

PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

1. DATE 16 Jan 58		2. LOCATION Columbus-Ft Benning, Ga. area		12. CONCLUSIONS ☐ Was Balloon ☐ Probably Balloon ☐ Possibly Balloon ☒ Was Aircraft Contrails ☐ Probably Aircraft ☐ Possibly Aircraft ☐ Was Astronomical ☐ Probably Astronomical ☐ Possibly Astronomical ☐ Other _____ ☐ Insufficient Data for Evaluation ☐ Unknown	
3. DATE-TIME GROUP Local _____ GMT 16/2330Z		4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION ☒ Ground-Visual ☐ Ground-Radar ☐ Air-Visual ☐ Air-Intercept Radar			
5. PHOTOS ☐ Yes ☒ No		6. SOURCE Civilian & Military			
7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION 5 mins		8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS two		9. COURSE South	
10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING Two cigar shaped objs, bright orange w/reddish tinge, one following the other. Objs faded out & then came back.				11. COMMENTS Description of objs & circumstances indicate that they were non-persistent contrails fm a formation of two jet a/c. Sug's position low on horizon could have caused the coloration.	

CLASSIFICATION

COUNTRY OF ACTIVITY REPORTING U. S. A.		REPORT NO. IR-02-58	(Leave blank)
AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT			
COUNTRY OR AREA REPORT CONCERNS Columbus-Ft Benning, Georgia		DATE OF INFORMATION 16 Jan 1958	
ACTIVITY SUBMITTING REPORT Hq 35th Air Division (Defense)		DATE OF COLLECTION 24 Jan 1958	SRI STATUS (If applicable)
PREPARING INDIVIDUAL EDWARD WOOTTEN Capt USAF, D/I		DATE OF REPORT 27 Jan 1958	SRI NO. CANCELED/COMPLETE
NAME OR DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE Mr. & Mrs. [REDACTED]		EVALUATION F-3	SRI NO. CANCELED/INCOMPLETE
REFERENCES (BAIR Subject, previous reports, etc., as applicable)		SRI NO. ACTIVE	
SUBJECT (Descriptive title. Use individual reports for separate subjects)		ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON (Date)	
Report of UFOB			
SUMMARY (Give summary which highlights the salient factors of narrative report. Begin narrative text on AF Form 112a unless report can be fully stated on AF Form 112. List inclosures, including number of copies)			
On the evening of 16 January 1958, Mr. and Mrs. [REDACTED] residents of Columbus, Georgia, sighted and reported a UFOB over the Columbus-Ft Benning, Georgia, area. Information concerning this sighting was given to the Airdrome OD, Lawson Army Airfield Command, and relayed to the AC of S, G-2, Hq Third U. S. Army, Ft McPherson, Georgia. Information was forwarded by Hq Third Army to AC of S, G-2, U. S. Continental Army Command, Ft Monroe, Virginia, with information copy to Hq 35th Air Division.			
APPROVED: <i>[Signature]</i> J. T. SCEPANSKY Colonel, USAF Deputy for Operations			
INCLS			
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1. Description of Objects:

- a. Shape: "cigar shaped and oblong" flying objects.
- b. Size: "hard to say", perhaps comparable to size of a C-97.
- c. Color: bright orange with reddish tinge.
- d. Number: two (2)
- e. Formation: one following the other.
- f. Discernible features or details: It was only stated that the objects "faded out and then appeared to come back". About seventeen hours after the sighting, the observing individual could not add to this comment.
- g. Tail, trail, exhaust: Objects were described as "trailing (tapering?) off perhaps slightly at tail", with very short trails which might have been part of the objects.
- h. Sound: None reported.
- i. Other: Objects looked "like sunlight on a small cloud as the sun goes down".

2. Course of Objects:

- a. What drew observer's attention? Not specifically reported; seventeen hours after the sighting, the observer stated that he merely sighted the objects visually while driving.
- b. Initial angle of elevation: 10 degrees.
Initial azimuth: Not specifically stated, but described as low against the western horizon, west of Phenix City, in Alabama.
- c. Final angle of elevation and azimuth: Not reported.
- d. Flight path and maneuvers: North to south, with no maneuvers reported.
- e. Manner of disappearance: Faded out rather abruptly.
- f. Duration of sighting: Five (5) minutes.

