

STRANGE BUT TRUE STORIES

THE ROSWELL MYSTERY

Sometime during the first week of July 1947, *something* crashed near the town of Roswell, New Mexico. To this day there's disagreement about whether it was a weather balloon or an alien spacecraft.

Several people in Roswell said they'd seen a burning object pass over the town. The next day, Mac Brazel was herding sheep when he saw the wreck for himself. It was about the size of a football field!

He picked up pieces of the wreckage and showed them to his neighbors, the Proctors. Loretta Proctor said one scrap "looked like lightweight wood." Brazel and Proctor tried to cut it and burn it, but they couldn't make a mark in it. "It was different from anything we'd ever seen," Brazel said. "Some of the material was like aluminum foil. But when it was

crushed, it would straighten itself out!” Another piece of the wreck had purplish pink figures on it. It reminded him of writing. But it didn’t look like any language he’d ever seen.

Mac Brazel went into Roswell to report the wreck to the sheriff. Then the sheriff called the Roswell Army Air Field. Loretta Proctor remembers that Brazel was held at the army base for a week. “After Mac Brazel came back,” she said, “his story had changed. ‘Well, they say it was a weather balloon,’ he said. And that’s all he would say about it.”

Frank Kaufmann, an officer at the Roswell Army Air Field, remembers the crash, too. “The radar screen lit up,” he recalls. “Then calls started coming in from people driving on highway 285. They said they’d seen ‘some kind of flame going down.’”

Kaufmann immediately went to see base commander Col. William Blanchard. A search party was formed.

Kaufmann was in the search party. “It was pitch black,” he said. “Off the highway, we could see this kind of glow. From 200 to 300 yards away, it didn’t look like a plane or a missile or anything like that. We radioed for the specialists—the chemical boys—to inspect the area. When they told us it was all right to go in, we got our first close look at the debris.

“We were . . . just dumbfounded. We didn’t know what to think. And we couldn’t help wondering how people would react if we told them what we saw. They’d probably think we were out of our minds.

“They were good-looking people, with ash-colored faces and skin. About five feet four, five feet five. Small ears, small noses. Fine features. Hairless. There were five in all. I saw just two of them. One was thrown out of the craft itself. And one was half in and half out of the cabin. Did I mention they were all dead?

“I didn’t go near the craft itself. I just

took a quick look because we were so busy. Our job was to truck everything out of there before daylight. The craft was small. I'd say it must have been 20 to 22 feet long and maybe 10 to 12 feet wide. The strange thing was that the craft carried no fuel. It seemed to be powered by a series of octagon-shaped cells.

"When one of the men noticed that the aliens' skin was deteriorating, we placed them in body bags. The bodies were the first to go, then the craft.

"It's something you live with all your life. You can't erase it from your mind. Seeing those bodies and seeing the craft—we're not alone."

Kaufmann and the other soldiers went back to the base. The men were warned never to talk about the crash. Kaufmann said nothing about it until the 1990s. Then other witnesses also began talking about that strange event in 1947.

One of those witnesses was Glenn Dennis, a man who worked at a funeral

home in Roswell. He said that a man from the base called about the availability of five child-sized caskets. Dennis asked the man what they were for. “‘We’re just having a meeting here,’ the man said. ‘If we ever have an epidemic, we need to know what we have on hand.’”

Later that day, Dennis had to go to the base hospital. Noticing a number of ambulances parked outside, he peered in one of them. He saw something like stainless steel. But it had odd-looking pink, purple, and black shadings.

A few minutes later, Dennis stopped in the hospital lounge for a soft drink.

“A captain was there,” Dennis says, “leaning against the door. I said, ‘Looks like you got a crash.’ The captain demanded to know who I was. Then he ordered two MPs to escort me off the base.”

The next day Dennis met a friend in a coffee shop. This friend was an army nurse from the hospital. Upset and crying, she told him about the aliens that

had been brought to the hospital.

She drew a picture of the aliens on a napkin. They were small creatures, with large heads and eyes. Each hand had four fingers with what looked like suction cups on the tips. A few days later, the nurse was transferred to England.

“I didn’t talk about it until 1990,” Dennis said. “I just didn’t want to get involved. I never told my wife or anybody else. If I’d told this in 1947, who would have believed it, anyway? I didn’t want my kids getting made fun of because their old man saw flying things.”

Walter Haut was another witness. In 1947, he was an information officer for the army. On July 7, Col. Blanchard told him to write a press release to announce that the army had found a crashed flying saucer.

Haut delivered the press release to two newspapers and two radio stations. Soon the phone was “ringing like mad,” he said. Everyone wanted to know more

about the flying saucer that had crashed.

A few hours later, he was told to put out a new press release. This one said that the crashed object was actually a weather balloon.

Haut never believed it.

In 1994, the Air Force issued a report about the crash. It said that a weather balloon had indeed crashed near Roswell. But it was a top-secret spy balloon. Its purpose was to search the atmosphere for proof of Soviet nuclear tests.

In 1997, another report came out about the dead bodies of so-called aliens. This report said that the “bodies” were really Air Force test dummies.

But many people aren't convinced. Some, like Loretta Proctor, say, “If we're here, why can't other creatures be out there?”