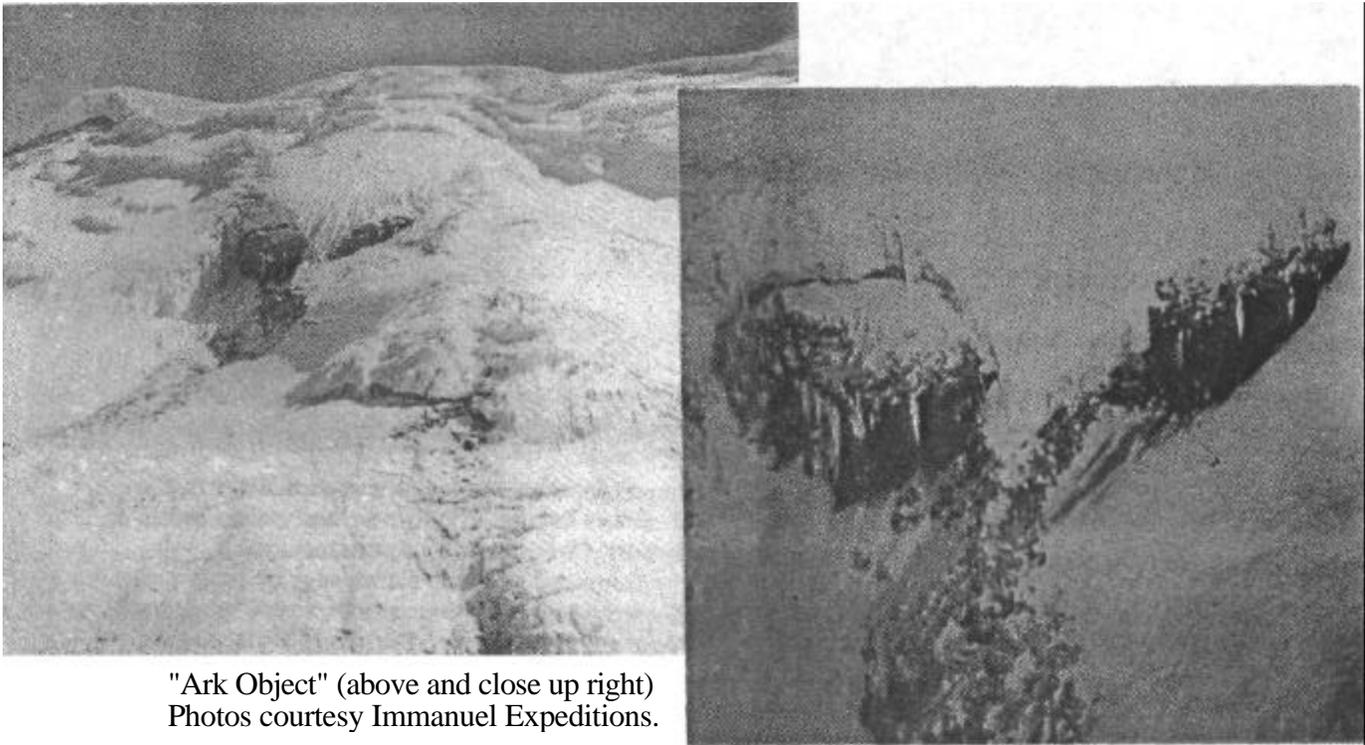


'No Stone Unturned' ARARAT REPORT

January 1990

Bill Crouse, Editor
Fred Reed, Managing Editor

Number 23



"Ark Object" (above and close up right)
Photos courtesy Immanuel Expeditions.

HAS NOAH'S ARK BEEN FOUND?

Near the end of last September, Cable Network News (television) carried the story that the American group, Immanuel Expeditions, was claiming the discovery of Noah's Ark. Later, the story was picked up by both DPI and AP and carried in some newspapers. The story was seemingly slow in developing. There seemed to be a reluctance to carry the story, possibly because "finding the Ark" seems to have become an annual event.

Immanuel Expeditions first revealed their discovery to the Turkish media on September 21. Chuck Aaron, the leader of the group, and pilot of the helicopter, was quoted in both UPI and AP as being one hundred percent certain that what they had photographed from the helicopter were the remains of Noah's Ark.

The reaction in the Turkish press was largely negative. One report stated it couldn't be Noah's Ark since the Turkish

government had already determined that the remains of Noah's Ark were a dozen miles southeast of Ararat (the Durupinar site).

