

PROJECT 10073 RECORD CY

24/2150 2-1

ATIC NO. _____

DATE OF INFO 24 Jan 50

AF NO. _____

LOCATION Bat. Pope AFB and Bolling Fld.

REPORT NO. _____

SOURCE USAF Pilots

DATE OF REPORT _____

DATE IN TO ATIC _____

TIME OF SIGHTING 1650

COLOR _____

SHAPE Spheroid

SPEED Estimated

SIZE 200-250' Diam.

ALTITUDE 7000'

COURSE _____

LENGTH OF TIME OBSERVED 15 Min

NO. IN GROUP 1

TYPE OF OBSERVATION Aerial

NOISE _____

MANEUVERS Horizontal Flight

PHOTOS _____ SKETCHES _____

Object resembled oversized parachute
with large black object hanging below it

Temporary ATIC Form
(2 Jan 52)

RECEIVED
SECURITY INFORMATION

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HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

SPOT INTELLIGENCE REPORT

8 FEB 1950

SUBJECT: Unconventional Aircraft DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
SPECIAL INQUIRY DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

1. This report pertains to the sighting of an unidentified flying object, similar in structure to the so-called "Flying Discs," by Captain G. B. EDWARDS, pilot, Captain THERON C. FEHREVACH, co-pilot, and 1st Lt. JOHN H. VAN SANTEN, passenger, of C-45 type aircraft en route from Pope Air Force Base, Fort Bragg, North Carolina to Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D. C.

2. Captain G. B. EDWARDS and Captain THERON C. FEHREVACH were interviewed on 30 January 1950 in their office, Room 1C 1066, National Defense Building, Washington, D. C., and gave in substance the following information concerning the incident:

a. On Tuesday, 24 January 1950, while en route from Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, to Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C., in C-45 type aircraft No. 7122, Captain THERON C. FEHREVACH was first to notice the unidentified flying object. FEHREVACH stated that the C-45 was pursuing a course of approximately 26° at 5,000 ft. when he first noticed the object slightly to the left of the course and about 2,000 ft. higher at a distance of 5 to 10 miles from the C-45. The object was approximately 7,000 ft. just above the top of the cloud level which was at this time approximately a 5/10 cloud coverage. It was darker than the clouds and easy to distinguish as not being a cloud. When first noticed the object was pursuing a course between and above two rather large cloud banks, which were estimated as being two miles apart. The object moved from the left cloud to the right cloud twice and never at any time did the object show any radius of turn. It moved to a stop and proceeded back again with a fine horizontal movement, at no time varying vertical in an ascent or descent motion. At this time Captain FEHREVACH showed the unconventional aircraft to Captain EDWARDS who immediately altered his course some 6 degrees and climbed to 7,000 ft. to be horizontally on the same level as the object. The C-45 pursued the object at approximately 160 miles per hour with a 20 mile tail wind. The C-45 at no time could overtake the object and at all times it seemed to stay between 5 to 10 miles directly in front and at the same level as the C-45. At this time FEHREVACH had the passenger, Lt. Van SANTEN, view the object. The object then seemed to disappear in front of them by increasing its speed. The entire action thus far reported took approximately five minutes.

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After a minute and a half the object was again sighted at the same distance (5 - 10 miles) at approximately 35 to 45 degrees to the right of the course pursued by the C-45. The object then came back to a point immediately in front of the C-45. Before assuming this course the object seemed to oscillate to the right and left, a distance seeming to be about one or one and a half distance of its width. When assuming the course it appeared to disappear directly in front of the C-45 by increasing its speed until it was invisible. The entire incident took place in approximately 15 minutes. Captain FEHREVACH and Captain EDWARDS stated that they had been airborne some 35 or 40 minutes or approximately 1650 when they first sighted the object. These two pilot officers further volunteered the following information:

- (1) The object was clearer when first noticed than at any time during the following 15 minutes that they could focus on it. The unconventional aircraft appeared to be hemispherical or spheroid in shape of approximately 200 to 250 ft. in diameter. The object appeared to be flat on the bottom, but this is further explained that the bottom half of the sphere could have been obscured due to a black trail which appeared to follow the object. This black trail appeared to be three to four times as long as the object was in diameter precipitating at the end of the smoke trail. (1-2 $\frac{1}{2}$ minutes precipitation rate) At no time during the viewing of the object was it possible to determine the actual structure. The black trail was very pronounced at the bottom. As proclaimed by Captain EDWARDS, the object looked like an oversized parachute with a large black object hanging below it. The smoke trail would lag behind the object no matter which direction it moved.
- (2) The atmospheric conditions were as follows:
 - (a) The free air temperature was 15 to 18 degrees centigrade.
 - (b) There was approximately 5/10 cloud coverage.
 - (c) The visibility was practically unlimited up to a heavy haze that was pronounced in the vicinity of the mountains west and south of the course pursued by the C-45.
 - (d) The sun was at approximately 220 to 230 degrees from the line of flight. At this time it was a huge red mass not throwing any pronounced rays. In the direction of the sun it appeared to be quite hazy.

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- (e) No contrail or vapor trail other than the black smoke was observed.
- (3) The object maintained a fine smooth movement which appeared to be capable of speeds from nothing to more than 300 miles per hour. It moved with and against the wind at will and could not have been mistaken for a cloud, meteor or celestial planet. Due to the speed maintained by the C-45 the object could not have been some sort of aerostatic lift or it would have been overtaken.
- (4) The only tactics or maneuvers noticed were horizontal and at one time oscillating.
- (5) In reference to the support the object could have, according to FEHREVACH, resembled what possibly the B-35 (the flying wing) would have looked like from astern at the same distance.
- (6) It is noted that Captains EDWARDS and FEHREVACH insist that the C-45 was never at any time close enough to determine the structure, support, propulsion, lights, sound or actual shape of the object.
- (7) Captain EDWARDS stated the incident occurred in the area of Blackstone, Virginia, or approximately 37° 5'N-78° 1'W.

3. On 31 January 1950 1st Lt. JOHN H. VAN SANTEN was interviewed regarding his observation of the unconventional aircraft on 24 January 1950. The interview took place in the office of VAN SANTEN, Room 1B 876, National Defense Building, Washington, D. C. Lt VAN SANTEN prepared an unsigned statement concerning his observations. This statement is inserted as a matter of record into this report and states as follows:

a. "On Tuesday, 24 January 1950, I returned to Washington D.C. from Temporary Duty at Ft Bragg, Fayetteville, North Carolina by catching a transient Air Force Aircraft (C-45) at Pope Air Force Base Travelling to Bolling Air Force Base.

"After approximately 45 minutes flying time from Pope AFB while at 5,000 feet altitude and 1645 hours the co-pilot called my attention to what at first I assumed to be another aircraft which I could have estimated to be 40 miles distant. There were no clouds in our immediate vicinity and the air was clear, however, over that part of the Appalachian Mountain range to our left front, the direction in which this object was seen, there were billowy white clouds. The object was over these clouds.

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After watching it for several minutes it moved approximately 12 degrees to the left very rapidly. Then it seemed to be travelling directly away from us and disappeared into the clouds. Several minutes later it reappeared approximately 30 degrees to the right of the spot where it disappeared, although at a seemingly greater distance away from us. There it stayed awhile without moving to either side and then I lost sight of it. I did not see it again although I kept a sharp watch. When the object moved it seemed to wiggle slightly although at that distance it was barely visible. There was no evidence at any flame.

"I cannot describe it more accurately and will not venture any guess as to what it actually was. I would not say it was not another aircraft of a new type although it seemed much too large at that distance for a conventional type aircraft."

b. In addition to the prepared unsigned statement, Lt. VAN SANTEN volunteered the following information:

- (1) The object could not have been a cloud, meteor, celestial planet or aerostatic lift.
- (2) Estimated the distance between the object and the C-45 as 40 miles; with altitude of 5,000 ft. and directly horizontal with the C-45.
- (3) Estimated the time in sight to have been 15 minutes.
- (4) The appearance of the object was definitely a dark sphere shaped solid body with no apparent wings, stabilizers or other means of support. The distance between the object and the C-45 was too great to determine the construction, propulsion or sound. VAN SANTEN was quite certain there was no smoke, contrail or vapor trail left by the object.
- (5) Concerning the tactics or maneuvers VAN SANTEN stated that the object was a fine smooth moving craft which at all times seemed to horizontally remain at the same altitude and was at one instance noted as oscillating, and was definitely evasive in that the C-45 could not overtake it.

