



NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL OF CANADA
CONSEIL NATIONAL DE RECHERCHES DU CANADA

OTTAWA 7.

20 November 1969

Mr. Arthur Bray,
1187 Agincourt Rd.,
Ottawa 5, Ont.

Dear Art:

I have noted your letter of November 11 concerning the meteoric procession of February 9, 1913. I have read all the original observations which are bound in a large volume stored in the rare book department of the David Dunlap Observatory. I have also discussed this in some detail with a number of experts in meteoritics. I have always planned to carry out a further study of this incident but have not had the time to devote to it.

You are quite correct that this was a most unusual occurrence and practically unique in the records of meteoric astronomy. There are many interesting points about the observations but up to the present in my study of the event I have seen nothing to suggest any intelligent control of these objects or any origin other than the chance occurrence of just the right angle and velocity of the intersection of a large group of meteoroids with the earth.

why not? →
In reading the original accounts there was no indication of peculiar behaviour of manoeuvring or other deviation from a great circle path. You are quite correct that the descriptions often agreed with the appearance of a rocket. However, almost any bright fireball can be described in this way and if by any chance rocket power were being used in the case of these objects they would not have followed the orbital path which they did. The paths followed indicated a free gravitational orbit. *→ it did?*
The perfect formation maintained is also a natural result of the interaction of the earth's gravitational force with the original motion of the particles and the fact that in most cases somewhat larger particles were a bit ahead of the smaller ones is in keeping with the expected effect of the slight drag imposed by the upper atmosphere. The length of the path and the time visible were certainly unusual and a result of the optimum conditions for the earth capturing for a short time a new satellite from space. Dr. Chant's comment concerning the diameter of the objects refers entirely to the radiating gas cloud and this was quite normal for the gas clouds surrounding large meteoroids in the earth's atmosphere.

*did it?
chant said
"bodies" →*