

A summary of the investigation by Captain Hardin, USAF, and Dr. J. Allen Hynek, of the reported visual sightings of UFOs at Bismark, North Dakota and Blackhawk, South Dakota, on 5/6 August 1953.

The initial incident which started the whole train of events was the sighting by Miss Phyllis Killian at about 2205 CST of an object which appeared in the southeast. The object appeared as a red glowing light and when first sighted was stationary, but soon appeared to move. The movement was described as a long sweeping movement of some thirty degrees to the right, stopped momentarily, then shot straight up, then moved to the observers left and again returned to its original position. The object also appeared to change its color from red to green. It then moved again and either speed off to the north or its light went off giving that appearance. Mrs. Daughenbach, who saw the object simultaneously, said at first "it's nothing but the red tower light." (There is an FM tower with a red obstruction light barely visible from their porch.)

Miss Killian next states that she saw an object directly overhead which moved very rapidly to the north. She was the only one who saw this object and it was the opinion of the investigating officer that this object was a meteor. She states, of course, no, she know's meteors.

At about that time she got into her car and went over to the Aldren farm. She went over after the object disappeared to pay a neighborly visit and tell them what she had seen. As she was talking to Mrs. Aldren it was the latter who sighted the third object (Referred to as object #2). This object was very close to the horizon, was starlike and in the investigating officers opinion was the star Capella.

The first sighting of Miss Killian was reported to the Rapid City Filter Center and since it appeared to be moving north, the message was relayed to the Bismark, North Dakota, GOC Filter Center.

Shortly after receiving the message, the Sergeant on duty at Bismark (Sgt Harry) went out on the roof and shortly spotted four objects. Several volunteer observers were on duty in the GOC Filter Center, all of whom observed and described the lights. All descriptions seemed to reasonably coincide. The lights were visible in the Bismark, North Dakota area for a period of three hours and then just faded out.

OBJECT #1 - Sgt Harry described object #1 as being at 264 degrees azimuth and 08 degrees elevation. It moved erratically up and down as much as one or two times the distance between the horizontal telephone wires. He insisted the motion was abrupt. When the object was west of the Filter Center it hovered moving up and down. Mrs. Owens spent most of her time watching this object and her evidence was essentially the same as that of Harry although she did not see it as soon. She maintained that in the western portion of the sky it would remain stationary, then hop up several degrees very quickly — almost instataneously — stop, move to the left and then swerve down in sort of a slanting motion,

repeating these maneuvers several times. This original western object disappeared sometime between midnight and 0100 hours. Mr. Wilhelm was located at The CAA Control Tower. He gave the position of this object as 295 degrees azimuth and 13 degrees elevation.

OBJECT #2, #3, & #4 - Just about midnight, the Filter Center people almost simultaneously saw other objects to the east. Object #2 was sighted at 0011 CST to the north of east. At 0145 CST and 0147 CST two other objects toward the east were seen. Mr. Wilhelm stated that the object #2 was almost due north and at a 30 degree angle to the horizon. Furthermore, Mr. Wilhelm stated that he examined all the objects through binoculars and pointed out that though they resembled stars, their motion and their color changes were such as to rule out this possibility.

One other behavior of the objects is worthy of mention, and it was pointed out repeatedly. At the time of the passing of a C-124, the object #4 appeared to blink in a sort of signaling way. It was most pronounced in #4, but they said it was taken up by #3 and #2, as though a wave had passed from #4 to #2.

#### CONCLUSION

Object #1, which was low on the horizon in the west and disappeared between midnight and 0100 hours was the star Arcturus observed through a surface inversion. Arcturus was low on the horizon in the west and set at approximately 1220 at 298 degrees azimuth.

Object #2, which was first sighted a little north of east at 0011 CST, was the star Capella observed through a surface inversion. At 0011 CST Capella was at 40 degrees azimuth and 15 degrees elevation. At 0200 CST Capella was at 53 degrees azimuth and 30 degrees elevation, which agrees with the positions given by Sergeant Harry and Mr. Wilhelm.

Objects #3 and #4 were, with a high degree of probability, the planet Jupiter, and the star Betelgeuse, observed through a surface inversion. Jupiter's apparent right ascension was 5.13 and its stellar magnitude was -1.7. At the time of the sighting Jupiter was low on the eastern horizon at approximately 92 degrees azimuth. The star Betelgeuse at the time of the sighting was also low on the eastern horizon at approximately 81 degrees azimuth.

The initial incident sighted by Miss Killian, because of the 30 degrees of arc which it was reported to have gone through, was possibly an aircraft. However, it is my opinion that, the amount of apparent motion was overestimated and that this object was also the star Arcturus observed through a surface inversion.

Regarding the second object that Miss Killian observed it is my opinion, and the opinion of the investigating officer, that this was nothing more than a meteor.

Any bright star twinkles when close to the horizon. When looking through a telescope one notices slight changes of position. When looking with the naked eye you will see variations in brightness and also changes of color.

Needless to say, this flickering is not a phenomenon taking place on the star itself, but is explained in the same way as the scintillation of terrestrial light sources. The changes in position are caused by the curvature of the rays in the striae of hot and cold air, both of which are always present in the atmosphere, and especially where a warm layer of air passes over a cold layer and air waves with eddies are formed. The changes in brightness arise from the fact that at the surface of the earth the irregularly deviated rays of light are concentrated at some places and sparsely distributed at others. The color changes are to be ascribed to the slight dispersion of the normal terrestrial ray curvature, so that the rays from the star travel along slightly different paths in the atmosphere, according to their color. For a star at a height of 10 degrees above the horizon we compute the distance between the violet and red rays to be as much as 11 inches at a height of 1.25 miles and 23 inches at 3 miles.

Scintillation is least near the zenith; there, when the atmosphere is calm, one can only just see, now and then, a twinkling of the bright stars. The closer the stars are to the horizon, the more they scintillate, simply because we are then looking through a thicker layer of air, and therefore, through more striae. Color changes never occur, apparently, at elevations of more than 50 degrees, but frequently below 35 degrees. The most beautiful scintillation of all is that of the bright star Sirius, which is visible in the winter months rather low in the sky. \*\*\*

Normally the air is warmest at the surface of the earth and steadily gets colder at greater and greater heights. Sometimes this situation is reversed. The air may be warmer some distance above the ground. When such a temperature inversion occurs light going through the air bends in a peculiar way, so that the image is displaced far more than normally. The inversion may produce fuzzy or greatly distorted images, and when there are several layers of alternating hot and cold air, the effects may be spectacular. At the boundaries between the layers the distortion and displacement increase greatly. A star or planet seen through such an atmosphere may display apparently violent motions, peculiar shapes, and fantastic color changes; light clouds drifting over the bright stars may increase this illusion of motion. \*\*\*\*

\*\*\* Light and Colour in the Open Air, by M. Minnaert

\*\*\*\* The World of Flying Saucers, by Doctors Donald H. Menzel & Lyle G. Boyd

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After 5 years of nearly continuous association with the investigation of Unidentified Objects, during which time the handling of <sup>the</sup> work by the Air Force has "changed management" several times, I feel that there is some point in setting down some recommendations based on my experience.

At the present time, three things stand out in my mind very clearly with regard to the investigation of Unidentified Flying Objects. These are:

(1) Confused state of public opinion regarding both the Unknown sightings and the attitude of the Air Force. The public has been repeatedly told that "there is nothing in UFOs" but at the same time, writers like Keyhoe stir their imaginations by repeatedly pointing out in one way or another that with one or two exceptions, there is no case on record of a bona fide Unknown having been taken off the Unknown list. That is, the public, through the efforts of such best-seller writers, is aware that "once an Unknown, always an Unknown." This fact alone does not breed confidence in Air Force investigations. A case in point is the North-South Dakota sightings of August 1953. I should like to choose this case as a proto-type in the following two points.

(2) In the Dakota case cited as a proto-type, we have an illustration of a weakness of the present defense set-up. Here was a case, among others, in which "something" was around for three hours or so, and yet radar observations, visual observations, and attempted jet interception yielded nothing. When writers like Keyhoe get hold of this incident ( as someday they surely will) is not the public bound to ask "How is it that our vaunted defense set-up can be baffled by a set of lights in the sky?"

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Would our defense set-up likewise be baffled by an actual enemy in the sky that hovered around for three hours?" In short, it appears to me that whatever the stimulus may have been which gave rise to the convincingly large number of serious reports, the fact remains that a recognized Air Defense-Interception post was unable to cope with it. Should not the question be asked, "Why, after three hours of nearly continuous sightings, was the Air Defense Command unable to identify, intercept, or otherwise cope with the " event." That is, regardless of the original stimulus, whether it was just a matter of reflected lights, of balloons, of unidentified aircraft, or of other cause, why, with the expensive and elaborate defense set-ups we have, was it not possible to say after a period of three hours that this <sup>incident</sup> was caused by balloons, aircraft, lights, or something else? Is it too much to ask that a defense post which is alerted and has access to unknown objects for about three hours, should in that period of time be able to tell at least whether the objects were tangible?

