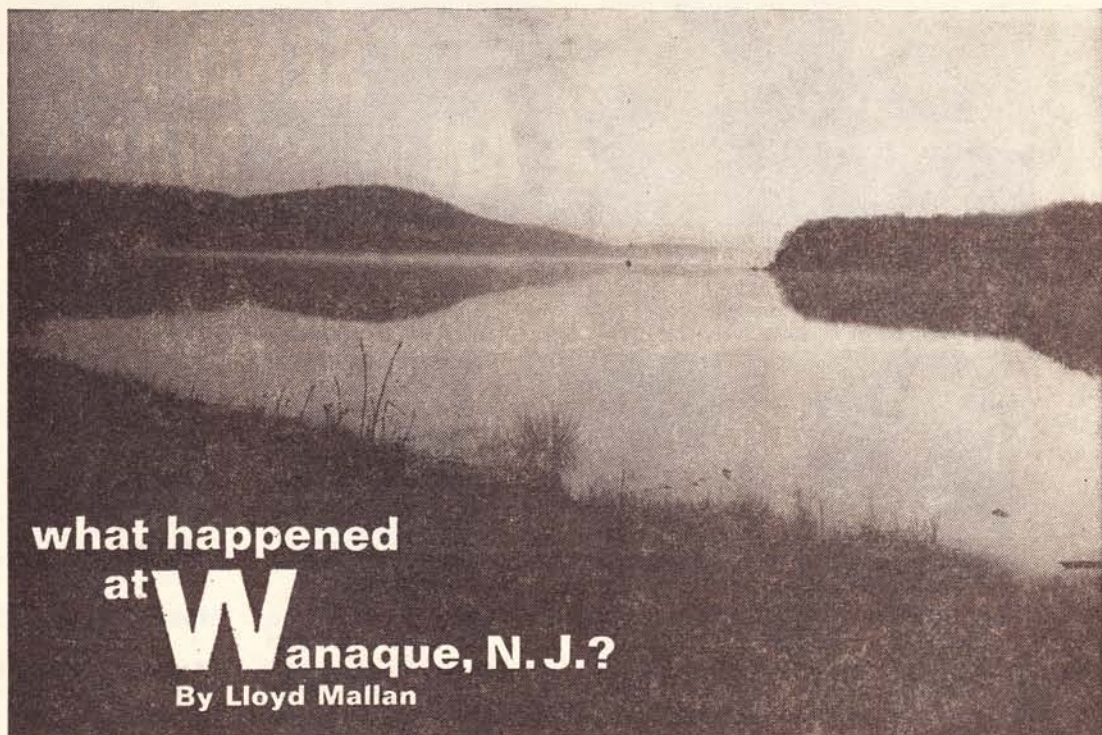
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A remarkable new fuel booster for autos that improves engine performance and increases mpg is featured in the June S&M—plus Joe Gutts' round-up of the 1967 pickup trucks, with road tests and photos of an amazing "truck of tomorrow." The June S&M—on your newsstand April 25.



what happened
at **W**anaque, N. J.?
By Lloyd Mallan

Over the lonely mountains surrounding the Wanaque Reservoir rose

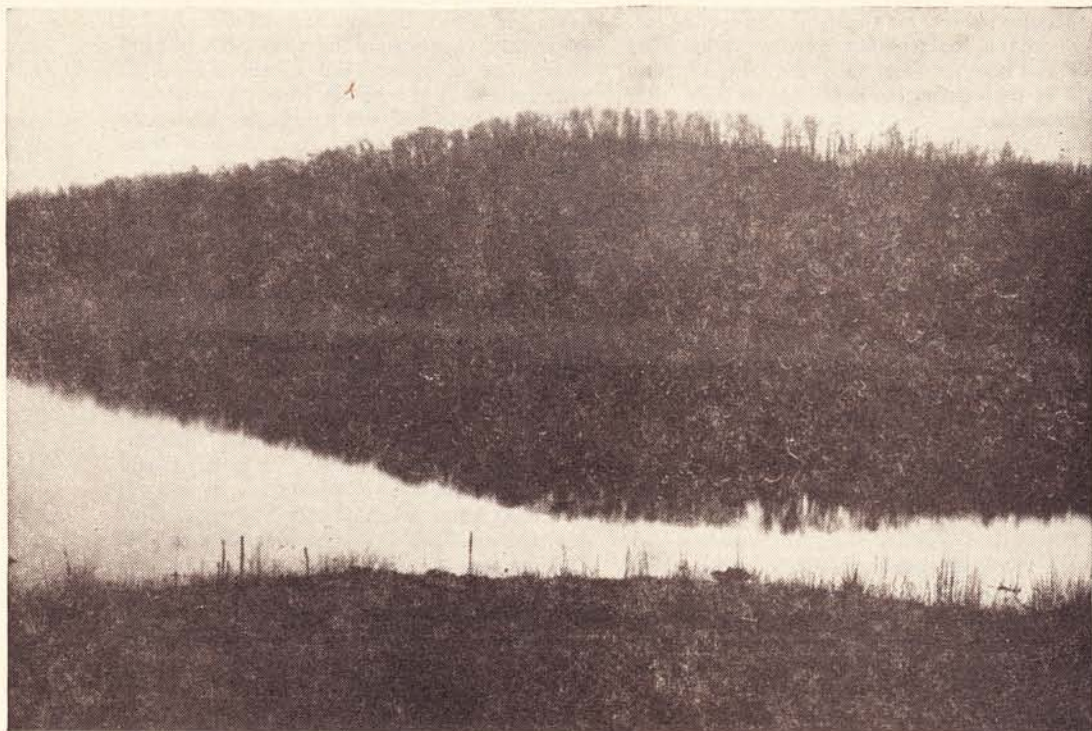
□ On the night of October 11, 1966, Police Sergeant Robert (known to his friends as "Bobby") Gordon was off duty, relaxing in his comfortable house at Pompton Lakes, New Jersey. He had just settled down to watch television when his wife flung open the front door, greatly excited. She called to him, insisting that he immediately dash outdoors to view an Unidentified Flying Object.

