

pictures." Dr. J. Allen Hynek, then with the Air Force's Project Blue Book, said, "I have no knowledge yet whether the pictures are authentic; in all honesty, at this moment, I cannot call them a hoax."

After two weeks of examination at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Hynek added that a hoax was considered less likely, although not ruled out entirely. As the years passed, this photo showed up as a favorite example of a Daylight Disc in lectures and magazine articles. The author of a recent book about the Project Blue Book files even drew particular attention to this photo. Yet, nine years later, the Jaroslaw brothers, now grown men, wrote the following letter to Dr. Hynek:

Dan suggested to make a model of a U.F.O., hang it up with a string and if the photo turned out good, we could play a joke on our family and friends to see their reaction, and then tell them the truth.

Dan made a quick model. Then we wrapped plain white thread with paper tape around two poles several times, and then taped the model to the threads. I was reluctant to waste the film, because I thought the threads and tape would be visible on the photo. The weather conditions were just right, the photo came out so real looking we took some more. At the same time we were taking the pictures, a helicopter flew over the area. Just for the heck of it, I photographed it too.

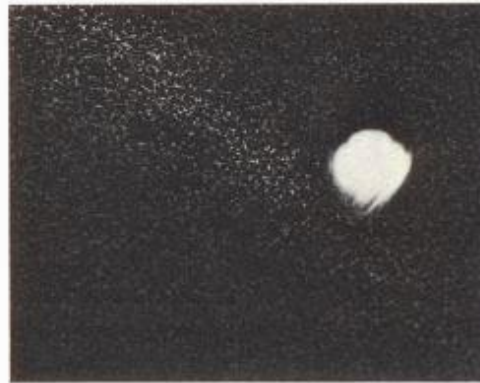
We showed our mother the photos and pretended they were real. But, before we knew it, while we were in another room, she had called the Newspaper.

Dan and I for some reason decided to let the paper have a story. We made it up as the reporter asked the questions. And said the helicopter was with the U.F.O. Also, we just didn't think the story would become as big as it did.

We are sorry if we caused anyone any trouble over this.

Respectfully,  
Grant F. Jaroslaw  
Dan A. Jaroslaw

But we should not demean those investigators who failed to discern the true nature of this "sighting."† They simply were stymied by the general failure of photographs to yield the information needed to separate true UFOs from impostors. Another example of a UFO hoax:



A Nocturnal Light . . . or a prank balloon?

We've seen that UFO photographs have been few in number and suspect in content. Yet "a picture is worth a thousand words"; so they are nonetheless in great demand, not only as "evidence" of the existence of UFOs but for the visual interest in press articles, lectures, and movies—even if the pictures are twenty years old. Motion pictures of UFOs are even rarer . . . and more desired. It is ironic to watch, say, a TV spot on cur-

† Did they have a chance to evaluate this one correctly at the time? There was no radar return from Selfridge Air Force Base—this was excused by stating that the object was probably too "low" for radar; there was a discrepancy in testimony about the order of appearance of the helicopter and the "UFO" as stated by the boys versus the numbers on the back of the Polaroid film—this was attributed to excitement.