Maybe these two men didn’t know a flying saucer from a hole in the ground, but they used both to sucker their victims. They were almost $400,000 ahead when TRUE’s reporter broke the amazing case of the...

**Flying Saucer Swindlers**

By J. P. CARN

DENVER

Back in 1952, the September issue of true ran a story of nine titled *The Flying Saucers and the Mysterious Little Men*. It was an excerpt of a best-selling book that told of saucers from Venus, manned by 3-foot characters in blue suits, that landed on earth. Despite solemn prefatory notes by both the author and publisher, the book was a complete hokum. I recalled up good that the little-men-from-Venus yarn was as phony as a headcheese’s bow and smile.

Digging into the story of the bogus flying saucers, I learned that two men—Silas M. Newton and Leo A. GeKauser—took their machine and fooled it off on a gullible victim. When we broke the story, we knew and I had some pretty good ideas why Newton and GeKauser had dreamed up their story, but we couldn’t prove our suspicions. And what you can’t prove you don’t print, so we said what we could, and hoped for the best. Thanks to true’s vast readership, we got the true truth and we were hoping for, and now we can give you the wrap-up story on an slippery pair of swindlers as ever came down the pike.

It happened like this...

As we had suspected, while chasing the flying saucer story to earth, Newton and GeKauser were more than a couple of fan-loving pranksters. Newton had a record that went back to 1931. It started with an arrest for contempt in Montclair, New Jersey, and worked its way through grand larcen...
croy, fake stock statements, and interstate transportation of stolen property. He had never been brought to trial on any of these charges, but he hadn't been bucking for Eagle Scout for the last 20 years either. Newton happened to be a man with a plan for getting all the book.

Geisebauer had a suspended sentence for violation of the Federal Housing Act.

It was a pretty safe bet that this plan wouldn't have taken time and trouble to pull off the flying saucer hit—complete with "pieces of the action"—if there hadn't been a pay-off for them. The pay-off was simple, we found.

Newton and Geisebauer were "doodletuggers," a term used in the oil industry for men with mysterious devices of one sort or another that are supposed to locate oil. Newton, the front man for the scam, was a doodletugger deluxe. He set up the Newton Oil Company with offices in Denver, stocked in the right circles, maintained a lavish suite at the Brown Palace Hotel, and drove only a Cadillac. His golf game was good; at one time he was amateur champion of Colorado.

Newton's contribution to the art of doodletugging was based on the principle that people are inclined to believe what they see in print. As president of the Newton Oil Company, he would promote petroleum trade publications to print articles he wrote. These inevitably contained one of Newton's own geophysical theories cooked in elaborate, pseudo-scientific double-talk.

Newton used the articles as a ruse. He would line up a prospect, trek him to the floor show of the Cadillac, the offices of the Newton Oil Company, the suite at the Brown Palace and at some point casually hand him the most recent article by that renowned authority on geophysics, Silas M. Newton.

After that, when Newton's doodletug indicated the presence of oil on a piece of property, it wasn't hard to believe there was a fortune underneath. Newton conned an amazing number of suckers into buying oil leases on some of the most barren country in the country.

But the technique had its limitations. The only magazines that would print Newton's articles were trade publications. Oil men who stumbled through them shrugged off Newton's wild geophysical double-talk as the scribblings of an eccentric.

What Newton needed was some method of presenting his theories to large numbers of people who knew nothing about oil. If he could manage that, he'd have his prospects coming to him.

The book about the flying saucers was the answer. Silas M. Newton is the kind of salesman who could peddle a steam calliope as a funeral parlor. The story he painted off on the man who actually wrote the book set Newton up as a world-famous geophysicist and multimillionaire. It gave him a perfect background to operate from.

The flying saucer yarn was built. When you got through reading the book, you might still have your doubts about the saucers, but you believed Newton was a genius when it came to locating oil—isn't that what you happened to know something about the subject. And Newton wasn't interested in people who knew anything about oil.

Geisebauer, Newton's side-kick, appeared in the book merely as "Dr. Geo." the mysterious and anonymous electronic wizard who had masteredmind undersea locating devices for the government. He was now supposed to be on Newton's payroll, developing oil locating instruments.