Bobby Gordon is a cop in the best sense of the word. He had been trained to observe facts and not UFOs. Using his own words: "In my job I deal with facts—and facts alone. I go by what I see personally." He had been cynical about the many reports of UFO's that had been observed in his area during the previous January and March. His wife, he knew, was a UFO "buff." She was a member of NICAP, the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena—an unofficial civilian organization that has been trying for some years to identify the Unidentified Flying Objects reported by many thousands of persons across the United States. So he waved her off for a few moments, until her excitement captivated his interest. Grudgingly he got up from the easy chair in which he'd been sitting and followed her outdoors.

It was precisely 9:15 p.m. when he reached the front yard and looked up at the sky in the direction his wife indicated. He noted, as a trained observer, that Mrs. Lorraine Varga, their neighbor who lived two doors away, was also out in her yard staring at the sky. Mrs. Varga seemed to be agitated—and quite frightened. He gazed above the high television antenna tower, about a block-and-a-half distant, toward which his wife was pointing. What he saw was to him interesting—but not frightening.

Sergeant Gordon is probably one of the youngest sergeants in any local police force in the State of New Jersey, if not of any state of the Union. He appears to be in his late 20s or very early 30s. He came up the hard way—by being a diligent worker, a dedicated police officer. He was not about to allow an unusual phenomenon in the sky to upset his capabilities of observation. Completely unselfconscious about his strikingly handsome appearance and obviously unaware of his earnestness, here's how he told me the story of the beginning of an evening that was probably unique in the history of UFO sightings:

"My wife had seen a very bright object up in the sky, above a nearby TV antenna. The antenna tower is five hundred and some feet in



a strange and awesome sight, with a light that blinded observers

the air and this object was high above it. The object was *very* bright. It appeared to be the size of a softball, or a grapefruit. It was moving in a north-northeasterly direction. It came from my left and moved to my right. How can I describe its brightness? It wasn't like looking at a streetlight, or a strobe light, or anything like that. It looked just as though there were a hole punched in the sky. There was no actual beam from it.

"Now when my wife first saw this object, it was hovering—it was still. I didn't see it hover. When I came out of the house it was moving.

"So I went back inside the house and phoned Headquarters. I didn't report the object. I just called them and asked them if they would send a patrol car over. Before I reported it, I wanted someone else to see it beside myself, my wife and Mrs. Varga.

"One of the police officers drove over and just as he got to our house, the thing disappeared from our view. It didn't go out like a light was shut off or anything like that. It just went beyond the horizon, beyond the mountains, in the direction of the Wanaque Reservoir, about four or five miles to our north. I asked the officer to call the Reservoir Police Headquarters by radio and see if any of their officers had a car

out on patrol. I wanted to find out if they could possibly see this object, whatever it was."

It should be mentioned here that the Wanaque Reservoir is a 90-odd-billion-gallon stretch of water lying among some of the wildest and loneliest woodlands in New Jersey. Through that mountainous area prowl bobcats, foxes and wild dogs. As many as 100 venomous copperhead snakes have been killed in one day by a single Reservoir Police Officer. The Reservoir Administration maintains its own autonomous police force to patrol the vast water-storage lands. In fact, the area is so wild that a police officer (who doesn't want to be named) told me: "There's only one thing that would make me go into those woods, no matter how many guns I carried, and that's to find a lost child. Otherwise I'd stay close to the roads—in a car."

(An interesting aside: the natives pronounce Wanaque as "Wahn-a-cue." Those who were not born in Wanaque Borough, or who live in nearby communities, pronounce the name as "Wahn-a-kee." No matter how you may pronounce it, Wanaque, N. J., has been the scene of many UFO sightings. Among the responsible persons there who have reported UFOs have been the Borough Mayor, the Mother Superior of Mount Calvary Convent, several

members of the Pompton Lakes Police Force, many members of the Reservoir Police Force (including its Chief,) Borough Councilmen, a newspaper editor, an electrical engineering student and a mathematics teacher. What they saw and how they feel about the UFO situation will be reported in the next issue of S&M. But none of their sightings, although these were also unique, can compare in sheer strangeness with the sighting on the night of October 11, 1966.)

Sergeant Bobby Gordon of the Pompton Lakes Police Force had no idea of what he was starting when he asked his fellow officer in the patrol car to radio the Reservoir Police about that UFO. His story, tape-recorded by me, continues:

"So he (the fellow police officer) radioed up and got in touch with Sergeant Ben Thompson, who was then on patrol around the reservoir. And Sergeant Thompson immediately said: 'Yes, I see something. It's *very* bright.' We were looking in a northerly direction and at this time we saw three or four flashes—extremely bright flashes."

"From this object?" I asked Gordon.

He shook his head negatively. "The object at this time was out of my sight. But its reflections came off a mountain—or I assume these reflections were from this object. Because it was not three minutes after it left our

view that we were in radio contact with Thompson. And it had gone in that same general direction. You see, to the north of my home are mountains which border the reservoir. And it apparently went beyond the mountains, just out of my line of vision. But I believe Sergeant Thompson said it came in from his northeast. That's when he first saw it. He just looked up—and there it was. But these flashes—there were three *or* four. I don't recall exactly."

I asked: "Oh, you mean they were like brilliant reflections of sunlight on water that you can see from an airplane when you're looking down at a river or the sea?"

"No," he answered. "They were more or less like reflections, say, from a gigantic flashbulb, something like that. They just went flash-flash-flash, about a second or so apart. Maybe two seconds apart, but no longer."

"Getting back to the position of the object when you first saw it," I said, "how did it compare with the antenna tower position? Could you get any estimate of its altitude or speed?"

"I don't know about altitude," Sergeant Gordon told me, "but I've been judging speed for 12 years now as a police officer, you know, and I would say it was moving no more than 20 miles an hour. It moved steadily. No deviations, whatsoever. No erratic turns or anything like that."

Sergeant Ben Thompson of the reservoir police. He had a close-up view of the strangely-shaped UFO



This statement, I should point out, contradicts the actions of the UFO as Sergeant Ben Thompson of the Reservoir Police later saw them and reported them to me.

I then asked Sergeant Gordon: "Do you have any idea of what it was that you saw?"

