


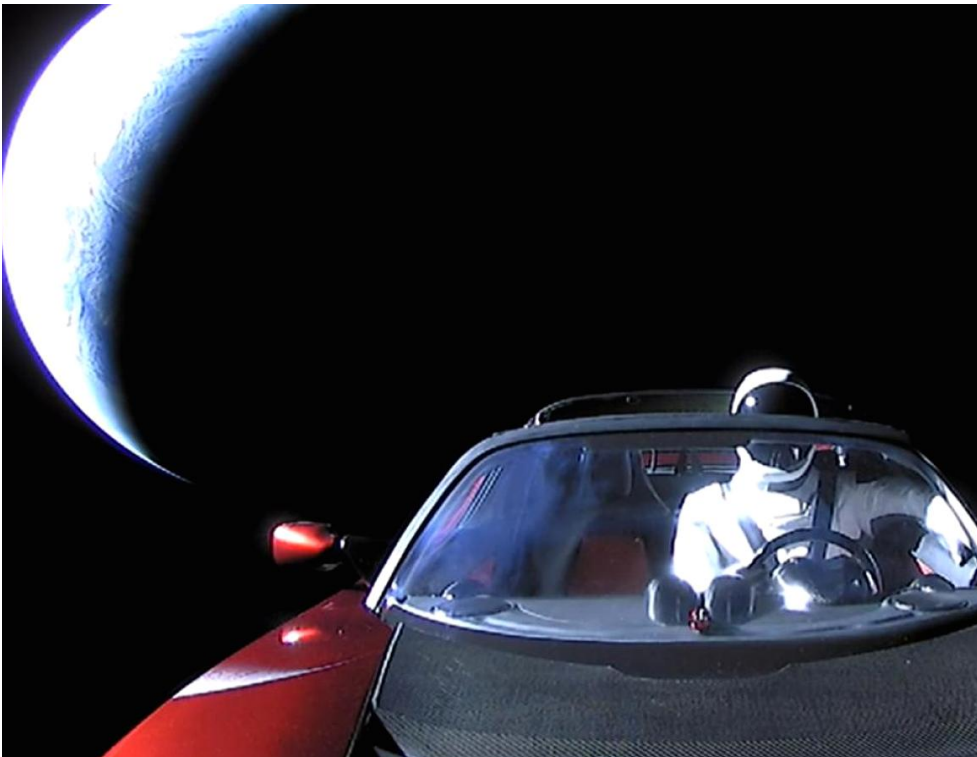
SUNlite

Shedding some light on UFOlogy and UFOs

A composite image of a night sky. In the upper left, a constellation of stars is visible, with some stars appearing as bright, multi-pointed starbursts. In the center, a dark, saucer-shaped object with a glowing circular center is depicted flying horizontally. Below the object, a cityscape is visible at night, with lights reflecting on a body of water. The overall background is a dark, starry sky.

I do not, of course, conclude that eyewitness reports must be discarded; on the contrary, excluding hoaxers and liars, most witnesses have genuinely seen something, although it may be difficult to decide from their descriptions what they really had seen.

R.V. Jones - The natural philosophy of Flying Saucers



Cover: My interpretation of what was seen over Stuggart, Arkansas on March 20, 1950.

Left: Don't panic! This "guy" and his journey was much more interesting than anything I have read about in UFOlogy that last few months. He also produced some UFO reports.

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Don't panic!

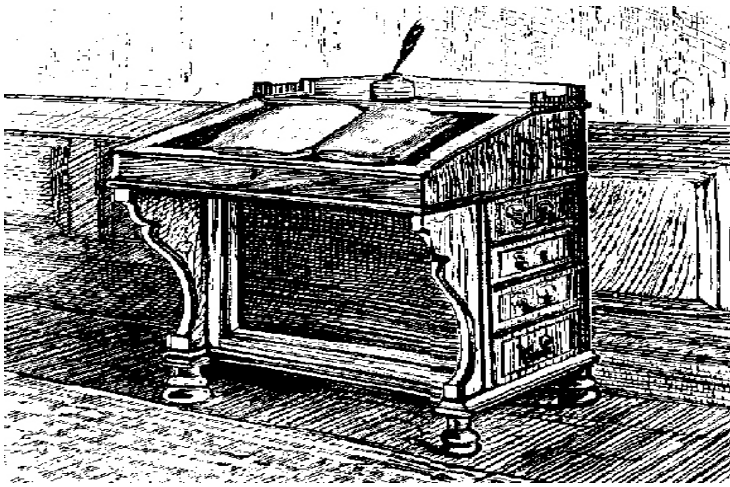
In a discussion with Chris Isbert (AKA Chris Spitzer), it became apparent to me that some people are concerned about receiving credit for "discoveries" that they have made when evaluating UFO videos and cases. In this case, Chris told me that he was the first to notice, and mention in a public forum, the reason for the motion of the object to the left in the Nimitz FLIR video was due to the breaking of the target lock. I had mentioned it but gave no direct credit to him. However, I did link to Mick West's video, which implied Mick was the "discoverer". This same video was examined in the Above Top Secret forum over a decade ago. I did not go page by page through that list to see if anybody discovered it then so I have no idea exactly who discovered what first. The point being that, because there are so many discussions going on, it is hard for me to keep score of who "discovered" what first. I am not an umpire/referee and there is no central organization designated for publishing such findings so we can give proper credit. It is also possible that people often discover things independent of each other. It is never my intent to take credit for other's hard work. I apologize to anyone, who might feel slighted or overlooked in my writings here at SUNlite in the past and I will try to do better and give credit where credit is due.

Meanwhile, Tony Bragalia tried to threaten me with a libel suit due to last issue's Roswell Corner. Bragalia felt I had lied about his research involving Robert Shanebrook and was going to involve his lawyers if I did not pull the issue from my site and delete the offending column. I pointed out that his beef was with Kevin Randle and Adam Dew, who had stated these things. I was merely reporting about the details of that interview. Bragalia then complained that I should have contacted him first. To be honest, based on my past interactions with him, I have no faith in getting a completely straight answer to any question from Bragalia. I am sure he did contact Shanebrook at some point. However, Adam Dew stated that he had contacted Shanebrook prior to Bragalia and, after Bragalia had contacted him, Shanebrook did not want anything to do with the slides. Dew stated he had to do some fast talking to get Shanebrook back on board. In the words of Adam Dew, Bragalia had "freaked out" Shanebrook. I told Bragalia that when he got Kevin Randle to pull down the interview, I would consider altering SUNlite 10-1. As of this writing, Randle's interview remains and so does SUNlite 10-1.

The "To The Stars Academy" (TTSA) continues to dominate UFOlogical discussions. Luis Elizondo has been the face of the TTSA but, other than promising that he has all sorts of evidence, he has not delivered anything but his personal stories, which may, or may not be, 100% accurate. The two videos he did produce continue to be the only items available to evaluate. Since the TTSA will not divulge their true origin, I continue to believe that they originated from Bigelow and not directly from the Pentagon. Did Bigelow simply get them from the internet or some anonymous individual who gave them to him for a price? I would not be shocked if any analysis of these videos also originated from Bigelow and not from independent experts in the Department of Defense (DOD). Despite various UFOlogical writers claiming to have seen reports associated with the videos, they have refused to release them. Is it too much to ask of the TTSA, and their promoters in the UFO field, to come clean and present all the information they have regarding these videos?

Who's blogging UFOs?

Hot topics and varied opinions



While many people continue to blog about UFOs, there really was not much in the way of news. The one topic that did have everyone buzzing was the To The Stars Academy (TTSA) and the Advanced Aerospace Threat Identification Program (AATIP).

