

411 Brixton Avenue
St. Lambert, P.Q.
February 16, 1964

Dear Mr. Wordley,

Your letter of February 2 was forwarded to me, and I checked the 1920 to 1923 Journals of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada for information on comets of that period. The only notable comet visible about that period was the periodic comet Winnecke. This comet was visible during May and June of 1921, and has a period of 5.8 years. In that year it passed very near the earth, but I do not think that it could be seen ~~with the sun~~ was above the horizon.

If you observed this object once only, it may have been the trail left by a very large meteor. Such trails may last for more than a few minutes. It is possible for a comet to become bright only when very near the sun and thus escape general observation, but this is very unlikely.

Although many comets return every 3 to 10 years (Jupiter's family of Comets), most have very long periods. All short period comets are faint, and Halley's comet is about the brightest periodic comet with a relatively short period of 76 years. This comet was last seen in 1910. Many comets seem to be in parabolic orbits and thus make only one trip around the sun.

Enclosed is a copy of the form used by the Comet and Nova Section explaining how to report the discovery of a new object in the sky.

Best regards, and good observing,

Jim Low

Standing Committee on Observational
Activities

Comet and Nova Section

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada