

~~RESTRICTED~~  
PROJECT 10075 RECORD CARD

21/0545Z

ATIC NO. - - -

DATE OF INFO 20 Sept 1950

AF NO. - - -

LOCATION Denver, Colo.

REPORT NO. - - -

SOURCE USAF Pilots & A/C observer

DATE OF REPORT - - -

DATE IN TO ATIC - - -

TIME OF STARTING 2245 MST

COLOR Brilliant white to orange-red  
slightly faster than limited

SHAPE Meteor

SPEED F-86 (700 mph) Measured

SIZE - - -

ESTIMATED

ALTITUDE 8000' approx Measured

COURSE 154° magnetic

LENGTH OF TIME OBSERVED 10-30 sec.

NO. IN GROUP 2

TYPE OF OBSERVATION Aerial

SOUND - - -

MANEUVERS Changes in Speed

PHOTOS - - - SKETCHES - - -

REMARKS: Object looked like landing light  
which emitted a string of bright sparks  
that "burned out".

Temporary ATIC Form 329  
(2 Jan 52)

~~RESTRICTED~~

ASTRO (METEOR)



UNCLASSIFIED

*Amc*

USA-NATS

IR-284-50

*af 228702*  
*7-1*

AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

Sighting of Unidentified Flying Objects, Colorado

Colorado, USA

Intelligence Division, Hqs., NATS  
Andrews AF Base, Washington 25, D. C.

29 September 1950

20 September 1950

Percy E. Sutton, Captain, USAF

USAF Officers

*C-3 Note Hg*  
*B-1 JWC*  
*ATIAA-2*

1. The Commanding Officer, Lowry Flight Service Center, Lowry AF Base, Denver, Colorado, reports the sighting of unidentified flying objects in the vicinity of Akron and Denver, Colorado, on the night of 20 September 1950 at approximately 2245 MST. Clear skies, with fifteen miles visibility, was reported as the prevailing weather at Akron at the approximate time of the sighting. Clear skies and fifty miles visibility prevailed at Denver.

2. Inclosed is a signed statement, concerning the sighting, made by USAF officer occupants of a B-25 type aircraft aloft at the time of the sighting. There is forwarded also an annotated drawing depicting the position of the observers' aircraft in relation to the unidentified flying object at the time of the sighting. Apparent confirmation of the sighting is furnished by the inclosed reports of fourteen persons also having observed flying objects.

APPROVED:

*Percy E. Sutton*  
PERCY E. SUTTON  
Captain, USAF

*1K*

WILLIAM L. TRAVIS  
Lt. Colonel, USAF  
Chief, Intelligence  
Division

*JC*

*file* *George*

*509.6*  
*Carded*

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1. Statement by USAF officer occupants of B-25 .
2. Annotated drawing.
3. Report of persons observing flying objects

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

UNCLASSIFIED

NAD 69762 N/15



### **Meteors in the Records**

The American Meteoritics Society, whose members specialize in the study of meteors and meteorites, for years have collected reports of such phenomena. From a large enough number of good descriptions of a given meteor, astronomers can analyze the data mathematically and determine the meteor's radiant—the point in the heavens from which it seems to come. The meteor is then identified by its radiant and given an AMS number. The data were published in *Meteoritics*, the journal of the society, and thus made available for future research.

September 20, the same year, was a big day for meteors. At 1:35 A.M. a giant fireball (AMS 2326) roared over southeastern Illinois from north to south, leaving a luminous train visible in five states and illuminating the sky and countryside from St. Louis to Louisville and from Memphis to Knoxville. The final detonation, over western Kentucky, was heard over an area 1000 miles square and shook buildings from Paducah to Memphis. Fragments showered farms over a twenty-five mile area, struck five buildings, and penetrated one roof. About fifty pounds of meteorites dropped in Murray, Calloway County, Kentucky, and are now in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. That same night about 10:45 P.M., fireballs were reported by plane crews flying over a six-state area—Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico [9, p. 115]. Similar fireballs that vanished without trace were reported on September 28, 1953 (AMS 2331); October 4, 1953 (AMS 2330); May 15, 1954; and October 27, 1954 (AMS 2337).

7-3712-32



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LOWRY FLIGHT SERVICE CENTER  
LOWRY AIR FORCE BASE  
DENVER, COLORADO

The following reports were received by Lowry Flight Service Center on unidentified objects seen at approximately 2245M, 20 September 1950

Mrs. Borah at Eagle, Colorado, sighted five balls of fire whose color changed from white to red heading in a southerly direction. Did not know the altitude or speed of the objects. Sighted objects at 2245M.

Capt. McFadden, First Officer Hansen, of United Air Lines, Frank Goodlive and a Mr. Black of CAA Maintenance reported seeing a number of balls of fire heading in a southerly direction over Stapleton and Lowry Fields. No other information received. Called in 2245M.

A Mr. Frank Maricale of 2600 Oneida Street, Denver, Colorado, called CAA with a report that he had sighted a meteor over Denver. Denver Control called with this information at approximately 2245M.

Capt. Grave, Continental Air Lines, reported sighting an unidentified object at 20,000 feet over Colorado Springs, Colorado, said object was triangular in shape, coloring was yellow and was just gliding along. Sighted at approximately 2245M.

