

2 Jet Pilots See Object

DAYTON, Ohio, Aug. 1 (AP).—Jet interceptor pilots reported to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base officials today that they saw an object in the sky which they did not think was a light reflection.

It was the first time pilots checking on flying saucer reports here had made such a positive statement.

The two interceptors were sent up about 1:45 a. m. after the Air Force base had received five or six reports of "flying saucers."

They told officers they went up about 17,000 feet and for about ten seconds watched a bright object which hovered above them. It then disappeared at "a high rate of speed."

"We deliberately maneuvered around to make sure it wasn't a light reflection. At first it appeared red and white and then white only," they said.

The pilots, attached to the 97th Fighter Wing, were Maj. James B. Smith, and 1st Lt. Donald J. Hemer, recently transferred from O'Hare Air Force Base, Park Ridge, Ill.

The Air Technical Intelligence Center, in charge of "flying-saucer" investigations, immediately ordered the two pilots to stop commenting further on their experiences and ordered a ban on pictures of the two.

In the report to Capt. E. J. Ruppelt, in charge of "flying-saucer" studies, the two pilots said they were unable to estimate the object's location because "it was dark and there was nothing to compare it with."

Although the official report said the pilots observed the object for about ten seconds, that probably referred to the brief time they got a good look at it.

One of the pilots reported: "I don't think the light was a reflection. I deliberately maneuvered around it at several angles to make sure it wasn't a light reflection. If it had been, there would have been a change."

UNCLASSIFIED

STATUS Report 1

17

1 August 1952

Bellefontaine, Ohio

Description of Incident

At 1551Z, a radar track appeared 20 miles NNW of W-P AFB. The course was 240° at 400 knots. Two F-86's under GCI control were then located ten miles SW of that position. The fighters were vectored and made visual contact at 1555Z. Fighters stayed with the object until 1613Z.

Interrogation of sources, an AF major and lieutenant, reveal the following:

a. The F-86's climbed to 48,000', fell off, and then made a second climb to 48,000'. The major made a camera run the second time and received a weak return on his radar gunsight. The lieutenant's sight was "caged" so he received no return. The major estimated the object at 12,000-20,000' above his altitude of 48,000'. This estimate was substantiated by the range capability of the radar gunsight. The object's size, accepting source's estimate of distance, was 24-40' in diameter and source said his optical sight just covered the object. The films were not sufficiently clear. The object appeared as a fuzzy, small image in the upper right hand corner with discernable motion to lower left.

b. The AC&W Squadron established two important facts: Re-affirmation that the UFO moved at 400 knots and indication that the two F-86's and UFO appeared simultaneously on the GCI scope. It is obvious that all eyes and antennas were fixed on the same object.

Comments

The object was not a balloon, since the speed was too fast. A rawinsonde was released at 1500Z and moved off to the east. The object moved against the wind. The blip size was that of a normal aircraft. The object was not a known aircraft because the altitude was too high. The object was not astronomical as dual radar returns eliminate this. Electronic or visual mirage of meteorological phenomenon is out of the question as the radar set was on high beam, and both would not occur simultaneously in the same place. The sighting occurred "above the weather".

Conclusion

Unknown

DOWNGRADED AT 8 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

UNCLASSIFIED

On August 1, 1952, two days after the Michigan incident, such a puzzle arose with an impressive radar-visual-photographic sighting near Bellefontaine, Ohio [2]. At 10:45 A.M. C.D.S.T., the radar operator at the Air Defense command post picked up an unidentified target north of Dayton, moving southwest at a speed of about 525 miles an hour. Two jets from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base were scrambled for an intercept and were vectored in by ground control. Since the ground radar was not equipped with height-finding devices, however, the operator could not direct the pilots to a specific altitude; he could only tell them whether they were nearer to or farther from the target.

When the jets had reached 30,000 feet, ground radar informed them that they were almost on target, which was still moving southwest at the same speed. A few seconds later, the returns from the jets and the UFO blended on the radarscope and the operator advised the pilots that they would have to continue the search visually. At this moment, unfortunately, the ground radar suddenly failed. Soon after communication between ground and air had ended, the lead pilot observed a silver-colored sphere several thousand feet above him. Both jets went after it but although they climbed to their maximum altitude, 40,000 feet, neither could get close enough to identify the object, which was still some 30,000 feet above them. One pilot, however, managed to expose several feet of film with his gun camera. At the same moment the warning light on his gunsight radar blinked on to indicate it detected a solid object. At this point the jets broke off the intercept and started back to Wright-Patterson Field.

