UNCLASSIFIED

Incident #211

3 Dec 1948

Bellefontaine, Ohio

Civilian

Flare

Remains found and when analyzed discovered to be a flare.

UNCLASSIFIED

[redacted]

UNCLASSIFIED

Incident #211 -- Bellefontaine, Ohio -- 4 December 1948

There is no astronomical explanation for this incident, in view of identification of recovered materials as man-made. Apparently there has been independent identification of the object as a pistol flare fired from the ground.

UNCLASSIFIED

[redacted]D

3 Dec

No. 211: Very Pistol.

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

Fiery Wheel Now Believed War Souvenir

The mysterious "flaming wheel" which crashed to earth near Bellefontaine, O., Friday night amid a shower of flame and smoke was "made in the U. S. A.," Wright Field authorities indicated today.

"Probably only a war souvenir," an Air Materiel Command (AMC) spokesman commented this morning, even though the investigation is not yet completed.

Indications are that the fragments are those of a wartime magnesium flare, of the type used by Navy and Air Force crews. It was of the type customarily fired by a Very pistol, it is understood.

Crash of the "flaming wheel" at Bellefontaine Friday night caused considerable excitement

Witnesses said the "wheel" continued to burn after striking the ground. Patrolman Murray Ricker investigated and tried to pick up the object. The remains disintegrated in his hards, he said.

Indications are that the war souvenir had been fired by a private citizen, probably a veteran.

STICK IT IN INDEX #212

'Fiery Wheel' From the Sky Scares Town

Bellefontaine, Ohio, Dec. 4 (U.P.). —Police today sent the remains of a "flaming wheel" that fell out of the sky to Wright-Patterson Air Base in the hope officials of the Air Force Experimental Center could tell them what it is and whence it came.

The flaming object hurtled out of the sky last night and crashed in a residential section. The object lighted up the entire area and gave off great clouds of smoke.

The Thing Breaks Up.

Police Chief A. D. Paden said the remains of the object looked like a tire rim off an airplane or automobile. He said the mysterious "wheel" disintegrated in the hands of a patrolman who sought to salvage the remains. Only a couple of tiny pieces remained intact, Chief Paden said.

Paden theorized the object might have been part of an experiment in guided missiles being conducted at Wright-Patterson Air Base, 45 miles south of here. He said the condition of the salvaged bits of metal indicated the object had been subjected to exceptionally high heat.

AIR BASE TO STUDY OBJECT

Police Seek Answer to Fiery Wheel from Sky

BELLEFONTAINE, O.—(U.P.)—Police sent the remains of a "Flaming Wheel" that fell out of the sky to Wright-Patterson Air Base in the hope of solving the mystery.

The flaming object hurtled out of the sky last night and crashed in a residential section.

* * *

IT LIGHTED up the entire area and smoked so profusely that it blacked out near-by residences.

Police Chief A. D. Paden said the remains of the object looked like a tire rim off an airplane or auto.

He said the mysterious "wheel" disintegrated in the hands of a patrolman who sought to salvage the remains.

Only a couple of tiny pieces remained intact, Chief Paden said.

* * *

PADEN theorized the object might have been part of an experiment in guided missiles being conducted at the air base.

He said the condition of the salvaged bits of metal indicated the object had been subjected to exceptionally high heat.

At Wright Field, meanwhile, Col. C. H. Welch, public relations officer, said field officials were anxious to examine the remains of the object.

He said he knew of no experiments being conducted at the field that could supply an answer to the mystery.

ident 211

Field Gets New Riddle

Remains Of "Flying Wheel" Studied

BELLEFONTAINE, Dec. 4.—(UP)—Police today sent the remains of a "flaming wheel" that fell out of the sky to Wright-Patterson Air base in the hope officials of the Air Force experimental center could give an answer to the mystery.

The flaming object hurtled out of the sky last night and crashed in a residential section here. The object lighted up the entire area and smoked so profusely that it blacked out nearby residences.

Police Chief A. D. Paden said the remains of the object looked like a tire rim off an airplane or automobile. He said the mysterious "wheel" disintegrated in the hands of a patrolman who sought to salvage the remains. Only a couple of tiny pieces remained intact, Chief Paden said.

These bare remains, the chief added, will be sent to Wright Field, some 45 miles south of here, for study.

* * *

PADEN THEORIZED the object might have been part of an experiment in guided missiles being conducted at Wright-Patterson Air base. He said the condition of the salvaged bits of metal indicated the object had been subjected to exceptionally high heat.

The police chief at first believed the "wheel" had fallen from an airplane. A check of air fields in the area disclosed, however, that there had been no reports of any airplanes having lost any parts over Bellefontaine.

