

These "lights" were one of many sets of "saucers" made by Dr. Menzel in his laboratory. Note the "mother ship."

But by no means all of the objects can be so dismissed. After we have eliminated the false saucers and the erroneous reports that we trace to misidentification, there do remain a number that we cannot completely write off. Such as the ones I saw myself.

The first question we are called upon to answer is this: If these objects are natural objects, why did they suddenly appear for the first time in 1947? An honest question and a basic one; for if it cannot be answered, we are in difficulties. But the answer is simple: They were seen in the skies long before 1947. Scientific literature is full of them.

#### England Had Durham Lights

Take, for example, the Lubbock Lights, which appeared in the sky near Lubbock, Texas, last summer and were photographed. Similar phenomena have been long reported. England was mildly excited over the Durham Lights almost a century ago.

In 1897, our papers were filled with stories about a mysterious cigar-shaped airship seen at odd places over the country. The lights and men aboard were clearly visible. Finally, the great inventor Thomas A. Edison himself disposed of the rumor.

Here is a quotation from the magazine *Nature* for May 25, 1893: "During a recent wintry cruise in H.M.S. *Caroline*, a curious phenomenon was seen. . . . Unusual lights were reported by the officer of the watch. They appeared sometimes as a mass, at others spread out in an irregular line. They bore north until I lost sight of them about midnight. . . . The globes of fire altered in their formation. . . . now in a massed group with an outlying light, then the isolated one would disappear and the others would take the form of a crescent of diamonds."

The account also mentioned a "looming mirage," of which I shall have more to say later. This report interests me for two reasons:

First, it would almost serve as a description of the Lubbock Lights. Second, my own theory of the Lubbock Lights was developed, and tested in my laboratory, before I found this account in *Nature*—and my theory directly associates looming mirages with the lights.

The next question is quite natural: Even granting that these phenomena have a long history, why are they so much more frequent today than in the past?

List the places where flying saucers have been seen, and you will notice that the great majority were reported in very hot areas, over deserts—in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. For years, these states were sparsely settled.

But since the war began, they are the areas in which the most startling population growth has been tallied. Irrigation has brought farmers in. The dry heat has made tourist havens of Phoenix and Tucson. The air age has made these flat, clear-skied areas the natural locations for great bomber and fighter bases. Finally, atomic energy has chosen New Mexico as its headquarters.

In brief, there are more eyes to scan the heavens. Hence, more is seen. The answer is as simple as that. The clear skies are themselves a partial answer. Beyond two or three miles, especially toward the horizon, the milky haze cuts down visibility in Eastern areas. In the West, one is accustomed to seeing a mountain peak more than 150 miles away.

Finally, the most important question of all: If the saucers aren't superhuman or controlled by superhumans, what are they?

First, we must study the reports.

A careful analysis of all the available data indicates that—after we have subtracted the balloons, papers, distant planes, Venus and the like—a substantial amount of reliable but unexplained material still remains. This falls into several definite patterns: ovals, disks or other patterns, either shining silver by day or

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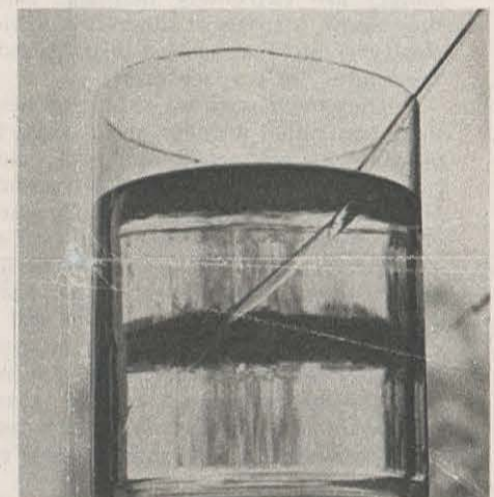
Photographed by Arthur Rothstein



Dr. Menzel begins setting up his apparatus, using a large glass jar, benzene and acetone.



Acetone floating on benzene simulates air levels; lens effect distorts Dr. Menzel's face.



A glass rod seems to bend as it passes from one liquid to other. Light bends in this way.

A light shining through the liquids bends at the meeting point. Same is true in air layers.

