

OUT OF THE PAST:

As part of a long-range program to follow up well-documented cases from the past (for the purpose of determining life-effects, present thoughts about the past UFO-event and about the UFO phenomenon itself on the part of the witness or witnesses, and to see how well their present memory of the event compares with what was reported originally), we have recently been in touch with Lt. Col. J.A. Gassein Jr. (Army Reserve, Ret.). For 30 years Gassein has been employed in the aviation industry, specializing in helicopters with Boeing, during which time he has been "exposed to all types of aircraft." In 1962 he reported two cases occurring within minutes of each other (presumably sightings of the same object) and witnessed by several independent observers. Dr. James McDonald, who was interested in the case, corresponded with Gassein and with NCAP investigators. Gassein has been kind enough to respond to our queries. Below is a recap of the original reports and Gassein's present comments about the many-year-old sightings.

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TIME: Approx. 7:45 P.M.
DURATION: 5+/- minutes
WITNESSES: 3 + several indep't.
PLACE: Springfield, Pennsylvania

Sighting 2

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TIME: Approx. 8:10 P.M.
DURATION: 3-5 minutes
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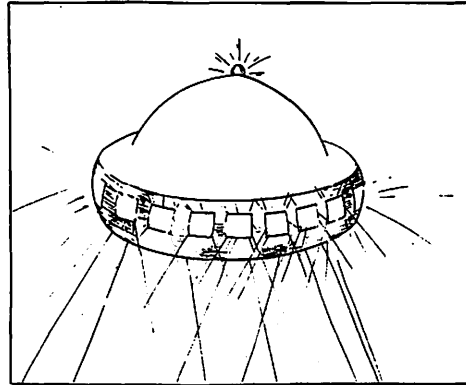
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A band, rotating around the main body, consisted of a series of square "windows" from which came shafts of brilliant white light. Similar shafts of brilliant white light were directed downward from the base of the craft; the object had a well-defined outline, or shape.