(3) It appears to me that public interest in "flying saucers" may be dormant but can be excited with small provocation. In view of the lack of public confidence in official Air Force answers, it appears to me that were I an enemy about to launch another Pearl Harbor, the smartest thing I could do would be to have my agents two days before the attack launch a host of false flying saucer stories. Then, when the first bomb dropped, I feel sure that one-half of our population could easily be convinced that the bomb came, not from the enemy, but from extra-terrestrial invaders, and our defense morale might be seriously weakened. One has only to think back to the panic of the Orson Welles Invasion From Mars to realize what a potent psychological weapon flying saucers could be in the hands of a clever enemy.

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All three of the above points seem to me to point out that the "flying saucer" issue is not a dead issue, but a smoldering, potentially dangerous matter. It appears ~~to me~~ that especially at the time of a thorough lull in sightings, the time is <sup>good</sup> ~~ripe~~ for public education for two purposes:

- (a) To build confidence in our defense set-up and it's ability to cope with strange phenomena, and
- (b) To acquaint the public with the possible use of flying saucers as a psychological weapon. ~~It~~

There is no sense in being hush-hush about this since only the enemy can benefit. Personally, I believe the public should know that during July '52, the military communications were jammed, mostly by a lot of nonsense, and that this might happen again if they allowed themselves to become panicky. The best cure for panic is knowledge that (a) Unknowns are being studied to put them on the Known list, and (b) that our defenses are good. As proof of point (b), actual case histories of how the "Air Force detectives" go about, in Sgt. Friday fashion, in showing that something that was extremely puzzling and potentially fear-breeding, was unmasked. A case in point would be the investigation of the Monroe, Wisconsin incident, which turned out to be Venus.

During my five years of nearly continuous association with this work, I have, on a great many occasions, on trains, in public places, in dinner conversations, etc., ~~have~~ casually introduced the topic in as off-hand a manner as possible, only to find that most people have definite opinions and that most people lack confidence in Air Force public relations regarding this matter, and in the ~~par~~ported solutions. They do not believe that all can be explained

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by "Menzel mirages" nor do they believe that experienced pilots, control tower operators, and Ground Observation Corps personnel, can be so easily fooled. The consensus among the public is, I would say, that the Air Force "knows all about it" but refuses to say anything. Is this not precisely the psychological climate that would be a perfect set-up for possible enemy use of a flying saucer scare? The public reaction would be, I am almost certain, "Well, here it is — the Air Force knew along that this was a real danger, but tried to pass it off. Now here they are bombing us!" We can certainly handle ourselves in the face of a human enemy, but in the face of an imagined "super-human" enemy, our will to resist could be seriously impaired, much to the delight of our human enemy that perpetrated the hoax. By the time the hoax was unmasked, the damage would certainly have been done.

I would recommend therefore, that

- i) Selected "Unknowns" continue to be worked upon and due publicity be given them when a satisfactory solution is reached.
- ii) To make public the results of recent statistical investigations, pointing out that modern methods of statistical analysis do not reveal any significant patterns in the well-attested Unknown sightings, but, however, with the frank admission that a statistical analysis is only as good as the available data allow.
- iii) A popular, well-written history of the flying saucer phenomena, and its investigation should be prepared to be issued, when and if the time appears appropriate.
- iv) Announcement that the Air Force is interested in the phenomena which cause reports, on a scientific basis, and that even though such reports are based on mistaken identity, meteorological phenomena, or upon heretofore unknown natural or "unnatural" phenomena, the Air Force is studying these

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as being of interest in themselves, as indications of how people react, and how panic is propogated, so that perfectly natural phenomena, or even false stories about such phenomena, can not be used effectively by an enemy against us in lowering our defense morale.

[REDACTED]

Rob Mercer

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Unidentified Object, Cont'd:

Question #2-Continued- When the object moved up and down, it seemed as if a trail of exhaust of a brighter color (red-orange) would prevail for a few seconds, from the under side of the object when ascending and from the top when descending. The object at this time also reminded me of light coming out of a porthole or something of that sort. Maybe, this part is something which my eyes could have tricked me on though. However, I usually pride myself on a good memory for details in everything I engage in and feel very strongly that I actually did witness everything stated in this letter and the previous report.

