

1959: Wallingsford, KY

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Plus

Controversial ring trace .

7 September Wallingsford, Kentucky. (about 2:30 a.m.)

Ground trace case. The Ogden story.

Adding some interest to the Lexington sighting was a possible connection with our next incident.

Walter E. Ogden, a 64-year-old rural mail carrier, lived in Wallingsford, an unincorporated community near the town of Cynthiana. Mr. Ogden was a man of excellent reputation. Friends, neighbors and townspeople considered the popular postal worker honest, sincere, and reliable. (117.)

About 2:00 a.m. Monday morning, September 7th, Mr. Ogden suffered a mild asthma attack. Choking, he got out of bed and went outside to get some fresh air. The weather was muggy and warm. Near the back door was an old cistern covered with wood. Half awake, Mr. Ogden sat down and leaned against the well top to get comfortable. He may have dozed off for a minute but wasn't sure when asked about it later. The view from the rear of Mr. Ogden's home extends beyond the backyard. Bert Hamm's farm was visible, and on that property is a pasture in a small valley surrounded in part by high hills covered by trees.

Without warning a bright light made Mr. Ogden open his eyes. About 40 feet above the trees in the direction of the pasture, was a glowing, "pumpkin-shaped" object with no superstructure. (118.) The thing was hovering. Questioned about the object's appearance, Mr. Ogden said the thing was a: "...sort of grayish color, only all around this thing, which had a funny shape, there was a bluish light, as if the thing were giving it off. I remember I could plainly see fences, bushes, and so on within a few hundred feet of it, so it must have been giving off quite a bit of light." (119.) Investigators learned the glow seemed phosphorescent: "Tree tops could be seen 150 feet away by the light given off by the object. The light was such that it did not bother Ogden's eyes. It was described as being like a light given off by a radium dial on a watch or clock." (120.) For a minute or so, Mr. Ogden stared at the object as it remained parked in the air. And then something happened: "All of a sudden a blaze of fire of a bluish nature streaked from the bottom of it and the thing rose about 500 feet." (121.) Moreover: "The object left in its place above the trees a perfectly formed [blue] smoke ring, apparently formed by the sudden acceleration, and which remained for minutes and then disintegrated." (122.) When the object reached 500 feet, it zoomed away horizontally. As Mr. Ogden described it, the thing: "...moved toward the east so fast it was out of sight in the 'snap of a finger.'" (123.) And it: "...made no noise except a sort of 'poof'-- like gunpowder ignited in the open." (124.) Finally: "Upon leaving, the object assumed a brilliant blue illumination." (125.)

Later that morning when Mr. Ogden was up and around in the light of day, he told friends and neighbors about his experience but no one took him seriously. He became the butt of friendly jokes. (126.)

The rest of the Wallingsford story would be played out beginning September 13th.

13 September Wallingsford, Kentucky.

The official investigation.

On Sunday, September 13th, Ogden's next door neighbor, W.F. Lee, had a family reunion. Mixing with the crowd was the "saucer-sighter." According to Ogden:

"...while we were eating a picnic lunch several people were kidding me about the flying saucer. A group of young fellows decided to go up into the field and look where it had been. When they reached the spot they yelled for the rest to come up there. We did, and there was a large circle burned right into the ground.

"The circle was 12 feet, three inches in diameter. Not everything had been burned, only a narrow ring nine inches wide leaving the center normal in appearance." (130.)

Someone at the reunion phoned the Kentucky State Police. Sometime after that State Troopers arrived. The officer in charge seems to have been Trooper Kenneth Eggem. (131.) Some interesting comments have been attributed the State Police by the APRO investigator:

"Upon observing the location of the UFO's hovering, they questioned Mr. Ogden as to why he had not reported it and informed him that they had standing orders to report such incidents to Air Force Intelligence immediately. Mr. Ogden sat in the State Patrol car while they radioed headquarters [in the city of Morehead] and were put through to Wright-Patterson Airfield in Dayton, Ohio, which in turn ordered the Air Force agents to Ogden's home." (132.)

Meanwhile, Sheriff Bob Stokely and some of his deputies reached the scene and patrolled the area. (133 .)

14? September The FBI, the Air Force, and the Army show up.

There is some confusion over who investigated officially and when they arrived. It seems that the Sheriff had something to do with the appearance of the FBI:

"Sheriff R.L. Stokely stated that FBI Agent Joseph Mooney, Resident Agent

at Cynthiana, Kentucky, interviewed the sheriff at the latter's office a day or two after 'authorities' were notified. Mooney did not go to the site but advised Stokeley to call a number in Louisville, which he did. Two men then went to the site, where they took soil samples, photographs and measurements and made tests for radioactivity. They identified themselves to Stokeley as Stark from Lexington, and Thomas from Louisville..." (134.)

