UNCLASSIFIED

Incident #197

ATIC NO. _____

AF NO. _____

REPORT NO. _____

DATE OF REPORT _____

TIME OF OBSERVATION 0435-0455 CST

SHAPE Round

SIZE Larger than star

COURSE Hovered

NO. IN GROUP 1

COLOR _____

SOUND yes SIGNATURE _____

DATE OF INCIDENT 5 Nov 48

LOCATION Richmond, Indiana

SOURCE [redacted]

DATE IN TO ATIC _____

COLOR White

SPEED Hovered

ALTITUDE very high

LENGTH OF TIME OBSERVED 20 Minutes

TYPE OF OBSERVATION Ground

MANEUVERS Remained Stationary

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Temporary ATIC Form 329
(7 Jan 52)

[redacted]

UNCLASSIFIED

Incident #197 -- Richmond, Indiana -- 5 November 1943

This incident very likely has an astronomical explanation; the object sighted was probably Venus. Venus rose on November 5 at about 3:30 A. M. and an hour later would have been a little south of east at an altitude of about 15°. Its magnitude was -3.4, or about six times brighter than the brightest star in the sky. The photograph taken of the object sighted does not contradict this hypothesis.

It is unlikely that the object observed was the bright comet (1948L) discovered one day earlier in the southern hemisphere, for this comet at that time was very far to the south and east, almost on the horizon, and was very much fainter than Venus. If the object seen here had been the comet, the persons observing it could lay claim to the first discovery. It was discovered one day later in Australia because of much more favorable location.

Venus, of course was visible all during the autumn of 1948 in approximately the same position as that in which it was seen on the morning of November 5.

It is also of interest to note that Mercury had its greatest western elongation on November 5, but it rose just at the beginning of the morning twilight and would therefore have been just rising at the time of this incident. Furthermore, Mercury was much less brilliant than Venus.

[redacted]

HEADQUARTERS
AIR WEATHER SERVICE
Andrews Air Force Base
Washington 25, D. C.

In Reply
Refer To: AWS DSS

11 May 1949

SUBJECT: Unidentified Flying Objects

TO : Commanding General
Air Materiel Command
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio
ATTN: MCIAXO-3

1. Reference is made to letter from your headquarters, MCIAXS, dated 9 March 1949, subject "Unidentified Flying Objects," and first indorsement thereto by this headquarters, dated 31 March 1949.

2. The incident summaries 173 through 233 have been checked against routine weather-balloon ascents made by the Air Force, Navy and Weather Bureau. Comments based on this review are inclosed.

3. It is recommended that the "Guide To Investigation Of Unidentified Aerial Objects" be changed as follows: Item 13, "Direction of Flight of Object," should be clarified so that vertical and horizontal motions are distinguished if possible, and so that motion is specified as the direction towards which the object appears to move. "Relative to Radar Settings" should include a statement of the type of radar set used.

FOR THE CHIEF, AIR WEATHER SERVICE

/s/ W. A. West
W. A. WEST
Lt. Col., USAF
Adjutant General

2 Incls:
1 - Incident Summaries
2 - Comments 173 thru 233

5 Nov 48

No. 197: Almost certainly the comet discovered by the Sydney astronomer. No balloon could have reached Richmond at the time the object was sighted inasmuch as the sighting time and release time were almost simultaneous.

Incident #197

A statement obtained from Professor [redacted], Astronomer, Earlham College by Capt. R Sneider, Mciaxo-3, revealed that it was the Professor's openion that the object was not a star.

Incident: 197

At approximately 0435 A. M., 5th Nov, 48 a woman phoned the office of The Palladium Item, Richmond, Indiana, to report a light in the east which she stated resembled a flare hanging from a parachute. Shortly thereafter a man reported the object. Mr [redacted] went to the window and saw a brilliant white light a bit south of east. It seemed to flicker a great deal and appeared much larger than a star so he discounted the possibility of it being a heavenly body. Lining it up with a corner of a certain building and observing it for a few minutes he noted no movement. He called the police but they knew nothing of it. Going to the upper roof he watched it for some 10 minutes. He then went down, secured a camera and returned to the roof and proceeded to take a time exposure. Upon his return to the roof he noted that the object appeared dimmer due to an overcast to the east. A short time later the sky was overcast from low clouds estimated at about 1,000 ft. However, when the object was first observed the night was clear with stars out. Mr [redacted] thought the size of the object appeared some five to ten times that of a normal star. He took two pictures of the "floating light."

