

1. DATE - TIME GROUP 16 Feb 53 17/0945Z	2. LOCATION Willow, Alaska
3. SOURCE 2 AF Pilots	10. CONCLUSION Astro (VEGA)
4. NUMBER OF OBJECTS One	An attempt to pick up object by radio was made with negative results. Probable refraction of star Vega.
5. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION 15 Min.	11. BRIEF SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS
6. TYPE OF OBSERVATION Air-Visual	Round red light of significant intensity was observed at an approx alt of 1000' at a 10 o'clock position from a C-47. Object moved in NE direction, same as a/c, on a straight course climbing to an alt of 2000', increasing in size and intensity. Object hovered 5 min then proceeded on a N course.
7. COURSE NE	
8. PHOTOS ☐ Yes ☒ No	
9. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE ☐ Yes ☒ No	

FORM
FTD SEP 53 0-329 (TDE) Previous editions of this form may be used.

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ACTION

Multiple
Prob. Astro
Vega (Lyra)

1953 FEB 18
#38 & 36
Same signature

FEB 17 21 33 1953
09:03

DISPATCHED

INFO

1. ATIA

2. ATI

3. C Files

RD154

WPE130

YDB159

KYC114

XDC191

JNZ C246

JKD B 164

JKDAD 15

PP JEPHQ JEDWP JEDEN 333

1953 FEB 17

17:11

17/0957

COUNTRY Alaska		REPORT NO. 10AD-3-53	(LEAVE BLANK)
AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT			
SUBJECT Sighting of Unidentified Light			
AREA REPORTED ON Alaska		FROM (Agency) 10th Air Division (Defense)	
DATE OF REPORT 20 Feb 53	DATE OF INFORMATION 17 Feb 53	EVALUATION B-6	
PREPARED BY (Officer) Robert M. Gallant, 2nd Lt, USAF		SOURCE [REDACTED] Major, USAF [REDACTED] Capt, USAF	
REFERENCES (Control number, directive, previous report, etc., as applicable) Msg DTG 17/1350 Feb 53, Msg No. 0670			

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. Between the approximate hours of 0945Z and 1005Z, 17 February 1953, an unidentified flying object was observed in the general area of Willow, Alaska (GEOREF # QB 5545). The object, which appeared to be a red light, was sighted from a C-47 aircraft (AF 1042) by two rated pilots.

2. Investigation has revealed no aircraft or weather balloons known to be in the area at that time, and identification has not been possible.

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DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

APPROVED:

John S. Masterison
JOHN S. MASTERISON
Major, USAF
Director of Intelligence

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INCL.

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DE JKDA 32

P 171350Z ZNJ

FM CG 10TH AIR DIV /DEF/ ELMENDORF AFB ALS

TO JEPHQ/DIR OF INTEL HQ USAF WASH 25 DC

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ZEN/CINCAL ELMENDORF AFB ALS

/R E S T R I C T E D/ATTN ATIAA-2C WRIGHT PATTERSON AFB PD ATTN

J-2 EDF AFB PD 10ADIN 0672 PD FLYOBRPT CMA FOLLOWING MSG SUBMITTED

FOR YOUR INFO CLN AT 17/0957Z FEB 53 PILOT OF AF 1042 ENROUTE FROM

FAIRBANKS TO EDF REPORTED SIGHTING UNKNOWN FLYING OBJECT BETWEEN

WILLOW AND PALMER EST ALT 2000 TO 3000 FT PD DESCRIPTION OF OBJECT

AS FOLLOWS CLN LOOKED TO BE BRIGHT RED CMA STATIONARY AT TIMES

AND MOVING RAPIDLY AT OTHER TIMES PD HAD BRIGHT RED TAIL AND

DISAPPEARED TOWARD SKWENTNA PD END,

17/1932Z FEB JKDAI

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INCIDENT NO. 7—On February 16, 1953, at 11:30 p.m., a pilot and an instructor in a C-47 over Turnagain Arm—a bay near Anchorage, Alaska—saw a red light that they judged to be a jet aircraft, five miles away. But as they watched it, it got bigger and brighter, as if headed toward them. Unable to see any green navigation light, they asked the tower at Elmendorf AFB if any other craft were in the area. The tower said there was none, and then made a radar check with negative results. The object was first seen low and definitely below the horizon. The C-47 was flying at 2,000 feet. The object continued to close on the C-47, increasing in brilliance and size until it was two or three times the original size. Then it seemed to stop and hang suspended for five minutes. The pilots, still thinking it might be another aircraft, headed toward Elmendorf, where the tower asked them if they still could see the light. It was still visible, and the tower asked them to try to intercept it. As the C-47 took up the chase, the light appeared to accelerate and shortly vanished.

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AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

FROM (Agency)	REPORT NO.	PAGE	OF	PAGES
CG 10th Air Division (Defense)	LOAD-3-53	2	4	

Following is an account derived from an interview with Major Joesph H. Lemon, AO 813 531:

At approximately 2350 (AST) 16 Feb 1953 a C-47, AF 1042, piloted by Major Joesph H. Lemon, AO 813 531, and carrying Captain Eugene S. Cramer, AO 816 247, as instructor-pilot, was east of Fire Island and South of Anchorage over the mouth of Turnagain Arm, (GEOREF Position BLQB 5510) flying on an approximate heading of northeast. At that time an object, described as a round red light approximately the size of a wing navigation light of an aircraft approximately five miles distant, was observed at a ten o'clock position from the C-47. The C-47 was flying at 2000 feet and the light was estimated to be at 1000 feet. The light was below the horizon at this point. The object was estimated to be west of Fire Island and proceeding on the same course as the C-47 at the cruising speed of a jet, estimated to be 300 knots. When it was realized that the red light, which is normally on the left wing of an aircraft, was apparently on the right wing, Captain Cramer contacted by radio, the Elmendorf tower and the nearest radar station in an effort to identify the object as a jet aircraft. Both the tower and the radar station reported no jets airborne and the radar station was unable to pick up a flying object in the area.