A poster in the Above Top Secret Forum with the name Mirageman wrote a very informative piece about Robert Bigelow, MUFON, TTSA, and the AATIP. He appears to have done his homework and paints a picture about how Bigelow seems to have scammed a lot of people. Despite spending millions on the study of UFOs, we have to ask a simple question. Where is the evidence that the taxpayers paid for?

Dave Brewer reports his FOIA request about the AATIP has been delayed. This mirrors what I have seen from others, who have submitted FOIAs regarding the AATIP. The FOIA requests will be informative but I am still trying to figure out why the

TTSA has not released any new information regarding the videos or any of the reports that Leslie Kean, and others, who have claimed to have read. Either they do not exist or they are not as good as claimed.

A skeptic check podcast discussed the AATIP and gave the skeptic's point of view based on what is known. James Oberg, James McGaha, and Ben Radford were the guests. It made for an interesting program. James McGaha discussed the "Gimball" video and seemed to think it was the exhaust from a jet. He also made the point that the rotation of the object probably had to do with camera rotating, which was also noted by the discussion on metabunk forum. I found it amusing that Seth Shostak incorrectly associated this video with the 2004 Nimitz sighting. One can hardly blame him since the "To the stars academy" (TTSA) allowed the video to be used in association with the story about the Nimitz sighting without clarification. Speaking of the TTSA, the program pointed out that the news release about the AATIP appears to have been a timed to help the TTSA. Seth also pointed out that if the "Gimball" video was the best evidence the AATIP/TTSA had, it was very disappointing. To me, if it looks like jet exhaust and acts like a jet, it probably is a jet. Maybe if the reports were presented, and that information examined, we could eliminate the jet explanation. Oh yeah....that's right....there are no analysts identified by name and no reports presented. We are, once again, relying on the words of Elizondo that there was an extensive analysis done by some "experts".

Kevin Randle mentioned the AATIP in one posting but he did not add anything new. However, in the comments Robert Hastings stated he gave four copies of his book to Hal Puthoff, who forwarded them to "movers and shakers" in Washington. One of those was the star of the AATIP, Luis Elizondo. I suspect that Elizondo, and the AATIP, had a library full of UFO books, provided by Bigelow/Puthoff and written by UFO proponents, to learn about the subject. How many books did he have written by UFO proponents with a skeptical approach to the subject? Did he have a copy of Hendry's UFO handbook or was that "forbidden knowledge"?

Out of the 36-72 reports that were supposedly submitted to or created by the AATIP, John Greenwald suggests that two were written by Dr. Eric Davis. These examined "teleportation" and "Advanced propulsion" (which describes the use of "Zero point energy"). From what I can tell, there is not much to these papers other than describing possibilities for advanced technology and were written in 2004. There is no mention of any threat presented by UFOs (the mission of the AATIP) and no evidence that any of these reports written by Davis led to any significant advancements in space propulsion. If these are the kinds of reports that the AATIP was presenting, it is no surprise that the brass at the DOD did not take this program seriously. Is this what 22 million dollars got the US taxpayer? Buildings for housing potential exotic materials that nobody can see, a paycheck for various UFO scientists and aficionados, a library full of UFO books, some papers written by UFO scientists that would fail to convince anybody in peer review, and raw UFO reports from MUFON and other internet sources. All I can think of is how the US taxpayer made Bigelow a wealthier man and got little to nothing in return.

Wired magazine's Sarah Scoles did an excellent piece on the TTSA videos. Unlike the TTSA sycophants, who have been writing a great many of the articles about the AATIP, Scoles actually asked some difficult questions that people like Elizondo seemed unwilling to answer. Scoles wrote that the Pentagon spokesperson Audricia Harris has told her that Pentagon personnel have been going over the AATIP files since the story appeared in December. She added that a great amount of it is unclassified, which should mean that it should not be long before these files will be released to the general public. This statement indicates to me that the data gathered by the AATIP was based mostly on sources outside of the pentagon, which means it probably came from Bigelow. It also implies that whatever Bigelow presented, the DOD deemed unimportant and not worthy of classification.

As far as the Nimitz FLIR video goes, we have some information revealed by the Pilot CDR. Fravor. It was finally clarified that the Nimitz video was shot by another pilot around the same date but did not record his specific event. Therefore, we are not even

Who's blogging UFOs? (Cont'd)

sure that this video shows the exact same UFO seen by Fravor. That makes the two events unrelated unless some information surfaces that can link the two events. All we can conclude is that some fighter jet on some date recorded this video and it looks like the object Fravor saw. The target is unknown and there is no indication it is not an aircraft seen from a distance. We were also told that the "Gimbal" video was not part of that event and was recorded somewhere on the east coast in 2015.

One of Metabunk's contributors, who goes by the name of igoddard, posted an interesting video explanation of what we are seeing in the Gimbal video. I am sure that supporters of the TTSA and AATIP disagree with his presentation but he makes some very interesting points that need to be considered and not being dismissed out of hand. Chris Spitzer (aka Chris Isbert) points out that Goddard was part of the 1997 conspiracy theory involving the TWA800 explosion. The implication is that one cannot trust Goddard's analysis because of this. While, Goddard had apologized for some of his comments regarding this incident he seems to still believe there is a conspiracy involved. This is disappointing information and tends to negate Goddard's credibility. However, much of what was in the video seemed to be a collection of his, and others thoughts, from metabunk. This indicates that much of what is in the video is a compilation of the crowd sourcing that happened in that forum. In my opinion, one cannot completely dismiss the entire analysis in the video based on the primary author's actions/beliefs from 20 years ago. What should be discussed is his/their arguments and I have yet to see any sound arguments presented in a form that demonstrates what Goddard posted is wildly inaccurate or based on a belief in conspiracies.

The other cornerstone of Bigelow's contributions to the AATIP was analyzing artifacts recovered from UFO events. Jon Austin wrote a piece based an interview with Open Mind's Alejandro Rojas. Rojas received criticism for naming Tom DeLonge the UFO researcher of the year in 2017 and now seems to be working overtime to vindicate that selection by promoting the TTSA's claims. Rojas told Austin that Luis Elizondo informed him that Bigelow had "metamaterials" and not "alloys" in his possession. These "metamaterials" defied analysis and had isotopic ratios that were "not of this earth". We know little else regarding these fragments/pieces/samples. Once again, the only source of this information is Elizondo. While Rojas, and others, finds Elizondo credible to the point that if he said that the earth was flat, they would believe it, I am a bit more skeptical. We have to remember that Elizondo gets paid by the TTSA venture, which is tied to individuals providing money to the organization. It is in his best interest to tell people what they want to hear so they will invest in the TTSA. This is probably why he is appearing in all of these UFO forums teasing everyone with bits of information but not revealing any actual documentation to support those claims. In the closing of the article, Austin states he tried to get the TTSA and Bigelow to answer questions he had regarding the "metamaterials" but received no response. IMO, the lack of a response indicates they do not want to answer too many question or reveal too much information. Why is the TTSA afraid to reveal information they have been privately sharing, or hinting at, with their promoters like Knapp, Rojas, and Kean? If the materials were so exotic, why aren't they being analyzed by the best experts in the field instead of a bunch of UFO scientists, who appear to have made a living promoting a lot of pseudoscience? I suspect that most of these metamaterials are nothing more than the standard UFO evidence collected over the years like the Ubatuba samples, which would fail any analysis done by an organization/scientist independent of Bigelow, the TTSA, or the UFO field.

