

~~SECRET~~ 19/2230Z

PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

ATIC NO. - - -

AP NO. - - -

REPORT NO. - - -

DATE OF REPORT - - -

TIME OF OBSERVING EARLY AFTERNOON  
1630

SHAPE - - -

SIZE - - -

COURSE - - -

NO. IN GROUP 1

SOUND - - -

PHOTOS - - - SKETCHES - - -

DATE OF INFO 19 Sept 1950

LOCATION POPLAR BLUFF, MO.

SOURCE N 6 pilot & others (newspaper rpt)

DATE IN TO ATIC - - -

COLOR - - -

SPEED - - -

ALTITUDE - - -

LENGTH OF TIME OBSERVED 5 HOURS

TYPE OF OBSERVATION Aerial

MANEUVERS - - -

REMARKS: Pilot flew toward object in F-51 and reported he was sure object was some kind of weather balloon.

Temporary ATIC Form 329  
(2 Jan 52)

~~SECRET~~

BALLOON

MICIA X 11



UNCLASSIFIED

32

HEADQUARTERS THIRD ARMY  
FORT MCPHERSON, GEORGIA

AJACI-3 360.33

22 September 1950

SUBJECT: Unconventional Aircraft

TO : Commanding General  
Air Materiel Command  
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base  
Dayton, Ohio

Attention: MCI (Control No. A-1917)

Inclosed herewith is newspaper clipping from the PRESS-SCIMITAR,  
Memphis, Tennessee, 19 September 1950, re unusual object in the sky.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

*John Meade*  
JOHN MEADE  
Colonel, GSC  
AC of S, G-2

1 Incl: 27  
As stated above

1950 SEP 25

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UNCLASSIFIED



7-3712-32

# Pilot Views Flying Saucer And Calls It a Balloon

*Memphis Press-Scimitar* 19 Sept  
Hovered Over Poplar Bluff for 5 Hours

Yesterday: 'Like Silver Marble'

Poplar Bluff's "flying saucer," which hovered over the Missouri city for about five hours yesterday, was just an errant weather balloon, the Memphis Air National Guard pilot who got closest to it, said today.

"It looked like a big silver marble," said Lt. Claude Haverty, 39 Belleair Drive. "It was some kind of weather balloon, I'm sure."

Various residents of Poplar Bluff had described their aerial mystery visitor as looking like a "translucent wash tub," "two big white balloons tied together," a "translucent silver sphere with a red tubular affair hanging from the bottom," and a sphere "with lavender colored edges, a bright gold center and a red tip."

First sighted in the early afternoon, the object hung around until Lt. Haverty flew up from Memphis after Poplar Bluff airport manager James Newsom asked for an investigator. Lt. Haverty arrived about 5:30 p.m.

"At first I couldn't see it from 8000 feet," Haverty said. "I went down to 2000 feet because I didn't want to run into it." Then men on the ground guided the lieutenant toward the object. After he located the saucer, Lt. Haverty started climbing toward it, reached 32,000 feet in his F-51. From that altitude, he circled the base of the object.

