

THE CURIOUS CASE OF CAPTAIN MANTELL



The most disturbing U.S. sighting of a UFO is the top-secret Mantell case. On July 7, 1948, at 2:30 P.M., the State Police at Madisonville, Kentucky, reported that they and several hundred persons had seen a huge UFO flying toward Godman Air Base. Col. Guy Hix, C.O. of the base, and his aide, Major Woods, rushed to the control tower where they joined other officers. All kept their eyes peeled on the sky. Suddenly a gap in the clouds showed an immense metallic object—its top an inverted cone—glowing intermittently. Within seconds three F-51 fighter planes, under the command of Capt. Thomas F. Mantell, took off in pursuit. Mantell's voice blasted through the loudspeaker: "I am closing in now to take a good look. It is directly ahead of me and still moving at about half my speed. The thing looks metallic and of tremendous size."

A few moments later, at 3:08 P.M., Mantell's two companions called in to say that they'd seen the UFO with Mantell following close behind, then Mantell's excited voice came through: "It's going up now and forward as fast as I am—that's three hundred and sixty m.p.h. I'm going up to twenty thousand feet, and if I'm no closer, I'll abandon chase."

A few hours later the debris of Mantell's F-51 was found scattered over an area of several miles. After two years of investigation, the Air Force stated its conclusions: "Mantell had probably blacked out at 20,000 feet from lack of oxygen" while the object he chased "is still considered unidentified." Reporters who have subsequently attempted their own investigation have been informed by the Pentagon that all photos of the wreckage of Mantell's aircraft are secret, that the verbatim report of Mantell's conversations with the Godman control tower is secret, and that all statements of his two companion pilots and control-tower observers are secret.

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