It was just fantastic enough to become a best seller. With access to the letters (Continued on page 60)
Flying Saucer Swindlers

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that came in to the author, Newton was able to build up a sucker list that was a man's dream.

Officially the law couldn't do anything to Newton until a formal complaint was filed. And there were no complaints. It took a lot of the author's resources publicly to be taken for a sucker - and that's what protection a con man has.

What I tried to was gauge young man who had been clipped by Newton and Gelbauer, and who'd advertised to admit it. With the help of the editors of various, I paid as much of Newton and Gelbauer's back- ground as I could provide. The Flying Saucers and the Mysterious Little Men, hoping some readers would turn up the lead we needed.

We had the jackpot with the first letter that came in.

It was from a Mr. A. J. C. Yawden who enclosed a windmill clip from a Los Angeles newspaper. The ad read:

"America's Greatest Swindler? - all persons having dealings with SILLAS H. NEWTON, NEWTON'S OIL CO., importers of Denver, Colorado, New York, Illinois, Wisconsin, California, etc., relative to oil investments. Connaught Royal and similar stock. Contact Box 34716 by letter or wire. This is my current address."

I wired. While I waited out the answer, the mail poured in from all over the country: complaints from people who already knew about Newton and Gelbauer; that individual, some others. It showed me that the stuff was pretty good and no use making machines in a day or two to last the 20 years. But in all the letters, there wasn't one that looked like it might turn into a valid complaint.

I was still waiting for an answer to my wire when I got two phone calls. One was from a man named Frazier in Denver. The other was from a Mr. Kershner in Phoenix, Arizona. Both said they had been cheated by Newton-Gelbauer. The answer to my wire, when it came, was also from Denver, very succinctly enough. A Mr. Kershner there had been getting the ads in newspapers all over the country. He wrote Frazier he could come and see him immediately.

Since it appeared that I was going to the Denver story, I made arrange- ments to go west. Pete's work isn't for them on special assignments.

Dr. Kershner turned out to be a neat fellow.

"Somebody cleaned all the lines while the umphire was lookin'.
Government property. However, Ge

German was a difficult and sometimes

satisfying experience. He enjoyed the

challenge of working with his team to

solve complex problems. He was a

dedicated professional who always put

his clients first. His dedication to his

profession earned him the respect and

admiration of his colleagues. When he

died suddenly, his loss was felt by all

who knew him. His memory lives on

throughout the firm as an inspiration to

all who continue to work there.

Herman Lew, a 25-year-old employee,

was one of the few who had the

misfortune to be present at the time of

the disaster. He described the events

leading up to the tragedy:

"At about 10:00 PM, I noticed that the

fire alarm was activated. I immediately

called the fire department, and they

arrived on the scene within minutes.

The building was completely

engulfed in smoke and flames. I

managed to evacuate the building

safely, but I saw many colleagues

struggling to get out.

"The firefighting efforts lasted for

several hours, and the building was

eventually declared a total loss.

"Despite the devastation, the firm

remained committed to supporting its

employees and maintaining its

operations. The community rallied

around the firm, offering condolences

and support.

"Herman Lew's memory continues to

influence the firm's culture, serving as

a reminder of the importance of safety

and preparedness."
There was just one more question, but it was the big one. "Would you file a complaint, Mr. Fleder, even if it meant admitting publicly you'd been taken for a sucker?"

Fleder began working again. "I'll do anything if it helps stop Newton and Gebara."

We went to see the Denver D.A.- Bert King. He listened to Fleder's story, and charted a plan of action. Witnesses had to be located and the actual site of Fleder's thefts in the Mojave had to be pinpointed. Fleder had to turn over all the operation that had cost him nearly $5,000 and the D.A.'s office wanted to know what really happened out there. Since I was going to check in both Phoenix and Mojave, I agreed to do a little unofficial leg work. The assignment was to gather such information as possible without tipping Newton or Gebara that investigation was under way.

Herman Corson, the man who had telephoned me in San Francisco, met me at the Phoenix airport. Corson, the proprietor of a defense firm, apparently was given to sampling his wares. He stands 6'5" and weighs 240. At his place, between moonshills of four-layer pastrani sandboxes, he told me his story.

It was the same old routine—flying jacks and super-secret government instruments converted to locate oil. The only difference was that Gebara had complained.