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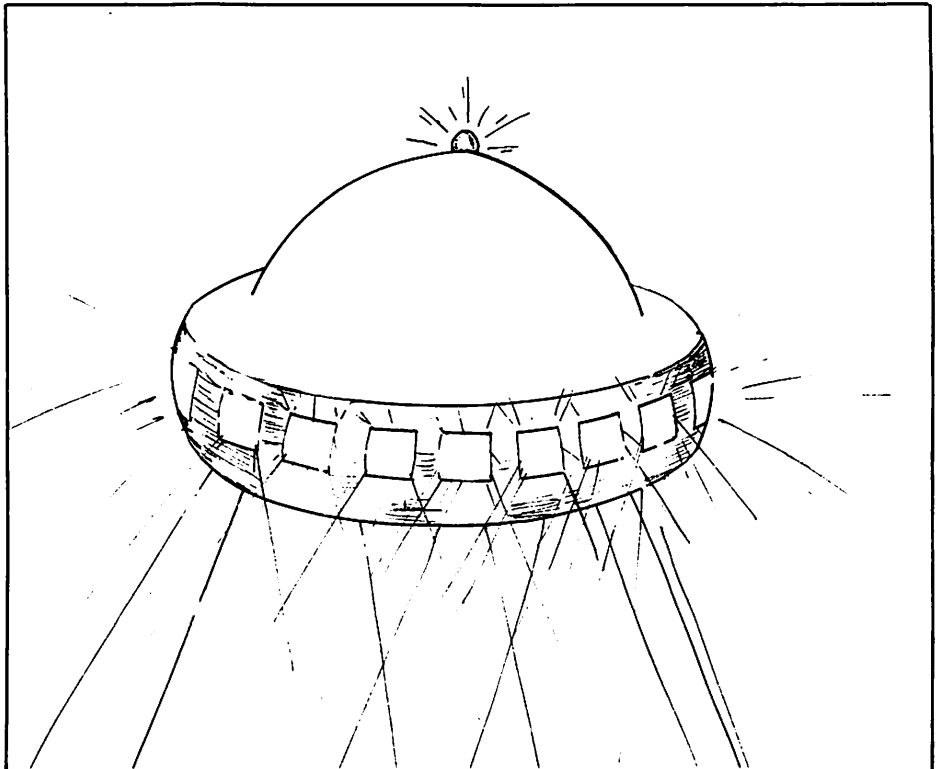
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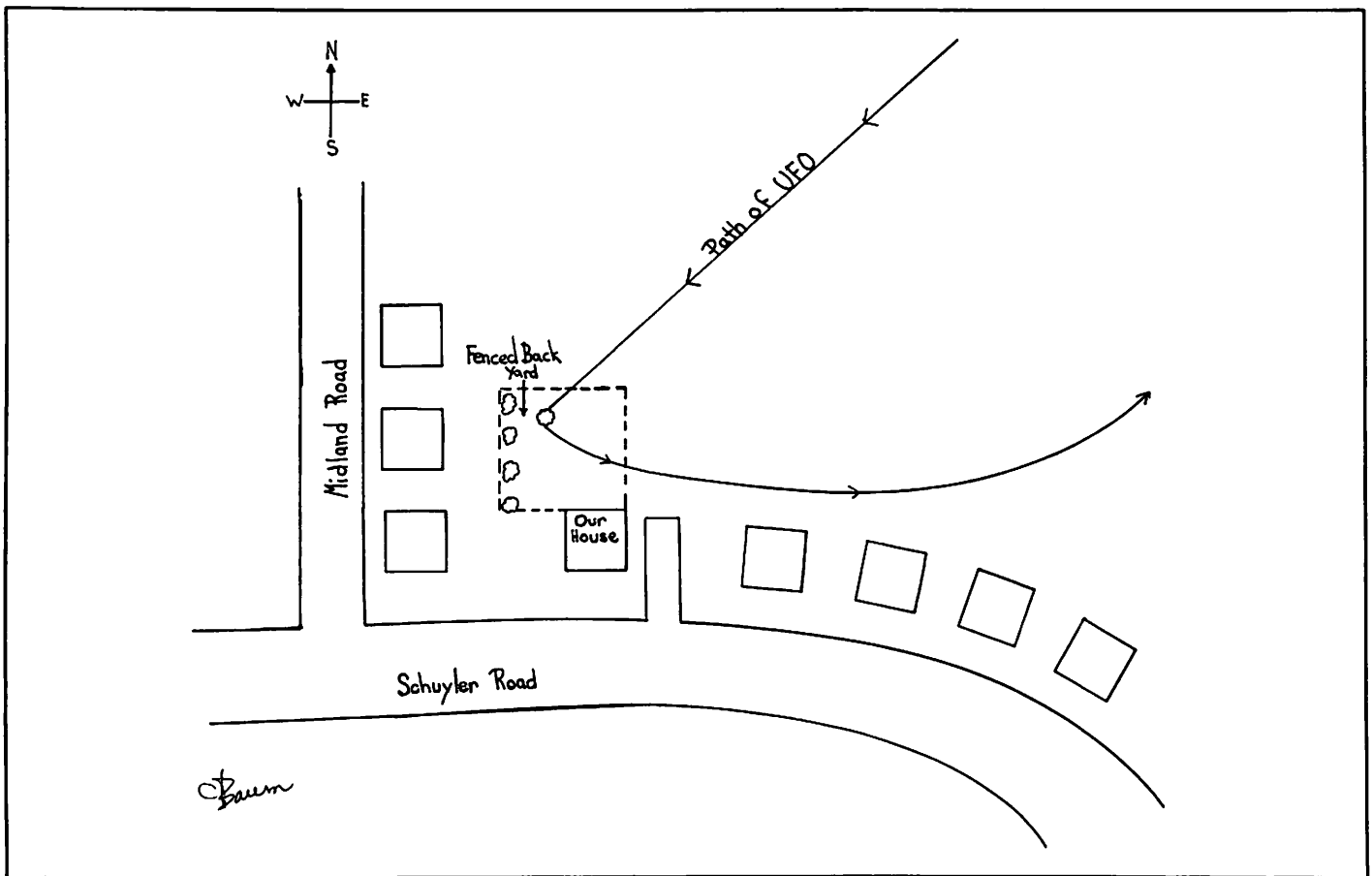
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When Mrs. Gasslein saw her young neighbor, she immediately wanted to tell her about her sighting. "Wait until I tell Barbara what I saw!" she thought, as she related later on.

But she never got the chance. Mrs. Gasslein recalls, "She was looking up with her mouth wide open and said, 'My God, what's that?'"

