

1. DATE - TIME GROUP 17 August 53 17/1830Z		2. LOCATION South-Central France	
3. SOURCE Military		10. CONCLUSION BALLOON (UAR) Description fits balloon	
4. NUMBER OF OBJECTS One			
5. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION 15 Minutes		11. BRIEF SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS Brilliant white round object was observed at high altitude by 2 AF Pilots while flying over South-Central France. The pilots altered their flight path to get a closer look. When they got underneath the object, it appeared to be very large. At an approx altitude of 60,000 ft, it appeared to be stationary.	
6. TYPE OF OBSERVATION Air-Visual			
7. COURSE Not Reported			
8. PHOTOS ☐ Yes ☒ No			
9. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE ☐ Yes ☒ No			
☐ Yes 17 Aug S.C. France Balloon ? o-9			

COUNTRY United Kingdom		REPORT NO. 53-1	(LEAVE BLANK)
AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT			
SUBJECT FLYING OBJECT <i>Mult</i>			
AREA REPORTED ON South-Central France <i>E 17/1890</i>		FROM (Agency) Hq 20th Ftr Bwr Wg, APO 120, USAF	
DATE OF REPORT 28 August 1953	DATE OF INFORMATION 17 August 1953	EVALUATION A-6	
PREPARED BY (Officer) Capt. James M. Kirk		SOURCE As Listed in Report	
REFERENCES (Control number, direction, previous report, etc., as applicable) AFI 200-5, PAR. 7			

SUMMARY: (Enter concise summary of report. Give significance in final one-sentence paragraph. List inclosures at lower left. Begin text of report on AF Form 112—Part II.)

This report contains information concerning the sighting of an unidentified flying object over South-Central France on 17 August 1953.

APPROVED:

William O. Light
JAMES M. McNULTY JR
Lt Col, USAF
Wing Intelligence Officer

2

INCL.

1. Statement
2. Map of Area

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AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

FROM (Agency)	REPORT NO.	PAGE	2	OF	2	PAGES
Hq 20th Ftr Bdr Wg, APO 120	53-1					

On 17 August 1953 an unidentified flying object was sighted over South-Central France (aprx 4715N/0430E), by two pilots of the 55th Fighter Bomber Squadron, 20th Fighter Bomber Wing, en route to the UK from Rome, Italy.

Persons interviewed who observed the object were:

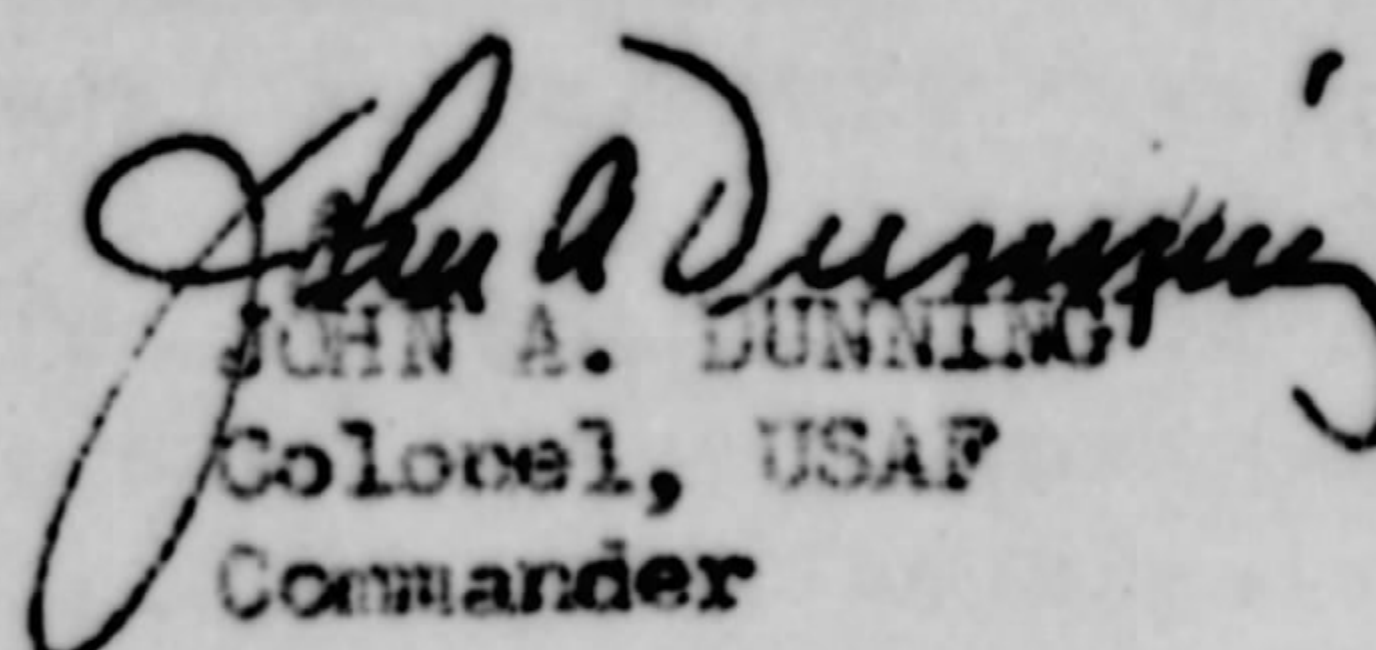
Captain Walter G. Center, AO 782163
1st Lt. Thomas N. Cairney, AO 1909691