At the International UFO congress, Luis Elizondo appeared in a video where he answered questions that had been submitted to him before hand. It seems that Elizondo is trying to shield himself from tough interviews and is happy to answer softball questions from UFO promoters. There was nothing in this video that impressed me. I thought his answer to IR expert, John Lester Miller's opinion that the videos showed "ringing" an effort to ignore expert opinion. He stated that "they" ruled this out (who is "they"?). Despite claiming that he wanted outside experts to analyze the videos, he dismisses the one expert, who had commented. Elizondo also implied that others were suggesting that what was seen in the gimbal video was some sort of atmospheric phenomena and nothing solid. He completely misrepresented what groups like metabunk were saying about the video. They have stated this was nothing more than a distant aircraft and the "rotation" had to do with the operation of the camera/recording system. If Elizondo wants to really address these issues, I suggest he submit a report to argue against these points being raised by critics/skeptics. This is how such technical discussions should proceed. One submits a potential explanation with supporting analysis and then Elizondo should submit a technical analysis which demonstrates why he thinks it is incorrect. Instead, he is using the standard UFOlogical wave of the hand. The only thing missing was the use of the term "debunker" to describe those, who were offering alternate, and more earthly, answers to his "not of this earth" claim. To me, it looks like he really does not know what he is talking about and wants to tell everyone to "ignore the man behind the curtain". I still continue to wonder why he feels it is ok to reveal documents to friendly UFO promoters like Knapp and Kean but hide that information from the rest of the public? What does he have to hide?

There appears to have been some sort of unknown aircraft event that transpired in October of last year. Details are not completely clear but it seems like a lot of pilots in the northwestern US saw some unknown aircraft from a distance and radar tracked the craft at some point. I have not looked very much into this but I thought readers might be interested in taking a look. Perhaps when I have some more time, I will take the time to examine the details.

Falcon Heavy upper stage UFO reports

On the evening of February 6th, Elon Musk's Space X launched its new Falcon Heavy rocket. In order to demonstrate the rocket's power, he chose to send a Tesla Roadster into solar orbit. The main boosters had put the rocket into high earth orbit but an upper stage was needed to send the Roadster away from Earth's gravitational pull. The upper stage burn happened around 0224 UTC on the 7th and it was visible from the western part of the United states. Luckily, the weather was clear enough for amateur astronomers to record the event but there were also quite a few people, who saw the display, that reported the event to UFO organizations.

The display

What was seen was a bright object surrounded by a cloud that appeared low in the southwestern sky and proceeded southeastward. It then evolved into a comet like object with twin tails. This cloud then expanded and dissipated. While the southwestern US was favored, there were reports of it being seen as far north as southern Oregon, Idaho, and Colorado. Estimates puts its altitude at about 600 miles at the time of the burn and it paralleled the Mexican coastline. I wonder how many videos of this event will be promoted by Jaimie Maussan?

The reports and time errors

MUFON has an interesting tracking feature these days where they plot the sightings on that date on a map. ¹



The descriptions given by some were reasonably accurate. Some mentioned the object moved at "extreme speed" and others stated they had seen the object as a shape, like a triangle, instead of a star-like center. Probably the most interesting problem I noticed was the spread of times. Like my examination of fireball reports, observers usually have a margin of error in the times they report. In some cases, it appears the data was entered incorrectly. For instance, the Butte Falls, Oregon sighting was reported as 9:20 PM but the description matches the reports indicating the witness just probably made an error in the data entry. Others erroneously entered the time as AM instead of PM. The actual time, as recorded by amateur astronomers in New Mexico, was between 2:24 and 2:33 UTC (6:24-6:33 PM CST/7:24-7:33 PM MST)

Location (MST)	Time given	Location (PST)	Time Given
Lordsburg, NM	7:30 PM	Butte Falls, OR	9:20 PM
Las Cruces, NM	6:50 PM	Ukiah, CA	6:15 PM
Caste Rock, CO	7:03 PM	Bodega Bay, CA	12:00 AM
Ajo, AZ	8:02 PM	Ontario, CA	9:10 PM
El Mirage, AZ	7:10 PM	Coulterville, CA	6:10 AM
Las Cruces NM	7:30 PM	Brentwood, CA	6:26 PM

Raton Pass, NM	7:45 PM	Escondido, CA	6:35 PM
Colorado City, AZ	7:34 PM	La Quinta, CA	6:56 PM
Phoenix, AZ	7:48 AM	Escondido, CA	6:30 PM
NM	7:20 PM	Redondo Beach, CA	6:27 PM
Denver, CO	7:30 PM	Loomis, CA	6:30 PM
Westcliffe, CO	7:30 PM		
CO	7:30 PM		
Las Cruces, NM	7:30 PM		
Mesa, AZ	12:00 AM		
Phoenix, AZ	7:30 PM		

A reasonable margin of error would be between 2:15UTC and 2:40 UTC to classify the time of the event as “accurate”. Any time outside of this would be considered inaccurate. For the MST time zone, there were 16 sightings. One had the time listed as 12AM, which is an apparent data entry issue. The other listed the time as AM vice PM. If we correct this value, we discover that out of the 15 sightings, 9 had time estimates that would be considered accurate. For the PST time zone, there were 11 sightings. One had the time listed as 12 AM and another had the time listed as AM vice PM. Out of these ten sightings(ignoring the 12AM report), 6 were within the margin for error. In both cases, only 60% of the observers got the time accurate.

The time problem appeared in the NUFORC database as well.² Once again, there were entries that were apparently erroneously recorded. Other times fell outside the range of 2:15-2:40UTC. Out of the 15 entries, three were erroneously entered and two others fell outside the expected time range. This agrees with the ranges in the MUFON data. Including the apparent erroneous entries, the accuracy was about 67%.

Location	Time	Location	Time
San Diego, CA	16:31	Las Vegas, NV	18:45
Caldwell, ID	7PM in description listed as 17:00	Clayton, NM	19:00
Carlotta, CA	18:29	Santa Fe, NM	19:21
Boise, ID	18:30	San Lorenzo, NM	19:25
Garden Grove, CA	18:30	Anthony, TX	19:28
Wrightwood, CA	18:30	Loveland, Co	19:40
Borrego Springs, CA	18:30	Cliff, NM	21:00
Spring Creek, NV	18:31		

Even the American Meteor Society's database was not immune to a time problem.

Location	Time	Location	Time
Lafayette, CO	3:05 UT	Coulterville, CA	3:30 UT
Fremont, CA	2:31 UT	Sloan NV	3:30 UT
Santa Barbara, CA	2:30 UT	Santa Clara, UT	2:31 UT
San Diego, CA	2:31 UT	Paradisa, UT	2:31 UT
CA	2:30 UT	St. George, UT	2:32 UT
Santa Barbara, CA	2:30 UT	Virgin, UT	2:32 UT
St. George, UT	2:30 UT	Truckee, CA	2:35 UT
Sandy, UT	2:22 UT	Los Angeles, CA	2:23 UT
St. George, UT	2:10 UT	Pacific Grove, CA	2:25 UT
Emeryville, CA	2:31 UT	Lone Pine, CA	2:45 UT
Crestone, CO	3:30 UT	San Ramon, CA	2:50 UT
Winnemucca, NV	2:46 UT	San Ramon, CA	2:45 UT
Irvine, CA	2:40 UT	Folsom, CA	2:40 UT

Murrieta, CA	2:36 UT	Livermore, CA	2:34 UT
Las Vegas, NV	2:33 UT	Garnderville, NV	2:30 UT
Yuma, AZ	2:30 UT	Redwood City, CA	2:30 UT
Silver Peak, NV	2:30 UT	San Jose, CA	2:30 UT
El Paso, TX	2:30 UT	Las Vegas, NV	2:30 UT
Anton, CO	2:30 UT	Reno, NV	2:28 UT
Healdsburg, CA	2:28 UT	Las Vegas, NV	2:27 UT
Anaheim, CA	2:27 UT	San Jose, CA	2:27 UT
St. George, UT	2:25 UT	Anaheim, CA	2:24 UT
Centennial, CO	2:21 UT	Berkeley, CA	2:31 UT

Out of 46 reports, nine had the time wrong. This indicates that roughly 80% of the reports had a time that was pretty correct.

