

TWO UNUSUAL PHENOMENA.

Ball Lightning at Mt. Gambier.

"At 0130 C.S.T. on Friday 19/9/52, I was bending over the pluviograph viewing the chart by means of a torch when there came a flash making the pluviograph visible as in sunshine.

I was facing a northerly direction and was conscious of the light source somewhere behind me. I turned around and saw a ball of light a little to SSW of zenith.

The ball was about the size the moon would be in a similar position and appeared to be about 200/300 ft. above the station; my estimate of height is only an impression. Colour of the ball was light green. It fell for a short distance in an ESE direction and vanished; the time interval of the light was about 6 seconds, and the appearance of the flash was similar to a flare as used by the Army.

Weather previous to the flash.

Thunderstorm with lightning in the late afternoon. Heavy showers as from CE, wind gust W/41 kts., fifteen minutes before flash.

Weather at time of flash.

Sky, 4/8ths. at 3000 ft. Showers in the area. Temp. Dry 46, Wet 45. Wind W/12 kts.

Following weather.

At Obs. time 0220 C.S.T. there was distant lightning, overcast cloud at 3000 ft., patches at 1000 ft., and wind rising."

- L.F.O'Donoghue (Mt. Gambier)

Condensation Trail over Melbourne.

Considerable public interest was aroused during the afternoon of November 13th by a very well defined condensation trail above Melbourne. This was caused by the flight of a R.A.A.F. Vampire piloted by Wing-Commander D.R. Cuming, well known to many met. men.

Particularly interesting in this case is the fact that the radio-sonde flight from Laverton was made within an hour or so of the occurrence of the trail. Examination of the aerological diagram shows that the humidity trace "cut out" at 655 mbs. (approx. 11500 ft.) but "came in" again at 360 mbs., showing a moister layer between 360 mbs. and 340 mbs. In this layer the relative humidity increased upwards being 29% at the bottom and 41% at the top of the layer. Above this layer the air was again very dry to the tropopause at 220 mbs. It seems likely that this moister layer at approximately 26-28000 feet was the region in which the condensation trail formed.

A. F. Woolcock (.. ..)

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