At Wright Field, meanwhile, Col. C. H. Welch, public relations officer, said field officials were anxious to examine the remains of the object. He said he knew of nothing on an airplane that would behave as did the "flaming wheel." He said he also knew of no experiments being conducted at the field that could supply an answer to the mystery.

Col. Welch said it was possible that the object might have been a magnesum flare such as used by pilots in making night pictures. He added, "however, that there were no night photo flights from Wright-Patterson field last night.

Today's Chuckle

There was a lot of talk this year about simplifying income tax return forms. One tormented taxpayer actually did something about it. He suggested a form to the Internal Revenue Department on which these four lines appeared.

1. What was your income for the year?
2. What were your expenses?
3. How much have you left?
4. SEND IT IN!

—*Contact.*

Incident 211.

[illegible] NO. 211

1. Date of Observation 4 Dec. 48 Date of Interview 17

2. Exact time (local)

3. Place of Observation Bellefontaine, Ohio

4. Position of observer Ground

5. What attracted attention to object -

6. Number of objects 1

7. Apparent size

8. Color of object

9. Shape Wheel of Fire

10. Altitude

11. Direction from observer

12. Distance from observer

13. Direction of flight of object(s)

14. Time in sight

15. Sound

16. Sky background

17. Trail

18. Velocity

19. Explosions

20. Maneuvers

21. Number of discontinuities

22. Effect on others

23. Additional information concerning object

24. Remarks or explanation Remains being analyzed by Laboratorys.

(over)

Copy of Telecon

7 Dec 48

T-81899-6

Item 2 AMC [redacted]
FROM MR DEYARMOND TO MAJ BOGGS
INVESTIGATION MADE OF SO-CALLED FLAMING
WHEEL REPORTED IN BELLEFONTAINE ON EVENING OF 3
DECEMBER questioning of witnesses and examination of
BURNED REMAINS INDICATE THAT OBJECT WAS PROBABLY A VERY
PISTOL FLARE BECAUSE OF PUBLICITY CONNECTED WITH FIRED FROM GROUND
PROBABLY BY PERSON WHO DID NOT CARE TO ADMIT FIRING
THE FLARE BECAUSE OF PUBLICITY CONNECTED WITH INCIDENT.
BURNED REMAINS ARE BEING ANALYZED
BY THE MATERIALS LAB TO DETERMINE COMPOSITION.
END ITEM " AMC [redacted]

Request for Analysis - Project Sign - Incident 211

MCREXM MCIAXE 7 Dec 48 1

1. This will confirm verbal request of Captain Sneider, Project Sign Officer, for analysis of the metallic samples submitted your office as of this date.

2. Your earliest cooperation is appreciated in facilitating the analysis in view of the fact that Hq., USAF, Office of Intelligence Requirements (AFOIR), Washington, D. C. has requested an immediate report.

W. R. CLINGERMAN
Colonel, USAF
Chief, Tech Intel Div
Intelligence Department

RRS/aw
6-5310
Bldg 288

MCIAXE MCREXM6 16 Dec 48 #2

Results of the analysis requested in Comment No. 1 are included in Engineering Division Memorandum Report No. MCREXM-Mc48-71, a copy of which is inclosed.

1 Incl
E. D. M. R. No.
MCREXM-Mc48-71

J. B. JOHNSON
Chief, Materials Laboratory
Engineering Division

NEF/mms
2-0236
Bldg 32

(NOTE: This R/R handcarried by C. Maugle to MCIAXD-3 now MCIAXS)

MCREXS MCIAXS 5 Jan 49 #3

It is requested your office review inclosed E. D. M. R. to determine whether materials reported upon may have been contained in a particular type of flare or explosive equipment either foreign or domestic.

1 Incl
n/c

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

RRS/aw
6-5310
Bldg 288

[redacted]

Request for Analysis - Project Sign, Incident 211

MCIAS MCREXE UNCLASSIFIED 22 Jan 1949 4

The Equipment Laboratory has no knowledge concerning materials contained in flares or explosive equipment. It is suggested that this report be forwarded to Aviation Ordnance, Engineering Division, MCREOR, to obtain their comments.

J. C. HARVELL
Colonel, USAF
Chief, Equipment Lab
Engineering Division

DCS/ec
Ex 28116
Bldg 45

TO: MCREOR FROM: MCIAXS Date: 14 Jan 49 5

Your attention is invited to Comment 3. Request your comments be returned to this office as soon as possible.

