

PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

1. DATE 2 Nov 1951		2. LOCATION 47N 57.35W (Atlantic)		12. CONCLUSIONS ☐ Was Balloon ☐ Probably Balloon ☐ Possibly Balloon ☐ Was Aircraft ☐ Probably Aircraft ☐ Possibly Aircraft ☒ Was Astronomical METEOR ☐ Probably Astronomical ☐ Possibly Astronomical ☐ Other ☐ Insufficient Data for Evaluation ☐ Unknown	
3. DATE-TIME GROUP Local _____ GMT <u>02/0000Z</u> 02/2304Z		4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION ☐ Ground-Visual ☐ Ground-Radar ☒ Air-Visual ☐ Air-Intercept Radar			
5. PHOTOS ☐ Yes ☒ No		6. SOURCE Military			
7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION 2 Seconds		8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS 1		9. COURSE	
10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING A brilliant white flare coming up through undercast observed from a/c at 8,000 ft. A/c dispatched to investigate 1 hr later. Located 4 surfaces vessels in area/ Pilot observed powerful rotating white beacon at St Pierre on Nova Scotia coast line. Additional information upon landing indicated that flare was rocket type with tail in flight from East to West with downward path descending through overcast. Believed to be over 40 mi away.				11. COMMENTS Pilot of investigating a/c was of opinion that beacon from St Pierre may have appeared over edge of undercast and been mistaken of observer for a flare. INSUFFICIENT DATA to substantiate this conclusion since reporting witness stated that flare came up through the undercast. Debriefing upon landing indicates that object more probably a meteor. Flight direction is West.	

AF FORM 112-PART I
APPROVED 1-JUNE 1948

UNCLASSIFIED

Authority of the Commander, MATS

19 Dec 51 D/PL/INT

Date Initials Division

COUNTRY

USA-MATS

REPORT NO.

IR-278-51

(LEAVE BLANK)

AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT 6/389662

SUBJECT

Unidentified Flares in Newfoundland Area

AREA REPORTED ON

Newfoundland; Nova Scotia

FROM (Agency)

Intelligence Division, Hq MATS
Andrews AF Base, Washington 25, D. C.

DATE OF REPORT

19 December 1951

DATE OF INFORMATION

3 November 1951

EVALUATION

A-2

PREPARED BY (Officer)

A. G. Love, Captain, USAF

SOURCE

Intelligence Officer, Flight "D",
6th Air Rescue Sq, Ernest Harmon AFB,
Stephenville, Newfoundland

REFERENCES (Control number, directive, previous report, etc., as applicable)

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.)

1. Report contains detailed data on the sighting and subsequent investigation of two unidentified flares in the Newfoundland area on 3 November 1951.

2. Continuing inquiry into the significance, if any, of the incidents, since the date of the sighting has failed to establish any concrete conclusions. It is therefore forwarded for further analysis.

APPROVED:

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

1R.
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ATC 35507

AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

FROM (AFHQ)	REPORT NO.	PAGE	OF	PAGES
Intelligence Division, Hq MATS Andrews AFB, Washington 25, D. C.	IR-278-51	2	3	

1. On 3 November 1951, at 0006Z, R-5D #542, en route from Argentia, Newfoundland, to Patuxent River, Maryland, at an altitude of 8,000 feet, reported sighting a brilliant white flare which came up through an undercast. Location of the sighting was at 47° 00' N, 57° 35' W, approximately 60 miles due east of St. Pierre, Pierre Island, a French possession 100 miles south southeast of Ernest Harmon AFB, Newfoundland.

2. Gander Airport advised that no other aircraft except the R-5D was in the area at the time of sighting; Halifax advised that no RCAF aircraft were in the area at the time of sighting; and the US Coast Guard at Argentia Naval Station reported that no aircraft or surface vessels under their control were in the area at the time of sighting.