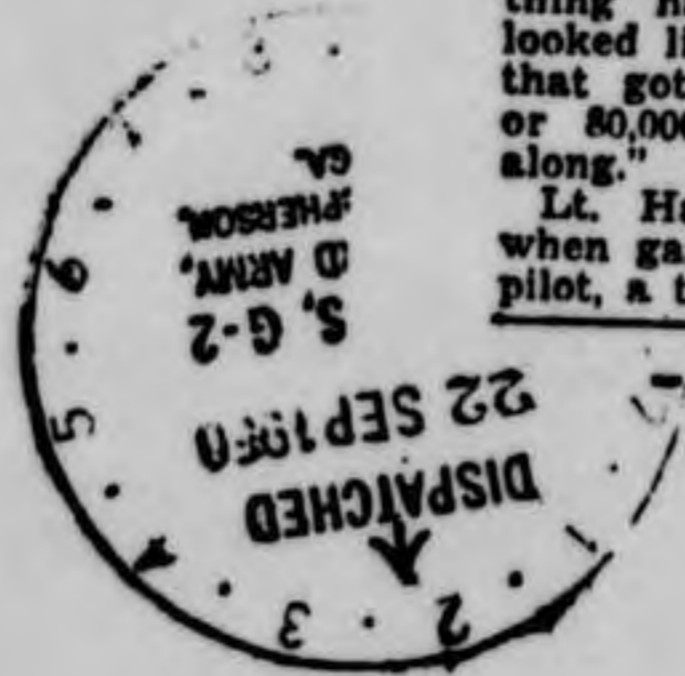
"I didn't appear to be any nearer than at 2000 feet," Lt. Haverty said. "But I kept it in view for almost an hour. It drifted about 10 miles from over the Malden, Mo., airport, where I first saw it, toward New Madrid. It didn't have anything hanging from it. It just looked like a big weather balloon that got caught up about 60, 70 or 80,000 feet and was drifting along."

Lt. Haverty headed for home when gas began to run out. A jet pilot, a transient who had stopped

at Memphis for fuel, also took a look before going on to his destination. Lt. Don Hoefker, of Memphis, was supposed to relieve Lt. Haverty, but hadn't arrived when the first pilot left. Hoefker could not be reached today.

Residents of the area reported as seeing the saucer were:

- Harwood Inman, Poplar Bluff amateur pilot.
- Floyd Fredwell, another Poplar Bluff pilot.
- Byron Kearby, radio station manager.
- E. G. Conway, police radio operator.
- Juanita McGee, Poplar Bluff.



MEMPHIS

**AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT**

FROM (Agency) Intelligence Division, Hq MATS Andrews AFB, Washington 25, D.C.	REPORT NO. IR-291-50	PAGE 3 OF 3 PAGES
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"g. Pilot emphasized that it was possible there was no connection between the object and the lights seen after dark."

*Percy E. Sutton*  
PERCY E. SUTTON  
Captain, USAF

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVAL  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.  
DOD DIR 5200.10

NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE ESPIONAGE ACT, 50 U.S.C. 1 AND 2, AS AMENDED. ITS TRANSMISSION OR THE REVELATION OF ITS CONTENTS IN ANY MANNER TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PROHIBITED BY LAW. IT MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED IN WHOLE OR IN PART, BY OTHER THAN UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AGENCIES, EXCEPT BY PERMISSION OF THE DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE, USAF.

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NO CASE (INFORMATION ONLY)

SOURCE: New York World Telegram and Sun

(Astro Meteor)

20 September 1950

Kentucky, Tennessee Area

## Meteor Blast In Sky Rocks 2-State Area

NASHVILLE, Sept. 20 (AP).

—A meteor flashed through the sky to the west of here early today and apparently exploded in the air, jarring an area from Paducah, Ky., to Memphis, Tenn.

The Illinois Central Railroad dispatcher in Paducah said reports from all along his line to Memphis told of an explosion.

He said a railroad signalman at Covington, Tenn., 40 miles north of Memphis, told of seeing a ball of fire in the sky getting larger and larger, then exploding.

At Memphis, 220 miles southwest, police patrols raced north of the city, and one radio car reported the meteor hit in the vicinity of Hatchie bottoms, a semi-swamp area between Memphis and the Millington naval base, about 20 miles away. This report was not confirmed.

### REPORTS SKY FLASH.

A report of the sky flash was given in Memphis by American Airlines Capt. H. J. Garman, of Dallas, Tex. Garman had just landed a DC-6 with 41 passengers from Washington.

"We sighted that thing some 50 miles east of Nashville," Garman said.

"I was flying at 18,000 feet and it looked as though it came right across our nose.

"I tell you, I never saw such a brilliant flash of light before. No, it wasn't a clear light. It seemed to be burning with an orange, yellow and blue flame.

"I can't say for sure whether it burned out in the air or hit the ground. I've seen hundreds and hundreds of meteors, but that was the lowest I ever saw one.