He looked puzzled. "No, I don't. I really studied this thing. I saw it for about five to seven minutes and I was honestly looking very closely for wing-lights or tail-lights or the set-up of lights that you find on a helicopter. But I never saw any such lights. And I had this object in my vision first from an 80° angle to my left, and then right in front of me, and then all the way out as it moved away. So I think if there had been any other type of lighting on the object, I most probably would have seen this. The thing I saw was a very odd type of light."

"Did you hear any noise at all?" I asked. "None whatsoever."

My next question was: "By 'very odd type of light,' what do you mean? What would it compare with?"

"Well, that's just it," he said. "I've never before seen anything like this. A lot of aircraft fly over this area. And it wasn't, say, an airplane with a strobe light, which is very, very bright. It was mellow than that. Let me see. How can I put this? For example, when you look at a star there's sort of a twinkling effect, while with a planet there's even, to a degree, some kind of fuzziness. This object had none of these effects. It was just white, you know. Not brilliant white as with a strobe light. It was more mellow. But it was bright."

"You mean that it looked sort of like the moon—if the moon were full?"

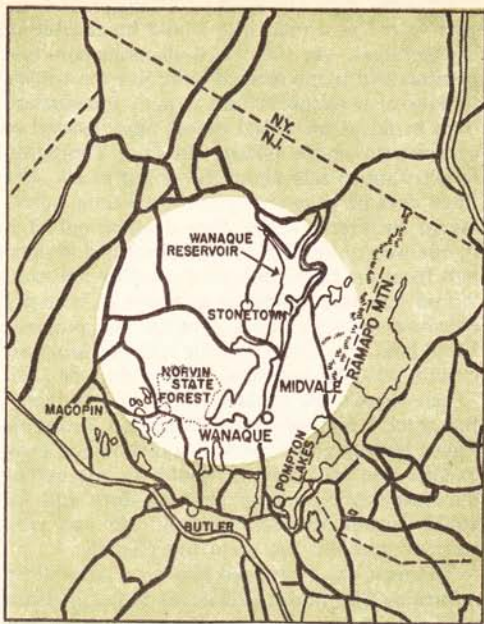
He answered me quickly. "No. It was much brighter than that. There was no diffusion whatsoever: no beam or ray or anything like that. Or any little aura around it. It was just neatly bright."

"Did you have the feeling that it was three-dimensional, or did it look flat?"

"I couldn't really say. It was just round—and that's as close as I can come to it. It was very high. I was sorry to see the thing leave my range of vision. It was that interesting. I had never seen anything like this before."

"What was your wife's reaction?"

"She was glad to see it." He laughed. "She's a member of NICAP. It was quite a thrill for her. In fact, she made me get out my own car and drive her and Mrs. Varga over to the reservoir. Of course, I first used the radio in the other officer's patrol car to ask Sergeant Thompson for his position at the time. And we drove over to where he was. But when we arrived, there was nothing in sight. The thing had disappeared. Up to that point I was very interested but not overly impressed with what I saw. Then I heard Ben Thompson's story. We drove up to him, oh, five to ten minutes after we first heard him on the patrol-car radio. I never saw



Wanaque is located in heavily wooded country south of the New York-New Jersey line. It is near the reservoir, north of Pompton Lakes.

him that excited before."

"Was he really shaken up?" I asked.

"Yeah. He was excited," answered Sergeant Bobby Gordon. "And Ben is not a fluster type of individual. He was shaken. Not to the point of panic or anything like that. But he was, you know, impressed with what he had seen."

"How could you tell he was that excited?"

"Well, actually, Ben is a distant cousin of mine—somewhere back there in the woodpile. And I've known Ben, well, I'd say 15 years. He's a humorous individual, with kind of a rough country humor, I guess you'd call it. And he wasn't very humorous that night, you know. Normally, he's a kind of effervescent type of individual, full of jokes. But that night he was quiet. And if you knew him well, you would sense immediately that he was mighty impressed with something."

Another person who had known Sergeant Ben Thompson for years was Howard Ball, an experienced newsman, who is Suburban Editor of the *Paterson Morning News*, largest circulation daily in the area. Ball described the Reservoir Police Sergeant to me like this: "Ben is a Davy Crockett-type, a man of the woods. He's an outdoorsman, a hunter. I've never known him to exaggerate anything—except maybe the size of a fish. And of all the people in the world, I think that maybe he was one of the great pooh-poohers of UFOs before he first saw one."

Sergeant Ben Thompson certainly didn't appear to me as a man who would be capable of exaggeration, yet the weird phenomenon that he described to me seemed more like the wildest fantasy of a science-fiction writer's imagination than it did as an actual object observed by an experienced police officer. In fact, Thompson didn't want to talk about the object at all. For three days he gave me quite a hard time, agreeing to an interview and then ducking out of it in one way or another. Originally I had phoned him from my home in New York City and convinced him that I wanted to write an honestly objective story about his sighting. My purpose, I told him, was not to ridicule him but to report exactly what he had seen. "All right," he said. "Then there's no problem. I'll talk to you." But after I arrived at the Wanaque Reservoir Police Headquarters, he was somehow too busy to talk. He said that he would see me earlier the next day before he went on duty and we could discuss his sighting then. He was very reserved and did not seem too friendly.

The next day I softened him up a little bit by informing him that his Chief of Police had not only agreed to talk into my tape recorder but that the Chief had highly recommended that I interview a certain Sergeant named Ben Thompson. Still he found an excuse not to sit down and describe his experience. But he was becoming a little more friendly.

During my wait to interview Thompson I talked with several other members of the Reservoir Police Force who had seen UFOs in the past. They were all reluctant to talk about their sightings. When I asked them a question about UFOs they would invariably reply with the same phrase. Some said it with a smile, others with no change of expression. The phrase was: "See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil." It was obvious that there was an unwritten policy among the Reservoir Police officers to remain silent about the UFOs that had "plagued" their area. I was puzzled by their reluctance to talk. Later I discovered the reason from a statement made to me by Sergeant Thompson.

