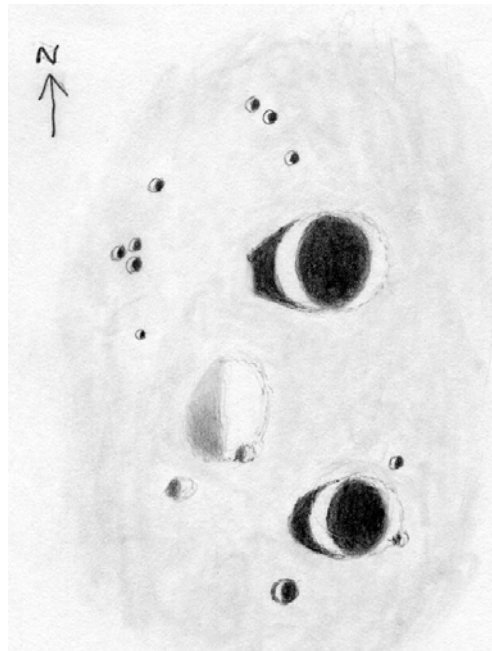


THE LUNAR OBSERVER

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSLETTER FOR STUDENTS OF THE MOON . . . DECEMBER 2000
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FEATURE OF THE MONTH



GAMBART B & C

Sketch and Text by Robert H. Hays, Jr. - Worth, Illinois, USA
June 11, 2000 - 6 inch Newtonian - 170X - Seeing 7-8/10

I observed this area on the evening of June 10/11, 2000. These are two craters near Sinus Aestuum and east of the associated crater Gambart. Gambart C is north of B and is slightly larger. Gambart G is southwest of B. A domelike feature was noted west of the midpoint between B and C. This feature was steeper at its south end judging from the shading on the side away from the sun. Two nearby small elevations had darker shading but still not black shadow as was in the craters. A sprinkling of small, crisp crater pits was seen north and west of Gambart C. Particularly noteworthy was a tight trio to the west of C. The shadows cast by the rims of Gambart B and C were also quite different. This was due either to their various peaks along their rims or differing terrain on which the shadows were cast.

Editor: Gambart B and C can be found on Map 32 of Rukl's Atlas of the Moon.

RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH

MICHAEL AMATO - WEST HAVEN, CONNECTICUT, USA
Ray Maps of Messier (4), Menelaus (6), Proclus (4)

ALESSANDRO CIPOLAT - MILAN, ITALY
CCD image of Western Mare Imbrium

DANIEL DEL VALLE - AGUADILLA, PUERTO RICO
Sketches of Pytheas, Daniell, Agrippa, Wallace, Anaxagoras, Domes near Hortensius, Dome near Milichius, Dome near Kepler

ROBERT H. HAYS, JR. - WORTH, ILLINOIS, USA
Sketches of Euler, Geber, Kant

HARRY PULLEY - GUELPH, ONTARIO, CANADA
CCD image of Proclus

ROBERT WLODARCZYK - CZESTOCHOWA, POLAND
Sketches of Messier, Gassendi, Unnamed feature near Atlas

LUNAR CALENDAR - DECEMBER 2000 (UT)

