

Rt 3 Matthews, NC  
February 8, 1966

Dear Jim,

I am pleased that you find my  
views of the Comet Ikeya-Seki, <sup>INTERESTING,</sup> it certainly  
was a magnificent show here in North  
Carolina!

I understand that the weather in  
Montreal was quite a hazard from the  
letter Miss Williamson wrote me. Too bad  
you up there could not have had the  
fortunate weather that most of the country  
had.

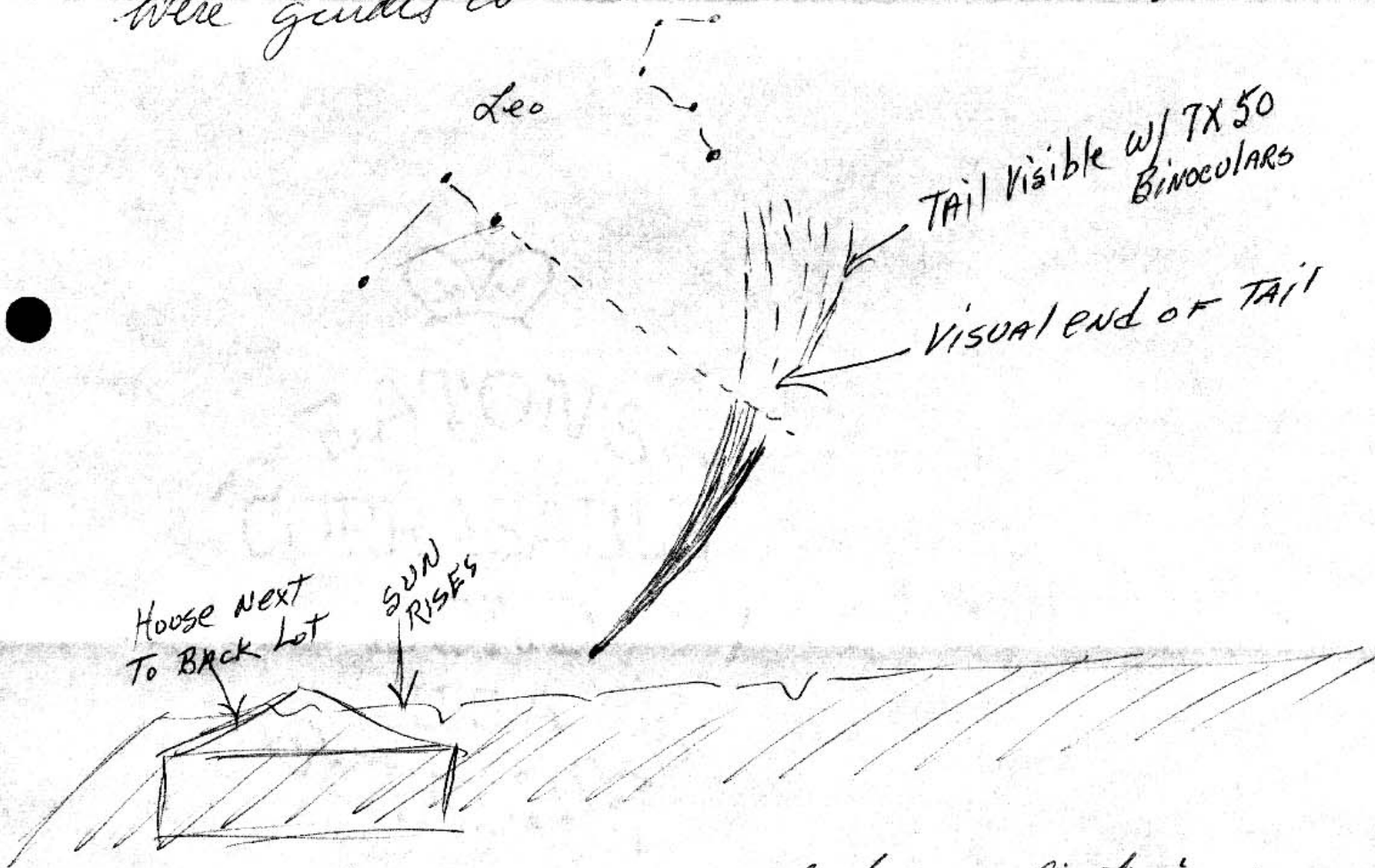
I got up about two weeks before  
the negative I sent was taken. With  
only a pair of binoculars I was able  
to trace the comet's tail about half again  
as long as was visible without optical  
aid. I was interested in getting the

most views of this Comet as I do not know that I will be around to view the return of Halley's Comet in 1986. (I hope, but things being what they are nowadays no one knows. My father told me of watching its return in 1910 and what it looked like to him. I guess his slight interest in this and a total eclipse of the Moon on my birthday in 1937 (May 14) started off my interest in astronomy.)

Overall views of the Comet both visual (with and without optical aid) ~~and~~ and telescopic were excellent. We were favored with clear skies with one exception about a week before the negative was taken when an interfering cloud bank obscured almost the entire eastern sky.

The mornings I did see it it appeared as a searchlight beam, beginning low in the eastern sky and trailing upwards as the

Earth turned slowly eastward. I was able to make estimates of its brilliancy as the skies were perfectly black just before dawn. The tail curved upwards southeast below the constellation Leo Major. The small triangle of stars making up the back of Leo Major were guides to the comet (see diagram)



The head was a small fuzzy object in a 2 inch telescope power of 50 diameter and was about  $\frac{1}{8}$ " diameter. No division in the head could be detected although as you know it

did split later.

Estimates of the Tail magnitude were from magnitude +6 at the extreme end to magnitude 3-4 near the head. Estimates of the head were difficult as the sun rays began to lighten the east about the time the head came up sufficiently above the horizon. Although difficult, the best I could estimate would be a magnitude of +1 to +2, as the head was still visible even after the Tail disappeared in the early dawn. In the diagram the visual end of the Tail is shown ending approximately at the point shown the tail extended up past this point almost halfway to A. Leonis. In all, it was a marvelous show and my first visual sighting since Comet Mrkos appeared faintly in the northern skies. I have a negative that I followed the stars to obtain but it was printed on ~~Enlarging~~ Enlarging paper as a contact print and doesn't

do justice to the Comet. When I am able, <sup>⊗</sup> I am going to print an enlargement of it and send you a copy as I'm sure it will be much better than the print I sent.

Jim, That's about all for now. My 9 1/2" mirror is being re-aluminized & should be back next week. Then I am going to have the 8" aluminized and maybe get things organized in the coming months. The 10 inch snowfall we had in the latter weeks of January has set my schedule of building & assembling back so it may be some time before I am able to complete the mounting.

I'll let you know when I do, however.

Sincerely,

Wm O Jenkins

(<sup>⊗</sup> I don't have any space to set up to enlarge the prints so I guess I'll have to set up in the house some night when all the lights are out in there)