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# Did You See It? Well, What Was It?

By WELLS CALDWELL

The strange object seen traveling across the heavens just after sundown last night has caused widespread speculation here in Radford as well as in other sections of Southwestern Virginia and Eastern Tennessee.

Exactly what the mysterious traveler was, no one here seems to know, and the number of conflicting reports have only added to the confusion.

This much seems to be certain: the object appeared over the Southwest horizon shortly before 8 p. m. and was moving eastward. Also, it was black, or at least part of it was.

A Radford man, living in the east end section, asked that his name not be used, but give this version:

"I was working in the yard when I glanced up and saw a long black thing flying across the sky. It came from the direction of Pulaski. It looked a great deal like a rounded stick of wood which was burning in

front. The object was trailed by either vapor or smoke and faded from view when it seemed to be directly overhead."

Mrs. Alfred Tolley, of 1702 Seventh Street, west, reported her 12-year-old son, Albert, was playing next door and noticed the object. She said her son had been studying comets in school and called her attention to the phenomenon, thinking that it was either a comet or a meteor.

"The strange looking object", she said "was long and black with a light on the front end. It seemed to follow the air route from the direction of Pulaski, later turning and heading toward Blacksburg. There was a light on the front end and great long streaks of fire. We saw it for about 10 minutes."

Miss Joe Stewart, of the Radford College biology department, said she saw the object and assumed it was the exhaust from an airplane. She added that she was "in no way alarmed."

Fred W. Hurt, of Fourth and

Harvey Streets, gave this version: "At the first appearance it looked like a comet. I recall Halley's comet and it resembled that. There was, at first, a bright spot ahead of the stream of fire, but the trail didn't look so bright when the object reached its zenith.

"It appeared to be moving slowly at first and later very fast, which indicates that it was quite a distance away when I first saw it. The object seemed to follow a straight path, however it veered a little once — in sort of an arc — and then straightened out again. I heard no noise."

Mrs. James D. Heinline, of 60 Jackson Street, Monroe Terrace, said she and her husband watched it with some neighbors.

"It looked like a long black cigar which was on fire", she stated. "We heard a faint sound, which might have been a small motor. At times it looked like an airplane way, way off. I thought at first it might be a comet or a meteor, but it seemed

to be traveling too slowly for that. It appeared in the southwest and traveled toward the east. There was a kind of reddish looking smoke about it."

Miss Dody Jones, of Harvey Street, reported watching the phenomenon with a group of children in the neighborhood. She said it looked like "what I think a comet would look like."

"It was a red flare", she continued, "which was light on the front. It moved slowly from the Southwest and traveled what seemed to be straight up. It curved toward the east and the fire streaks trailing it got longer as they began to fade out."

L. B. Graybeal, of Christiansburg, a former Air Force pilot, estimated the altitude of the object at 6,000 feet. He said there was a light from the object as it passed over and a "roaring sound."

Other reports have been received from as far West as Kingsport, Tenn., and as far East as Bedford.

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