



Our Old Bookcase, August 17, 2017, Total Solar Eclipse crossing the United States August 21st.

Photo caption: An Image of the Corona, the circle of light surrounding the Sun, during the June 8, 1937 Total Solar Eclipse of Canton Island [Kanton Island] located Southwest of Hawaii.

OUR OLD BOOK CASE

By Joyce L. Alig, President, Mercer County Historical Society

The first Total Solar Eclipse to cross continental United States in 99 years is being announced by the news media. The Eclipse will be following a path across the United States.

A Total Solar Eclipse touched the United States on July 20, 1963, when it began in the North Pacific, with the path of totality crossing Alaska and heading across Eastern Canada and northern New England to cease midway across the Atlantic. The New York City photographers captured spectacular images of the 1963 Eclipse.

A Total Solar Eclipse on October 2, 1959 crossed the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean. During that Eclipse, a Partial Solar Eclipse crossed Ohio and I watched it. The one image in my mind from that event is that the partial eclipse made a reflection of crescent shadows on the leaves of the trees at our home at Fort Recovery.

I downloaded several historical Astronomy books on my NOOK Reader to study the astrological phenomena of Solar and Lunar Eclipses recorded in history. A Solar or Lunar Eclipse can be viewed from various sites and times around the world.

For there to be a Solar Eclipse, the moon must be near enough to the plane of the ecliptic at the time of a new moon so that some part of its shadow will fall on the earth's surface. The moon must be between the earth and the sun, in order for the sun's light to be cut off from shining on the earth, whether it is a full or partial eclipse.

For there to be a Lunar Eclipse, the full moon must occur near enough to the plane of the ecliptic for the moon to pass through some part of the earth's shadow. The earth must be between the sun and the moon, in order for the sun's light to be cut off from shining on the moon.

In the photograph above, during the June 3, 1938 Total Solar Eclipse, photographers were taking photographs at Canton Island, and captured detailed images of the Corona during the eclipse. Photographers captured images of the Sun's Corona during the May 26, 1916 Total Eclipse at Srinagar, Kashmir, India. Photographers also captured images of earlier Total Solar Eclipses in 1854, 1860, 1900 and 1905 around the world.

There is a legend relating to our history here in Midwestern Ohio, about Tecumseh, the Shawnee Indian, during the Indian Wars of the 1790's through the War of 1812, whereby Tecumseh and/or his brother, the Prophet, predicted the June 16, 1806 Solar Eclipse. Several historians and astronomers have written about documenting the validity and/or the invalidity of that story.

I look forward to watching this Total Solar Eclipse on August 21, over our television. Following the Eclipse, the news media will be repeating the views. National Geographic Magazine has always been known for its quality photographs. I will look forward to seeing this magazine's images of the Total Solar Eclipse. This Solar Eclipse will become a part of Mercer County's history, to be preserved by the Mercer County Historical Society. We will be able to watch this Eclipse on television, and see it become a part of our history. I wonder how many readers are going to ignore the warning "to not look directly at the sun" during this Eclipse!

[Mercer County Historical Society President Joyce Alig, may be contacted at 3054 Burk-St. Henry Road, Saint Henry, OH 45883, or hystalig@bright.net or 419-678-2614]