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THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

ALBUQUERQUE

Institute of Meteoritics

February 21, 1949

TO: Lt Colonel Doyle Rees, Commanding Officer  
District No. 17  
Office of Special Investigations

From: Lincoln LaPaz, Director  
Institute of Meteoritics

Subject: Anomalous luminous phenomena (4th report)

1. Several additional sightings of unexplained aerial light phenomena have occurred since the third report in this series was prepared. Outstanding among the as yet undescribed incidents was the green fireball of Sunday evening, January 30, 1949, 5:54 p.m. MST. Within less than one minute after the appearance of the fireball, an eyewitness (Mr. Nesbett) called to report the impression of a group of persons who saw the fireball through an east window while seated about the dinner table in a brightly lighted room. Within twelve hours after the fireball appeared, more than 100 eyewitness accounts had been obtained by its director through personal interviews. An unusually high percentage of the reports came from military personnel (waiting out under the sky for Post Theaters to open), from guards and other special agents already alerted to watch for anomalous luminous phenomena and from airplane pilots, control tower men and oilwell workers working on the late afternoon to midnight shift.

2. On February 1st, a staff car was placed at the writer's disposal by Major William Godsoe of the Fourth Army and a field survey was begun of the region in New Mexico and Texas in which the majority of the observer's reports during the fall lived. This survey, carried out under unusually severe weather conditions, included visits to the following localities: Moriarty, Estancia, Vaughn, Ramon, Mesa, Roswell, Caprock, Tatum and other towns in New Mexico; and Lamesa, Brownfield, Plains, Lubbock, Muleshoe and other towns in Texas. (Several of these towns were visited two or more times.) At Roswell, where very effective cooperation was provided by the OSI group at Walker Air Base under Lt Paul Ryan, and the local CAP unit under Lt H. K. Cobean, Special Agent Bill Rickett was added to the survey party and gave much aid in later work. At Lamesa, Texas, the ground survey party was joined by an air search party consisting of Major Charles Phillips, USAF, Captain Melvin E. Neef and Special Agent Jack L. Boling, from the 17th District OSI office at Kirtland Field, and Corporal Cochran. On February 4th, the four persons just named flew a low-level air reconnaissance mission in a T-11 aircraft over the area surrounding the earth-point of the fireball of January 30th. At the same time a second ground survey party under Lt Paul Ryan made a careful field search along a route extending from Lamesa through Amherst, Texas, to Clovis, New Mex.

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