Time considerations

What the data demonstrates is that the time recorded for an event has the potential for being in error by minutes, and possibly, an hour or more. This is important when trying to identify a potential source of the sighting. If a bright fireball was visible but the witness gives a time that is an hour off, that does not mean that what they saw was not that fireball. The same can be said for sightings that might be the ISS, a bright satellite, airplanes, or rocket launches. One must continue to remember that human beings are recording this information and, because they are human, they can, and do, make errors.

Notes and references

1. Mutual UFO Network (MUFON) case management system. Available WWW: <http://www.mufon.com/track-ufos.html>
2. Davenport, Peter. February 2018 database. National UFO reporting center. Available WWW: <http://www.nuforc.org/webreports/ndxe201802.html>
3. Event 501-2018. American Meteor Society. Available WWW: https://www.amsmeteors.org/members/imo_view/event/2018/501

Night intensifier video requirements

When I posted last month's explanation for the Freeman video, I figured I had conclusively proven it was the ISS. I was wrong. Apparently, Mr. Freeman still believes that he was using the correct Two Line Elements (TLEs) when he ran his phone application in September to determine the ISS's track across the sky in late July. The problem with such applications is that they download the current TLEs to compute an object's track across the sky. If you move the date back, the TLEs do not change to the date in question. Heaven's above even gives a disclaimer on their web page when attempting to determine visibility of satellites outside of 14 days because they may not be accurate.

This failure by Mr. Freeman, and others, regarding their recordings got me wondering how they can help eliminate the obvious explanations when presenting their videos. I suggest they incorporate the following guidelines in their recordings:

- Location should be listed on the video
- Date and time with the time set to an accurate time source
- Prior to starting the recording session, the videographer must record the Heaven's above visible satellite passes (set to the faintest magnitude possible) and Iridium flare possibilities for the location, date, and time. While this will not eliminate all satellites (some are below the magnitude limit Heaven's above has in their table), it will take care of a great many of those visible.
- When recording videos, the location of the sky (preferably the constellation and brightest star in the frame identified) needs to be identified (or at least recorded in some form).

This data is just a starting point but, in my opinion, it will go a long way towards help solve a great number of these videos before they appear on the internet. Videographers, who are interested in performing there work with a scientific approach, should be willing to present this information. It certainly will help them avoid embarrassing situations like that experienced by Mr. Freeman and will make them strengthen their case that they have recorded something exotic.

UFO EVIDENCE UNDER REVIEW/701 CLUB

CASE 671: MARCH 20, 1950 STUGGART, ARKANSAS

This case is a "Two-fer". It is listed as both an UNIDENTIFIED in the Blue Book files and the UFO evidence. The UFO evidence describes the case as:

*March 20, 1950--Nr. Little Rock, Ark. Chicago & Southern Airlines pilots watched a circular UFO with "portholes" arc above their plane. [II]*¹

Section II states the following:

*At 9:29 p.m., March 31, 1950, a Chicago & Southern Airlines plane was flying at 2,000 feet on a southwesterly course near Little Rock, Arkansas. Captain Jack Adams and Co-pilot G. W. Anderson, Jr., suddenly noticed a distinct circular object, apparently disc-shaped approaching from the left. The UFO passed in an arc above their plane, proceeding north at an estimated 700 to 1,000 mph. Eight to 10 lighted windows or ports were visible on the underside, and "the strongest blue-white light we've ever seen" flashed intermittently from the top. The pilots told official investigators they believed they had witnessed some secret experimental craft. To this date, the sighting remains unexplained.*²

Note that in this section of document, the date is erroneous. The references were the July 1950 issue of Flying magazine and the Memphis "Commercial appeal" of March 22, 1950.

Don Berliner describes the case as:

*March 20, 1950; Stuttgart, Arkansas. 9:26 p.m. Witnesses: Chicago & Southern Airlines Capt. Jack Adams, First Officer G. W. Anderson, Jr. One 100' circular disc with 9-12 portholes along the lower side emitting a soft purple light, and a light at the top which flashed 3 times in 9 seconds, flew at not less than 1,000 m.p.h. It was seen for 25-35 seconds.*³

Brad Sparks gives the following description:

*March 20 [22? 31?], 1950. 40 miles E of Little Rock, N of Stuttgart, Ark. 9:26 [9:29?] p.m. Chicago & Southern Airlines Capt. Jack Adams and First Officer G. W. Anderson, Jr., flying a DC-3 at 2,000 ft heading W from Memphis to Little Rock, saw a 100 ft flat cylinder-section circular disc [or body of object not visible?], width/diameter ratio about 1:4.5, with 9-12 [or ??] bright white lights or "portholes" along the lower side emitting a soft purple [?] light, and a blinding blue-white center light at the top which flashed 3 times in 9 secs [or 3/sec ??], fly at 700-1,000 mph [or 1,000+ mph?] from the S headed N, passing to their right at about 1/2 mile distance about 1,000 ft higher altitude.*⁴

Sparks seems to think there is a question about the date but it clearly is stated to have transpired on the date of 20 March. News accounts of the time give the date and there is no conflict of the dates in the BB files. I suspect he put question marks on these dates because other sources (like NICAP) listed those dates.

Another source of information about this case can be Loren Gross, who has an interesting section in his history of UFOs January-March 1950.⁵ In the news accounts in his writings, the time duration was listed as about 45 seconds

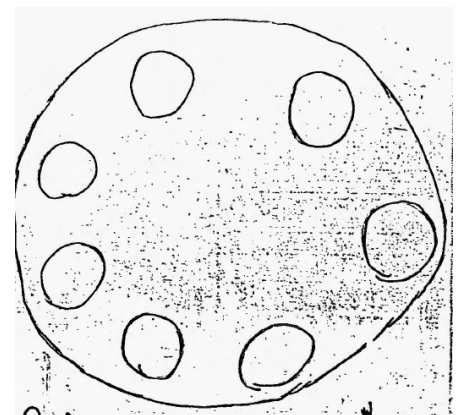
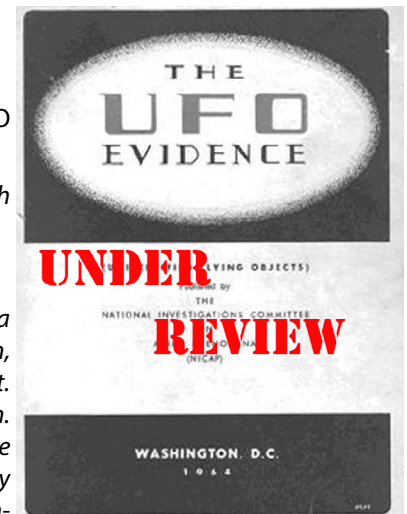
The Blue Book record

The record really does not contain much information. There is a summary of the sighting and a report made by Majors Richard Easley and Dewey Orr, who interviewed the pilots about their sighting.⁶ To summarize:

- The sky was clear and the plane was at 2000 foot altitude.
- The observation was over US Highway 70 about 15 miles north of Stuttgart.
- The object was visible between 25 and 35 seconds.
- The object was estimated to be 1/2 mile away and 1000 feet above the airliner.
- The object was estimated to be 100 feet in diameter, disc-shaped, and had a top light that flashed approximately 3 flashes per second.
- The bottom of the object had 9-12 portholes in it.