"You know," he said, "I've personally been ridiculed right down to the end on this thing. Sometimes," he added bitterly, "I've almost come to blows with people who'd say to me, 'What were you drinking that night, Ben?' Or they'd say, 'You can see the funniest things when you have a snootful, Sergeant.' The boys over at Headquarters get the same treatment. It's aggravating."

Furthermore, the U. S. Government had apparently played a role in establishing their policy of silence about UFOs. This had occurred during the earlier sightings. In the words of Ben Thompson: "We notified said Government. And they sent an investigator to Lakeland High School where he interviewed us. He came right out and said we were 'seeing things.' Swamp gas, a star—things like that. He as much as

told us that we didn't know *what* we were seeing. So we figured it would be a waste of breath to talk to anybody, official or not, from then on."

But I finally persuaded the police officers, including Thompson, to talk about their experiences at length. Before I left Wanaque, Sergeant Thompson was calling me "young man" and "buddy." His boss, the Chief of Police, said: "It was a real pleasure to meet you." And the others were all friendly and pleased that their story would be told without bias.

I finally pinned down Sergeant Ben Thompson to a tape-recorded interview. Prior to that moment I'd had the impression that he was a hardboiled, hard-working cop. I felt that he would brusquely go through a quick interview and then dismiss me. Instead I found him actually to be a warm person with a sentimental streak. I interviewed him in his home, which he built by himself with the help of a brother. In his backyard was a deer, a full-grown buck, that he had trained from babyhood. He had rescued the buck from a pack of wild dogs in the woods around the reservoir. With a branch torn from a tree he had killed the vicious dogs, who were as fierce as timber wolves, and chased the little buck three miles in 94° heat to catch it and save it from starving. The dogs had



Sergeant Thompson feeds his pet deer which he raised and trained after he rescued it from an attack by wild dogs in the woods.

killed the little deer's mother and another buck. Affectionately, he christened the little buck "Bambi." The State of New Jersey permitted him to keep it. Now it wags its tail wildly when it sees him approach and eats coughdrops out of his hand.

Sergeant Thompson is a stern-looking, handsome man, with black wavy hair, thick eyebrows, a ruddy complexion and a lean, wiry figure. His stern appearance vanishes when he smiles. He does not drink hard liquor and only occasionally has a beer or two. His fellow police officers told me that he's like an Indian in the woods. He himself told me that: "If somebody took a tree anywhere in these woods and moved it within ten feet of where it was, I would know that tree was moved."

Thompson, when I interviewed him, had been with the Wanaque Reservoir Police Force for six years. Before that, for 20 years, he had been a Security Guard at the E. I. DuPont de Nemours plant at Pompton Lakes. "In other words," he said, "I've been trained to observe things carefully. Things and people. That's what we work with." During World War II he was in the infantry and fought on the islands of Guam and Iwo Jima.

He is thoroughly familiar with aircraft of all kinds. He puts it this way: "Yes, sir! I watch

that sky carefully at night when I'm coon hunting or fox trapping. And I do a lot of hunting. You see, I wait for the sound of an airplane because as it comes over, the noise of its engines drown out any noise I might make when I'm stalking. And I can get close to the animals that way, without their hearing my approach."

Also, he's very familiar with the appearance of landing lights on airplanes. "I've seen them many times," he said, "blinking their lights at each other, just like bus drivers do when they pass each other on the highway."

Certainly the weird light that he observed close-up on the night of October 11, 1966, was not flashed from an airplane—or he would have recognized it. It was so weird, in fact, that almost anybody would be hard-pressed to believe his story was not fictional if Sergeant Thompson were not such a straightforward, earnest and down-to-earth type of man.

Throughout a long interview plus several hours longer with the man in his own home, where he was casually dressed and relaxed, I was able to study Sergeant Thompson closely. I am convinced that his story is sincere. He is the type, as one of his friends described him, whose main interests are the commonplace things of life. "When he sees a squirrel over his rifle-sight," this friend said, "that he can understand."

Sergeant Thompson has a deep sandpapered voice. Rarely does he show emotion as he talks rapidly in a clipped but matter-of-fact manner. Here's the story he told me of what happened to him in those minutes before Sergeant Bobby Gordon drove us to find him shaken and excited:

"It was somewhere around 9:15 in the evening and I was on patrol around the reservoir. I was in the gray patrol car, which is kind of a big Jeep. And I received a radio call from the Pompton Lakes Police, which is a kind of Central Radio Dispatch Headquarters for several communities in this area. They told me that there was some kind of a flying object in the air. They asked me if I would check it out. So I was only about five minutes' drive away from the area where they thought this object was heading. I drove over there and I saw this very bright light as I approached. I would say it sat there in the sky for around two-and-a-half to three minutes when I first saw it. As I got closer, all of a sudden it started to move. I came to a spot in the road where I stopped. This light was real bright and I could see it was as big as a car. Yes, I'd say it was around eight feet in diameter. And then it made all these squared-off moves. It just kept going—to the right, left, up, down and making all these square turns, to the north, to the east . . . Seemed like it was putting on a show or something."

"How high did it seem to be?" I asked.

(Continued on page 62)



Newspaper editor Howard Ball and Sergeant Bobby Gordon of the Pompton Lakes police. Both men observed UFO in the Wanaque area.

Happening at Wanaque

(Continued from page 33)

"Well, I would judge it was about 250 up in the air from me and about 250 feet away from me."

"Was there any shape to it at all?"

"Well, if you took a basketball and cut a hole in it and then set a football in this hole—and then left the end of the football sticking out of the basketball—that's about what it looked like. From one position. It all depended on what way it was going. When this thing was going east and west, it would seem to be just a round disc. But then when it headed south, that's when I could see this other shape to it.

"And this football-shaped dome, or whatever it was, seemed to stay in one spot. When this thing was traveling south, or coming north, from where I was standing, the dome-shape just stayed there on top in one position. I mean, you could see this bright light all around it . . . And it seemed like this dome was working on maybe some kind of a bearing. Or the whole thing, the whole object, worked like a bearing—where the outside of the bearing, the bright light, would turn and the inside, the dome, would stay in one place. That's about what it would look like."

"Oh, I see," I said. "This always remained level?"

"The dome? Right! The disc seemed to work around it."

