

Van Meter Visitor

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Van Meter’s 1903 visitor was said to carry its own blinding light. Newspaper accounts placed the winged figure above buildings and connected its disappearance with the town’s mine.

STATUS	Historic newspaper legend; extraordinary features unverified
CLASSIFICATION	STR
MATERIAL	Iowa, USA
DISPOSITION	PUBLIC / SOURCED STORY
CATEGORY	Strange Files
RECORD TYPE	Cryptids
STORY HISTORY	Van Meter, Iowa, September-October 1903

THE ACCOUNT

The reported visitor first appeared above Van Meter’s buildings in 1903: a bat-like figure with enormous wings and a horn that emitted a dazzling light. Over several nights, residents said it moved through the town while attempts to shoot or pursue it failed. Some believed the nearby mine had been opened too deeply and had released something from below. Iowa PBS’s retelling follows those newspaper accounts, in which an industrial town suddenly found the darkness beneath it looking back.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

The surviving history supports a newspaper episode and an enduring local legend. Iowa PBS labels the account as lore and traces it to reporting from the period. A newspaper can preserve a town’s alarm without authenticating the event that caused it. Neither provides an authenticated animal specimen or an independent demonstration of the light-producing horn. The mine explanation belongs to what people reportedly believed, rather than an established account of a creature emerging underground.

WHY IT STAYS WITH US

The horn’s light makes this visitor different from a shape barely seen in the dark. In the story, it controls what people can see and overwhelms their attempt to look directly at it. The familiar act of illumination becomes another obstacle to understanding.

WHERE THIS TELLING COMES FROM

Local Lore: The Van Meter Visitor

Iowa PBS

<https://www.iowapbs.org/article/11624/local-lore-van-meter-visitor>

RETURN TO THE STORY

Van Meter Visitor

Visit the record for its illustrations and further reading.

<https://u225x.com/record/STR-CRYPT-036>