The Blue Book record mentions a sketch by pilot Adams but it is not in the file. However, Loren Gross provide us with a copy of the sketch.⁷ It is important to note that the disc outline was never seen by the pilots. They assumed this shape based on the arrangement of the port holes they saw.

Blue Book drew no conclusions about this case but Ed Ruppelt stated somebody told the pilots that had probably seen a meteor. Is it possible that might have mistaken a meteor for a flying saucer?



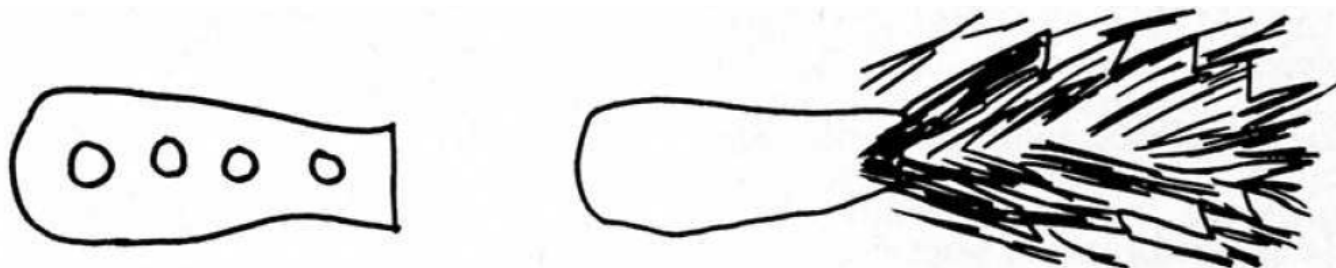
Portholes or something else?

According to Ruppelt, the USAF investigators suggested to Captain Adams they had seen a meteor.

He reported that to the Air Force and some red-hot character met him in Memphis on his next trip. He talked to Adams a few minutes and then told him that he'd seen a meteor. Adams felt like a fool. Hell, I know Jack Adams well and he's the most conservative guy I know. If he said he saw something with glowing portholes, he saw something with glowing portholes - and it wasn't a meteor.⁸

This is probably why many of the news accounts have him denying he had seen a meteor. Despite these denials, I have to wonder if that wasn't exactly what they had seen.

Much of the description matches the Chiles-Whitted sighting of 1948, which some UFO proponents have conceded was probably a bright fireball. All one has to do is look at the history of such fireballs being reported as UFOs to see that it is not uncommon to describe them as objects with disc or cigar shapes, which included portholes. Zond IV and Chiles-Whitted are two examples but there are others. For instance, this sketch of the April 25, 1966 fireball event also shows portholes:⁹



Observing “port holes” does not mean that what was seen was an actual craft. While not all fireballs produce this effect, any event that produces a fragmenting object with multiple light sources can sometimes be described as a craft with port holes. It is an illusion that Dr. William Hartmann referred to as the “airship effect”.¹⁰ Witnesses are basically taking the multiple light sources, assuming they are “windows” and then creating a craft around them.

Time duration

The biggest problem with the fireball explanation is the duration stated by the pilots. We have a range of durations between 25 and 45 seconds depending on the source. Is 25-45 seconds too long to be a Bolide? I don't think so based on some long duration fireball videos I examined from 2017.

Date	Duration
April 25, 2017	20 Seconds
July 26, 2017	17 Seconds
August 25, 2017	14 Seconds
December 23, 2017	13 Seconds
December 31, 2017	14 seconds

I also found a some other long duration fireball reports/videos from previous years:

Date	Duration
April 25, 1966	20-30 Seconds
March 16, 1995	18 seconds
November 16, 1999	20 seconds
October 19, 2013	13 Seconds
May 15, 2014	17 Seconds
January 19, 2016	14 Seconds

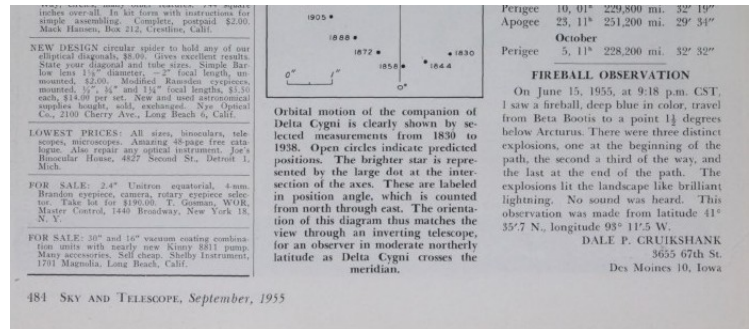
While only one of these fall into the 25-45 second range, we also have to wonder if the time estimate is even accurate. My experience with bright fireballs is that the longer the duration, the harder it is to make an accurate estimate of the time elapsed. Watching some of the videos of these events from 2017 had me thinking about how slow these meteors appeared. They seemed to be visible for an eternity compared to the shorter duration fireballs I am familiar with. While there is no direct evidence that people tend to overestimate meteor durations in long fireball events, one can see overestimates in some of the fireball events listed in the American Meteor Society's database. It is interesting that Captain Adams told official investigators that it was 25-35 seconds but then increased the value when talking to the press.

I found one documented experiment designed to determine how accurate fireball durations were estimated.¹⁰ In 1935, Bemrose Boyd conducted an experiment involving a bright light on top of a radio mast at an observatory, which was turned on and off.

Observers on the grounds of the observatory, unaware the event was going to happen, were later asked to estimate the duration the light was energized. The average error for the estimated duration was 146.6%. Additionally, a 1987 study by Elizabeth Loftus, Jonathan Schooler, Stanley Boone and Donald Kline indicated people tend to overestimate time durations of events by a factor of two or more.¹¹ While these experiments were videos of bank robberies, and not meteors, they do indicate the problems with people estimating time durations of significant length.

Furthermore, I have examined reports in the Blue Book system compared to known meteor fireball events. One case involved a fireball on June 15, 1955. An observer in Des Moines, Iowa reported to Sky and Telescope that he had seen a fireball at 9:18 PM CST on June 15.¹² In the Blue Book system, there is a report by a USAF pilot from Topeka, Kansas, who reported the same event (listed as 9:30 PM CST) and stated it lasted 40 seconds.¹³ Either the pilot's estimate of duration was too high or there was a bright fireball visible for 40 seconds. It seems more than likely that the pilot was mistaken about the elapsed time.

UFOB INDEX CARD			ATSS-UF0B-177-55
1. DATE 16 June 1955	2. LOCATION Topeka, Kansas	12. CONCLUSIONS <input type="checkbox"/> Was Balloon <input type="checkbox"/> Probably Balloon <input type="checkbox"/> Possibly Balloon <input type="checkbox"/> Was Aircraft <input type="checkbox"/> Probably Aircraft <input type="checkbox"/> Possibly Aircraft <input type="checkbox"/> Was Astronomical <input type="checkbox"/> Probably Astronomical <input type="checkbox"/> Possibly Astronomical	
3. DATE-TIME GROUP Local ONT 16/0330Z May 1955	4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION <input type="checkbox"/> Ground-Visual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air-Visual <input type="checkbox"/> Ground-Radar <input type="checkbox"/> Air-Intercept Radar	5. SOURCE Military (Pilot)	
6. PHOTOS <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION Forty (40) Seconds	8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS One (1)	9. COURSE 190°
10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING One (1) round, green object, the size of a grapefruit at arm's length, features the size and appearance of those on the moon, a tail to a point, appeared to a USAF pilot for a period of forty (40) seconds. The object appeared to burn out suddenly.			
11. COMMENTS In connection with the sighting in Minn-neapolis, same date, approx same time, heading in the same direction, this UFOB has been has been evaluated by this headquarters as POSSIBLY ASTRONOMICAL in spite of the fact of the length of time of sighting.			