Corson paid Gebara $5,550 for a nebulous oil lease near Casper, Wyoming. For this investment, Gebara gave him a couple of jars of oil, supposedly sampled 60 miles west of his oil, underground photographs (valued for Corson's benefit at $1,500) and a trip to Casper. Corson, who only involved one. The Denver case involved enough money so it would be almost impossible for Newton and Gebara to raise the cash to repay Fleder and quash the suit. Corson's case involved only $5,550.

As usual, both Newton and Gebara would set Newton and Gebara to inspecting all their items, they would certainly find out what was going on in Denver. If that happened, the Fleder's Fleder and his attorney had all the information they needed. There was no doubt that Newton and Gebara could so thoroughly cover up that Denver case never would come to trial.

I asked Corson if he was willing to postpone his complaint until the Denver case was set.

"You're sure you don't mind hearing about my symptoms, Doctor?"

It was a tough decision for him. If he hit Gebara right then, his $8,350 was as good as back in his pocket. If he waited, there was no telling when he'd collect. Finally Herman Corson nodded. He agreed to wait.

Two days later I was in California, checking at the Mojave lease site. I located a slim Appleby who had worked as a driller for Newton. Appleby—a tall, windburned man—has a reputation for being on the level. Although he only worked for Newton for wages, he regrets the association.

"This country's been surveyed by experts," Slim said. "It's full of oil holes. Old ones. Anybody who knows anything about this desert knows that a few hundred feet down there's a layer of granite that runs for miles. And here we were drilling right into the middle of it. That's what I couldn't understand about those fellows."

Appleby had heard the Brinton-scout story, too, the identical story Fleder had been told. He had seen Dr. Gebara and his machines, and hadn't thought much of them; he'd been around oil fields too long.

Appleby wasn't impressed with Newton and Gebara's drilling either. Under Newton's supervision, they lost their drilling tools down the hole, and occasionally, thanks to careless, but the hole itself. As Appleby put it, "At one time or another, we had everything down that hole but the rig itself. Everything, that is, but oil."

At least I knew Newton had actually done some drilling. I had some hard data, so I knew when and how deep I knew where the holes were and I knew how to get in touch with Slim if he were needed for a witness.

That night I was back in Phoenix on my way to Denver. I checked to see how Herman Corson was holding up. He was still sitting tight, but I could see the strain was awful.

Our time was running pretty short. One Friday, October 15, charges were quietly filed in Denver's Justice of the Peace Court instead of the District Court where they would normally have been filed. Warrants were issued for the arrest of Newton and Gebara. By filing in an out-of-the-way court there was a chance the charges wouldn't be spotted before Newton and Gebara could be picked up.

For three days investigators from the D.A.'s office quietly checked with police departments all over the West, trying to locate Newton and Gebara without alarming them. It was a tough assignment.

About 9:30 on the morning of the 14th, a lawyer strolled into the District Court and asked if there were any charges filed against Newson. Obviously, someone had got wind of what was up.

But a few minutes later the FBI, up to this point not very enthusiastic about the Newton-Gebara case, had received authorization from the U.S. Attorney's office to file charges.

"Bribery, 'sucker scientist.' Charged in $30,000 Fraud," was the headline on the Denver Post for all editions.

With no more need for secrecy, all the police bulletins went out for Newson and Gebara. That night—October 15, 1952—agents in Phoenix gained Gebara. Newton was picked up the next morning in Hollywood.

The date was set for June 9, 1953. But before the case actually got into
The trial was postponed more than six months before Newton and Galbraith, on trial for murder, were exonerated by a jury and released.

The trial began on April 20, 1916, and lasted for more than six months. During this time, both Newton and Galbraith were held in jail, and many witnesses were called to testify. The final verdict was not reached until October 19, 1916, when the jury found both men not guilty.

The case is a classic example of a miscarriage of justice, and it brought national attention to the issue of police brutality and the need for a more impartial judicial system.

The trial was held in the Old State House in Boston, and was one of the most bitterly contested in the history of the city. The defense was represented by the well-known attorney, John J. Homes, and the prosecution by the district attorney, John R. Thacher.

After the trial, Newton and Galbraith were exonerated, and the jury recommended that a new trial be held. However, the Superior Court of Massachusetts refused to grant a new trial, and the verdict was upheld.

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