Both pilots then realized that, although they had been chasing an unknown for some ten minutes, they were still northwest of the base in almost the same area where they had started the intercept. This surprising fact seemed to indicate that the unknown had slowed down from its original speed of 525 miles an hour, to hover in the sky nearly motionless.

Flying-saucer addicts regarded this series of events as an iron-clad case. One of them commented, "For the first time a saucer had been photographed during simultaneous radar and visual sightings, with the camera 'plane [sic] also locked on by radar. It was absolute proof that this saucer was a solid object, a controlled, disc-shaped machine." [10, p. 109]

After sifting the evidence, ATIC investigators eventually found the more prosaic though complicated solution to the puzzle:

1) The object picked up on ground radar had actually been a jet plane, flying out of Cleveland. It had not been identified immediately because the Bellefontaine station had not received its flight plan. At 10:45 that morning the jet had been north of Dayton, flying at low altitude on a southwest heading, at a speed of around 525 miles an hour—the exact time, position, and speed of the radar unknown.

2) The pilots of the interceptors never saw this jet. What they saw, what their gun radar detected, and what their gun camera photographed was a twenty-foot radiosonde balloon that had been released from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base that morning shortly before the sighting. Ground radar, on the other hand, never picked up the balloon.

3) The chief reason for the confusion was that ground radar did not have a height-finding device. When the operator notified the pilots that his scope showed a blending of the returns produced by the pursuit jets and by the unknown, neither he or the pilots had any way to tell whether the unknown was directly above or directly below the pursuing jets. At 30,000 feet the pilots were too high to see the Cleveland jet far below them. But they did see the balloon above them and naturally assumed that it was the object they were supposed to be chasing.

4) Since the ground radar stopped functioning at this point, the operator could no longer track the course of the unknown or of the interceptors. If the radar had been working, he would have seen that the target continued on to the southwest while the interceptors were searching in a different area to the north.

FINAL GALLEY PROOF

Galley 63—THE WORLD OF FLYING SAUCERS

5) The photographs confirmed this reconstruction of a complicated series of events. The pictures obtained by the gun camera displayed a round, indistinct blur. Analysis showed that the size of the object was that of a twenty-foot sphere—a balloon—photographed from a distance of 30,000 feet.

1 August 1952

Bellefountain, Ohio

An unidentified object was observed ~~at~~ on radar, and fighters were vectored in for an attempt to identify the unidentified radar return. Fighters were able to see the object, but were not able to get near it because of the altitude of the object. The object ~~is~~ observed in this sighting has positively been identified as a type of upper air research balloon. This object actually consisted of four balloons attached to one "load". ~~is~~ this load weighed approximately 500 pounds, ~~unusually~~ and consisted of metal measuring devices that would give a radar return.

*Has this statement been
checked? Summary of Case #9*

UNCLASSIFIED

Classified: SECRET
Headquarters: 664th AC&W
By Authority of: CG, 30th AC
Date 11/10/52
Initials RLV 77

ATIC W-P AFB ATIAA-5 Subj: (Uncl) FLYOBRPT

ATIAA-5 (2 Oct 52)

1st Ind

HEADQUARTERS, 664TH AC&W SQUADRON, Bellefontaine, Ohio

TO: Commanding General, Air Tech Intel Center, Wright-Patterson AFB,
Dayton, Ohio

In compliance with paragraph 1, basic letter, the Radar
Observation Data Sheet is completed and forwarded for your information.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

1 Incl
n/c

Chester J. Dereziński
CHESTER J. DEREZIŃSKI
1st Lt., USAF
Adjutant

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DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVAL
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

#307

T 52-14017-19

UNCLASSIFIED

AUTH: CG, ATIC
BY: E.J. RUPPELT, pk
Capt, USAF
DATE: 29 Sep 52

AIR TECHNICAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE
OHIO

In reply refer to
ATIAA-5

OCT 2 1952

SUBJECT: (Uncl) FLYOBRPT

TO: Commanding Officer
664th AC & W Squadron
Bellefontaine, Ohio

1. With reference to your unidentified flying object report (FLYOBRPT) of 011550Z August 1952, it is requested that you complete the inclosed Radar Observation Data Sheet. You may omit questions 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 of Part II as the Air Technical Intelligence Center is already in possession of the complete weather data.

