

Historical Sightings 1517 - 1749

1517 Rumania, Moldavia: A large blue glowing disk appeared and remained in the sky for some time.

1520 Prussia, Erfurt: Two burning suns were observed. The report says that a great burning beam then landed, took off again and then became circular in shape.

1528 Holland: From the Siege of Utrecht in Holland. "A cruel and strange sight was seen in the sky, which terrified the townspeople and made the enemy think he would get the city. It was the form of a Burgundian cross right over the city, high in the sky, yellow in color, and fearful to behold."

1529 Two burning suns were seen at Erfurt, Prussia. Then a great "burning beam" landed suddenly. It took off again into the sky, where it became circular in shape.

1554 France: "There appeared, about the moon, a burning fire, emitting a great noise, what seemed to be the point of a lance, turning from side to side, from east to west, casting out flames on all sides."

1561 Germany, Nuremberg: The entire sky over, was filled with cylindrical objects and spinning discs, some say as many as 200, spouting numerous black, red and orange spheres.

1566 Basel, Switzerland: Many black spheres were seen moving through the sky at great speed at around sunrise. August 7th is close to the peak of perhaps the largest meteor shower of the year, the Perseids, which can be very spectacular. It is tempting to try to link the Basel phenomena with the meteors, but it is unlikely that even the Perseids would produce enough rocks large enough to be seen as dark objects.

1569 China: In the evening, a flaming star appeared in the sky. It was regarded as an omen of serious changes announcing the fall of the Chu Dynasty.

1577 Germany, Tubingen: "Objects came out of the clouds resembling large, tall and wide hats and they landed in great numbers and in a variety of colors." From Pierre Boaistuan.

1593 England, London: A "flying dragon" surrounded by flames was seen over the city.

1606 Japan, Nijo Castle: A whirling ball of fire was seen hovering over the castle.

1619 Switzerland, Fluelan: A prefect of a Swiss Canton saw a long, bright object flying along a lake near Fluelen.

1643 England: From diarist, John Evelyn. "I must not forget what amazed us exceedingly the night before, namely, a shining cloud in the air in a shape resembling a sword, the point reaching to the north. It was as bright as the moon, the rest of the sky being very

serene. It began about 11 at night and vanished not till about one, being seen by all the south of England.”

1649 Germany, Hamburg: A fireball which "moved in bounds up and down" was observed.

1663 Russia, Robozero: A fiery ball of light stopped over a lake. The noisy object gave out blue smoke and two beams of light projected ahead of it. Fisherman on the lake were burned by the intense heat. The object disappeared and returned again about one hour later. It was observed by many groups of witnesses.

1676 Edmond Halley, the astronomer who discovered Halley's comet, could recall two accounts involving unidentified crafts. His first experience was when he saw a "Vast body apparently bigger than the moon." He estimated it at 40 mi. above him. He also stated that it made a noise, "Like the rattling of a great cart over stones." After estimating the distance it traveled in a matter of minutes, he came to the conclusion that it moved at a speed greater than 9,600 mph.

1680 France: The government issued a commemorative coin of a UFO sighting.

1686 Germany, Leipzig: A fiery ball of light was seen to travel east to west before hovering some seven minutes in the sky at an estimated altitude of 30 miles. It was about half the size of the moon and gradually vanished from view.

1694 Wales, Montgomeryshire: "A fiery exhalation...a furlong broad" rose out of the sea burning straw, hay and barns. Grass tainted, killing cattle, and skin affected.

1700 USA: In the US, there is an 18th century Indian legend about luminous humanoid beings who paralyzed people with a small tube. In variations of these tales, Indian women were even said to have married a couple of these "star people.”

1716 Edmond Halley's second experience was 39 years after his first in 1676. Halley saw an object that hovered for more than two hours.

1718 East Indies, Lethy Island: A large fiery mass fell and exploded on the ground. Subsequently a jelly-like mass, silvery and scaly, was said to have been found.

1731 England, Sheffield: Thomas Short saw what he later described as "a dark red cloud, below which was a luminous body which emitted intense beams of light. The light beams moved slowly for a while, then stopped. Suddenly it became so hot that I could take off my shirt even though I was outdoors [this is the dead of winter!]. This meteor was observed over Kilkenny, Ireland, where it seemed like a great ball of fire. It was reported that it shook that entire island and that the whole sky seemed to burst into flames.” The next afternoon, local manuscript records show, the "meteor" appeared over Romania: "...there appeared in the west a great sign in the sky, blood red and very large. It stayed in place for two hours, separated into two parts which then rejoined, and the object disappeared toward the west.”

Italy, Firenze: Immediately before an earthquake, a luminous cloud was seen in the sky. It was watched until it disappeared over the horizon.

1733 England, South Dorset, Fleet: Dec 8 - James Cracker saw a silvery disc fly overhead in broad daylight. Here is his eyewitness account: "Something in the sky which appeared in the north but vanished from my sight, as it was intercepted by trees, from my vision. I was standing in a valley. The weather was warm, the sun shone brightly. All of a sudden it re-appeared, darting in and out of my sight with an amazing coruscation. The color of this phenomenon was like burnished, or new-washed silver. It shot with speed like a star falling in the night. But it had a body much larger and a train longer than any shooting star I have seen. Next day Mr. Edgecombe informed me that he and another gentleman had seen this strange phenomenon at the same time as I had. It was about 15 miles from where I saw it, and steering a course from east to north."

1741 England, London: Lord Beauchamp was in Kensington Gardens when he observed a ball of fire in the sky. It seemed as if it was eight inches in diameter but grew until it was about a yard and a half.

1742 England: An account by a Fellow of the Royal Society: "I was crossing St James park when a light rose from behind the trees and houses, from the south and west, which at first I thought was a rocket of large size. But when it rose 20 degrees, it moved parallel to the horizon, but waved like this (the speaker drew an undulating line) and went on in the direction of north-by-east. It seemed very near. Its motion was very slow. I had it for about half a mile in view. A light flame was turned backwards by the resistance the air made to it. From one of burning charcoal. That end was aflame like bars of iron, and quite opaque in my sight. At one point on the longitudinal frame, or cylinder, it issued a train in the shape of a tail of light more bright at one point on the rod or cylinder; so that it was transparent for more than half of its length. The head of this strange object seemed about a half a degree in diameter and the tail near three degrees in length."

1749 Japan: For four days, three round objects were seen in the skies.

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