"Would you say," I asked, "that the whole thing appeared to be maneuvered at random or intelligently?"

"Oh, yes. Very intelligent. Yes."

"And you still don't know what it was?"

"No. I don't know what it was. The light was so bright, I couldn't tell what was behind it."

"Was it as bright as an arc light?"

"Well, you know, when you're welding they tell you not to look into the arc? Well, this thing was worse than an arc light. Because I know: I've worked in a welding shop and I've looked at arc lights. Naturally, a lot of times you'd be sitting around the shop and another guy'd be welding and you'd just happen to look over at him—right?—and his arc would bother your eyes for a little while after you turned away. But not as long as this thing bothered my eyes that night."

"I asked: 'Can you make a guess as to how long your eyes were affected?'"

"I would say that I was *totally* blind for at least two minutes."

"What color was the light of this object you saw?"

"It was just a real, real bright white."

"You mentioned that it was moving. What sort of movement did it make?"

"Oh, this thing was moving at a very, very

fast pace." (This is in sharp contrast to the estimate of 20 miles an hour given for the UFO's speed by Sergeant Bobby Gordon of the Pompton Lakes Police Force.) Sergeant Thompson was emphatic: "I would say that it went a mile in the short time it would take you to get into a car and out of it. In that length of time, it would make two trips across the reservoir at the place where I spotted it.

"In fact, I parked my patrol car in a very bad place along a narrow road. I started to get out of the car, but then thought better of it. So I sat there, just watching this thing for awhile. Because it really shook me up, you know. I finally got out of the car and walked over toward its front fender. I was afraid to step out into that narrow road, just in case another car would come scooting by. I finally edged back into this police car that we use as a Jeep and I switched on the red dome-light and flasher. This would be the rotating warning beacon. Then I got out of the car again and started walking toward this flying thing—and it took off."

"You mean," I said, "that the UFO took off after you turned on the beacon?"

"Right! After I switched on this red dome-light, it took off directly toward what we call Cooper Swamp Mountain. And it seemed just like it went right inside of the mountain. But to me, it looked like the light went out.

"You see, there was a funny mist all the way around this thing while it was in flight, as it went away from me. I could see this mist as it flew away from me."

"Oh," I said, "there was kind of a haze surrounding it?"

"Right. A very, very heavy haze."

"Was the haze the same color as the light itself?"

He shrugged. "You see, this thing was so bright that it lit up the whole area. I would say, for a half a mile wide."

Again, here is a sharp contradiction with what Sergeant Bobby Gordon observed about the UFO. Gordon saw neither haze nor mist and, in fact, described the object as being "neatly bright" like "a hole punched in the sky." However, Sergeant Gordon did not see the object at close-up range.

"Was the sky clear?" I asked Sergeant Thompson.

"It was a perfectly clear night, yes."

"Did you hear any sounds at all?"

"No sound at all," he answered. Then he added emphatically: "I never heard a *sound* from it!"

"So it couldn't have possibly been some kind of an aircraft?"

His tone was disdainful. "No. It was no aircraft. I've seen a lot of aircraft. In fact, there were aircraft all over the place after this thing had disappeared. But nobody knows where they came from. There were seven helicopters and,

I would say, ten or twelve jets."

"Oh? These were U. S. Air Force aircraft?"

"I don't know," he answered.

"You don't know where they originated? They just came on the scene?"

"**Right on the scene!**" he stated with emphasis. "It was only 15 minutes from the time we had spotted the thing. And the Air Force claims that they didn't get any report on it. And that they didn't send any aircraft into our area. But I don't know. They seem to be holding something out on us. I just don't know. Now I've never seen seven helicopters at one time in this area in all my life—and I've lived here for 40 years."

"Were the airplanes jet-fighter types?"

Sergeant Thompson shrugged again. "They were very fast aircraft—and they kept circling the whole area. Stewart Air Force Base, which is the closest to this area—it's in New York State at Newburgh—claims that they didn't send anybody down here. No planes or anybody. Nothing."

This was a puzzling situation, to say the least. If the Air Force had sent aircraft over the area within 15 minutes of the UFO sighting, how had they learned about the UFO so swiftly? Maybe they were monitoring the Pompton Lakes Police Radio Central signals? On the other hand, Sergeant Bobby Gordon told me that he did not believe this was so. As of this writing, there is no answer to the mystery of the sudden heavy traffic in helicopters and high-performance aircraft.

I next asked Sergeant Thompson: "How long did you observe the UFO?"

"I would say about three minutes," he answered.

He paused for a moment, then said: "Well, I'll tell you one thing. I could not find my patrol car after this thing disappeared." Again with strong emphasis: "I was *totally* blinded from that light. I had to stand there in the road quite a while before I could get my vision back to where I could find that car!"

"This was from looking directly at the UFO?"

"Yes. Yes, sir!"

"What kind of reflection did it cast on the reservoir?"

"Oh, it lit up the reservoir like you were two feet from the water pointing a very bright spotlight. You could see the whole water. I could see the treetops on both sides of the mountain—which would be anywhere from a half a mile to a mile of that area.

"And as it went over the trees—which would be on the mountain to the west—it would sort of pull the tops of the trees together. In other words, it had a suction effect. It didn't blow the trees apart. It pulled them together. And it also pulled the water—upward."

This sounded incredible to me. "Can you describe that effect in more detail?" I asked

Sergeant Thompson.

If my incredulity was too obvious, it didn't seem to affect Thompson's earnest manner. He continued as if there had been no pause for a question. "And as this thing faded away, from an area like, say, to the west of the one mountain, as it went over the reservoir toward the east, I could see the water come up toward this flying object," he said matter-of-factly. "Then as the object moved away from that area, the water would settle back down to its natural level."

"You mean," I again interrupted him, "that the water would move like a wave, or a quick tide?"

"**No. The water was pulled up.** It was sucked upward. But not off its bed. The flying object would just raise a whole big area of water—I don't know—for maybe two-hundred-and fifty feet. As far as I could see. The object would just pull at the water and I could plainly see the water rising. And when this thing flew away from the area, the water would just settle right down again."