Another report accused Aaron of planting Star Wars devices on Mt. Ararat, and that the search for the Ark was a cover! The same article in the Turkish press claimed Aaron was in cahoots with Dr. Ed Teller, the acclaimed atomic scientist!

Immanuel Expeditions is based in Orlando, FL and is headed up by Chuck Aaron, a helicopter pilot and dealer. He first became involved in the search for Noah's Ark as the

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The "Ark Object" from this overhead angle looks totally natural. Photos courtesy Immanuel Expeditions.



"Immanuel Expeditions Team"
(Standing L-R) David Montgomery, Kathy Montgomery, Chuckle Aaron, B. J. Corbin, Chuck Aaron, Paul Schlemmer, Bob Garbe, John Wanvig, Debbie Redmer; (Seated) Turkish support team.

helicopter pilot of Jim Irwin's team in 1987. They were unsuccessful that year and were not allowed to explore the area of their interest. He returned on his own in 1988 and succeeded in the exploration of the Ahora Gorge (see the Sept.-Oct. 1988 issue of *AR*).

Aaron and his team (see photo) consisting of Bob and Jerry Garbe, B.J. Corbin, David Montgomery, Cathy Montgomery, John Wanvig, Paul Schiemer, and Debbie Redmer made their first series of flights last summer during the month of August.

Bob Garbe, Corbin and Redmer were part of previous expeditions to Ararat under the leadership of Charles Willis of Fresno, CA. Garbe is a pharmacist from Ohio, and was in charge of the scientific experiments to be carried out on the ice cap. David and Cathy Montgomery are son and daughter of Ararat explorer and author, Dr. John Warwick Montgomery. For David, this was his seventh trip to the mountain.

Immanuel Expeditions made a total of three trips to Ararat this summer. On the first, they succeeded in landing the helicopter near the summit of the mountain, which as far as we know may be a first. It was their goal at that time to get sonar readings of the western plateau of the mountain. It was *AR*'s suggestion that this site be further explored (see the Sept.-Oct. issue).

The sonar readings were successfully carried out but with no positive results. They did however, measure the thickness of the ice (256 feet) and conclude that this area of the mountain is most certainly a volcanic caldera. They also flew around the mountain thoroughly exploring all areas above 13,000 feet. Both video and still photography were utilized for further research.

When Aaron's group returned they were somewhat disappointed, but astounded as to the immensity of the glacier melt this past summer. After consulting with other Ark researchers, it was concluded that the severe heat and drought in the mountain area gave them an unprecedented opportunity

that perhaps should be further exploited. Other Ark researchers felt like all known areas of interest should be carefully photographed for further research.