"I tell you, it lit up the whole sky."

The CAA operator at the Nashville airport said it lit the sky "bright as day" and he thought it landed between the field and the city, only five miles away.

September 20, the same year, was a big day for meteors. At 1:35 A.M. a giant fireball (AMS 2326) roared over southeastern Illinois from north to south, leaving a luminous train visible in five states and illuminating the sky and countryside from St. Louis to Louisville and from Memphis to Knoxville. The final detonation, over western Kentucky, was heard over an area 1000 miles square and shook buildings from Paducah to Memphis. Fragments showered farms over a twenty-five mile area, struck five buildings, and penetrated one roof. About fifty pounds of meteorites dropped in Murray, Calloway County, Kentucky, and are now in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington.

### Meteors in the Records

The American Meteoritics Society, whose members specialize in the study of meteors and meteorites, for years have collected reports of such phenomena. From a large enough number of good descriptions of a given meteor, astronomers can analyze the data mathematically and determine the meteor's radiant—the point in the heavens from which it seems to come. The meteor is then identified by its radiant and given an AMS number. The data were published in *Meteoritics*, the journal of the society, and thus made available for future research.

# AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

FROM (Agency)

REPORT NO.

Intelligence Division, Hq MATS  
Andrews AF Base, Washington, D.C. IR-291-50

PAGE 2 OF 3 PAGES

The Commanding Officer, Maxwell Flight Service Center, Maxwell AF Base, Alabama, has forwarded the following report of an unidentified aerial object sighted in Missouri on 19 September 1950:

"a. At 1630C, 19 September 1950, Malden Radio was advised by telephone that an unidentified object had been sighted over Poplar Bluff, Missouri. At approximately 1640C, Malden Radio had the object in sight. A Tennessee National Guard F-51, from Memphis, was dispatched to the scene at 1645C. Malden Radio directed the F-51 to the approximate location of the object. The pilot sighted the object, but was unable to reach it at his ceiling of 30,000 feet. A second F-51, NG 45-11582, was dispatched at 1800C. This F-51 climbed to the vicinity of the first aircraft over Malden, and there also sighted the object. The first aircraft then withdrew from the area, the unidentified object being over New Madrid, Missouri, at that time. The pilot of the second F-51 was able to climb to 40,000 feet but was still unable to attain the altitude of the unidentified object, and was unable even to estimate how far the object was above him. This pilot stated the object appeared to be a very large balloon and was silver in color. There was neither fire nor lights, nor was there exhaust. In shape it appeared to be between spherical and elliptical. At about 1900C the object was lost from sight. Remaining in the area of the sighting, the pilot of the second aircraft reports that at approximately 1918C he observed a set of green and white lights above him, moving at a very high rate of speed. The green light was reported in the front and the white light in the rear, in the same manner as on USAF aircraft. These lights appeared to move in bursts of speed in a northerly direction toward St. Louis.

"b. Weather at the time: Cirrus haze at 30,000 feet, lower scattered stratus.

"c. Witnesses: Pilot of NG 45-11487, Haverty, James, 1st Lt, 155 ANG Squadron, Tennessee. Address unknown. Pilot of NG 45-11582, Soefker, Donald L., 1st Lt, 155 ANG Squadron, Tennessee, RFD #1, Box 1131, Raleigh, Tennessee. Occupation: Mechanical engineer.

"d. Photographs of object not available.

"e. No sketch available.

"f. Object sighted:

- (1) Number: One.
- (2) Shape: Egg shaped to spherical shaped.
- (3) Size: Unable to establish size by comparison with anything.
- (4) Color: Silver to silver grey.
- (5) Speed: Hovered or was stationary, lights moved at a terrific rate of speed.
- (6) Heading: Northerly toward St. Louis.
- (7) Maneuverability: Stationary, lights moved in a straight line.
- (8) Altitude: Unable to estimate, but very definitely above 40,000 feet.
- (9) Sound: No sound.

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVAL  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.