

1944: Impilahti / Lake Ladoga, FIN WWII CE1

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FINLAND

A CLOSE ENCOUNTER FROM THE YEAR 1944

Date: Between 26 July and 2 August

Time: During the evening

Place: Impilahti, by the Lake Ladoga

Witness: Jaaku Kivistö

Nature of sighting: Cigar-shaped object at close range

When The UFO Research of Finland was investigating the Loimola case (see this magazine no. 1 1983 pp. 8-10), we sent accounts of Sgt. Kylliäinen's observation to several newspapers and asked for other observers. But to this date we have not got contact with any other observer who could have observed the phenomena in Loimola in 1944. Needless to say, this was expected, while it happened 40 years ago, and a lot of the veterans are already dead. However, we received a letter Jaaku Kivistö, who had observed a strange craft in Impilahti in 1944.

Before we go to his observation some background information could be useful. During July 1944, Finnish troops retired from Eastern Karelia to the so-called U-positions in Pitkäranta, some tens of kilometres east from Impilahti. In these positions, the advance of the Russian troops was stopped and their assault thrown back with heavy casualties on both sides. The front was stabilized in the end of July and did not move further during the war.

Kivistö's letter is, somewhat shortened, the following:

"The case took place during the last part of the war, in the retiring phase. I was serving in the 15th Car Unit as a non-commissioned medical officer. Our company was placed in Impilahti, which is in the northern part of Lake Ladoga. I was living in a building where the corn was dried, and had also my reception there. The building was built on the slope of a hill, so that it would be easy to drive in the corn. From this building a path was leading to the haybarn, where the truck drivers used to sleep. After a while, I chose to sleep there, to get some chatting company. Once, when I had slept there, I woke up quite late and found that the drivers had already gone to service. I started to walk slowly towards the drying building, which was about 300 m away and not visible from the haybarn. I had walked for sometime when I got sight of the drying building and noticed that there was some large object by the side of it. At first I thought it was a truck and greatly wondered who had driven his car there, because it was difficult to park the car on the slope. Then I thought it could not be any of our company's cars, because it was painted reddish, like a carrot; the cars of our company were painted dark green.

After having walked a little bit further, I noticed that the object was hovering in the air. It is possible that it had been doing this all the time, but due to my lower position I hadn't been able to see it. I also got a feeling that the object tried to conceal itself, so I pretended not having noticed it at all, while still walking slowly forward.

The craft was now nearly right over my head at an altitude of some 50-70 m. When I reached the door of the drying building I stopped to observe it better. It was moving very slowly, about walking speed. There were many windows located on its side, but I did not count them. It is difficult to estimate its length, I guess it was about 30 m. In any case it seemed to be rather large. I could see it very clearly; it was a bright summer evening. The contours were sharp and all the windows black. It came to my mind that I could shoot some of the windows broken with my rifle, but then I thought I couldn't do this because I didn't know what it was. There were no markings belonging to any country, nor were there rudders, wings or propellers, and the object was completely silent. During my observation, I saw it from the front, from the side and from behind.

Then it went towards Lake Ladoga and vanished from my sight. I ran

quickly up to the hilltop to look for it, but the object had already vanished.

I thought I should report my observation, but then I figured that it would be wiser not to speak of it to anybody.

It is a strange thing that I forgot the whole incident during the rest of the war, and a long time afterwards. Yet it was such an interesting case and I could remember all the details when it came to my mind again".

Kivistö had also made a drawing of the object in his letter (see fig.1).

I wrote a letter to Jaakku Kivistö and asked for complementary details. From his answer I learned that the colour of the object was actually some kind of metal-looking, greyish colour. The reddish colour he had seen first was probably a reflection of the red colour in the walls of the drying building. When the craft was in the air it was greyish. Kivistö was not sure if the craft, when first observed, was lying on the ground or hovering above it. Later on he could not observe anything special at that spot.

The object was moving in the following way: first it rose slowly upwards and a little to the right from the observer (e.g. eastwards). When at an altitude of 50-70 m it ceased to rise and rotated slowly some 90 degrees to the east (horizontally), and vanished very slowly - walking speed - to the east-southeast over the Lake Ladoga. It did not accelerate.

The windows on the object were rectangular, and their contours sharp. No doors were visible.

I made some research in the Finnish war archives in Helsinki of this and the Loimola case. I got through several war logbooks to find some notice of these cases. From the war logbook of the 15th Car Unit I learned that it came to Impilahti 17 July and moved forward 3 August. It was located in the Metsäkylä area in Impilahti. (see map).

Then I checked the weather. During the observation it had been a clear and sunny morning. In the Impilahti area, the weather was clear and sunny from 17 to 23 July, then it rained for two days, and it was clear and sunny again from 26 July to 3 August. Due to the fact that Kivistö had been sleeping several nights already before the observation, I think we can exclude the first week, so the observation was made sometime between 26 July and 2 August (the 15th Car Unit moved early in the morning of 3 August).

Now I knew the approximate time and place of the observation and started to read the war logbooks of nearby units from the actual period. However, not a single notice was made of anything unknown or unusual during the time in question. Yet they all had sentries 24 hours a day and a duty to report any special event which had happened.

This, I think, does not mean that Kivistö's account isn't true. We may remember that he wrote in his letter that he had ran up to the hilltop to see the object again, but it had already vanished, despite of its slow speed! Instead, I believe that the object somehow vanished "into thin air" or moved to fast to be observed, both common features from other UFO reports all over the world.

About the Loimola case

I also investigated the war logbooks of several units which were in the Loimola area. I think that now I am able to date the Loimola observation exactly.

Firstly, I am certain that the change of cabinet which Sgt. Kylliäinen was referring to in his letter, actually was the resign of president Ryti 1 August 1944. It was noted in some war logbooks that this had caused a lot of discussion and speculations after it had been announced in the radio. Furthermore, it was not mentioned that the cabinet changed. The old one resigned automatically together with the president, and not before 8 August a new one began to work, after Marshal Mannerheim was elected to president 4 August.

This will give us two possible days for the observation, 2 and 3 August. I checked the weather during this time in the Loimola area and found that it was clear