Mr [redacted] is considered a trustworthy person. His employer, [redacted] stated that he attempts to obtain as many true facts as possible. He considers [redacted] honest and sincere. Mr. [redacted] is a member of the local Junior Chamber of Commerce.

INCIDENT SUMMARY SHEET

Incident No. 197

1. Date and Time of Observation: 5 Nov 48 0435-0455

2. Where Sighted: Richmond, Indiana.

3. Observer's Position: Roof of "The Palladium-Item" Bldg., Richmond, Indiana (i. e., ground, air, control tower, etc.)

4. Name and Address of Observer: [redacted], The Palladium Item, Richmond, Indiana

5. Occupation and/or hobbies: Sports Writer

6. Attention Attracted by: telephone call which referred attention to an object in the sky

7. Number of Object(s) Seen: 1

8. Size of Object(s): larger than a star

9. Color of Object(s): white

10. Shape (Sketch if Possible) round

11. Nature of Luminosity: (directed beam of light?) like that of a brilliant star

12. Altitude of Object: ~~[illegible]~~ N/S (estimated)

13. Estimated Distance of Object from Observer: great distance

14. Estimated Speed of Object: remained stationery

15. Time in Sight: 20 minutes (from 0435 to 0455)

16. Tactics: Remained stationery

17. Sound Made by Object(s): none

18. Direction of Flight of Object(s)

19. Apparent Construction: N/S

20. Effect on Clouds: clouds caused object to appear a bit dimmer

21. Exhaust Trail (Color of): no exhaust trail

22. Manner of Disappearance: Behind overcast

23. Weather Conditions at Time of Sighting: low clouds at about 1,000 feet however when obj first sighted night was clear with stars out.

24. Peculiarities Noted: Seemed to flicker a great deal and appeared much larger than a star

25. Summary of Incident: (over)

(See attached page)

Dr HYNEK'S EVALUATIONS EXTRACTED FROM PROJECT GRUDGE REPORT.

INCIDENT INDEX

1. Astronomical

a. High probability:
#26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 48, 49, 59, 60, 66, 69, 70, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 101, 102, 103, 104, 116, 119, 132, 136, 140, 147, 148, 158, 174, 184, 185, 187, 197, 203, 204, 208, 216, 219, 238.

b. Fair or low probability:
#19, 20, 23, 24, 28, 35, 36, 46, 50, 63, 67, 80, 82, 93, 100, 112, 120, 121, 129, 130, 144, 153, 165, 166, 167, 175, 192, 199, 202, 205, 220, 230, 240.

2. Non-astronomical but suggestive of other explanations

a. Balloons or ordinary aircraft:
#3, 11, 22, 41, 42, 53, 54, 73, 81, 83, 91, 92, 113, 114, 115, 126, 131, 138, 141, 145, 155, 156, 157, 159, 160, 161, 163, 169, 171, 173, 178, 180, 182, 188, 190, 194, 195, 196, 198, 200, 201, 209, 210, 217, 222, 235, 237, 239.

b. Rockets, flares or falling bodies:
#4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 25, 56, 65, 78, 106, 107, 108, 109, 133, 170, 211, 218.

c. Miscellaneous (reflections, auroral streamers, birds, etc.):
#39, 89, 123, 124, 128, 146, 164, 181, 189, 214, 221, 231, 234.

3. Non-astronomical, with no explanation evident

a. Lack of evidence precludes explanation:
#38, 44, 45, 47, 55, 57, 72, 86, 87, 88, 90, 99, 110, 117, 118, 125, 127, 137, 139, 149, 150, 177, 179, 191, 208, 212, 213, 229, 232, 233.

b. Evidence offered suggests no explanation:
#1, 2, 10, 17, 21, 29, 37, 40, 51, 52, 58, 61, 62, 64, 68, 71, 75, 76, 77, 79, 84, 105, 111, 122, 135, 151, 152, 154, 162, 168, 172, 176, 183, 186, 193, 207, 215, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 236, 241, 242, 243, 244, 134.

Strange Glow In Eastern Sky Attracts Notice; Picture Taken

RICHMOND, INDIANA

One of those strange bright lights in the sky attracted the interest of a few local persons early Friday morning.

No one was able to say whether it was one of those "flying saucers" or not. But it remained in the eastern sky for nearly 20 minutes and at least one photographer took a picture of the night visitor.