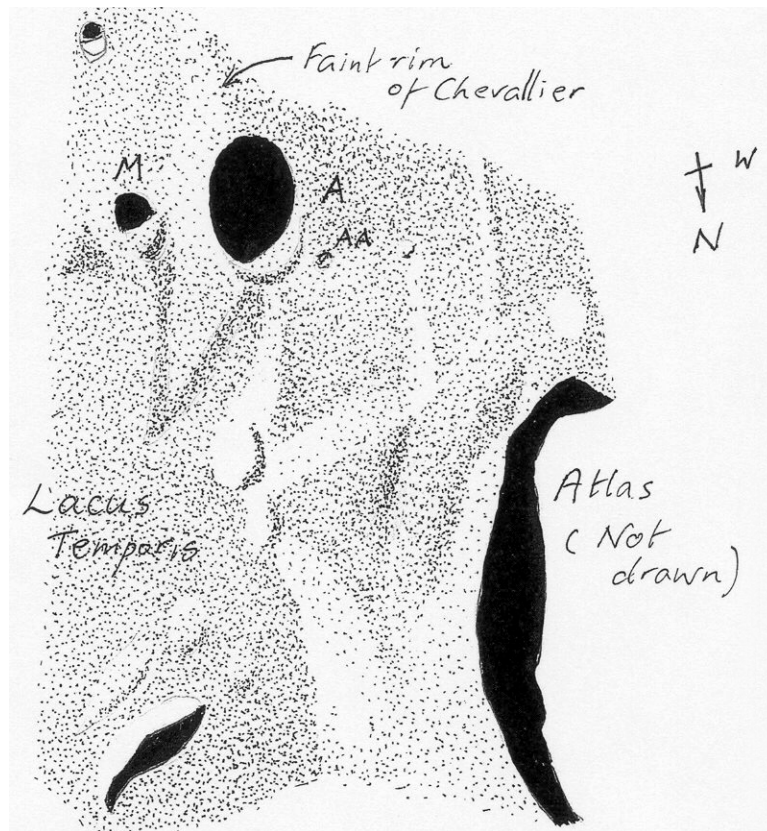
2 02:00 Moon 2.0 Degrees SSE of Uranus
4 03:55 First Quarter
11 09:04 Full Moon
12 23:00 Moon at Perigee (224,068 miles - 360,593 km)
17 00:43 Last Quarter
20 02:00 Moon 3.9 Degrees NNE of Mars
24 24:00 Moon 0.87 Degrees NNE of asteroid Ceres
25 17:22 New Moon (Start of Lunation 965) - Partial eclipse of the sun
28 07:00 Moon 2.0 Degrees S of Neptune
28 15:00 Moon at Apogee (252,386 miles - 406,181 km)
29 11:00 Moon 2.2 Degrees SSE of Uranus
29 24:00 Moon 1.7 Degrees SSE of Venue
30 01:00 Moon 1.6 Degrees NW of asteroid Vesta

POSSIBLE LANDSLIP IN TORRICELLI

In the November issue of TLO we published a report by Daniel del Valle in which he stated that a Lunar Orbiter photograph showed a possible landslip in the crater Torricelli while a Harold Hill sketch of the same crater did not. Fernando Ferri of the UAI (Italian Union of Amateur Astronomers) responded that in the September BAA Lunar Section Circular there appeared the following statement: "There appears to be a landslip in Harold's drawing, but not in the Orbiter Image." Fernando goes on to note: "Probably what seemed a landslide was simply the remnant of part of one original crater ring (Torricelli is thought to be the result of two very close impacts) under peculiar illumination conditions." Coincidentally, the UAI recently started a long term TLP monitoring program of Torricelli B. Those interested should check out the UAI website at http://astrolink.mclink.it/uai/sez_lun/english.htm

That Bright, Unnamed Feature Near Atlas (Again)

Observations continue to come in related to the bright, unnamed feature near the crater Atlas. Here are sketches and notes from three widely separated observers:

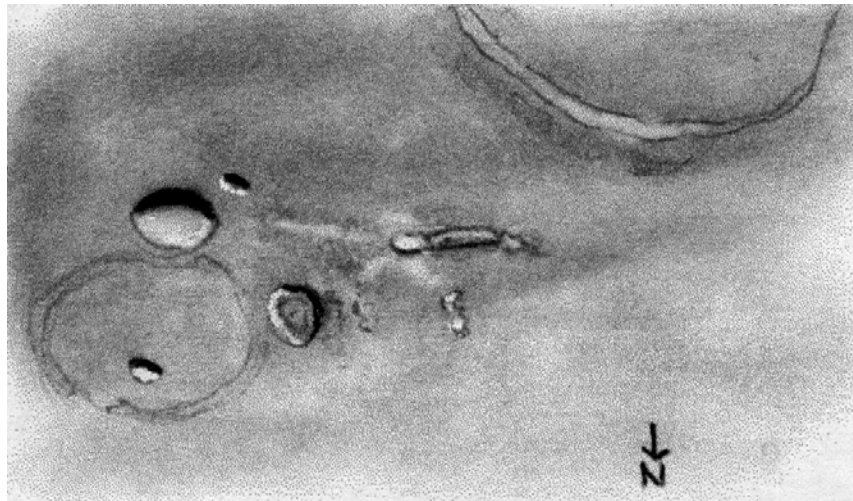


Sketch & Notes by Colin Ebdon - Colchester, Essex, England
June 6, 2000 - 10 inch Newtonian - 183X