Capt. Gurney, flying United 648, eastbound sighted what he thought was a meteor over St. George, Utah. Object was traveling west to east. It was very large. While he watched it broke into four pieces. Time of sighting not given.

A state policeman sighted five objects in the sky over Akron, Colorado. Thought they were about five hundred feet above the ground and were heading south. No other information.

Mr. E. G. Gillis of Edgewater, Colorado, was at the West Drive-In Theater, Denver, Colorado, when he sighted two balls of flame heading in over the theater at an altitude of from five to seven hundred feet. Color red. Headed south at approximately 300 mph. Sighted 2245M.

Major M. M. Taylor, 3416th Student Officer Sq, Lowry AF Base, sighted two round white lights in the vicinity of Cheyenne Wells, Colo. When first sighted objects were at about 16,000 feet. Came down to 11-12,000 feet and then went back up to approximately 16,000 feet. Headed north then east, and then south. No other information. Sighted 2245M.

Mr. A. M. Wagner (one of three patrolmen from the Cornhusker Ordnance Depot) called the Grand Island CAA Communication Station about what they thought was an aircraft in distress. Object had a bright blue light in front and an exceptionally bright white light in the rear. Appeared long and was traveling at great speed. The object appeared to be traveling south and was long in shape. Sighted at 2247M.



Reports on Unidentified Objects Seen on 20 Sep 50

T/Sgt Whitehead, 3415th Maintenance Sq, Lowry AFB, sighted two streamlined objects over Lowry Field. Looked like two balls of orange-red fire. Were traveling south in a straight line at about 25,000 to 30,000 feet. Thought they were jets. Weather clear. Sighted at 2245M.

Mr. Ken Tillotson, 1940 Geneva Street, Denver, Colorado, sighted a ball of fire with a tail over Denver at 2250M. Tail was three times the size of the ball. Color yellow. Weather clear. Traveling south-south-east. No sound.

Above listed reports were received by 1st Lt Jack R. Stark, Clearance Officer on duty in Lowry Flight Service Center at the time.

328702-5



Statement re Unidentified Flying Object

21 Sep 50

higher, about 500 feet. The objects seemed to have a "going ahead" power because they were able to accelerate rapidly.

Regarding size, the object was like a landing light in the air. It became more lights the same size, looked like looking down on a string of landing lights. We saw about 10 to 20 at the same time. These faded out. There was no exhaust trail. There was no sound. The light was similar to an aircraft on fire, except ragged in back. This was not a conventional aircraft and not a jet. It may have been rocket powered, there was no blue flame. We have seen static electricity on aircraft wing tips at night but this was not the same. It wouldn't be possible to see that far and that brilliant a light.

It is believed the object had about  $154^{\circ}$  magnetic heading. It came right over across us, and we were on the south range of Akron radio. See the attached drawing.



ROBERT G. HOLLIDAY

2nd Lt, USAF

Pilot, 3416th Tng Sq, Lowry AFB, Colo.



JOHN W. CLAPPER

Capt, USAF

Pilot, 3416th Tng Sq, Lowry AFB, Colo.



JOHN F. WHELAN

Capt, USAF

Aircraft Observer, 3416th Student Officer Sq, Lowry AFB

RECEIVED AT LOWRY AFB, COLO.  
NOV 1 1950

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UNCLASSIFIED  
LOWRY FLIGHT SERVICE CENTER  
LOWRY AIR FORCE BASE  
DENVER COLORADO

21 September 1950

The undersigned saw an unidentified flying object at 2243M on 20 September 1950 under the following circumstances:

We were flying a B-25 aircraft at 8000 feet altitude, 241° magnetic heading. Location was 10 miles south of Akron, Colorado, Radio Range 39°55' north latitude, 103°5' west longitude. Weather was clear, but a little hazy.

When we first saw the object it looked like a brilliant star on the same level with us. As it kept approaching it looked like a meteor. This occurred in a matter of seconds. It looked like a landing light in the air. We started to make a turn, and it started to make a turn as soon as we did. We saw we were going to miss it. The object either accelerated or decelerated power. When this happened there was a string of bright sparks that appeared the same size as the object. They looked like the drawings of puffs of smoke (very illuminated) coming out of a car in the comic drawings, this making a string of objects. These lights then "burned" out.

At this time, when this happened, we could see it was actually two objects. The one on the left pulled slightly ahead. At that time the lights changed from brilliant white to orange red.

We watched it for 10 to 30 seconds until they went out of sight. We could see two lights all the time as they went out of sight. When we first saw it, there was one brilliant white light. There were some clouds on the south and we lost them.

The speed was hard to judge at 90°, but seemed slightly faster than an F-86, or 700 miles an hour, not 1000 miles an hour.

We waited 10 minutes and called Akron Radio Range to double check before we said anything. We asked for the position reports of two aircraft who crossed at 8500 feet going to the south at 2243M. Akron Range had no report and wanted to know if we saw 2 to 20 flying fire balls. They had several ground reports, including the state police who saw two objects. Ground reports were from 2 to 20 objects (balls of fire). We told them we had seen balls of fire, told them we did not know what they were and would make a full report when we reached Lowry. Denver range called up regarding reports of flying balls of fire over Denver. A report was made when we landed. Lowry reported fireballs over the field at 2255M.

It is believed the position as we first came toward them was on the same level as our plane. When they left, the objects looked slightly



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