Two calls were received at The Palladium-Item at 4:35 a. m. about a light which resembled "a flare hanging from a parachute."

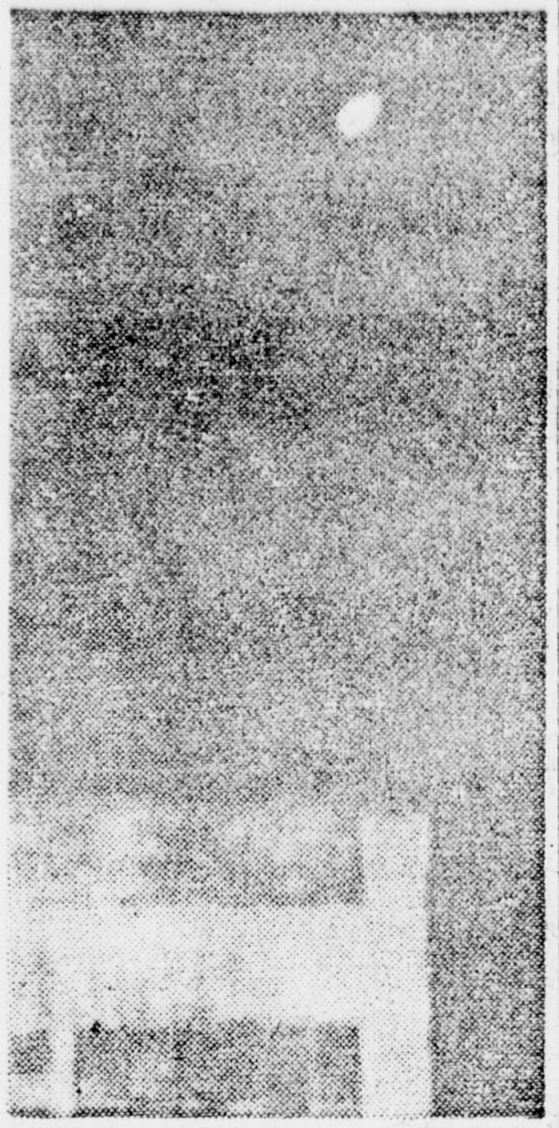
According to reports, it was a white light about five or 10 times the size of a normal star. One person said it looked "like a king-sized star."

Dale Stevens, sports writer who happened to be in the office writing some stories, said he thought the light flickered a great deal.

"It seemed to grow dim and bright. The sky at the time was clear and stars were visible," Stevens said. "I watched it for a few minutes before I took a picture of it. By 4:55 a. m. a cloud moved in and obscured it entirely."

Stevens said he was impressed by its size and brilliance and the fact that it flickered and seemed to swing.

Professor David Telfair, member of the Earlham college faculty, indicated that perhaps it might have been a flare dropped from a passing plane.



—Palladium-Item Photo

Here is a photograph of the "floating light" as seen from the roof of the Palladium Publishing corporation building at about 5 a. m. Friday.

0500 hrs 5 Nov. '48

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THE PALLADIUM-ITEM
RICHMOND, INDIANA

Saturday, Nov. 6, 1948

To: Commanding General
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio
Attn: MCIAXO-3

In compliance with verbal request from a representative of your command Herewith is my statement of events as they occured on or about the 5th of Novemeber, 1948 at 0435 hours, central standard time.

I was working in office after hours and answered the phone at approximately 0435 a.m. A lady asked if I had noticed the light in the east, which she said resembled a flare ~~burning~~ hanging from a parachute. I said I would check on it. Immediately after she hung up a man called with a similar statement.

I looked out the window and saw a brilliant white light to the east, a bit south. It seemed to be flickering a great deal and was much larger than a star so I discounted the possibility of it being a heavenly body.

I lined it up with a corner of a building in the alley to see if it was moving and after a couple of minutes perceived no movement. I called the police to check with them and they knew nothing of it.

I went to the upper roof and watched it for about 10 minutes, then came down and got a camera and took a time exposure of it.

By the time I returned to the roof for the picture, the light was a bit dimmer.

Within five more minutes the sky was overcast from low clouds

THE PALLADIUM-ITEM
RICHMOND. INDIANA

November 6, 1948

To Whom It May Concern:

When I came to work on the morning of November 5, 1948 I noted a typed memo from [redacted], a sports writer on the staff who had worked the night before.