3. Question Three regarding talk with Mr. Wilhelm.

a. When I called Mr. Wilhelm I made this statement, as nearly as I can recall. " Mr. Wilhelm, Can you see any aircraft, balloons or any unusual object in the West or Southwest skies? Do you have any aircraft in the area at this time? Any Balloons?" At this time I did not inform him of our alert on the Object(s). (I had already sighted the object from the Filter Center along with 5 other people and I wanted to see if someone else whom I felt highly capable like Mr. Wilhelm could or would see the same object as we had. In the interim period we had checked all available contacts on Weather and Weather Balloons and definitely eliminated the Balloon angle. By checking with the CAA and our own military Air Force Units we knew that there was no aircraft or balloons in the area.) Mr. Wilhelm then said he would check and call me back. He called back in a few minutes and stated he did see a brightly lighted object moving at this time rather slowly across the skies. I then told him the approximate position of the object in relation to the object from the Filter Center. From us it was approximately 220 degrees and at an angle of about 35-40 degrees at an altitude of 3-4 thousand feet. We then talked and agreed that we were both looking at the same object. During this time, the civilians and military were reporting the objects position to me and to the Direction Center. Mr. Wilhelm and myself conversed several times during the remainder of the evening on the object's position and we (the Filter Center) received very fine cooperation from Mr. Wilhelm. I am enclosing a sketch of the relative positions of the CAA Tower, The Filter Center and the positions of the Object.

4. Question Four regarding movement of the object(s).

*perspective* →  
a. When Object #1 hove into view, it would have moved, according to the scale you set, across the entire span of my hand in just a few seconds (5-10 approx.). However, once it had established its position to us in a general West or Southwesterly direction from the Filter Center it moved (more slowly. The other objects moved slower, generally speaking, except when moving up and down. Then, they moved erratically and would have spanned the distance between each finger in about a second or less. The objects all moved into the Bismarck area very quickly it seemed and then began their hovering antics in which they seemed to increase and decrease speed at will.

5. (Actually this Question #4-Regarding Reconstruction of the Phenomenon)

a. I have thought this question over an awful lot and can reach no concrete answer or give an intelligent/supposition. This was something that I have never seen before or since and is something that I can only classify in the "Flying Saucer" category, with the exception that the lights if thats what they were, reminded me of portholes or of a moving train at night.

Unidentified Objects (Continued to Question #6)

6. When the Object(s) were moving most slowly and hovering, my knuckle would have hidden it completely for a matter of seconds. It did move erratically at times and when so doing it would seem to me now at this time that it did move up or down the breadth of one or more fingers. Sometimes it seemed like a steady movement and then it would spurt and definitely reverse directions to a small extent.

7. I am firmly convinced that Mr. Wilhelm and I made simultaneous observations of at least the first and second objects and only a very short time between the last two observations of objects. We had sighted the last three objects at almost exactly the same time as I was preparing to call him when he called us. I mentioned to him at the time that we should try to make the independent observations, keep track of the change in positions and when the objects ceased to be under our surveillance we could then discuss the positions and see how closely insofar as time, distance size of object, weather aloft and directions of objects we came to each other. We correlated the information as best we could with the equipment and found that our separate, independent observations tallied very closely with each other. ~~I also feel that a surveyor could determine the actual altitudes and possibly gather more information pertaining to the sightings.~~ Here is why. ~~I cut marks around my shoes in the top of the tarred roof I was observing from here at the Center, I also lined my body up with other physical objects present such as power line poles, wires (the only things that could possibly have moved slightly), a brick chimney, the corner of a brick building and several features of other buildings in the surrounding area.~~ ~~The marks are still on the roof where I changed from one position to the other and the times can be correlated to prove the exact altitude, direction, angle of bearing and other information, including the speed,~~

8. Insofar as the Weather and temperature inversion records, I have no idea of their whereabouts as I had never seen them at the CAA Tower. This Filter Center maintains a constant picture of the weather from our Observation Posts and these reports are used strictly for tactical purposes. We only keep these reports at the most for one month, and in some instances only two weeks unless they pertain to and official Air Force alert or interceptions of aircraft. We did not however, have the Weather & Temperature Inversion records, nor do we have them now. Our posts are required only to call in pertinent information such as heavy rains, snows, wind direction changes and speeds, etc. However, I have just finished contacting the Bismarck Weather Bureau and they have supplied me with this information: There was an inversion on the 4th, 5th, and 6th but none on the 7th.

5 August 53 at 0300Z

Surface Inversion extending up to 2000 feet.