1 Incl
n/c

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

HWS/aw
6-5310
Bldg 288

[redacted]

UNCLASSIFIED

211

Request for Analysis - Project Sign, Incident 211

MCIAXS MCRSXG2 20 Jan 49 6

This Laboratory concurs with statement contained under Conclusions in attached Memorandum Report, and recommends that a copy of this Report be forwarded to:

Commanding Officer
Picatinny Arsenal
Dover, New Jersey

with a request that comments be furnished, as that Arsenal is the development agency for the Military Establishment for pyrotechnics and other solid propellant items.

1 Incl: m/c

R. E. JARMON
Colonel, USAF
Chief, Armament Laboratory
Engineering Division

WCO/lbms
2-8212
Bldg 22

COORDINATION:

Letter sent Picatinny on 25 Jan 49

211

No. of Pages - 4

UNCLASSIFIED [redacted]

MCREXM6/REF/mlm

AMC, Wright Fld, Dayton, Ohio

MEMORANDUM REPORT ON

Date: 15 December 1948

SUBJECT: Unidentified Metal and Earth Samples

OFFICE: MATERIALS LABORATORY

Contract or Order No.

SERIAL NO.MCREXM-M648-71

Expenditure Order No. 720-71

A. PURPOSE:

1. To analyze the metal and earth samples submitted by the Technical Intelligence Division of the Intelligence Department in connection with Project Sign.

B. FACTUAL DATA:

2. The samples were contained in an envelope with the return address, A. D. Paden, Chief of Police, Bellefontaine, Ohio, written in the upper left hand corner. These exhibits were delivered by the Project Sign Officer, to whom the residues were returned. The first sample, Physics Branch Serail No. 17133 consisted of several pieces of metal and some dirty white material mixed in with some soil-like material. Figure 1 shows this exhibit, the arrangement of the metal pieces was suggested by the Project Sign officer. The second sample, Physics Branch Serial No. 17134 is reported to be soil from the area where sample P. B. 17133 was picked up. It is shown in Figure 2.

3. Spectrographic analysis of the metal in P. B. 17133 indicated it to be zinc with minor amounts of lead, sodium, and cadmium present with traces of magnesium, copper, iron, and silicon. The dirty white chunks in P. B. 17133 contained magnesium as the principal metallic constituent with a major amount of sodium present. Zinc was present in a minor amount with traces of titanium, manganese, iron and calcium. The fine material of P. B. 17133 was found to have major amounts of magnesium, zinc, silicon, aluminum, and sodium with minor amounts of iron and lead, and traces of titanium, chromium, boron, and calcium.

4. The brown earth-like material in P. B. 17134 contained major amounts of silicon, aluminum, and iron with minor amounts of sodium, magnesium, and titanium, and traces of boron, calcium, manganese, copper, and chromium. The white material in sample P. B. 17134 contained major amounts of silicon, magnesium, aluminum, zinc, iron, and sodium with a minor amount of titanium and traces of boron, manganese, calcium, and copper.

[redacted]

UNCLASSIFIED

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5. Comparison of the spectrographic data obtained for the soil and the various portions of the residue was made. On the basis of the relative amounts present, zinc, magnesium, sodium, lead, and cadmium are the elements which appear to be most significant.

6. None of the submitted exhibits gave any indication of the presence of radioactive materials when tested by means of a Geiger counter (Cyclotron Specialties Model 310A) or ionization chamber type radiation survey meter (Tracerlab SU-1A).

C. CONCLUSIONS:

7. The exhibits contained zinc, magnesium, sodium, and lead which are typical constituents of flares and other explosive devices.

D. RECOMMENDTAICNS:

None - data merely submitted.

/s/ N. E. Funkhouser
Prepared by: N. E. FUNKHOUSER

/s/ W. R. Koch
Approved by: W. R. KOCH
Chief, Physics Branch

/s/ (Signature indistinct)

Approved by J. B. JOHNSON
Chief, Materials Laboratory
Engineering Division

Distribution:
MCIAKE

Concurrence:

[redacted]

ECIAXO-3/[illegible]/dw

UNCLASSIFIED

JAN 26 1949

ECIAXO

SUBJECT: Request for Analysis

TO: Commanding Officer
Picatinny Arsenal
Dover, New Jersey

1. It is requested your office review inclosed memorandum report to determine whether materials reported upon may have been contained in a particular known type of flare or explosive equipment, either foreign or domestic.

2. Materials were recovered after witnesses alleged they saw a "flaming wool" fall from the sky at night. See newspaper clipping, Inclosure 1.

3. Request results of your analysis be forwarded to this Command, attention ECIAXO-3, and that Inclosure 2 be returned.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

2 Encls
1. Nwp Clip
2. Memo Rpt w/ Materials

H. H. McCOY
Colonel, USAF
Chief, Intelligence Department

UNCLASSIFIED

[redacted]

09-19

211

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, 206, 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.