From the park area was emerging an object very much like the one seen less than a half-hour earlier. It was heading for the house. Judging from the height of the trees in the Gasslein yard, the UFO appeared to be not over 20 feet above the ground level, so low that a good view of its underpart could not be obtained. It moved slowly and silently.

At this point Gasslein was called out from the house the second time. He now relates: "Once inside our relatively small fenced backyard, the object turned to pass behind the same Cape Cod-type houses of our neighbors. I saw it plainly after it made the turn. The UFO had, at the closest point of observation, not been over 50 feet from where my wife and the young neighbor were standing.

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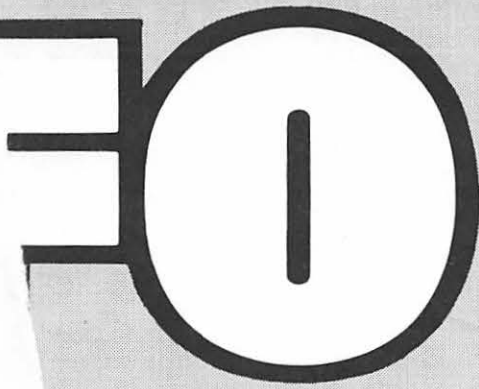
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Immediately after this second sighting, both Mrs. Gasslein and her neighbor went into the house and independently drew pencil sketches of the UFO. The sketches agreed in basic details, and tallied with Gasslein's own observation.

The actual size was not difficult to estimate since, as Mrs. Gasslein related, "It came toward us, about as far as 10 feet from the house, moving slowly and making no noise." The witnesses estimated the diameter of the object to be 30 feet.