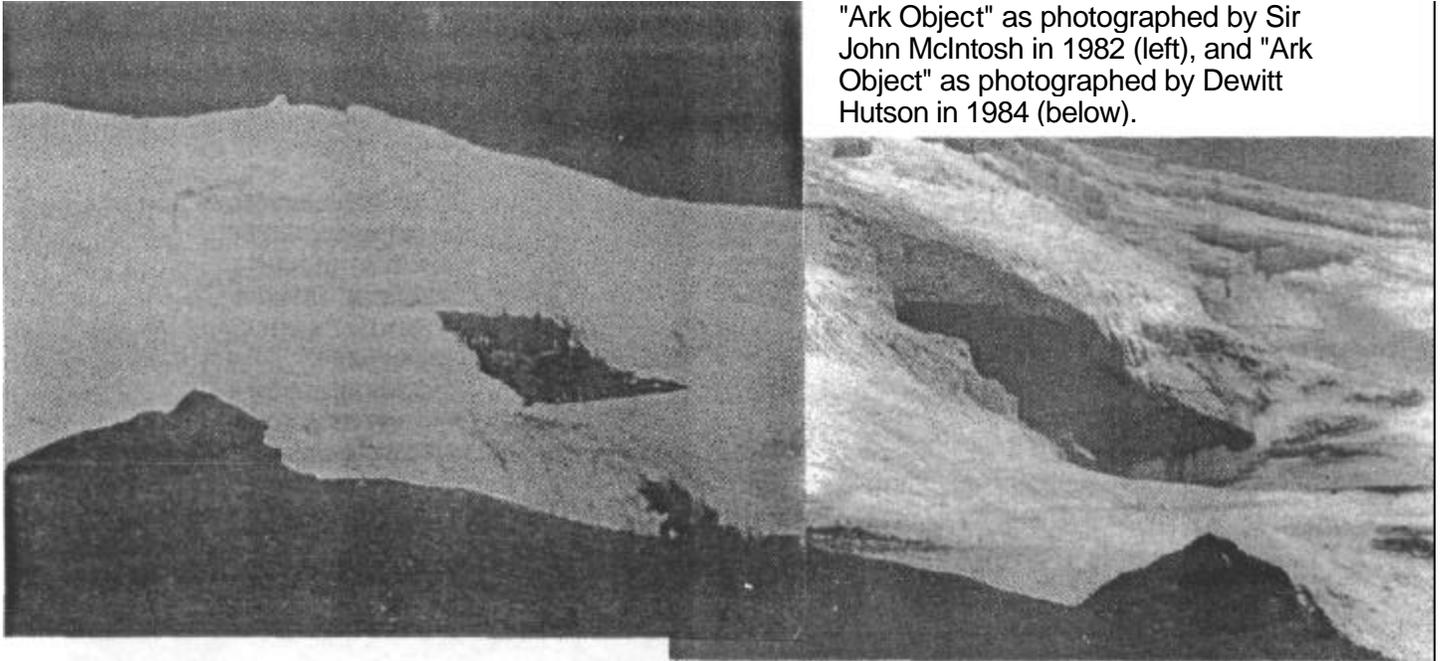
Aaron and his group immediately set about raising funds for a second trip. This time only Garbe and Montgomery were able to return with Aaron. The melt of the ice cap that occurred since the first trip apparently caused the barge like formation to make its appearance on the western side of the mountain. Although this site *was* photographed during the first series of flights (see photo), at that time it looked rather unimpressive.

After returning to the states near the end of September, thinking that they had finally photographed Noah's Ark, it became overwhelming to Chuck and other researchers, that further confirmation was necessary. At first, it was proposed that a climbing team try to reach the site. The veteran climber, Bob Stuplich, was ready to get out his gear once again and fly to Turkey.

However, the snow on the mountain at this late date made this a virtual impossibility. Instead, Aaron and some geologists from the Institute for Creation Research opted for a third series of helicopter flights. Nobody can accuse Chuck Aaron of giving up easily!

One of the geologists, Dr. John Morris, is well-known to our readers, as he has been involved in the search for Noah's Ark since the early '70s. Accompanying John were his brother, Henry Morris U, Grant Richards, Bob Van Kampen and Bill Dodder of High Flight Foundation (Jim Irwin's organization).

This time they attempted to fly as close to the object as possible with the goal of making a more positive identification. Their conclusion, sad to say, was that it was once again only a phenomenon of nature which assumed a very ark-like shape.



"Ark Object" as photographed by Sir John McIntosh in 1982 (left), and "Ark Object" as photographed by Dewitt Hutson in 1984 (below).

The following is Chuck Aaron's submission to *ARARAT REPORT* as he looks in retrospect of the summer's events:

Here are the facts and circumstances surrounding the sighting and claim that our team made regarding the September 15, 1989 flight in Eastern Turkey on the west side of Mt. Ararat at an elevation of 14,500 feet

During the past four years I have spent hundreds of hours in research and have conducted six helicopter flights surveying the area known as ML Ararat in Turkey.

I have studied all the research materials available to date which had been provided me by many fellow ark researchers. This includes the study of aerial photos taken on previous expeditions.

Bob Garbe and I, while on our fifth mission, spotted something that was never seen in previous flights or photos. This was due to the significant glacial melt during the summer of '89. The ice cap had not experienced a melt back of this proportion in at least 30 years, possibly more.

As a result of previous expeditions, we came to the conclusion that the Ark was not located lower than the ice cap. During these previous flights, with at least four people on board the helicopter, we conducted 20 (twenty) complete accumulative circles covering the entire mountain.

On the eve of September 15, 1989, Bob and I saw a "rectangular shape" protruding out of the glacier at 14,500 feet elevation, on the west side of Mt. Ararat. We felt that this was the Ark because it seemed to match perfectly with the Hagopian and Chuchian accounts. This sighting had many similarities to some of the previous documentation surrounding other eyewitness accounts.

We attempted to obtain as much video and still photographs as possible before returning to base camp. Upon return, we reviewed the video footage over and over to make sure of what we had seen. We discussed and analyzed the footage comparing its location and shape with existing documentation.

