

I continued my lecturing. There was great interest in a nuclear physicist giving an illustrated lecture "Flying Saucers ARE Real" and little competition on the college lecture circuit. I had spent 14 years working on a wide variety of highly classified advanced nuclear and space systems for major companies such as General Electric, Westinghouse, Aerojet General Nucleonics, TRW and General Motors, but the bottom fell out of that business in 1970. So I spent the decade of the 1970s full time lecturing, writing, and investigating UFOs. On January 11, 1977 I gave a lecture at the University of Minnesota in Morris, Minnesota. The temperature was 41 below zero and frankly I was astonished that there was a full house. (I recognize there isn't much to do on a January evening in Morris, Minnesota.) After the lecture I went with Bill Moore to John's Pizza Place. Bill and I had met in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, a decade earlier when I was very active in the UFO Research Institute in Pittsburgh. He had an interest in UFOs, but had been only peripherally involved. We talked at some length. He was then teaching high school in Herman, Minnesota, but was interested in a wide variety of things. We had other conversations over the next year about UFO research.

A real breakthrough occurred on February 20, 1978. I was in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to lecture at Louisiana State University and was doing three different interviews at a local television station. The station director was being polite over coffee and out of the blue came up with a sentence that got my adrenalin flowing. He said quite casually "the person you really ought to talk to is Jesse Marcel." "Why is that?" I said. "Well, he handled pieces of one of these things when he was in the service, a long time ago." This casual remark obviously could be very important. I asked for more information. He said "Well, Jesse and I are old ham radio buddies. He lives over in Houma, Louisiana. He's very straightforward and trustworthy."

I had a very busy day and a great crowd at LSU. The next day at the airport, on the way to somewhere else, I checked with telephone information, got a number for Jesse Marcel and called him. He told a fascinating story of having been the base intelligence officer at the Roswell Army Air Force Base in Roswell, New Mexico. He wasn't sure of the date but it was in the late 1940s. He was eating lunch at the officer's club and he received a call from the local sheriff who mentioned that some rancher had come in with pieces of strange wreckage and thought the base might be interested. He checked it out, met with the sheriff, talked to the base commander, Colonel William Blanchard, and went out with a Counter Intelligence Corps agent named Cavitt. The rancher, the next day, showed them the wreckage. They brought back an Army carry-all and an old Buick full of fragments while leaving most of the wreckage out on the ranch. There were several kinds of very strange material which were brought back to the base. Jesse was instructed to put it on a B-29 and to fly with it to Wright Field in Ohio. They were to make a stop at the headquarters of the 8th Army Air Force, of which his group, the 509th Composite Bomb Group, was a part, in Fort Worth, Texas. When they got there, General