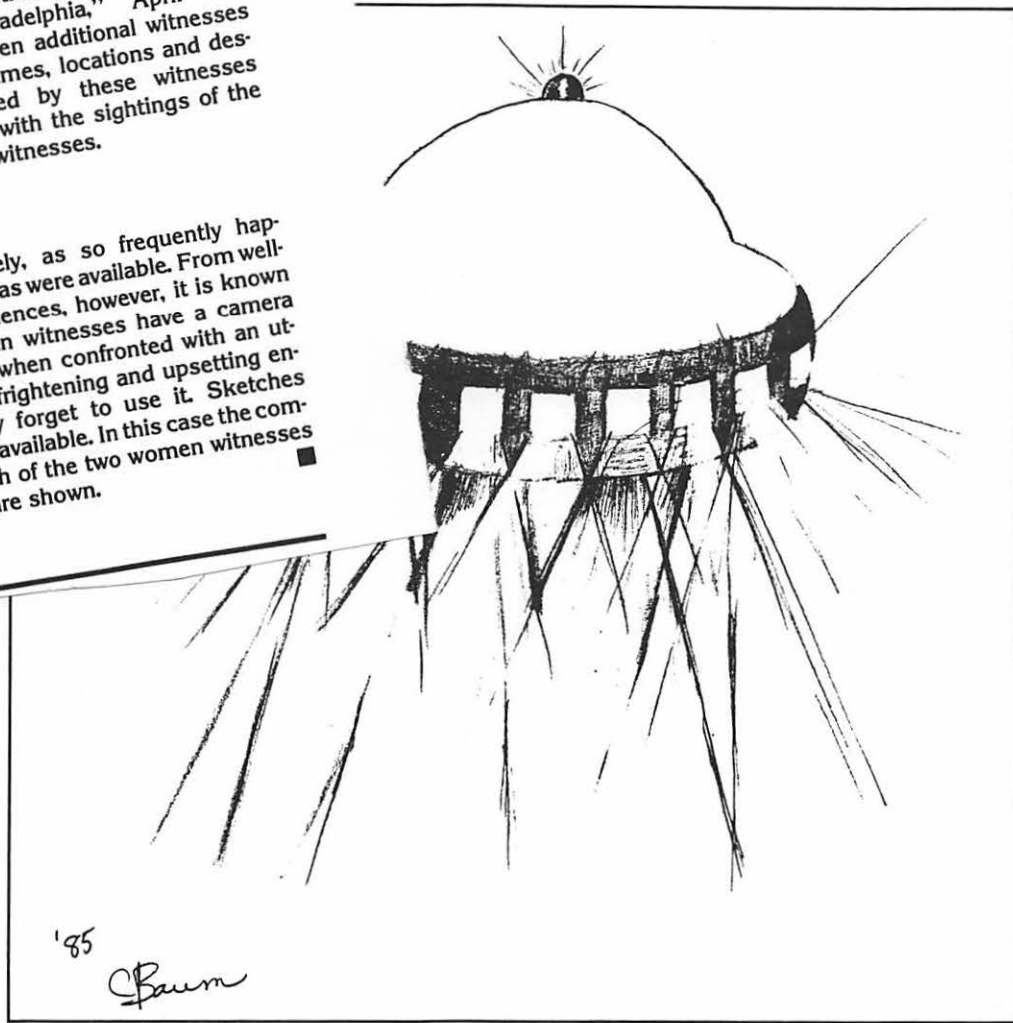
Continued on page 14



**Out of the Past
—continued**

NICAP files contain correspondence between Gasslein, McDonald and Ted Bloecher. The investigators were interested in locating the names and addresses of several other witnesses who came forward after a brief account of the double sighting became known (particularly from a short item in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* entitled "Strange Objects Seen Over Philadelphia," April 26, 1962). Some dozen additional witnesses were found. The times, locations and descriptions furnished by these witnesses tallied quite well with the sightings of the close encounter witnesses.

Unfortunately, as so frequently happens, no cameras were available. From well-attested experiences, however, it is known that even when witnesses have a camera within reach, when confronted with an utterly foreign, frightening and upsetting encounter, they forget to use it. Sketches generally are available. In this case the composite sketch of the two women witnesses and a map are shown. ■



A Very Close CE1...



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EDITORIAL — WHY UFOS

This is a question many of us have long pondered, but in this case it is not a question, it's the telephone number of the new UFO Phenomenon Research Facility of CUFOS in Scottsdale, Arizona. Just put 602 in front of the WHY and you have the complete phone number:

602 WHY UFOS

The Arizona facility, or "CUFOS WEST," is located at 6159 E. Indian School Rd., in Scottsdale (a suburb of Phoenix), and is a short distance from the new Hynek residence.

Understandably, our readers may be a bit puzzled about the relationship of the Lima, Ohio, the Evanston (now to be the Glenview), Illinois, and the Scottsdale "branches" of CUFOS, and so here is a brief explanation:

The Business Office of CUFOS remains in Lima, in charge of John Timmerman, the Chairman of the CUFOS Board and Treasurer. Financial matters in general, subscriptions to the *IUR* and the *ANL*, and all questions pertaining to address changes, as well as all general correspondence relating to Center matters, should be directed to the Lima office (P.O. Box 1621, Lima, Ohio 45802). The *Associates Newsletter* will continue to be edited, printed and mailed from Lima. Likewise, matters pertaining to the scheduling of the CUFOS photo exhibit will continue to be handled from there.

The *International UFO Reporter* will be edited, printed and mailed from Illinois. Its editorial staff has been expanded (see masthead), with Mr. Jerome Clark, of Evanston, as Editor, and Dr. Hynek serving as Editor-in-Chief from his new quarters in Arizona. Ms. Ann Parker, of Evanston, continues as Make-up Editor.

The files and library of CUFOS remain in Illinois, with Mr. Sherman Larsen in charge. UFOCAT and the computer services will also be centered in Illinois; updating and management of UFOCAT will be under the direction of Mr. Mark Rodeghier and Mr. Fred Merritt. Mr. George Eberhart remains in Chicago as CUFOS Librarian.

Now, the new facility in Arizona: Formally, it is called "The UFO Phenomenon Research Facility" thus signalling the emphasis on research. Under the direction of Dr. Hynek, it has a special function. While the two groups in Lima and Glenview represent a closely integrated, although geographically separate unit, the Arizona group will observe a degree of independence from the groups east of the Mississippi, taking on specific individual projects, on both a short and long term basis. It will seek funds expressly for research purposes working, however, closely with its eastern counterparts. The forthcoming association with the Hessdalen project is a case in point. The results, however, will be published in the *International UFO Reporter*, as will other findings resulting from the researches in Arizona. UNICAT, the computer catalogue of well-investigated cases suitable for detailed research purposes, will also be based in Arizona.