Now he became somewhat excited. "And that object just pulled the trees right together. The tops of the trees came *right* together. Each tree just mingled in with the other one. They came together just as smoothly as could be. It wasn't a violent motion. It didn't break the trees or anything like that. It would be just like somebody took a big rope and circled it around four or five hundred trees and then ran it through a chain-block and started pulling those trees together. And they'd come together nice and slow. Well, that's the way those trees acted when the flying object passed over them."

"How high would you estimate that it pulled up the water?"

"Oh, I would say that from where I was standing—while I was looking into this light—that it pulled the water up a good two or three feet. The reservoir was low at the time and I could see the water rise plainly. As long as I was looking into this light from the flying object, I was all right. But if I just moved my head away from the light for one minute, I couldn't see a thing. Not a single thing. Because I was blinded."

"**Were there any other witnesses** at the reservoir?" I asked Sergeant Thompson. "Were you the only one who saw this UFO that close up, from among all of the people who saw it in the sky?"

"Yes, I am." He paused for a moment. "But a certain lady, Mrs. John Oldman, I think saw it pretty close up, because she was driving along the road just as this flying thing was passing over that same road, descending toward the reservoir. Mrs. Oldman had left her house to go shopping—she lives up around that area of the reservoir—and this thing scared her so badly that she drove right back home before she ever got to the store. She just stepped on the gas and took

off. She told her husband about it and her husband came over to Police Headquarters and he told me about her experience.

"In fact," said Sergeant Thompson as an afterthought, "these same two people had seen this flying object one night before—with me."

Surprised, I asked: "You mean, you had seen it previously?"

His tone was absolutely matter-of-fact. "Oh, yes. This is the third time that I've seen this thing."

"What did it look like the other two times?"

"Well, it was much higher. And it looked just like the way the Pompton Lakes Police described it to me over the radio: a real bright light. But see, it was so high it looked like it was going slow. Yet it was still making these square turns. Even at that altitude.

"The first month several of us saw it was in January (1966). And then we spotted it again in March. That's when my Chief also saw it."

"And for how long did you see it the first and second times?"

"Well, the second time we watched it quite awhile. It stayed right there for, I would say, an hour-and-a-half."

"That long? And still making those squared-off turns?"

"Right. Still making those square turns. In fact, I was in Johnny Oldman's house the second time. And we watched it from there. As it faded over the hills, the mountains—there are some pretty high mountains over there—well, I got in the police car and followed it down through the valley where I could watch it, you know, and still keep it in sight. Kept it in sight quite a long time—about an hour-and-a-half, as I mentioned. That was in March."

"The first time you saw it, in January, how long did it stay in sight?"

"Quite a long time. Quite a while."

"What did you think, personally, when you first saw it?"

"To tell the truth, I didn't know what to think. I mean, I knew that there was something there that I'd never seen before in the sky. Especially because of those square turns.

"You see, this thing could maneuver so fast. And it made no round turns, like an aircraft would as it started peeling off. You know, you can watch an airplane—I don't care how fast it's going—go into a turn. But with this thing, you couldn't see it make a turn. It would just go directly south, or north, or east, or whatever way it wanted to travel—and it would decide to go up. While it was going straight ahead at a very fast rate of speed—it would just shoot right straight up."

"Vertically? Just like that?"

"Vertical, right. And then it would set there for a few minutes, or seconds, and then all of a sudden come right back down. Then it would go to the right, to the left—making square turns. And I think if any aircraft did this, or anything

else I've ever seen in the air, that kind of maneuver would bust it up. It would break apart."

Amazing as his story may seem, Sergeant Ben Thompson claims that he is willing to stand up to anyone, in any court and to any individual, and swear under oath that he has seen what he describes with such graphic clarity. "I would even appear before the President of the United States of America," he told me, "and defy him to call me a liar!"

He recounts a little personal anecdote to illustrate why people should not be so quick to scoff at what may appear to be unusual in nature—and yet be easily explainable if they sat back to think things out and try to find an explanation. Once while hunting in the woods he saw a ketchup bottle moving toward him along the ground. He was startled, but he knew that ketchup bottles cannot move by themselves. So he went up close to the bottle and discovered that a copperhead snake had caught its head tightly in the bottle-opening. He grabbed the snake by its tail and carried it home, bottle and all, where he killed and burned it to prevent its venom from soaking into the ground and poisoning the land. Since he had no evidence of the snake in the bottle, nobody believed him later when he told of seeing a ketchup bottle "walking."

Sergeant Ben Thompson is especially bitter about what he calls the stupid tactics of Project Blue Book, the U. S. Air Force's official project to evaluate Unidentified Flying Objects. "They don't listen to what you saw," he says. "They tell you what you saw! I would never report anything to them. It's a waste of effort."

His attitude is firmly echoed by Sergeant Bobby Gordon of the Pompton Lakes Police Force, who refused to report his own UFO sighting to the Air Force. Why? "I have enough aggravation on my job, so that I don't have to go outside to get it," Gordon told me.

These were common attitudes among people in the Borough of Wanaque, N. J., as I discovered during my stay in the area. Are they valid attitudes? And how does the Air Force explain the abrupt, mysterious appearance of seven helicopters and 10 to 12 high-performance aircraft over the Wanaque Reservoir a mere 15 minutes after the sighting of the strangest UFO ever by Reservoir Police Sergeant Ben Thompson?

Next month in S&M the Air Force will be given a chance to answer both the accusations and the mystery—as further sightings of the strange UFO are reported by the Mayor of Wanaque Borough, the Chief of the Reservoir Police Force, the Suburban Editor of the *Pater-son Morning News* and an electrical engineering student who discovered that the normal background radiation level in the area had increased four-fold just prior to Ben Thompson's weird experience with a UFO that temporarily blinded him. ■

S & M Readers Report:

UFO SIGHTINGS

THE following reports of UFO sightings have been submitted to S&M in response to the invitation that was first published in the February 1967 issue.

Literally hundreds of readers have sent us reports and most of these, according to the writers, have not been submitted to the Air Force's Project Blue Book or to any other UFO organization.

No attempt has been made to explain or evaluate these reported sightings. They are presented here exactly as received from our readers, except that, in some cases, the letters have been shortened because of space limitations.