The footage revealed a flat spot below the object where "Ark Rock" could be located. It matched the reference point from the village of Ortulu, and the reference to the summit in the Chuchian account.

The next morning on the second flight, both Bob and I desperately wanted to be on foot at this point to get a closer look, and possibly obtain samples. I did everything within reason, attempting to land the helicopter at the 13,500 foot level on the flat spot. Unfortunately, the helicopter, a Hughes 500-D, did not have the power to land at that altitude. All we could do as we made slow passes in the helicopter, was to look at it and film it.

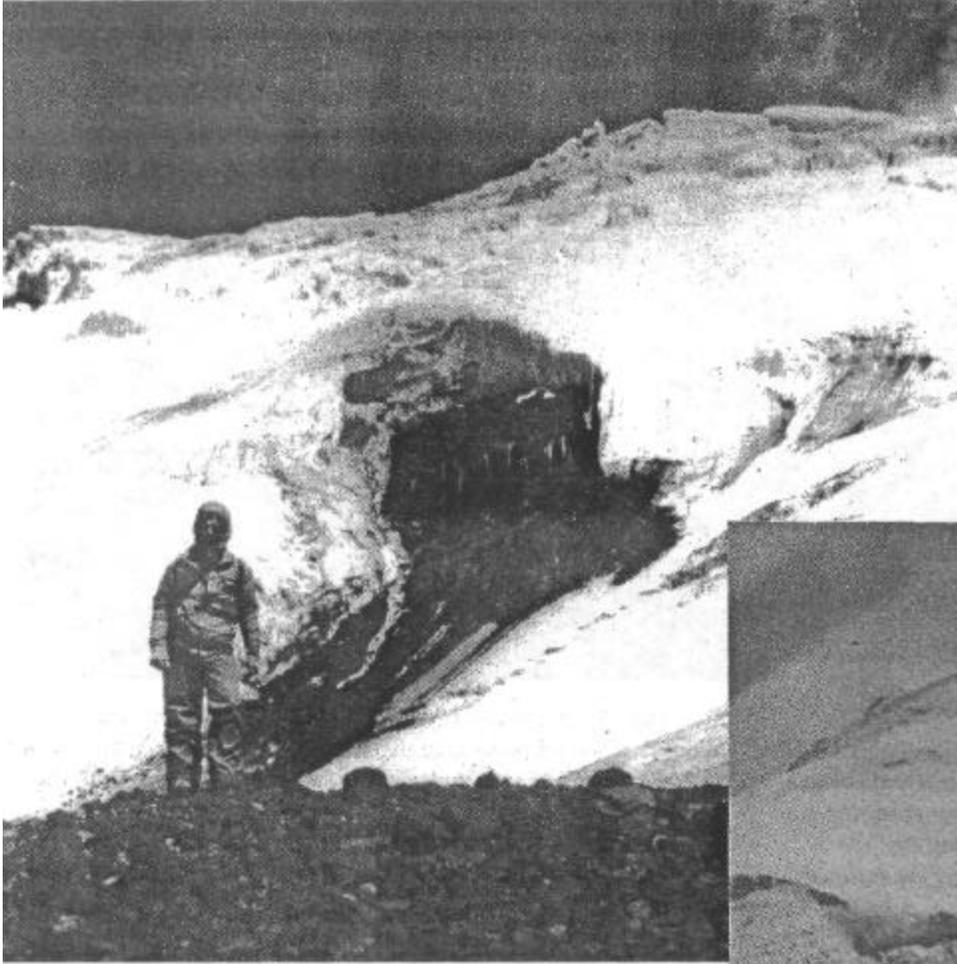
Bob and I strongly felt we were looking at what George Green had seen in 1953 and what the U.S. Air Force Pilots had reported in 1943-45. We thought this was what Hagopian and Chuchian had seen. We are still confident of this.

In order to stay within the good graces of the Turkish officials, we had to provide the government and Turkish press a full release of our findings.

Upon return to the states a third expedition was quickly pulled together. Our objective was to get qualified mountain climbers and geologists to the site for physical samplings. When we arrived at the site October 28, further melt back had revealed even more of the object.

Again we were not able to land due to dangerous conditions. Even though we did not get a sample of this object, we were able to positively identify the object as being composed of rock. Wood could not be seen anywhere when we looked at it with the naked eye or through the lens of a camera. We all agreed while in the helicopter that this was not the Ark.