Both observers are considered reliable, experienced pilots.

No other air traffic was known to be in the same general area at the time of the sighting.

No unusual weather conditions prevailed at the time of the sighting.

Inspection of flight charts of the location discloses several prohibited areas in the vicinity of the sighting. It is considered likely that experimentation taking place in those areas may have been observed by the two pilots.


JOHN A. DUNNING
Colonel, USAF
Commander

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AF FORM 112—PART II
APPROVED 1 JUNE 1948

AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

FROM (Agency)

REPORT NO.

53-1

PAGE

OF

PAGES

S T A T E M E N T

On 17 August 1953, we, Captain Walter G. Center, AO 782163, and 1st Lt. Thomas N. Cairney, AO 1909691, USAF, members of the 55th Fighter Bomber Squadron, departed Ciampino Airfield, Rome, Italy at 1717Z with a flight of two FB4G aircraft on a routine navigational proficiency flight to Wethersfield RAF Station, England.

About 1830Z over the approximate position of 4715N/0430E (South-Central France), cruising altitude 36,500 feet, magnetic heading 320 degrees, we observed an unidentified aerial object nine o'clock high to our flight path, in a southwesterly direction. The position of the sun at this time was approximately 20 to 30 degrees above the horizon.

With sky conditions in this area clear and visibility unlimited, the initial sighting was very distinct. The object appeared to be brilliant, shining white in color, round or spherical in shape, with no sign of smoke, contrail, etc. (the light appeared to originate from within the object).

Because of the unusual appearance and altitude of this object, we altered our flight path for a closer look. At this time we increased our power setting to 100% rpm, approaching the object at maximum indicated air speed (.82 mach) on an approximate heading of 240 degrees. Six minutes later we passed under the object at 40,000 feet. Considering our speed and the time consumed, together with the apparent lack of horizontal motion of the object, we calculated it to have been about 50 miles distant at the initial sighting. By the rate of horizontal closure we estimated the object to be at an approximate altitude of 55,000 to 60,000 feet, and 75 to 100 feet in diameter.

We made three 360 degree circles under the object, climbing out to 43,000 feet. There was very little apparent decrease in the distance of our separation, and little or no movement of the object. From all points of observation there was no change in appearance. On our final passage under the object at 45,000 feet, the glowing white light, slightly less than a magnesium flare or arc welding light in intensity, appeared to separate into two lights of equal size and brilliance.

The total length of observation of the object was approximately 15 minutes, at which time we were forced to leave due to shortage of fuel.

Thomas N. Cairney
THOMAS N. CAIRNEY
1st Lt., USAF

Walter G. Center
WALTER G. CENTER
Capt., USAF

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