Dear Sirs:

Have been reading the UFOs and case histories in S&M. This report will probably be meaningless due to the delay, but could be a part of a mysterious puzzle—or as a matter of record.

Place and time were St. Louis, Mo., on August 11, 1947, 1630 EST. Duration of sighting was three minutes from the first sighting in the southern hemisphere (180°) to out-of-sight in the northern hemisphere (360°).

The observers were two softball teams, myself included, and about 25 spectators. Members of the teams included nine aircraft ground instructors of varied backgrounds, and nine pilots and aircraft students. The background of the spectators is not known.

Sky was cobalt blue, no clouds. In aviation circles known as CAVU. The number of objects sighted was either 7 or 9—I don't recall at this time, but it was an odd number. The objects appeared to be about the size of grapes, black on one side and white (or reflected light) on the other.

Their speed was very fast, I'd guess at 1000 mph. Altitude at 25,000 to 30,000 ft. at about 75° from point of observation. At this altitude about the size of a grape.

Sound: None. Objects moved from south to north as straight as anyone could walk, drive, fly or sail. They seemed in a vertical Vee formation. One on a point, the other stepped above and below in trail.

These objects were observed to, shall I say, flip, and in perfect unison from black to light every 2 seconds. At first, thought to be bombers. But at this altitude, where were the contrails? Also, there was no droning noise. The second thought was that they were ducks. But at this

altitude? Besides, they were headed the wrong way for this time of year. Then, too, the formation was too perfect.

The nearest explanation to the possible source of power was the perpetual motion seen in a jeweler's window: absorb and reflect the sun's rays.

Don't know whether this has ever been reported or not but thought you might be interested anyway. I have been in the aviation business 20 years as Comm. Pilot, A&E Mechanic with Inspection Authorization. Am presently employed by the U. S. Navy as Inspector at Aircraft Corp.

C. W.
St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Sir:

I am writing about a UFO sighting I made. You may use my name.

November 21, 1966, at about 7:45 p.m. local time in Bronx, N. Y. The duration of the sighting was 10 seconds. Number of objects: one. I am a high school student, 15 years old.

The object was shaped like an inverted pyramid with a red light shining constantly. It looked black on the black background but was very visible. It was about 25 ft. across at the top, and 25 ft. in length from top to bottom. No sound was heard.

Altitude was about 500 ft. when it appeared over a building at about 75° . Then it moved overhead and out of my vision over the top of the car. Its speed was about 150-200 mph.

My father and I were heading north on the Bronx River Parkway at about 50 mph. I noticed an airplane at a height which was normal for an approach for one of the airports in the area. Then I saw the inverted pyramid flying high over a 23-story building. I watched it for about 10 seconds until it passed out of sight over the top of the car. I turned to tell my father, then turned to the back seat to look out the back window but could not see it.

My father was unable to see the UFO because he was unable to pull the car over to the side of the road. But I swear it was no aircraft I have ever seen before.

Michael Glazer
Bronx, N. Y.

Mr. Mallan:

My sighting was in November 1965 (reported to NICAP).

Weather conditions were clear and cool. The

trajectory of the UFO was NNE to SSE, approximately 30° above the horizon. Length of observation was approximately 20 seconds. Sound, None.

When I first observed the object, it appeared to be about the size of a large pea held at arm's length. Object was traveling at a terrific rate of speed. No expert, but would guess speed at 2000 mph (by comparing to jets I have observed).

Object was bright orange in appearance, then dulled as it jerked to a halt on two occasions. As it sped up again it glowed with more intensity. Suddenly it came to a stop for a third time. Appeared to be a slightly oval orange plastic ball, being lit from within. Object then sped up again, halted briefly, glowed to a yellow-white and ascended with such speed it appeared to be about the size of a pinhead within 3 to 4 seconds. If first guess of speed was correct, object was traveling about 8 to 10 thousand miles an hour when it ascended. Within a few short minutes, two interceptor jets appeared from the direction of Scott Air Force Base and proceeded on the upward course taken by the E. A. (extra-terrestrial aircraft).

Bob Hewitt
Godfrey, Ill.

Dear Sirs:

I would like to report the sighting of a flying object which I have not been able to identify. I am 19 years old, a machinist and the only observer.

The sighting took place August 12, 1966 at 10:00 p.m. EST, five miles west of Schenectady, N. Y. on Route 7. There was one object and the sighting lasted only 2 to 3 seconds.

The object was egg-shaped and bright red in color. It appeared to have a white light on the front and a short tail on the rear. The object appeared to be about the size of a dime held at arm's length. It produced a whirring sound which grew faster and fainter and then ended abruptly . . .

The object traveled from east to west in what seemed to be an arc overhead. It traveled extremely fast, and I estimated its altitude at the peak of its arc at 2000-3000 ft.

The object appeared to take off a mile to my right, travel westward overhead and land a couple of miles to my left. It traveled in a straight line but seemed to ascend coming towards me and descend going away from me.

Charles Nelson
Duanesburg, N. Y.
(Continued on page 71)



Photos of saucer-shaped UFO were made by two brothers, Dan and Grant Jaroslaw, behind their home on Lake St. Clair near Mount Clemens, Mich. The area is one mile from Selfridge Air Force Base but the Air Force says it knows nothing of the sighting. Photo at right is enlargement of object.

UFO Sightings

(Continued from page 35)

Dear Editor:

I am in secret aerospace work as a draftsman. This, therefore, requires anonymity.

Specifically: In October 1964 (I cannot remember the day), I left the _____ aircraft plant after working overtime—about 10:20 p.m. The cars are parked adjacent to the airport runway in Santa Monica. The parking area is quite dark. What made me look upwards was not an object. A bank of searchlights converged nervously above the airport. They emanated from, I believe, the Nike installation in the Santa Monica Mountains.

My first thought was: It is perhaps a weather balloon. Of this I am not yet sure. I stood outside my car for about five minutes looking above the converged lights. Faintly, very faintly, I detected a spheroid shape quite out of range of direct light impact. It was almost invisible but faintly ruddy in color. It did not move. Since I had a passenger to take home, I finally left. I observed this for almost seven minutes.