Who were these two men? Mr. Ova J. Gulley, who lived directly across the road from Ogden, was certain that at least one person who took pictures of the site was a U.S. Air Force investigator (135.) A story in the *Fulton Leader* said: "The Army officials who visited the scene Monday questioned Mr. Ogden and others concerning the incident and took extensive pictures and measurements. (136.) An APRO investigator mentions "two AF agents and several other people." (137.) The APRO man tells it like this:

"Two AF agents arrived, giving their names as Mr. Thomas from Louisville and Mr. Stark from Lexington (the photographer), as well as several other people of whom Mr. Ogden was told was an FBI agent [agent(s)? None of the accounts mention uniforms]. They requested the County Sheriff to have the area roped off and guards stationed around the perimeter. The agents had a Polaroid Land camera and a Speed Graphic [a much superior camera] with which they proceeded to take pictures from all angles. They built a small fire and with the Polaroid they took a picture, passed it around and then burned it. The number of pictures taken with the Polaroid is not known, but amounted to more than one roll. Pictures taken with the Speed Graphic were kept. Witnesses and APRO's investigator suggested the Polaroid was used to determine correct angles for areas and other places. The surrounding area was thoroughly searched but apparently nothing additional was found," (138.)

Lowell Denton, editor of the *Flemingsburg Gazette*, was less certain than Mr. Gully the photographer was Air Force. He published that the official investigators included: "...an FBI agent and an AF or Army photographer from Lexington..." (139.)

The Wallingsford case file in Air Force BLUE BOOK records was prepared by an Army outfit, "Region V, 109th CIC Group, Louisville, Kentucky." (140.) The report was on loan but the loan was rescinded and the material apparently became a permanent part of BLUE BOOK. (141.) Its possible no Air Force people were ever at Wallingsford.

"Told to get out."

This information about the Army is interesting in light of what NICAP investigator William Leet told Keyhoe:

"One of the Lexington FBI agents told me this Morning [29 October 59] that his office made a preliminary report to FBI Headquarters on the Sept 7th Wallingsford sighting and was told that the FBI has no jurisdiction in such cases, exclusive jurisdiction being in the OSI at Wright-Patterson; that the CIC sent in a man on this sighting and he was 'told to get out.'" (142.)

Gray Barker asked Ogden if he was questioned. The Postal worker replied: "For two solid hours, just like Philadelphia lawyers. I have never been through such a cross-questioning in my life." (143.)

The "ring hoax."

What attracted a lot of attention was the smell. The *Fulton Leader* published a: "...very peculiar odor resembling gas and toxic fumes." (144.) The APRO investigator described it this way: "A very strong odor resembling that of sulfur." (145.) Mr. Ogden likened it to "gasoline." (146.) Ogden's son-in-law, Charles Faulconer, said it reminded him of "fuel oil." (147.) The Army CIC report in BLUE BOOK files said the burned area: "...smelled of a fuel product similar to kerosene." (148.)

Apparently it was the *smell* of some conventional inflammable liquid that made the Air Force evaluate the whole case a hoax. Unfortunately, although soil samples were taken, no mention was made of any test to confirm the presence of a fuel product!

Mr. Lowell Denton, publisher of the *Fleming Gazette*, told the NICAP investigator over the phone he: "...did not notice any [smell] when one of them [official investigators] held a sample of soil under his nose." (149.) Moreover, Mr. Denton mentions an observation of the site on, or about, the 13th of September. The impression is that he made a personal visit:

"...the pasture in which this existed was mostly in weeds and wild grass—very little Bluegrass—and that the burned ring was not black and charred, as though caused by a grass fire, but was burned only brown, the way a weed killer might leave it..." (150.)

During a trip to Wallingford in November Leet was shown the ring site by Mr. Ogden. Leet wrote:

"He showed me a crimson band on the pine trees about 30 yards from the ring. The band is about 25 yards long and about *4 feet deep* [My emphasis-- L. Gross] It is horizontal and not parallel with the ground, which slopes. If it is a prank it would have been very hard to accomplish." (151.)

NICAP investigator Leet has even more to add. Early in 1960 he and an engineer named Pat made a second trip to Wallingford to take a look at the site. Leet wrote Richard Hall:

"Your letter of January 28th with the information that ATIC considers the Wallingford case a hoax, is very interesting. Pat Riddle and I went over there again last Sunday and surveyed the area again as his notes on the previous survey disappeared. The ring is a definite depression in the soil about 1-1 1/2 inches deep which has been noticeable to Pat all along, and which could not have been caused by the burning of fuel oil or gasoline." (152.)

There is also the possibility we have two events here. One could be Ogden's sighting, and the other a "ring hoax."