Based on all of this information it seems possible that the estimate by Adams was too high and the true time duration might have fallen into the range for bright fireball meteors with a duration of 10-20 seconds.

The flashing light

Some might point towards the “flashing light” description as a reason to rule out the fireball explanation because it had a constant rate. It was stated in the press that it was a rapidly flashing light. In the Blue Book file, the pilots stated it was an extremely bright light that blinked at an estimated 3 flashes per second but was only visible during the approach and, possibly, after its passage. Fireballs can have multiple bursts in their trajectory. Usually these bursts are the brightest part of the meteor’s path. Some of the meteor videos (12/23/17, 1/29/16, 10/19/13) I linked to showed this kind of effect. It seems possible that several bright bursts could have been interpreted by the crew as a flashing light that went on and off at a constant rate. It is interesting that after the flashing light disappeared he noticed the “port holes” appear and they were fainter. Adams described them as a “soft purple light”. In the fireball scenario, the fireball had multiple bursts with peaks in brightness. After the last burst, the object fragmented into fainter objects that appeared as “port holes”. Some of these fainter objects would then flare out giving the impression the flashing light was still visible.

It was not a meteor!

The last reason that we have to reject the fireball explanation is the statement by Captain Adams that he felt it was not a meteor. This is a common statement by people who have never seen a long duration bright fragmenting fireball before. They are often only familiar with normal meteors, which look star-like and usually have short durations (although I have seen my share of non-fireball meteors that were visible for many seconds). As an amateur astronomer, I have seen many meteors but not that many bright fireballs. Most of the ones I have seen were during major meteor showers like the Perseids, Geminids, Orionids, and Leonids. While they were spectacular, a sporadic fireball of long duration that is fragmenting is something different. The two that I saw were incredible events that are hard to forget. Both illuminated the sky to the point that shadows were cast and lasted many seconds.

The spring fireball radiant and evening fireball rates

It is interesting the event happened around the spring equinox and during the evening hours. Amateur astronomers have been aware of what has been referred to as the spring fireball radiant for many years.

...in spring, the number of sporadic fireballs climbs by 10 to 30 percent.

“We’ve known about this phenomenon for more than 30 years,” Cooke said. “It’s not only fireballs that are affected. Meteorite falls — space rocks that actually hit the ground — are more common in spring as well.”¹⁴

Halliday and Griffen noted that the number of meteorite falls were greater around the spring equinox than at other times of the year.¹⁵

Additionally, Studies by Rendtel and Knöfel, noted that fireballs were more likely to occur in the evening than in the morning by a factor of four.¹⁶ The Stuggart case happened in the evening.

While this information does not prove that the event was a fireball, it does indicate that a fireball was more likely to occur on that

date and time than others.

Conclusion

While we can never prove what was seen was a fireball meteor without more data, we cannot eliminate the possibility that a bolide was the source of the sighting. Many aspects of the sighting resemble UFO reports that turned out to be fireballs in the past. As a result, I feel it should be classified as a possible fireball meteor and no longer be placed in the UNIDENTIFIED category.

Notes and references

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Project Blue Book case review: July-December 1953

This is the second edition of the Project Blue Book case review covering the second half of 1953. Like the previous evaluation, I tried to examine each case to see if the explanation had merit. I added comments to help clarify the explanation or if the explanation was not correct or adequate.

July 1953

Date	Location	BB explanation	My evaluation
2	Shaw AFB, SC	1. Venus 2. Stars/planets	Agreed. Probably Capella, Venus and Jupiter.
2	Tinker AFB, OK	Balloon	Agreed
3	Freemont, WI	Balloon	Agreed. Possible balloon launched from Minnesota on July 2.
3	Reno, NV	Venus	Agreed. Daylight sighting of Venus
3	Middletown, NY	Aircraft	Agreed
3	Tipp City, Ohio	Balloon	Agreed. Possible balloon launched from Minnesota on July 2.
4	Tinker AFB, OK	Balloon	Agreed
6	Stillwater, OK	Searchlight	Agreed
7	Atlanta, GA	Hoax -shaved monkey	Agreed
8	Colville, WA	Venus	Agreed
8	Tinker AFB, OK	Balloon	Agreed
9	Sheppard AFB, TX	Debris in wind	Agreed
9	Fort Worth, TX	Meteor	Agreed
10	Forrest City, AR	Balloon	Agreed
11	Godman AFB, KY	Venus	Capella. Venus did not rise until one hour later.
12	Adrian, MI	Balloon	Agreed. Probable Balloon with Reflector
13	Shaw AFB, SC	Meteor	Agreed
14	Fairborn, OH	Venus and Jupiter	Agreed
15	Opportunity, MT	Insufficient data	Agreed
18	Sheridan, WY	Meteor	Agreed
18	Key West, FL	1. Balloon 2. Star	Agreed
18	Brooklyn, NY	Meteor	Agreed
19	Le Grande, OR	Balloon	Agreed
19	Colorado Springs, CO	Aircraft	Agreed
20	Offutt AFB, NE	Other (Foil from radar reflector)	Agreed
22	Atlantic City, NJ	Aircraft	UNIDENTIFIED. Sighting of multiple objects (20) coming out of clouds with vapor trail. Records state that there were no aircraft in area. Not a lot of information in file but should have been identifiable based on the information available.
24	Key West, FL	Aircraft	Agreed
25	Central House, AK	Balloon	Agreed
25	Washington DC	Venus and Jupiter	Agreed
25	Perrin, TX	Balloon	Agreed
26	Tinker AFB, OK	Balloon	Agreed
26	Deer Creek Springs, NV	Balloon	Agreed (Probable source Project Gopher flight launched 7/24 Holloman AFB)

26	Dayton, OH	Balloon	Agreed
27	Dayton, OH	Insufficient data	Possible Balloon
28	Minneapolis, MN	Balloon	Agreed (Two research balloons launched from St. Paul the day before)
29	Springfield, OH	Aircraft	Agreed
31	Creola, AL	Meteor	Agreed

August 1953

Date	Location	BB explanation	My evaluation
1	Creola, AL	Meteor	Agreed
1	Key West, FL	Aircraft	Agreed
2	Satsuma, AL	Meteor	Agreed
2	Saraland, AL	Aircraft	Agreed
3	Amarillo, TX	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
3	Dayton, OH	Insufficient data	Multiple confusing reports. Possible balloon.
4	Onida, SD	Insufficient data	Agreed
4	West Point, NE	Meteor	Agreed
5	San Antonio, TX	Balloon	Agreed
5-6	Rapid City, SD	V: Stars/planets R: Anomalous Propagation.	Agreed
7	Martha's Vinyard, MA	Venus/Jupiter/Betelgeuse	Agreed
9	Moscow, ID	Reflection	Agreed
10	Wilmington, NC	Unreliable report	Agreed
11	Barksdale AFB, LA	Meteor	Agreed
12	Leesburg, VA	Insufficient data	Agreed
12	Oxnard AFB, Ventura, CA	Meteor	Agreed
12	Ventura, CA	Aircraft	Agreed
12	Ventura, CA	Aircraft	Possible meteor
15	Madison, WI	Capella	Agreed
16	Ramore, Ontario, Canada	Moon	Agreed
17	South-Central France	Balloon	Agreed (Balloon launched from Padova, Italy)
17	Peoria, Ill	Balloon	Agreed
20	California area	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
22	San Antonio, TX	Aircraft	Agreed
23	Port Moresby, New Guinea	Insufficient data	Agreed
26	Bermuda	Insufficient data	Agreed
27	Falls Church, VA	Meteor	Agreed
27	Greenville, MS	UNIDENTIFIED	Arcturus and Antares (See SUNlite 6-4)
28	San Rafael, CA	Insufficient data	Possible birds (14 objects in loose V formation flying through clouds - Observer used opera glasses)
28	Jamestown, ND	Meteor	Agreed
30-7Sep	Lewisdale, MD	Aircraft	Agreed