In substance, the note told about the glow he had seen in the sky shortly before 5 a.m. on the morning of Friday, November 5th. His attention had been attracted to the light, he wrote, by two telephone calls that came in about 4:35 a.m. He looked out the window, he said, and saw the light "about five or ten time the size of a normal star" and proceeded to take two time exposures of what he saw. His note was left me along with a glossy p rint which he had made in our darkroom.

I have known [redacted] for over two years as a member of the staff here. From my observation and contact, I know him to be a trustworthy person and an honorable citizen. By the nature of his reporting, he is apt to get as many true facts as possible. His alertness is evidenced by the fact that he took two pictures of the "floating light" he saw in the eastern sky over Richmond that morning. I consider him to be honest and sincere. I know that he formerly served with the Air Force. He is married, happily I believe. His habits do not include smoking or drinking. He is a member of the local Junior Chamber of Commerce.

I personally did not see this "light" mentioned above.

Respectfully submitted,

[redacted]

Received from the Palladium Item
in the person of Mr. [redacted]
two negatives for official
use. It is agreed that subject
items will be returned upon
completion of studies.

Robert F. Sneider
Capt USAF
Wright Patterson Field
Dayton, Ohio

MCIAXO-3

MCIAXO-3/RRS/aw

[redacted]
Palladium Item
Richmond, Indiana

SUBJECT: Incident #197

Dear Mr [redacted]

Reference is made to the visit of a representative of this Command to your office 6 November 1948. It is the desire of this Headquarters to express appreciation for the promptness of your report and the cooperation you extended in furthering the interests of the government.

We are interested in all reports of unidentified flying objects and encourage your future cooperation in sending pertinent information to Commanding General, Hq, Air Materiel Command, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Wright Field, Ohio, attention: MCIAXO-3.

Sincerely yours,

W. R. CLINGERMAN
Colonel, USAF
Chief, Tech Intelligence Division
Intelligence Department

MCIAXD-3/ERS/aw
30 Nov 48

MCIAXD-3

[redacted]
Richmond, Indiana

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to the visit of Capt R. R. Sneider, Hq, Air Material Command, 8th November 1948, to the Palladium Item, Richmond, Indiana. Your further cooperation is requested in furnishing the following information:

1. What type of camera was used?

2. What type of lens was used with the camera?

3. What was the duration of the first exposure?

4. What was the duration of the second exposure?

5. What time interval passed between the first and second exposure?

6. Was the negative showing the greater order of magnitude the first or second exposure?

7. How was the film processed?

8. Which cloud level appeared first - the top or lower cloud layer?

9. When the object was visible, was the upper layer of clouds above the object, and did the lower level then obscure it?

Please direct your reply by earliest date to Commanding General, Air Material Command, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Wright Field, Ohio, attention: MCIAXD-3.

Sincerely yours,

W. R. CLINGERMAN
Colonel, USAF
Chief, Tech Intelligence Division
Intelligence Department

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STANDARD FORM NO. 64

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

(INCIDENT #197 ltr)

MCIAXE/CLA/jrs
DATE: 8 November 48

TO : Major Michael J. Piatnitza

FROM : MCIAXE-33

SUBJECT: USAF Parachute Flares

1. Reference is made to the discussion regarding subject item this date.

2. Investigation conducted by this office has revealed that, as previously stated, the approximate burning time of USAF Parachute Flares never exceeds 5 to 8 minutes and the Flares are most generally designed for a burning time of only three minutes. There is, however, a Tow Type Aerial Flare that consists of several three-minute flares as a chain tied together which is towed behind an aircraft (but never dropped by parachute), and which is designed to burn one at a time consecutively to facilitate night tracking and gunnery practice.

3. Training Manual, Number TM 9-1981 includes descriptions of all standard type USAF Flares and Signals. It is suggested that the photographs in this manual, which show flares functioning, could possibly be utilized for comparison purposes.

4. This Manual may be obtained from Mr. Ryan, Ordnance Office, AMC, Phone 2-7189.

C. L. ARNOLD
MCIAXE-33

CLA CLA

197

Field Investigation Report

Initial Report

At 1600 hrs 5th Nov. '48 the Public Relations Office and, telephone Capt. Robert R. Snelson, Project Sign Officer and notified him that some pictures had been taken of a lighted unidentified object in the sky at Richmond Indiana on the 5th Nov. '48

Action Taken:

A long distance telephone call was placed with Mr. [redacted] of the Palladium Item who verified the report and agreed to hold the pictures.