The name of the Arizona facility, "UFO Phenomenon Research Facility," emphasizes the fact that one does not really do research on UFOs (the Center has none on ice to study!) but on the UFO phenomenon, the existence of which is undeniable [the phenomenon is the existence and persistence of UFO reports themselves, the world-wide body of witnesses to UFO events, and the patterns in the contents of those universal reports].

Thus, as 1985 begins, we feel that CUFOS starts this year with a new vitality and with a promise of very interesting things to come. We know, however, that little can be done without your continued support. We thank you for it in the past and hope that it will continue and expand during 1985. With your help, maybe we can really answer the question:

WHY UFOS?

Springfield, PA

file/CE1?
1962.

(Gasslein)

Springfield (Delaware County)
Pennsylvania, April 24, 1962.
Multiple-witness urban-area sightings of UFOs take on special interest in that many uninformed persons are under the misimpression that UFOs are never seen except in rural areas by lone witnesses. Near 8 p.m. on Tuesday, April 24, 1962, a number of persons in different parts of greater Philadelphia observed a slow-moving disc-shaped object with flashing lights. NICAP files gave basic information on the background to this case, but I have been in direct contact with one of the principal witnesses, Mr. Joseph A. Gasslein, near whose home two separate sightings within a 20-minute period occurred. Gasslein, who is with Boeing's Vertol Division at Morton, Pa., was working in his basement when his wife called him out excitedly to see an object moving low over their neighbourhood, at about 7:45 p.m. His wife, Mrs. Alice W. Gasslein, had been driving her mother, Mrs. Estelle W. Wilkinson, to her near-by home when the two of them observed the object, and hastened back to alert Mr. Gasslein.

By the time Gasslein got outside to look, the object had passed to a distance from his house (148 Schuyler Road, Springfield) which he estimated at about a quarter-of-a-mile, "but nevertheless clearly defined as to configuration." His summary states:

"I saw it as an object smaller at the top than at the base, seemingly suspended in the air at an angle of about 45 degrees from my position, and giving off coloured lights. I know that the object was not any kind of

conventional aircraft or balloon."

It may be relevant to note here that Gasslein is a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserve and his work brings him in contact with helicopter equipment.

His wife and mother-in-law had seen it from very much closer than he, while it was moving in a westerly direction at only about 50 feet above street level before it turned downward. The description given by Mrs. Gasslein included the following

from JSM
P.S. Mar. 1972.

Bulk of case description
on reverse ↴

points:

"The UFO appeared to be about the size of one of the Cape Cod houses over which it passed, which would make it approximately 30 feet in diameter, and about the same dimension in height. It was circular in diameter, and about the same dimension in height. It was circular (in plan-form) surmounted by a dome giving off flashes of green light. The centre section (had a rotating) series of square-shaped 'windows,' each giving off a brilliant white light. The base section was somewhat saucer-shaped, curved upward. Shafts of white light were directed downward from the base.

Clearly, we are not here dealing with a report readily equatable to any of the commonly proposed meteorological or astronomical explanations of UFOs. No sound was ever heard, so an aircraft explanation is inadequate. The shape, seen clearly, was quite unlike an airship.

When the UFO departed, Gasslein returned inside and Mrs. Gasslein took her mother to her nearby home. On returning, she had just parked the car when a neighbour, Miss Barbara Berryman (now Mrs. Richard McClure) called "in a tone of astonishment" to direct Mrs. Gasslein's attention to a nearby wooded park area, from which was emerging an object of the same description as cited above.

"Moving easterly at low level—not over 50 feet above the ground level, as judge by trees in that area—the UFO proceeded slowly, and without sound. It was approaching the rear of our home and adjacent properties," Gasslein recounts his wife's description.

His wife again called him out from the basement, and by the time he got outside, "the object was proceeding parallel to the backs of the houses in the same line as ours. It was then perhaps 150-200 yards distant. My observations of the characteristics of the UFO tallied with my wife's and the young lady's. Each of them independently made a pencil sketch within a few minutes after the sighting, and the sketches were substantially alike."

Gasslein enclosed a copy-sketch in his January 6, 1969 letter to me. It is

so unlike any conventional airborne device or natural phenomenon that one would be obliged to discount the testimony of evidently credible witnesses to assimilate it to any conventional object.