This drawing was made as a follow up to the interesting observations of Daniel del Valle and Robert Wlodarczyk in the May and June issues of TLO. The seeing was, unfortunately, pretty poor at the time of observation.

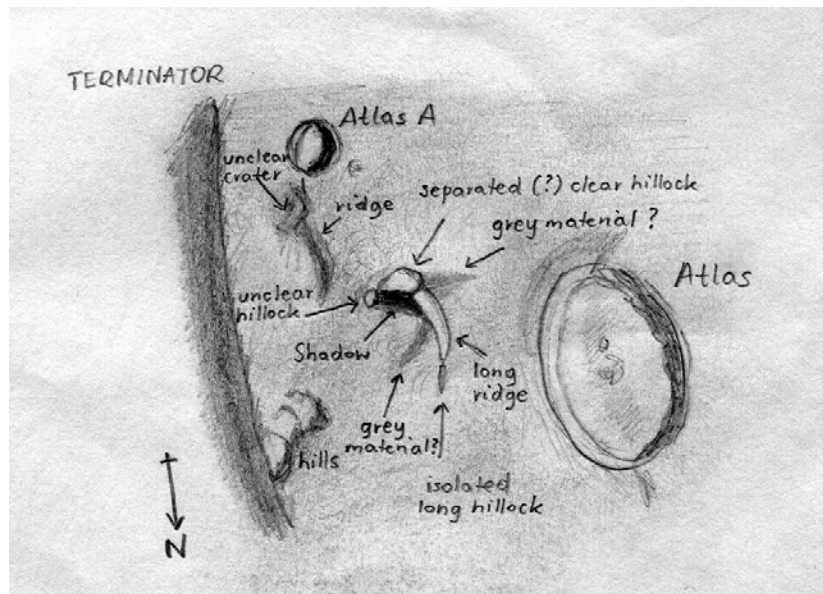
At lower magnifications the feature gives the impression of a small ray system, characterised as much by its 'whiteness' as its brightness. However, in the best map I have to hand (the Times Atlas) it appears to consist of low, eroded, ridges and hills, focusing on two almost dome-like features at the central point of the system. At this focus there are a pair of central 'pits' or small craterlets, which were not visible at the time of observation.

The overall appearance is that of a structure consisting of 'Rumker-like' hard-to-classify material. One 'arm' of this roughly star-fish shaped object runs out to Atlas A (Chevallier A in Rukl) and another radiates northwest towards Atlas. Two smaller 'arms' radiate to the east, as shown in Daniel's drawing but not in mine, and these seem to form a bay in the Lacus Temporis (Lake of Time). There is a much more well-defined ridge between this object and Atlas. The seeing will need to be very good for this general area to be inspected to any great detail.



Sketch and Notes by Daniel del Valle - Aguadilla, Puerto Rico
 October 15, 2000 - 200mm Newtonian - 266X

Returning to this feature, I have attempted to capture another aspect of its structure under different lighting conditions. The surrounding area is full of detail and depicted in a relative way only. The feature seems to be divided into three parts, the brightest being on the eastern end, appearing as a bright knob with rays that reach out in a star-like fashion. The largest section is almost dome-like in appearance except for its elongated shape.



Sketch and Notes by Robert Wlodarczyk - Czestochowa, Poland
 August 17, 2000 - 180mm Newtonian - 240X

This is another observation of the fascinating feature near the crater Atlas. It seems like a ... flying mosquito! I sketched this region on August 17/18, 2000 between 22:30 UT and 00:30 UT during moments of steady seeing. Moon phase -0.92. It was a very exciting observation.