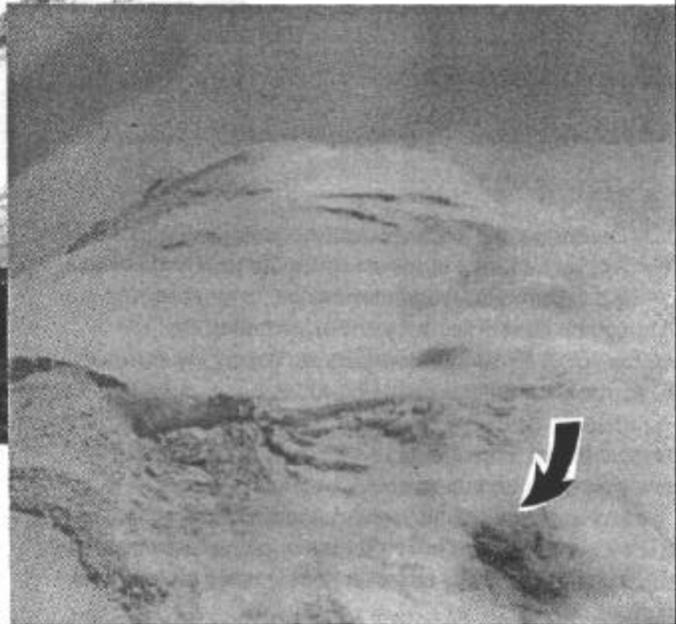
When we returned to base camp and reviewed the new video footage, we also agreed we could not say it was the Ark, nor that it was not the Ark. It definitely looks like the Ark when you are 100 feet or more away with the naked eye, and it also looks like the Ark on all the videos, no matter how close you get. However, when you look at it closer than 100 feet



Notes

If the last issue of *Ararat Report* you received was the June issue, you have not missed any. We do not publish

Sir John McIntosh standing 300-500 feet from "Ark Object" in 1984 (left), and "Ark Object" as photographed by Turkish pilot in 1987 (below).



with your own eyes it simply looks like rock and lava.

These observations are not conclusive, and I feel it is worthwhile to check this area out on foot and obtain samples for conclusive scientific evidence. This will tell us exactly what this object's composition is.

A major question remains: "What does, or should the Ark look like after thousands of years"? No one knows for sure. If this is not the Ark, then there still remain many places that deserve further exploration on the icecap. Once permits are approved, I intend to go back to ML Ararat next year with an airborne sonar device that will look into the ice and then we will be able to determine it's exact location. Once this has been accomplished the mountain will have been totally surveyed including any secrets that may lie inside the glacier.

Released November 30, 1989

Bob Garbe also filed a very interesting and extensive report with the *Bible-Science Newsletter* (December 1989 issue) which we recommend to our readers.

CORRECTION:

In our March-May '89 issue we reported that the February '89 *Moody Monthly* carried the article: "Still Searching for Noah's Ark" by Louis Moore. Please note: This is incorrect as it was *the March '89* issue. Thanks to David Cory for pointing out our mistake. Also, the correct title of the article is "Still Searching for the Lost Ark."

AR during the months of July and August. In September, we traveled to the north side of Ararat-Soviet Armenia. When we returned, the news broke about the Immanuel Expeditions' claim to have discovered the Ark. We then delayed doing an AR until we had the facts. That was not until November! We apologize for being late, and you will not be shorted on your promised subscription. All expiration dates will be advanced on the computer.

• • •

Some of the stories we are working on which will appear in future issues this year (we hope!) are:

"The Chuchian Story"

"My trip to Etchmiadzin"

"Phantom Arks on Ararat"

"Is Hagopian the best witness?"

"Other Mountains, Other Arks: The Conclusion"

"The Spiritual Reasons for the Flood"

A review of books by Dave Fasold and Dick Bright.

THE SUMMER IN REVIEW

For the third time in six years an announcement has been made that the Ark of Noah has been found (Marvin Steffins in '84, Wyatt and Fasold in '85). Not only is the mystery still unsolved, but skepticism is beginning to abound. This writer heard several Christians remark in reference to the news: "You mean Noah's Ark has been found again?" The secular news media even seemed reluctant to carry the story this time.