In all the time I was employed and would leave late, I never saw a searchlight convergence since World War II. The use of searchlights for advertising was another instance. Never, though, this convergence at this point.

A weather balloon, even at considerable height, has a play of light from beneath indicating a convexity. The object I saw appeared flat . . . I do not know how long the lights were on before or after I appeared on the scene. A weather balloon directly above a heavily used light- and medium-weight airplane runway seems an unlikely occurrence at night.

Whatever it was, it was a palpable object. I have sharp vision, as I have been an artist all my life. I know every nuance of color.

(Name withheld)
Seal Beach, Calif.

Dear Sir:

In your magazine of February '67 you asked readers to write in if they have seen any UFOs. I saw something last June that I had never seen before or since.

About 10:00 p.m., around June 19th or 20th, for about 3 seconds as it passed my vision through a window. My 13-year-old daughter and I were in bed but awake. She saw it first, and froze. Then I saw it and said, "What's that?" She said, "I'm glad you see it too, because I didn't believe my eyes."

It seemed to be coming straight toward the window from the west, then veered eastward out of our vision. I am over 50 years old, but in all my years I've never seen anything like that.

It was round, like the full moon, and a little larger. It was not as bright as the moon. It glowed a bluish-white like the screen of a TV

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when no picture is on. No sound was heard.

It appeared to be about 200 ft. above the ground. We live 75 ft. above sea level, so no swamp gas would be that high.

I never saw it again. I told a Portland Press Herald reporter about it. We sell the Sunday papers for them. Later that same week a neighbor of mine, 1½ miles away, described the same type of observation. She is a school teacher in her late 40s. We deduced that when it disappeared from her view it came into ours.

Druscilla Clemens
Dennysville, Me.

Dear Sirs:

Time and place of sighting: June 26, 1966, at 9:15 p.m. CDT/ in backyard of my home in Mattoon, Ill.

Duration: 5-8 seconds. Number of observers: Three—a teacher, 38; son, 5; and daughter, 6. Number of objects: one. Shape: none, only a light. Dimensions: the size of a basketball held at arm's length. Color: red-orange cone of light in center graduated to light orange to complete the semi-circular shape. Sound: none.

Altitude: 45° above horizon; estimated at 1000 ft. because of flat trajectory of flight path.

The UFO came over the house as we faced south. Its trajectory was flat. The angle created from the time we first saw it until it disappeared would have been about 140°. It went out of our line of view behind trees to the northeast.

The UFO pulsed at about the same rate as a heart beat. It did not blink on and off nor did the intensity of the light change from bright to dim, yet it pulsed.

Jim Waltrip
Mattoon, Ill.

Dear Sirs:

On July 7, 1957, at about 7:30 p.m. at Johnstons River, Prince Edward Island, Canada, I and 6 others observed a UFO for the first time.

The sky was completely clear and the sun was low in the western sky. I sighted the object in a northwesterly direction and observed it for about 10-15 seconds at a time.

The shape wasn't clear-cut; it seemed hazy especially around the edges. The object looked lens-shaped when it hovered. Sometimes it would appear to come directly toward me, starting as a thin line and exploding at tremendous speed into a large lens-shaped object with a startling effect.

But more startling was that the object changed shape when it made a vertical ascent from below the horizon, moved to the east rapidly, made a 120° turn and dived below the horizon. It seemed to elongate during this spectacular turn, forming a sort of tail which seemed to catch up to it after it had proceeded in the opposite direction. The object seemed to be surrounded by an atmosphere with a solid machine in the center.

I would estimate that since it went behind the hill across the Hillsboro River, about 2 miles away, that it was at least 300 ft. in diameter but possibly could be much more—maybe 800 ft. in diameter.

The color ranged from light grey when it was shaped more like a line, at which time the object didn't seem quite solid. It gave the appearance that you might be able to see through it. Then when it came rapidly toward me or made a turn at great speed, it would seem to bunch up and become intensely black in the center, remaining a bit hazy at the edges.

It was silent. Altitude ranged from horizon to 40° above. I would estimate the speed at 3000-4000 mph.

It would come from below the horizon, most of the time rise vertically at an angle, sweep an arc across the sky and dive below the horizon, or just vanish rapidly, becoming a thin line and then disappear completely. It would then reappear in a portion of the sky opposite to the direction in which it was last going, or reappear from below the horizon. It would sometimes stop instantly and go in another direction, at which time it would seem to change shape as described earlier.

The object was sighted several times after, at between 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Robert Brazil
Vancouver, B. C.

Dear Sir:

I have seen a UFO and here is my report.

Time and place of sighting: March 22, 1965, at 6:25 p.m. EDT., on Hamilton Road, Somerville, N. J. Number of observers: one. Number of objects: one. Duration of observation: 5 minutes.

Type of observer: Beginner astronomer (13 at that time) with 1½ years of observation and study of the heavens. Now an amateur astronomer, age 15. Observer reliability: I think good. I am familiar with locations of planets, stars, constellations, etc.

Shape: a long smoke trail which looked like a black drop of paint rolling across the sky. **Dimensions:** about 10-20° long and 1/16° wide. **The color** was black. **Sound:** none. **Altitude:** about 10° above the western horizon. **Speed:** about the average speed of a jet. **Tactics:** the UFO traveled straight down, chasing the setting sun.

Comments: the observer observed the UFO through a 120-power 3" reflector telescope. The observer allowed the object to pass through the field of vision of the telescope a few times. It took 5 seconds for the UFO to do so.

If there was anything in front of or making the vapor trail, the observer would have spotted it with the help of his telescope.

Ty Klock
Somerville, N. J.

One of Hugo Gernsback's "return" titles, created after his forced bankruptcy, it was first published in 1929 as **EVERYDAY MECHANICS**. The name was changed to **EVERYDAY SCIENCE AND MECHANICS** in 1931. The magazine was sold to Virgil Angerman, and the name shortened to **SCIENCE AND MECHANICS**, in early 1937. The magazine was sold to Curtis Publishing in 1954, and by them to Davis Publications in 1959. It survived into the 1980's as a quarterly and bi-monthly, with its last issue coming out in 1984.