Through the assistance of Dr. Charles P. Olivier of the University of Pennsylvania's Flower Observatory, NICAP secured reports of a number of others in the south-west sector of Philadelphia who had reported basically similar sightings at about that same time. Mr. Paul T. Scattergood, living about a mile west of the Gasslein residence, was out walking his dog near 8 p.m. when he saw to his south-east "a brilliantly lighted object low in the southern sky." At first he supposed it to be a jet, but its slow speed, lack of engine noise, and peculiar blink pattern of the row of lights did not match that explanation, he stressed.

Two other observers, Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. King, contacted Dr. Olivier, describing an unusual object with flashing lights similar in features to that seen at close range by the four persons involved in the two sightings at the Gasslein's. Three students at St. Joseph's College, about six miles to the north-east, also reported seeing an unidentified object move over the college area that evening, and other witnesses that night reported unidentified aerial objects, but details are sparse in the latter instances.

Remarks: In answer to a number of queries on this case, Gasslein wrote me and provided helpful clarification. He states that the observer-to-object distance was approximately 50 feet at one part of his wife's sighting on the object's second return. Since no sound was ever heard, and since the clues to distance were here much better than average (trees, backyard fences, etc.) it is difficult to propose any routine explanation, or even any unusual natural or technological explanation to account for this sighting.

This incident was not reported to any official agency, though much effort was expended by the Gasslein's to contact other witnesses and discuss the event with astronomer Olivier. Mrs. Gasslein contacted a friend on the staff of the Philadelphia Inquirer to indicate that their account might be of public interest, but the paper did

not follow through, and no press account was published.

This is reminiscent of the February 4, 1968 sighting over Redlands, California, where a total of at least 30 residents saw a hovering disc, estimated at a height above street level of a few hundred feet. A two-inch story in the local paper, commenting on a single witness' account, would have been the entire coverage had not professors at Redlands University become interested and undertaken an investigation. The Air Force did not witness interviewing. Since I have interviewed a half-dozen of those main witnesses, I can say that I regard it as a quite significant UFO sighting. The Colorado Project also investigated it, yet not a word about that Redlands case appears in the Condon Report—for reasons I fail to understand.

The Gasslein sightings and related sightings near Philadelphia on April 24, 1962, are paralleled by a very substantial number of other urban-area sightings, often involving close-range observations, such as the April 22, 1966 Beverly, Massachusetts, case that appears incompletely reported in the Condon Report.