Aaron and Garbe were certainly within their rights to be excited. We probably would have been had we been there. I hope we are not sounding too critical if we express regrets that there had not been more restraint before going to the media with an announcement. I'm sure in retrospect these two fine Christian gentlemen agree.

Our reasons:

(1) Because of previous untrue (or at least unsubstantiated) claims of discovery, only a near airtight case would have to be made to convince an already skeptical public. What we have in mind is some definitive (the key word) evidence that the object was man-made. When the news broke, our first question was: Is there anything about the object that can be positively identified as being man-made? As many of our readers know, there are "ark shaped" rocks all over the mountain. (In our next issue we will publish some of these.)

(2) Not long after ark researchers had received data as to the exact location of the object, immediate doubts arose in the minds of some seasoned researchers. The reason, some explorers have been fairly close to this object in the past, and some pretty good photographs exist for comparison (see photos).

For the benefit of our readers, we might note that this object is very prominent and easily visible from the village of Dougubayazit. When a bugged-eyed Ark hunter arrives there for the first time, this thing immediately is viewed in wonder. This was the experience of Jim Irwin and yours truly. I remember staring at it for what seemed like hours through binoculars from the roof of the Isfahan Hotel.

Most everyone has concluded that this is some sort of an ice-cave construed from the way the glacial ice moves over and around a protrusion of basalt. We have also noticed that this object is very prominent in the Spot Satellite photos even in those taken at times when there is much snowfall. This gave rise to the theory that perhaps this is a volcanic hot spot.

We have unconfirmed reports that natives have actually been to this site, a very perilous feat indeed, since it lies on a pretty steep slope in the middle of cascading ice! Villagers, we learned, refer to this formation as the "eye of the bird."

(3) Members of Immanuel Expeditions have claimed that this site agrees with the Hagopian testimony. While this could be what Hagopian saw, it is doubtful that this is the site he describes. Hagopian insisted that the Ark could only be found near the summit of the mountain and not at the 14,500 foot level. We also checked with Elfred Lee, who knew Hagopian as well as anyone.

According to Lee, Hagopian never gave any specific location, other than that it was near the summit. We cannot rule out with any finality that this was not what he and his

uncle saw at the turn of the century. He definitely described it as solid rock. He also said he saw wood grain, evidence of a man-made structure and that the roof was entirely covered with green moss!

(4) Immanuel Expeditions' members have also stated that this site agrees with the sighting of another helicopter pilot, George Green, who supposedly saw and photographed the Ark in 1953. According to our research, this was not what George Green saw. In the *Ararat Report* of February -March, 1987, we believe we positively tied Greene's sighting and photographs to the same object photographed by Tom Crotser of the Holy Ground Mission.

People who have actually seen Greene's photographs before they were mysteriously lost, believed we had located Green's photographs when they were shown photos of the Crotser object. The photograph that we published, along with the sketch of someone who viewed the black and white prints (Fred Drake), seems to be convincing to us.

(5) We are also doubtful that this summer's discovery is in agreement with Chuchian's testimony as Immanuel Expeditions' members claim. Chuchian's drawings do seem to put the Ark in this general vicinity, but from his drawings he seems to put his ark between the "ark" of Immanuel Expeditions' and the Parrot Glacier area (in the snow fingers). He also describes the Ark as being in a body of water and most always submerged.

For the benefit of our readers, we will publish our entire file on the Chuchian testimony in the next issue. It is our guarded conclusion that this account is not reliable. It definitely is not first-hand evidence.

What shall we say then about this year's discovery?

We must always be careful not to paint ourselves in the proverbial corner. It does not appear to be anything but a natural object resembling a barge. However, it will take a ground team to verify this. Chuck Aaron is correct when he says we do not know exactly how the Ark should look after all these millenniums. Perhaps the Ark is in there somehow encased in volcanic lava!

We also agree with Immanuel Expeditions' team members that this object is likely what has been noted by some military pilots. To some villagers and shepherds in the area, it could also be the Ark. When viewed on the plateau described by Aaron, it is conceivable how some might mistake this for the Ark.

The bottom line is: The whereabouts of the remains of Noah's Ark is still a mystery. From someone who really wants the Ark to be found, the results from last summer disappoint.

More areas and more objects have been eliminated, but at a high price. AR knows that a minimum of \$250,000 has been spent on the various expeditions the past summer. We are still curious about the Anderson site and what might be in Shockey's photograph, but we are running out of mountain.

