

pair, for we have voluminous accounts from the previous year which show that the bodies, in an advanced state of decomposition, were discovered on August 20, 1966.

Back to square one

So there it rests. For all the resounding phrases and ominous hints of pending arrests, for all the discoveries including the van said to have carried the murdered bodies to the foot of the Morro, and for all the pathological examinations of exhumed bodies (about which nothing was said because nothing was found?), we find ourselves well and truly back in square one, and to boot, with some exasperating carelessness over the dates. In the end the police had succeeded in adding just one 1967 ingredient to the 1966 mixture, and that was the speculation that Miguel and Manuel had met their murderer after their call at an electronic equipment store in Niterói—where they were in no hurry—and before their call for mineral water at a bar where they

displayed a marked degree of urgency.

With a pious hope expressed in the *Correio da Manhã* that the mystery would be solved in a week, the case once again disappeared into limbo.

Alarming suggestions and unpleasant undertones inherent in the 1966 discoveries had no doubt led to questions being asked when, after a year, nothing had been resolved about the deaths of the technicians. Was the case allowed to re-appear briefly so that the police could project the idea of a “murderer”? After all, down-to-earth human mayhem is so much more reassuring than wild hints about spiritist dabblings with dark forces, or any suggestion that the men in the lead masks were done away with by a UFO, or even a great big glob of plasma.

NOTES

- 1 Bowen, C. *The Mystery of the Morro do Vintém*. FSR Vol. 13, No. 2. March/April 1967.
- 2 Brazilian newspapers account, by courtesy of Nigel Rimes. Translations by Gordon Creighton.

TWENTY YEARS BACK

By Brinsley Le Poer Trench

ON October 1, 1948, in the words of the late Edward J. Ruppelt, former head of the USAF Project Blue Book investigating flying saucers “the third big sighting of 1948, Volume III of “The Classics” took place”.

We have already covered the Mantell tragedy, as well as the Chiles and Witted sightings, in the last two issues. Now we will take a look at the strange duel that Lieutenant George F. Gorman, of the North Dakota Air National Guard, had with a UFO.

Gorman was flying into the Dakota town of Fargo after a cross-country practice flight. At around 9.00 p.m. he decided to land after flying around the locality for a while. He called the control tower and received permission to do so. A Piper Cub was going down just before him. However, he noticed another object pass him on his right. He called control tower again and was assured that apart from the Cub no other plane was in the vicinity.

The fighter pilot decided to investigate the object that he had just seen. So, he pushed his F-51 into a turn and moved in towards the UFO.

Gorman was now above the object which appeared to be a shining white light, blinking on and off. Then he made a bold decision and swooped down upon it.

Then, as Gerald Heard described the action “quick as a matador with a charging bull”, the object “side-stepped”.

Gorman realised now that the object was only a foot or less in diameter. Suddenly, it made a dart for the control tower, hotly pursued by the gallant Gorman in his F-51.

At 7,000 feet the UFO turned and Gorman tried without success to get closer. For twenty minutes the fighter pilot and the UFO dived and turned in probably the strangest aerial duel that has ever occurred in the history of aerobatics. At times Gorman nearly blacked out trying to follow the incredible tight turns and gyrations of the UFO which completely out-manoeuvred him.

This fantastic aerial dance came to an end when the “light” suddenly climbed away into the sky at great speed and disappeared.

The tower control man had seen the UFO and observed it through his night binoculars. According to Ruppelt four other witnesses saw the object, but did not see all the action as later described by Gorman. They were the pilot of the Cub and his passenger, and two CAA personnel on the ground.

Project Blue Book concluded that Gorman was duelling with a lighted balloon. Ruppelt pointed out in his book that many pilots have been fooled by lights.

Ruppelt has always seemed to me a very broad-minded, unbiassed and capable investigator. However, many people must have doubts as to the validity of his conclusions on this particular occasion.

Gorman told ATIC investigators “I had the distinct impression that its manoeuvres were controlled by thought and reason”.

Could not this object have been remotely controlled from some space ship miles above the earth?

I would like to quote what Gerald Heard wrote in his book on the same lines: “There is then no escaping the conclusion—as all who were in on that play agreed—that there was an intelligence guiding that ‘Light’. That is interesting, if perhaps a little too much so. What is not only interesting but heartening is that that intelligence showed itself considerate. It wanted to learn about us and it was not only clever in the way it did so, but considerate”.

Since the Gorman affair in 1948 there have been other cases involving remote controlled lights and in my submission it is a little too easy a way out to write this particular object off as a lighted balloon.

SOURCES

- The Report on Unidentified Objects*, by Edward J. Ruppelt. Doubleday & Co., 1956.
The Riddle of the Flying Saucers, by Gerald Heard. Carrol & Nicolson, 1950.