3. Flight B's SA-10 #4058 was dispatched and reached the area of sighting at 0109Z. A search of the area was made at an altitude of 5,000 feet. (Further let-down was not made due to a second incident described further in this report). The pilot, Captain Harold S. Julin, reported the area clear, with unlimited visibility, and with an undercast lying to the south. An estimated four surface vessels were sighted in the area, all prominently lighted. All appeared to be small fishing boats. A powerful rotating white beacon was visible at St. Pierre and lights on the Nova Scotia coastline, over one hundred miles away, were plainly seen. The pilot's opinion was that the St. Pierre beacon may have appeared over the edge of the undercast and had been mistaken by the R-5D pilot for a flare.

4. Both the pilot and co-pilot overheard heavy VHF traffic on "D" channel and, though unable to identify the transmitting aircraft, were convinced that some sort of USAF formation of aircraft were near the area. Voices were described as being unmistakably American.

5. To clarify this incident further, a message was forwarded to the Intelligence Officer at the Patuxent Naval Air Station, Maryland, requesting that the crew of the R-5D be carefully interrogated upon landing for all details of the sighting. The following answer was received in response to this request:

"YOUR 030530Z. OBSERVER LCDR F L JONES PILOT, CONFIRMATION LT L O FORTNER COPILOT. ACTION TIME 022304Z. BEARING ESTIMATED 18 MILES SOUTH OF 47 DEGREES NORTH 57 DEGREES 35 MINUTES WEST, TYPE OF PYROTECHNICOR LIGHT OBSERVED FLARE, ROCKET TYPE BRIGHT WITH TAIL, NUMBER OBSERVED 1 ONLY, COLOR WHITE, ESTIMATED HEIGHT OBSERVED FLARE ABOVE WATER 6500 TO 7000 FEET, DIRECTION OF FLARE FROM EAST TO WEST, OBSERVERS FLYING AT ALTITUDE OF 8000 FEET, DURATION OF FLARE ESTIMATED 2 SECONDS, DOWNWARD PATH ON TOP OF OVERCAST, WEATHER SOLID OVERCAST TOP 6500 FEET. VISIBILITY DARK UNLIMITED. OBSERVERS ESTIMATE FLARE 40 MILES FROM LAND. FLARE SIGHTED DESCENDING THROUGH OVERCAST. NO OTHER AIRCRAFT OR VESSELS KNOWN TO BE IN AREA. SUGGEST CHECK OF CELESTIAL PHENOMENA OR SCHEDULED OPERATIONS INVOLVING PYROTECHNICS OR PRACTICE FIRING IN AREA."

6. While SA-10 #4058 was investigating the white flare sighting, it was diverted from the area to investigate the following incident:

a. At 0114Z PAA Boeing Flight No. 120, en route from Sydney, Nova Scotia, to Shannon, Eire, at an altitude of 15,000 feet, reported a descending flare sighted at 0114Z (3 Nov) at 49° 25' N, 53° 30' W, slightly off the coast from Wesleyville on the northeast tip of Newfoundland. The Pan American ship descended VFR to investigate and at 0154Z sighted a second descending green flare at 49° 25' N, 53° 30' W. The aircraft continued its descent to an unknown altitude and circled the area, flashing its landing lights, but received no response from the water.

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AF FORM 112—PART II
APPROVED 1 JUNE 1948

AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

FROM (Agency) Intelligence Division, Hq MATS Andrews AFB, Washington 25, D.C.	REPORT NO. IR-278-51	PAGE 3 OF 3 PAGES
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b. SA-10 #4058 was immediately diverted to the area and arrived at 0414Z. VFR conditions existed and visibility was unlimited. A small flashing green beacon was visible on an off-shore island. The pilot, however, expressed doubt as to whether the Pan American pilot could have seen the green light from 15,000 feet. He also expressed doubt that it could have been mistaken for a flare. A low search was made and one small fishing vessel was observed in the area.

7. The overall evaluation of the investigation by Captain Julin was that the extreme visibility, combined with the extreme surface darkness of unlighted areas, created many illusions which easily could have confused a pilot.

8. The US Coast Guard at Argentia advises that flares are utilized by water vessels only in cases of distress or emergency.

A. G. Love
A. G. LOVE
Captain, USAF

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