At 1030 hrs 6th Nov 1948 Capt Snelson departed this base and arrived in Richmond Indiana at 1330 hrs, same date.

Facts:

Mr. [redacted] of the Palladium Item, Richmond, Indiana submitted the negs of [redacted] Sports Writer, on the same paper.

as the person who had witnessed the unusual phenomena and had taken pictures of it. Mr. [redacted] testified to the reliability and trustworthiness of Mr. [redacted] See Exhibit "A" to this report. It developed that two negatives were present of the phenomena and Mr. [redacted] was persuaded to loan them to this Hq. (See Exhibit)

A check was made at the Richmond Municipal Airport - 5 miles South of the town, for possible leads on the premise that the light observed had been a flare from an airplane. It was discovered that the airport is closed during these hours and neither commercial or private flying was going on. A talk with the airfield attendant Mr. [redacted] on 2nd hour duty and the Director of Public Works Mr. [redacted] as well as the commercial line representative revealed that no lights Delta Airlines [redacted] at 0599 hrs and 1239 Tu. Airlines last flight 1705. Field closes at dark.

Winds Aloft

Indianapolis at 1000 5 PM.

Taken at (in Feet)	Surface	2000	4000	6000
Heading in °	100	100	120	120
Speed MPH	19	21	30	23

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[redacted]

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF INFORMATION

(Re Sightings of Unidentified Aerial Objects)

PROJECT "SIGN"

1. Date of sighting 5th Nov 48

2. Time of sighting (Zonal by 24 hr clock) 0435-0500 (CST)

3. Where sighted:

a. Ground

(1) City, town Richmond, Indiana

(2) Distance and direction from city or town road, intersections, etc. ~~2 miles East~~ Between 15-19 South 900 East

(3) From building (story), yard, etc. ~~from~~ two story house

(4) Map coordinates (if possible) showing latitude and longitude

b. Air

(1) Type aircraft, speed, altitude, direction of flight

(2) Distance & direction from city, town or known landmark.

(3) Clock position of object from observer's aircraft

(4) Latitude and longitude

c. Sea

(1) Latitude and longitude

(2) Proximity to land (Name city, country, etc)

4. Number of objects one object

a. Formation type (if any) (sketch if possible) none

5. Distance of object from observer ~~feet~~ estimate

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Police 5th

[redacted]

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[redacted]

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5. (Cont'd)

a. Laterally or horizontally ~45° Angle

b. Angle of elevation from horizon "

c. Altitude

6. Time in sight 0455-0955 (20 min duration)

7. Appearance of object

a. Color bright white has a brilliant star seemed to be in town at most times

b. Shape (sketch if possible) Round

c. Apparent construction (translucent)

d. Size

(1) Estimated size 10 times as large as a star

(2) Size as it appeared from observer's view (Compared to known object)

8. Direction of flight Slow at first then Suddenly took off Southeast with course of Bldg and in 20 min. to last seen.

9. Tactics or maneuvers

a. Vertical ascent or descent, horizontal, oscillating, fluttering evasive, aggressive, erratic, etc.

10. Evidence of exhaust

a. Color of smoke

b. Length and width

c. Odor (if any)

d. Rate of evaporation

e. Does trail vary with sound? (spurts) No sound

11. Effect on clouds

a. Opened path thru clouds Clouds caused by craft

b. Formed cloud or mists No.

[redacted]

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11. (Cont'd)

c. Reflected on cloud No

d. Shown thru cloud No

12. Lights

a. Reflected or attached

b. Luminous

c. Blinked on and off in relation to speed Observed sporadically

13. Support

a. Wings

b. Aerodynamic lift of fuselage

c. Vertical jet

d. Rotating cylinder or cone

e. Aerostatic lift (balloon or dirigible)

14. Propulsion

a. Propeller or jet

b. Rotor

c. Aerodynamic vanes (flapping or oscillating) (KatzMayer effect)

d. Visible exhaust or jet openings

15. Control and stability

a. Fins

b. Stabilizers (Horizontal or vertical)

(1) Size

(2) Shape

(3) Location

16. Air ducts

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16. (Cont'd)

    a. Slots

    b. Duct openings

17. Speed - MPH none

18. Sound none

    a. Continuous whine or buzz no

    b. Roar, whistle, whoosh no

    c. intermittent none

19. Was any radio antenna to be observed, i. e., (any projections or extensions that might presumably be construed as such)