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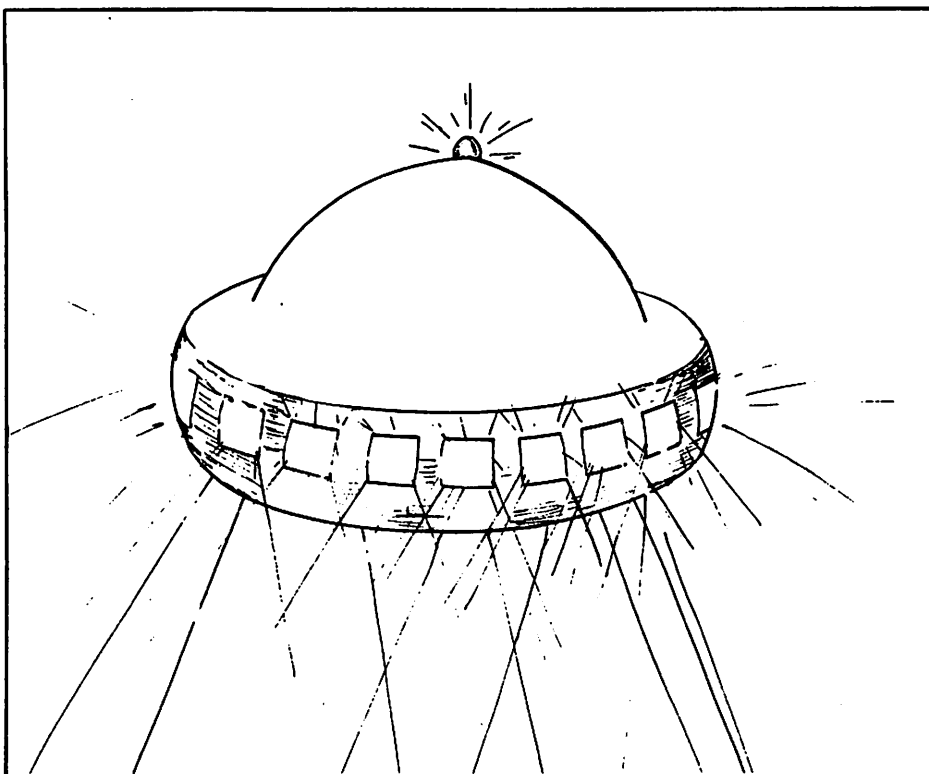
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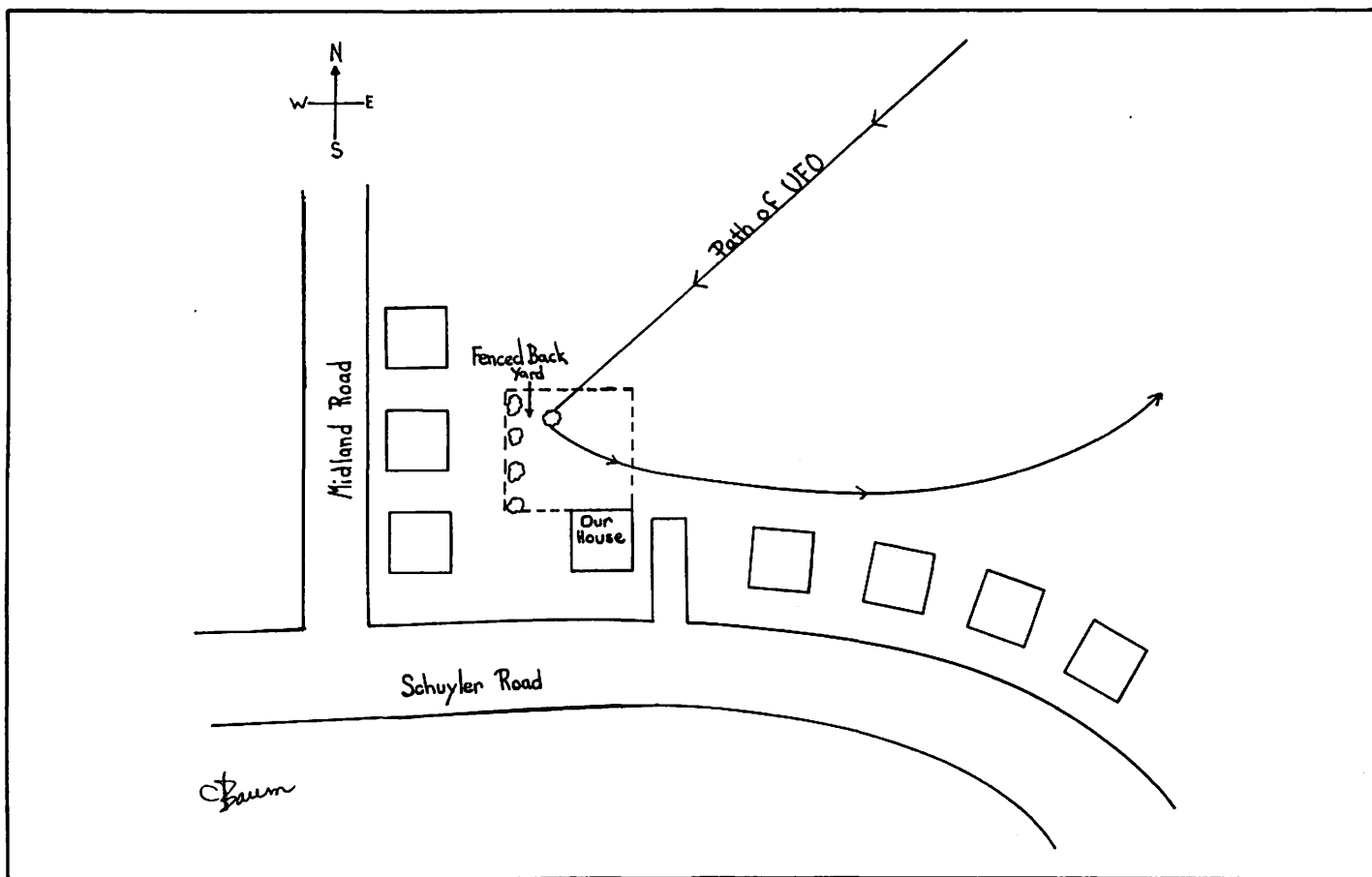
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