2. However, question 8, Part II, is extremely important. Specifically, it is necessary to know if the unidentified flying object and the two F-86's appeared simultaneously on the radar scope.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL

1 Incl
Radar Observation
Data Sheet

James C. Paschal
JAMES C. PASCHAL
1st Lieut, USAF
Asst Air Adjutant General

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T52-14017-A

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I. QUESTIONS REGARDING DETECTING RADAR EQUIPMENT

1. What type radar equipment is involved?

AN/TPS-3 Search Radar

2. Has there been any recent maintenance difficulties? If so, describe.

Negative

3. What type modulator (i.e., spark gap, hard tube, etc.) is used in the radar equipment?

Hydrogen Thyatron (hard tube)

4. Was the AFC (automatic frequency control) circuit of the receiver operating properly?

Yes - in auto position

5. Has interference from another radar set been observed recently, and are personnel familiar with the effects caused by an interfering signal?

None observed, and personnel are familiar with adjacent station interfering

6. What type indicators, "A scope", "B scope", etc., were used to follow the target? signals.

PPI Scope

7. What was the radar scan rate?

3.3 RPM

8. What was the approximate frequency of the transmitter?

1290 Mc

II. GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What were the general weather conditions at the time unidentified target was observed?

X

2. What weather data from nearby U.S. weather stations is available on temperature vs altitude, humidity vs altitude, and wind velocity vs altitude?

X

3. Was the target observed by any other nearby radar equipments? If so, give details.

No

4. Are the operator and the supervisor familiar with the effects of anomalous (duct-effect) propagation as they pertain to this type radar?

X

ATIC Form 332 (18 Jun 52)

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Page 1 of 2

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DOD DIR 5200.10

752-14017

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5. Has anomalous propagation been observed to extend the range of ground clutter by this radar at this site, and did this condition exist during or near the time that unknown target was observed?

X

6. What effects of rain storms and lightning have been observed on this radar?

X

7. Were any checks made to determine if unknown target could have been one of our own aircraft?

Yes. Aircraft were directed to the target by the controller. Target was believed to be another jet aircraft until observed by the flight leader.

8. Was any interception attempted? If so, give details.

Intercept was successful, but target was too high for the aircraft to get close for positive identification. Pictures were taken.

III. SPECIFIC TARGET QUESTIONS

1. What technical personnel observed the unknown target? Have they been questioned thoroughly? What was their opinion? **Maj. Smith, Flight Leader and Lt. Lott, Controller were observers. The target intercepted was not the target on the PPI Scope it must have been flying the same course at the same time.**

2. Was a permanent record "track" made of the target positions as they appeared on the indicators? If so, attach to this report.

None

3. At what range, azimuth, altitude, and time was the target observed?

Range 25 miles, azimuth 230°, altitude unknown. High beam was used - target was above 10,000 feet.

4. How did the target appear in size and shape as compared with conventional aircraft targets?

Normal

5. Was the target of consistent size, or did it change rapidly?

Yes, until about one minute after intercept.

6. Was the speed of the target constant or variable? Explain.

Speed constant about 400 knots.

7. Did the target appear "fuzzy" or clear and sharp as compared with a known aircraft target?

Clear until fade.

8. What other (aircraft) targets were observed in the same general area, altitude, and time as that of the unknown target?

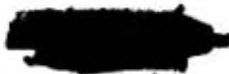
2 F-86's from 97th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio, at 30,000 feet, M.S.L.

UNCLASSIFIED

752-14017

PROJECT 10073 WEATHER DATA SHEET

1. DATE OF OBSERVATION 10 Aug 52		2. TIME OF OBSERVATION 1500 Z		3. STATION OBSERVING FPO	
4. WINDS/ALOFT:					
ALTITUDE (feet)	VELOCITY (knots)	DIRECTION (degrees)	ALTITUDE (feet)	VELOCITY (knots)	DIRECTION (degrees)
0	17	180	25,000	25	290
1,000			30,000	29	280
2,000	24	270	35,000	29	290
3,000	28	270	40,000	26	276
4,000	34	270	45,000	31	270
5,000	33	260	50,000	31	260
6,000	29	260	55,000	33	270
7,000	28	260	60,000		
8,000	19	260	65,000		
9,000	21	260	70,000		
10,000	22	260	75,000		
12,000	17	260	80,000		
14,000	16	260	85,000		
16,000	25	260	90,000		
18,000	13	260	95,000		
20,000	14	260	100,000		
5. WAS AN INVERSION LAYER NOTED? ☐ Yes ☐ No (If yes, at what altitude? _____)					
6. WERE ANY THUNDERSTORMS NOTED IN AREA? ☐ Yes ☐ No (If yes, at what quadrant? _____)					
7. CLOUD COVER: _____ tenths at _____ feet. _____ tenths at _____ feet. _____ tenths at _____ feet. _____ tenths at _____ feet.				8. VISIBILITY WAS _____ MILES.	
9. COMMENTS:					


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FLYOB RPT - 1 Aug 52 - Bellefontaine, Ohio

I. Interrogation of Maj Smith and Lt Hemmer by Lts Flues and Olsson revealed following:

A. F-86's climbed to 48,000 ft., then fell off, then made a second climb to 48,000 ft. Maj Smith made a camera run the second time and received a weak return on his radar gunsight. Hemmer's sight was "caged", so he received no returns. Smith estimated object at 12-20,000 ft. above him at 48,000 ft. This estimate is substantiated by range capability of radar gunsight.