20. Manner of disappearance

    a. Explode

        (1) Possibility of fragments

        (2) Other physical evidence

    b. Faded from view

    c. Disappeared behind obstacle behind clouds

2 balls of fire

Relative to the Observer

1. Name of observer [redacted]
2. Address
3. Occupation
4. Place of business Radiation Laboratory

    a. Employer or employee

5. Hobbies

    a. Time engaged in hobby (experience)
    Is observer amateur astronomer, pilot, engineer, etc.

radio operator

[redacted]

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1. (Cont'd)

a. Observations of range, speed, altitude and size of target

b. Does target execute any turns? If so, what angle (180°), etc, and what radius of turn. If radius of turn is not observable, how long did the target stay in the turn and what was its speed?

c. Note particularly any separation of distant target into several targets upon approach. Track all if possible.

2. If airborne, when object was sighted.

a. Were there any radar indications or extra noise on radio circuits

b. Give estimates of size, speed, maneuvers, etc.

GENERAL

1. Teletype sequences of local weather conditions

2. Winds aloft report

3. Local flight schedules of commercial, private and military aircraft flying in vicinity at the time
(Check Canadian activity if close to that border)

4. Possible releases of testing devices in vicinity sent aloft by Ordnance, Navy, Air Force, Army, Weather Units, Research Organizations or any other.

5. If object contacted earth, obtain soil samples within and without depression or spot where object landed (and then presumably departed) for purposes of making comparison of soils.

6. If object came sufficiently near other aircraft or known objects, check surfaces with Geiger counters for possible radioactivity. Make comparisons with other unaffected aircraft objects, etc.

7. Obtain photographs (or original negatives) where available; if not, secure sketches of

a. Object
b. Surrounding terrain where object was observed
c. Place where object contacted earth (if this happened)
d. Maneuvers
e. Formation (if more than two)

8. Secure signed statement

9. Obtain fragements or physical evidence where possible.

[redacted]

6. Ability to determine
   a. Color better than average
   b. Speed of moving objects "
   c. Size at distance "
7. Reliability of observer
   a. Sources
      (1) Neighbors no
      (2) Police Dept no
      (3) FBI records no
      (4) Employer no
8. Notes relative to observer on
   a. Sightings in general
   b. How attention was drawn to object(s) By Local
      (1) sound
      (2) motion
      (3) glint of light
9. Witnesses
   a. Addresses 2 others, unknown
   b. Occupation
   c. Reliability
10. Comments of interrogator re intelligence and character of person interrogated. Top

Relative to Radar Sightings

1. Re radars now operating on ground

[redacted]

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Dayton Airways Control Tower (MO-44432)
had received no report on flare
being dropped during 0435 - 0455 EST
nor in vicinity Richmond Indiana

Weather — Clouds

Patterson at 1000 ft MSL } at 900 feet overcast
& Richmond Area } Variable to broken
Indianapolis Ind. } Second layer
} High overcast
6500 ft.

Winds aloft

Patterson at 2200 EST

Taken at (in ft) Surface	2000	4000	6000	8000
Heading ° 150	140	110	60	30
Speed MPH 4	12	10	13	19

Patterson at (in ft) 10,000	12,000	14000	16000	18000
Heading ° 40	20	350	340	340
Speed MPH 18	17	21	28	28

20,000	24000	26000
320	300	310
28	21	42

6 Nov. '48

Mileage 7120.1 ~~Departed~~ Patterson Field 1030

Arrived Rich. Int'l 1330 hrs.

Spoke to Mr. [redacted]

What are the nearest airfields — Commercial flights? O.K. 5 miles South of Richmond

Mileage 7247.8 — Arrived 10:45 hrs

Professor David Telfair member of Eastern College — teaches Physics (P. 58303)

Checked Delta Airlines Ops —
Private Flights Ops — None — F.M. Lamb
Airport Attendant — On duty 2 shows
a day — No a/c departed 0900-0500
hrs — Nov. 98,
[redacted], Director of Private Flying
no flights. Haven't heard of any flights
Actual Ops btw 0700 — 1700 hrs —
Darkness — No Control Tower
TWA — 1705 hrs last flight
Delta AL 0847 hrs — 1239

Check with Police Station ops reports
etc. [redacted]
Weather —
Parachute Flare —
Astronomy —

Couldn't have been a star
Teach Astronomy
Either a parachute flare — flare
no-meteorite ~~meteorite~~.