4. It is noted that immediately after the incident Captain EDWARDS radioed (VHF) Blackstone, Virginia and made inquiry of the control tower operator if any report had been made of the unidentified aircraft. When

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informed that there had been no other reports, and when queried, EDWARDS indicated that he did not wish to report the incident through AACS.

5. In relation to the three officer observers the following information is offered to aid in evaluating the credibility of their statements:

a. Pilot of C-45 aircraft --

- (1) Name of Observer - Captain G. B. Edwards
- (2) Address - 755 Barley Walk, Falls Church, Va.
- (3) Occupation - Flying officer
- (4) Place of Business - Statistical Control, USAF
Rm 1C 1066
National Defense Building
Washington, D.C.
- (5) Pertinent hobbies - Claims flying as a vocation and avocation.
- (6) Ability to determine - This officer has been flying for several years as a Combat Flying Officer and otherwise, as such, has been accustomed to conventional modes of aviation, climatic conditions and normal observations from the air.
- (7) Reliability of observer - The past flying experience and evidence indicating that the observer is not an opportunist or glory hunter substantiates his reliability.
- (8) Degree of fatigue and duration of flight at time of sighting in cases where observer is airborne. The aircraft had been airborne approximately 40 minutes when the object was sighted. The turbulence was mild and the flying conditions were good. There was no indication that at that time of day should the observer be suffering from some other fatigue. (sleepiness, hangover etc.)

b. Co-Pilot of C-45 aircraft --

- (1) Name of Observer - Captain Theron C. Fehrevach
- (2) Address - Box 770 Lee Boulevard, Falls Church, Va.
- (3) Occupation: Flying Officer
- (4) Place of Business - Statistical Control, USAF
Rm 1C 1066, National Defense Bldg.
Washington, D.C.
- (5) Pertinent Hobbies - Flying
- (6) Ability to determine - This officer has been flying for several years, as a combat flying officer and otherwise, as such, has been accustomed to conventional modes of aviation, climatic conditions and normal observations from the air.

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- (7) Reliability of observer - The past flying experience and evidence indicating that the observer is not an opportunist or a glory hunter substantiates his reliability.
- (8) The degree of fatigue concerning this observer is the same as indicated for Captain EDWARDS in par 5a(8).

c. The passenger of C-45 aircraft --

- (1) Name of Observer - 1st Lt. John H. Van Santen
- (2) Address: 1211 N. Pitt, Apt 33, Alexandria, Va.
- (3) Occupation - Officer, U. S. Army
- (4) Place of Business - Army Courier Service, Rm 1B 878,
National Defense Bldg., Wash., D.C.
- (5) Pertinent Hobbies - None
- (6) Ability to determine - Has flown at least one week out of every month for the past year. Receives non-rated flying pay.
- (7) Reliability of observer - This officer is very sincere, conscientious, and observing.
- (8) The degree of fatigue concerning this observer is the same as indicated for Captain EDWARDS in par 5a(8).

6. The interviewed officers appear to be very sincere and mature. Each of them seem to have had enough flying hours to be amply trained in observation and description. It is further noted that the officers, although cooperative in discussing the incident, were rather reluctant to initiate the report themselves. This being accredited to recent opinion both pro and con by various individuals through popular newspapers and magazines. Each of the three officers, when queried as to whether or not they had read or were influenced by an article written by KEYHOE which appeared in the 28 December 1949 issue of True Magazine, stated that they did not read the article nor were they influenced by the public opinion of the article.


R. S. VAN FOSSON
Special Agent, USAF

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