September 1953

Date	Location	BB explanation	My evaluation
1	Goat Rock, GA	Star/planet	Unreliable report (Various dates between 1 Sept and April 1954)
2	Sidi Slimane, French Morocco	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
3	Portland, Oregon	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
3	Jones Beach, NY	Reflections on cloud	Agreed
3	Modesto, CA	Aircraft	Agreed
4	Pepperell AFB, Newfound-land	Meteor	Agreed
4	AZ-TX-NM	Meteor	White Sands Aerobee Rocket launch
7	Omaha, NE	Aircraft	Agreed
12	Fort Meade, MD	Insufficient data	Agreed
13	Switzerland	Meteor	Agreed
15	Rapid City, SD	1. Balloon 2. star	1. Agreed (Balloon launched 14 Sep from Tillamook OR) 2. Information confusing (two sightings mixed in with each other) Object appears to have come from north, hovered over drive-in movie screen, and then disappeared. Sighting appears to have lasted 20 minutes. Winds from north. Possible balloon.
18	Atherton, CA	Balloon	Agreed. Balloon launch Vernalis CA or Edwards AFB. Both last reported in the area still aloft over 24 hours after launch on evening of 9/16.
22	Lawton, OK	Insufficient data	Agreed
22	Hayward, CA	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
23	Gaithersburg, MD	Aircraft	Agreed
24	Brooklyn, NY	Balloon	Agreed
26	Springfield, OH	Other: Cloud	Agreed
28	Harrisville, MI	Aircraft	Agreed
28	Palmdale, CA	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
28	Lake Charles, LA	Capella	Agreed
30	Silver Springs, MD	Meteor	Agreed

October 1953

Date	Location	BB explanation	My evaluation
1	Harrisville, MI	Insufficient data	Possible Aircraft reflection (short duration event. Aircraft present in area)
1	Capitol Heights, MD	Aircraft	Agreed
2	Tinker AFB, OK	Aircraft	Possible balloon (winds above 1500 M were from west)
3	North Rome, PA	Arcturus	Agreed
7	Holloman, NM	Balloon	Agreed
7	Scott AFB, IL	Balloon	Agreed
8	Long Beach, CA	Insufficient data	Agreed
9	Sampson AFB, NY	Aircraft	Agreed
11	Waubun, MN	Unreliable report	Agreed
11	Albuquerque, NM	Birds	Agreed
12	Waterville, ME	Aircraft	Agreed
12	Yakima, WA	Sun Dog	Agreed

12	Offutt AFB, NE	Balloon	Agreed
13	Dobbins AFB, GA	Searchlights	Agreed
15	Minneapolis, MN	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
15	Palmer, AK	Insufficient data	Agreed
15	Dayton, OH	Meteor	Agreed
16	Cyprus Island	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
16	Presque Isle, ME	Electronic interference/Birds	Agreed
19	Winsor, Newfoundland	Balloon	Agreed
19	Westport, MA	Meteors	First event was a possible meteor. Second event should be classified as insufficient/confusing information. It is difficult to determine if the event was one object visible for 15 minutes or multiple objects seen over 15 minutes.
19	Lowry AFB, Co	Balloon	Agreed
19	Bolling AFB, WA	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
20	Norfolk, VA	Balloon	Agreed
22	Compton, CA	Jupiter	Agreed
25	Simiutak, Greenland	Mars/Arcturus	Agreed
26	Baltimore, MD	Aircraft	Agreed
26	Pacific	Meteor	Agreed
26	Melbourne, FL	Meteor	Agreed
29	Pepperell AFB, Newfoundland	Jupiter	Agreed
29	Hampton, VA	Meteor	Agreed
29	Mapleton, ME	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
29	Presque Isle, ME	Meteor	Agreed
30	Norton AFB, CA	Insufficient data	Agreed
31	Annapolis, MD	Balloon	Agreed
31	Logansville, OH	Meteor	Agreed
31	Union Lake, MI	Insufficient data	Agreed

November 1953

Date	Location	BB explanation	My evaluation
1	Big Moose Lake, NY	Hoax	Agreed
1	Guadaloupe Island	Meteor	Agreed
2	Idlewild AP, NY	Cloud/contrail	Agreed
2	Norton AFB, CA	Aircraft	Agreed
4	Ashley, ND	Fomalhaut	Possible Moby Dick Balloon T140 launched from Tillamook on evening of Nov 2. Balloon last sighted over Idaho/Montana Border on Nov 3. Recovered in Pipestone, MN. Track passes near Ashley, ND.
5	Indiana-Illinois area	Insufficient data	Agreed.
7	Long Beach AFB, CA	Mars	Probably Venus. Duration lists 1.5 hours after initial observation. Venus rose in ESE. Strong twilight and sunrise happened an hour after initial sighting.
7	Prince George BC, Canada	Aircraft	Agreed
9	Pepperell AFB, Newfoundland	Meteor	Agreed

10	Dayton, OH	Meteor	Agreed
10	Atlantic	Insufficient data	Possible meteor. Time listed as 4 minutes but object described as very fast. Time may be in error or persistent ion train after meteor's passage included in time estimate.
11	Atlantic	Meteor	Agreed
14	New Orleans, LA	Aircraft/helicopters	Agreed
15	McCool Junction, NE	Meteor	Agreed
15	Watson, CA	Balloon	Agreed
15	St. Louis, MO	Aircraft	Agreed
16	Catalina, CA	Jupiter	Moby Dick Balloon from Vernalis CA. Launched on 15 November. Last tracked about 100 mi SSW of Catalina about 2 hours after sighting. Track placed it passing the area of Catalina around the time of the sighting.
17	New York City, NY	Aircraft	Agreed
17	Los Alamos, NM	Balloon	Agreed
18	Maitowoc, WI	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
19	Atlantic	Meteor	Agreed
19	Panama City, FL	Balloon	Agreed
20	Atlantic	Balloon	Agreed
20	Marietta, OH	Insufficient data	Agreed (Wood county airport south of Marietta not to west. Location given in error. What else is incorrect?)
21	Kirtland AFB, NM	Meteor shower	Agreed
22-3	Woomera, Australia	Meteor shower	Agreed
25	Clemson, SC	Insufficient data	Possible meteor
27	Saudi Arabia	Insufficient data	Possible meteor
27	Saudi Arabia	Meteor	Agreed
27	Keflavik, Iceland	Meteor	Agreed
27	Houston, TX	Balloon	Agreed
27	Phoenix, AZ	Stars/planets	Jupiter for night sighting, Venus for pre-sunrise sighting.
28	Brookley AFB, AL	Jupiter	Agreed
30	Minneapolis MN	Sirius	Agreed