The object continued on a straight course for the Willow area, slowly climbing to approximately 2000 feet and increasing to twice its original size and intensity. On reaching the above point the object seemed to stop and hang suspended in mid-air, maintaining that suspended position for approximately five minutes. It was above the horizon at that point.

The C-47 approached Elmendorf and entered the traffic pattern at 1500 feet on the upwind leg for runway 050, continued on around the traffic pattern onto the final approach then broke traffic and climbed out again in order to more closely observe the object. After the C-47 had taken up a heading of 330° magnetic the object was directly ahead of it. At this time the light appeared to continue on a northerly course and, gradually diminishing in size and intensity, disappeared. The C-47 circled the area north of Elmendorf for several minutes but no further sightings were made. After the object had disappeared a C-124 arriving at Elmendorf from Ladd AFB was observed by the C-47 pilots at approximately the same point at which the object disappeared.

The duration of the sighting was approximately 15 minutes under CAVU weather conditions. Aurora Borealis illuminated the sky behind the object. The only description of the object was that it was a round, red light, resembling the running lights of an aircraft. However, the shape was not clearly ascertainable by the observers.

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FROM (Agency)	REPORT NO.	PAGE	OF	PAGES
CG 10th Air Division (Defense)	LOAD-3-53	3	4	

Following is an account derived from an interview with Captain Eugene S. Cramer, AO 816 247:

On 16 Feb 1953, at approximately 2345 hours (AST), a C-47, AF 1042, piloted by Major Joseph H. Lemon, AO 813 531, and carrying as instructor-pilot Captain Eugene S. Cramer, AO 816 247, was proceeding on an approach heading of 010 degrees magnetic toward Elmendorf Air Force Base. At this time, when in a position approximately ten (10) miles east of Fire Island over Turnagain Arm (GEOREF Position BLQB 5510) and approaching at a speed of 120 knots, Captain Cramer observed a light in a ten o'clock position to the C-47. At this time the light appeared to be stationary and was alternating in color from red to blue-green. Believing it to be a celestial body or an aircraft at some distance, Captain Cramer did not mention his observation to Major Lemon until they had proceeded approximately ten miles further on their course. At this time the light began to move in a southwesterly direction, and Captain Cramer estimated its speed and altitude as being approximately 350 knots per hour at 1000 feet and its original position as being in the vicinity between Big Lake and Willow. Inasmuch as the light now appeared as a constant red color and was about the size of a running light of an aircraft when seen from this estimated distance, Captain Cramer then believed it to be a jet aircraft. However, as they continued on course, the object reversed its flight in the vicinity of GEOREF Position BLQB 3030 and returned at approximately the same speed and altitude to its original position. This maneuver was accomplished at least once and possibly twice. Due to the fact that the light remained red when traveling northeast in approximately the same direction as the C-47 rather than appearing green as would the right running light of an aircraft, Captain Cramer contacted the Elmendorf tower as to whether any jets were airborne in the vicinity or whether the tower had also sighted the object. The tower answered in the negative to both questions. After requesting jet interception of the object and being advised that no aircraft were available for the mission, Captain Cramer and Major Lemon received permission to fly a course toward the object, which then appeared to be over Wasilla. Taking up a heading of 345 degrees magnetic and a speed of 150 knots, they broke out of the traffic pattern and flew toward the object. As they continued over Knik Arm on this course, the light remained stationary and began to increase in either size or brilliance until it seemed to be about three times its original proportion and appeared to be the reddish orange color of molten iron. As the C-47 reached the approximate GEOREF Position CLAB 1530, at about 0005 hours, 17 Feb 1953, the object began to move again, this time on a heading of between 270 and 290 degrees magnetic at an estimated altitude of 2500 feet, and at an unknown speed. It gradually assumed a bright red color and began to diminish in size until it disappeared about 45 seconds later.

After circling for several minutes and making no more observations of the object, the C-47 returned to Elmendorf Air Force Base and landed.

From the time the light was first observed until it began to increase in size or brilliance the light appeared to have the half-oval shape characteristic of obstruction lights. As it grew in size or brilliance it assumed a complete oval shape. No sound was heard nor were any smoke or vapor trails observed.

The duration of the sighting was approximately fifteen (15) minutes under CAVU conditions. At no time did the observer lose sight of the light.

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FROM (Agency)

CG 10th Air Division (Defense)

REPORT NO.

LOAD-3-53

PAGE

4

OF

4

PAGES

COMMENTS OF PREPARING OFFICER:

It is believed that the sources of this information are very reliable. Both officers appeared to be stable and intelligent; and both should be well qualified, from a number of years flying experience, to accurately observe and record their observations. Neither had any preconceived opinions concerning unidentified flying objects, and seemed to be completely objective in relating their observations.

All possibilities as to the source of this light have been examined with no identification being made. Apparent discrepancies between the statements of the two officers may be attributed to the fact that the light was initially observed by Major Lemon approximately five minutes after being first sighted by Captain Cramer, and that the officers were engaged in bringing their aircraft into Elmendorf for a landing at the time.

Robert M. Gallant

ROBERT M. GALLANT
2nd Lt, USAF
Combat Intelligence Officer

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