B. Object's size, accepting Smith's estimate of distance, is 24-40 ft. in diameter, as computed from the fact that the gunsight is two miles in diameter and Smith said pip just covered object.

C. The films were not sufficiently clear. Object appeared as fuzzy small image in upper right hand corner with discernable motion to lower left.

II. The object is not:

A. Balloon speed too fast. 1500Z radar^Wsonde release moved off to east. Object moves against the winds. Blip size is that of normal aircraft.

b. Known aircraft. Altitude too high.

c. Astro. Dual radar returns eliminate this.

d. Electronic or visual mirage or meteorological phenomena. Radar set is on high beam. Both would not occur simultaneously in same place. Sighting occurs "above the weather".

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DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS:
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

Summary

CASE #9

1 August 1952

Bellefontaine, Ohio

Description of Incident

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Interrogation of sources, an AF major and lieutenant, reveal the following:

a. The F-86's climbed to 48,000', fell off, and then made a second climb to 48,000'. The pilot made a camera run. The major estimated the object at 50 to 70,000'. The object's size, accepting source's estimate of distance was 24-40' in diameter and source said his optical sight just covered the object. The films were not sufficiently clear. The object appeared as a fuzzy, small image in the upper right hand corner with discernable motion to lower left.

b. Two important facts were established: Re-affirmation that the UFO moved at 400 knots and indication that the two F-86's and UFO appeared simultaneously on the ground radar scope. It is obvious that all eyes and antennas were fixed on the same object.

Comments

- but speed relative!
The object was not a balloon, since the speed was too fast. A rawinsonde was released at 1500Z and moved off to the east. The object moved against the wind. The blip size was that of a normal a/c. The object was not a known a/c because the altitude was too high. The object was not astronomical as dual radar returns eliminate this. Electronic or visual mirage of meteorological phenomenon is out of the question as the radar set was on high beam, and both would not occur simultaneously in the same place. The sighting occurred "above the weather".

Conclusion

Unknown

*← unless back end of jet exhaust
signature visible*

DISPOSITION FORM

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION (If any)


UNCLASSIFIED

FILE NO.

SUBJECT

(Restricted) Project Blue Book, Gun Camera Film

TO Chief, Air Technical
Intelligence Center
Wright-Patterson AFB
OhioFROM Dept of the Air Force
Hq USAF - AFOIN-2A

DATE Maj Fournet/ 71016

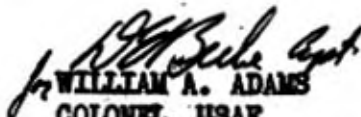
COMMENT NO. 1

SEP 24 1952

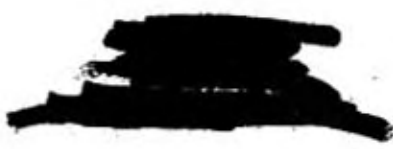
1. Returned herewith is gun camera film taken of an unidentified flying object by the 97th FI Squadron.

2. Prints were made of four frames by OSD-OPI and declassified by Security Review, OSD. It is understood that a print of two of these frames will be furnished TRUE magazine in answer to their request.

1 Incl:
Roll 16mm film

for 
WILLIAM A. ADAMS
COLONEL, USAF
Chief, Topical Division
Deputy Director for Estimates
Directorate of Intelligence, DCI/O

When indicated, No. 1
before withdrawal or as indicated.
Secret
This copy is being
graded to *restricted*
accordance with Par 25e, 205-1.


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b. The AQ&W Squadron established two important facts: Re-affirmation that the UFO moved at 400 knots and indication that the two F-86's and UFO appeared simultaneously on the GCI scope. It is obvious that all eyes and antennas were fixed on the same object.

Comments

The object was not a balloon, since the speed was too fast. A rawinsonde was released at 1500Z and moved off to the east. The object moved against the wind. The blip size was that of a normal aircraft. The object was not a known aircraft because the altitude was too high. The object was not astronomical as dual radar returns eliminate this. Electronic or visual mirage of meteorological phenomenon is out of the question as the radar set was on high beam, and both would not occur simultaneously in the same place. The sighting occurred "above the weather".

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PAGE 49

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Conclusion

Unknown

*randoms back and forth and about
photographed*