December 1953

Date	Location	BB explanation	My evaluation
1	Dayton, OH	Insufficient data	Probably Procyon
3	Holloman AFB, NM	Insufficient data	Agreed
3	North Truro, MA	Aircraft	Insufficient data (details lacking)
3	Belmar, NY	Insufficient data	Possible meteor
4	Houston, TX	Balloon	Agreed
8	St. Louis, MO	Aircraft (B-50)	Agreed
9	Thule AFB, Greenland	Meteor shower	Agreed
10	Columbus, IN	Insufficient data	Agreed. Date listed is "approximate". Witnesses could not recall date.
10	Maryland-PA area	Meteor	Agreed
11	Rome, NY	Meteor	Agreed
13	Albuquerque, NM	Balloon	Agreed
14	Panama City, FL	Balloon	Agreed

15	Idaho Falls, ID	Insufficient data	Agreed
16	Ft. Belvoir, VA	Sun Dog	Sun below horizon. Sirius and Betelgeuse, Jupiter, or Capella.
16	Mediterranean Area	Radar analysis	Agreed
16	Agooura, CA	Lenticular Cloud	Agreed (This case is often considered an UNIDENTIFIED. See Lance Moody's argument for this explanation)
17	Hassleholm, Sweden	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
17	Pacific	Aircraft	Insufficient data. Radar sighting from airborne radar over ocean. No visual sighting.
24	El Cajon, CA	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
26	North Korea	Balloon	Agreed
27	Orwigsburg, PA	Jupiter	Jupiter or Sirius
27	Madison, CT	Aircraft	Possible Meteor (object stopped and then faded away)
28	Marysville, CA	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
28	Minneapolis, MN	Meteor	Agreed
29	Rock Springs, WY	Insufficient data	Agreed
30	Miami, FL	Balloon	Agreed
31	San Jacinto and Palm Springs, CA	Missile/Rocket	Possible meteor (listed as extreme speed but then states it was visible for 1 and 1/2 minutes)
31	Seal Beach, CA	Missile/Rocket	Possible meteor
31	Quantico, VA	Grimes light on Aircraft	Agreed

Reclassification

There were 187 cases in the Blue Book files from July to December of 1953, that I evaluated. In my opinion, of these 29 were improperly classified (about 16%). This table describes these cases and how I felt they should have been reclassified. Some of the sightings really did not have enough information for evaluation and other cases that had been listed as "insufficient information" had potential explanations.

Date	Location	Reclassification	Reason
7/11	Godman AFB, KY	Venus	Capella. Venus did not rise until one hour later.
7/22	Atlantic City, NJ	Aircraft	UNIDENTIFIED. Sighting of multiple objects (20) coming out of clouds with vapor trail. Records state there were no aircraft in area. Not a lot of information in file but should have been identifiable based on the information available.
7/27	Dayton, OH	Insufficient data	Possible Balloon
8/3	Dayton, OH	Insufficient data	Multiple confusing reports. Possible balloon.
8/12	Ventura, CA	Aircraft	Possible meteor
8/27	Greenville, MS	UNIDENTIFIED	Arcturus and Antares (See SUNlite 6-4)
8/28	San Rafael, CA	Insufficient data	Possible birds (14 objects in loose V formation flying through clouds - Observer used opera glasses)
9/1	Goat Rock, GA	Star/planet	Unreliable reports (Various dates between 1 Sept and April 1954)
9/4	AZ-TX-NM	Meteor	White Sands Aerobee Rocket launch
9/15	Rapid City, SD	1. Balloon 2. star	1. Agreed (Balloon launched 14 Sep from Tillamook OR) 2. Information confusing (two sightings mixed in with each other) Object appears to have come from north, hovered over drive-in movie screen, and then disappeared. Sighting appears to have lasted 20 minutes. Winds from north. Possible balloon.
10/1	Harrisville, MI	Insufficient data	Possible Aircraft reflection (short duration event. Aircraft present in area)

10/2	Tinker AFB, OK	Aircraft	Possible balloon (winds above 1500 M were from west)
10/19	Westport, MA	Meteors	First event was a possible meteor. Second event should be classified as insufficient/confusing information. It is difficult to determine if the event was one object visible for 15 minutes or multiple objects seen over 15 minutes.
11/4	Ashley, ND	Fomalhaut	Possible Moby Dick Balloon T140 launched from Tillamook on evening of Nov 2. Balloon last sighted over Idaho/Montana Border on Nov 3. Recovered in Pipestone, MN. Track passes near Ashley, ND on November 4.
11/7	Long Beach AFB, CA	Mars	Probably Venus. Duration lists 1.5 hours after initial observation. Venus rose in ESE. Strong twilight and sunrise happened an hour after initial sighting.
11/10	Atlantic	Insufficient data	Possible meteor. Time listed as 4 minutes but object described as very fast. Time may be in error or persistent ion train after meteor's passage included in time estimate.
11/16	Catalina, CA	Jupiter	Moby Dick Balloon launched on 15 November from Vernalis CA. Last tracked about 100 mi SSW of Catalina about 2 hours after sighting. Track placed it passing the area of Catalina around the time of the sighting.
11/25	Clemson, SC	Insufficient data	Possible meteor
11/27	Saudi Arabia	Insufficient data	Possible meteor
11/27	Phoenix, AZ	Stars/planets	Jupiter for night sighting, Venus for pre-sunrise sighting.
12/1	Dayton, OH	Insufficient data	Probably Procyon
12/3	North Truro, MA	Aircraft	Insufficient data (details lacking)
12/3	Belmar, NY	Insufficient data	Possible meteor
12/16	Ft. Belvoir, VA	Sun Dog	Sun below horizon. Sirius was one object. The other was either Betelgeuse, Jupiter, or Capella.
12/17	Pacific	Aircraft	Insufficient data. Radar sighting from airborne radar over ocean. No visual sighting.
12/27	Orwigsburg, PA	Jupiter	Jupiter or Sirius
12/27	Madison, CT	Aircraft	Possible Meteor (object described as fading out at the end of its flight path)
12/31	San Jacinto and Palm Springs, CA	Missile/Rocket	No evidence of missile test. Possible meteor (listed as extreme speed but then states it was visible for 1.5 minutes. Possible confusion that meteor and resultant ion train lasted 1.5 minutes)
31	Seal Beach, CA	Missile/Rocket	No evidence of missile test. Possible meteor

Summary

The 16% value of improper classification is a bit less than the value of 18% I arrived at for early 1953. A majority of this has to do with the apparent lack of feedback from various organizations. After the initial messages arrived at Blue Book, there seemed to be little in the way of additional information. Observer forms were sent out but never returned and requests for additional information were never received. There were several potential meteor observations where the durations were listed in the minutes but the witnesses described the object being very/extremely fast or having speed of thousands of miles per hour. How can object be visible for 2-4 minutes if it passed overhead at 2000 mph (roughly 33 miles per minute)? All I can assume is that these time estimates were inaccurate or improperly reported. With such minimal and conflicting data it is no surprise that Blue Book had problems identifying these cases. I certainly had problems looking at these puzzles and trying to ascertain what the witness was trying to describe when making their reports.

In my review, I have noticed that there were several instances of multiple reports being made by single individuals on multiple dates. One that stood out during this period were the reports from Key West in the summer of 1953. These were all made by one man, who was a Seaman Apprentice (E-2) attending sonar school. The witness could not have been in the Navy very long or never advanced to the next pay grade (which takes only about a year). It did not give me much confidence in his abilities and, after reading his reports, I had to wonder about how accurate these reports were. This is the major problem with these reports. If you take

them as 100% accurate the number of unknowns can be high. If you look at the behavior of the objects in the reports and compare their behaviors with known objects, one can usually determine a possible solution.

Next issue we will move on to 1954, where the infusion of more investigators from the 4602nd AISS might help resolve more cases and drop the reclassification rate.

References

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