3. Manner of Observation:

- a. Ground-visual.
- b. Optical aids: None.
- c. Data re observation while airborne: N/A

*Typical when sun
near horizon and
interplay of sunlight
on light surfaces.*

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4. Time of Sighting:

- Hour and date: 16/2330Z January 1958.
- Light conditions: Dusk, with perfectly clear skies.

5. Location of Observer: Sighting was effected while driving and after dismounting from vehicle, with all sightings made from Victory Drive (a main artery between Fort Benning and Columbus, Georgia) near King's Airport, a local civilian installation. Observer telephoned report to Lawson Army Airfield Command at 1900 hours, 16 January 1958.

6. Identifying Information on Observer:

a. Civilian:

Name: [REDACTED] (and wife, who was driving in a following vehicle, from which she dismounted when signalled to do so by her husband). [REDACTED] is a former Army captain.

Age: 38

Mailing Address: [REDACTED] Columbus, Georgia

Occupation: [REDACTED] Section, US Army Infantry Human Research Unit, Fort Benning, Georgia

b. Military: See item 11.

7. Weather and Winds-Aloft Conditions at Time and Place of Sighting: Not furnished.

8. Any Other Unusual Activity or Condition: Negative.

9. Interception or Identification Action Taken: None.

10. Location of Any Air Traffic in the Area at Time of Sighting: See item 11.

11. Name, Rank, Title of Person Receiving the Report, and Comments and Actions: Airdrome Officer of the Day, Lawson Army Airfield Command, Ft Benning, Georgia. On 17 Jan 1958, [REDACTED] (the observer) stated that he had seen a similar phenomenon once before "about two months ago". The AOD, LAAC, stated that an individual (later identified as Pfc Gabriel SPERA, US 51397403, Hq & Hq Det, LAAC) entered the room where the telephone report from HARRIS was being received at approximately 1900 hours on 16 January 1958, remarked that he had seen what appeared to him to be two jet aircraft, and voluntarily discussed the matter with [REDACTED] by telephone after [REDACTED] completed submitting his report. Pfc SPERA was contacted by OACofS, G-2, on 17 January 1958, and stated substantially as follows: that he (SPERA) had seen what he believed to have been two jet aircraft at about the time of [REDACTED] observation; that he discussed the sighting with [REDACTED] by telephone; that the over-all description of the objects, the time of their sighting, their direction of movement, and their general location "low along the horizon, pretty far in Alabama", were agreed upon between him and [REDACTED]

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Note: Important
so that he was certain that the same phenomenon was under discussion; that the sun was setting at the time, and, although he could not see the jet aircraft themselves, he assumed from the characteristics of the sighting he had made that jet aircraft were actually involved; that he was led to this conclusion by prior experience of jet sightings; and that he would describe the sighting as "the reflection of the sun on the exhaust of two jets". [redacted] agreed on 17 Jan 58 that he and SPERA had observed the same phenomenon, but was unprepared to lend personal credence to the view that the sighting had actually been of jet aircraft, and equally unprepared to say that the sighting definitely was not of jet aircraft; he simply stated that the phenomenon remained unexplained to him. Actual sunset on 16 Jan 58 was at 1759 hours.

12. Physical Evidence: None.

COMMENTS of Preparing Officer:

Description of objects and circumstances indicates that they probably were non-persistent contrails from a formation of two jet aircraft. Sun's position low on horizon could have caused the coloration.

ATIC Conclusions:
Correct. There hundreds of UFO reports of a/c observed during low sun or dusk when sun low on horizon. Slant rays of sun generally "wash out" vertical and other surfaces, giving illusion of elliptical shapes, or cigar-shaped objects. Reason: only the fuselage is perceivable.

Edward Wootten
EDWARD WOOTTEN
Captain, USAF
Director of Intelligence

Prob jet aircraft

Sgt. Bolan; Check if any a/c in that area at that time

- 1. Traffic in area - including jets*
- 2. Radar reports nothing unusual in air at that time.*
- 3. No other reports of UFOs from other units (GOC, etc).*

See UFO Case 7-8 May 1957 - Macon, Ga. file. Credible aerial

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