Chuck Aaron plans to return again this spring with a powerful helicopter (already purchased) with onboard sonar to survey the entire ice cap. If nothing turns up then, hope may be permanently dimmed for the Ark's survival.

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the same as the date of this issue it is
your last unless we hear from you.

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OTHER VENTURES IN THE SUMMER OF '89

Scott Van Dyke of Houston may have accomplished the most important Ark research this summer. Scott succeeded in hiring a professional Turkish mapping company to completely map the Mt. Ararat area with a high resolution camera (9.5 by 9.5 inch negatives!).

Because of Scott's background in the oil industry he knew exactly how the job should be done. Four types of film were used including infrared. In all, 910 overlapping photos (in stereo pairs) were made covering approximately 50 square miles, and all of the mountain above 10,000 feet.

Scott tells us that the resolution is so good that sheep on the mountain are clearly visible. These photos were also taken at the most opportune time right at the end of August during four days of perfect weather. Scott was accompanied on this trip by Doug Adams, also of Houston.

If an Ark is visible on Mt. Ararat you would expect that it would be visible in one of these photographs. We hope to travel to Houston soon for a personal viewing of Scott's treasure. We will report in a future issue. Scott had been to Mt. Ararat on several previous occasions.

Ray Anderson of Bell Buckle, TN also traveled to Mt. Ararat with his son, John, a school teacher, with the intent of

exploring an area near the summit of the mountain where Anderson is convinced he has seen tell-tale signs of something barge-like in his study of photographs. Ray's plan was to climb the south side then make a short trek to the Northeast peak area, his area of interest.

Ray did not elect to climb. His son, however, succeeded in getting to the summit, but due to the melt conditions of this past summer the guides would not allow him to proceed to the northeast peak area because of crevasse danger.

The area Ray is interested in is the exact area that the Crouse-McIntosh (the "A" Team) team sought to explore in '85 but were unsuccessful. Ray Anderson is a semi-retired engineer and climbed all over Mt. Ararat in the late seventies.

Don Shockey, an optometrist from Albuquerque, NM, whom this editor met on the slopes of ML Ararat in '84, also returned this summer to follow up on information that is still largely classified. He was accompanied by Ahmet Arslan, a native of the area who now lives in the Washington, D.C. area.

Shockey was looking for a reported rectangular object in the Abich II glacier area. The object was located and photographed by Arslan. Experts are now studying the photographs.



Subscription Information

Purpose Statement: The *Ararat Report* exists to defend the biblical doctrine of Creation and the Universal Flood, to be a reliable source of information on the ongoing search for the remains of Noah's Ark, to thoroughly investigate claims of Ark sightings, and to provide a forum for various opinions on related subjects. The *Ararat Report* is published 10 times a year (excluding July and August) by Christian Information Ministries, International, 2050N. Collins Blvd., Suite 100, Richardson, TX 75080, phone (214) 690-1975. This publication is sent free on request for donations of at least \$25 (five issues) or \$50 (11 issues).



'No Stone Unturned'

ARARAT REPORT

FEB-MAR 1990

Bill Crouse, Editor
Fred Reed, Managing Editor

NUMBER 24



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PHANTOM ARKS ON ARARAT

The dictionary defines a phantom as "one that is something in appearance but not in reality." Anyone searching for Noah's Ark on Mt. Ararat can readily attest to the fact that the Ark *can* be seen on Ararat. In fact, it can be seen in many locations! The truth is, there are many Arks on Ararat, phantom arks, that is. The mountain is very active geologically. The scene changes from year to year. New arks are constantly being made and destroyed.

With the absence of hard evidence that remains of Noah's Ark still exist, or even that the Ark landed on this mountain, all we are left with are some intriguing "phantom arks." To those with an advanced case of Ark fever, these phantoms have caused many heart palpitations, sleepless nights, visions, dreams, and many

cases of premature egg-counting.

In the light of last summer's most recent phantom ark discovery (although it probably needs some further reconnaissance), we thought it might make an interesting story to document some of the most famous "phantom arks" that have turned up in the Ark search. We worked hard to be able to make these graphic to our readers by reproducing photographs. Unfortunately, we must confess we did not succeed in locating the most clear shots for all our examples.

We start with what we feel in our opinion was the best effort by the forces of nature to deceive Ark hunters. This is what we have dubbed "the Garbe Object" (see photo #1). It was first seen on a slide taken