Surface Temperature of 65 degrees 70  
Top Temperature of 72 degrees

6 August 53 at 0300Z

Surface inversion extending to 1900 feet

Surface temperature of 66 degrees

Top Temperature of 69 degrees

\* 4 August 53-0300Z Surface inversion extending to 1900 feet 30

Surface temperature of 62 degrees

Top temperature of 68 degrees 60

Unidentified Objects (Continued from Question #8)

I cannot understand why Mr. Wilhelm could not locate the Weather Inversion records because I have just finished contacting the Weather Bureau and they stated that they have maintained their records up to date for the past 6 months and that they are readily available.

9. The objects sighted were not aircraft, balloons, or stars in my estimation because of the following reasons.

a. They had no aerodynamic features such as visible structural, material vapor trails, no sound connected with them, no exhaust trail such as a jet type aircraft would leave, the airborne characteristics were decidedly different from any I have ever witnessed. Nothing was noted to make me believe there <sup>were</sup> landing lights or anything of that sort. And finally, as far as the possibility of being an aircraft, there were no known aircraft in this area at that time according to all Military and Civilian records available to this unit.

b. There were no balloons in the area at that time according to all records available to this Unit either. All weather balloons were down and accounted for at least two hours before the sightings. I have seen several airborne balloon both during the night and day and these objects resembled nothing of the sort.

c. I do not believe they were stars, due to their erratic movement, the speed with which they closed in on this area, and the activity which they accomplished while aloft. All this, when accompanied by the verification of two other military Airman and 3 civilians here at the Center lead me to believe that something of a completely unusual type was up there. And also, the various stationary positions from which I watched the progress of the Objects is enough to convince me that these Objects were not Aircraft, Balloons or Stars.

statement

10. At one point in my original/I emphasized the point that I saw or thought I saw a type of pulsating signal from one to the other of the three objects in the North, NE and East. I believe that I also mentioned in the report, the presence of a USAF C-124 (Globemaster Cargo & Troop Carrier) which was entering the immediate vicinity of the objects. At this time, prior to even knowing of the C-124 in the area, I noticed the pulsating signal which would last about 5 seconds, stop for approximately 15-30 seconds and begin again. This happened several times and was witnessed independently by 5 other people from vantage points in and around the Filter Center. These signals or whatever they were lasted only until the C-124 was out of the area. Incidentally, the C-124 crew was alerted to spot the objects but at that time, a cloud bank or mist of some type was forming in the area. They did not see the objects because of this but we in turn could see both the C-124 and the objects very clearly. The C-124 was approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -2 miles south of the objects at this time and flying west. The signals seemed to be of a red-orange to bluish green and white color combination. It was at this time that the objects began fading from our vision.

11. The objects disappeared by fading from view, I believe primarily to distance and secondarily because of the light cloud bank coming in from the East. I do not believe they disappeared because the light went out. The only object of the group which I can truthfully say vanished to a combination of speed and distance was Object #1 which disappeared over the horizon to the West-Northwest.

Unidentified Objects (Continued to Question 12)

12. Insofar as general appearance was concerned, the last three objects sighted were alike, in general size and in the colors emitting from them. These last three, were also the ones where I saw the pulsating light or lights. Object #1 was different in that I felt that it was closer and therefore seemed larger. No signal type lights were observed on this object.

I have thought all the known quantities over in the case of these objects and arrive at a not too unreasonable answer. The answer is that these objects are Unknown, definitely and positively. The facts which we have checked and double-checked seem to bear out this reasoning. I and the two military people involved in it here at this Center come to the same conclusion. That the objects sighted actually existed, that they were not aircraft (as we know them), not stars and not balloons. However, with my limited knowledge of the subject I could not say what they are. One thing does stand out in my mind though and that is, that little is known of the Universe and it would be possible for another world to make technical advancements much farther than our own civilization. However, on the more logical side is the fact that there are several Unknown things right in our planet such as various types of weather phenomena and specifically, the Temperature Inversion Type. I believe that the inversion, if anything could have some definite effect or bearing on the so called Flying Saucer Incidents. I believe that much more knowledge should be gleaned from the Inversion of Temperature studies and maybe before too long the answer will come out of it. I still maintain though that I saw what I saw and whether it were something from another planet or something stemming from temperature inversion I saw something which I had never seen before and would really like to know the answer. I intend to keep this communication confidential and assume you will do likewise. However, if I may assist in any way at any time please contact me. I sincerely hope that I have helped in some small way to solve the riddle.

Sincerely yours,

*Wesley M. Harry*  
WESLEY M. HARRY  
S/Sgt, USAF  
Operations NCOIC

P.S. I also would like to make it clear that this statement or report has no reflection on the military unit I belong to and is, in a large sense, my own viewpoint from what I believe was witnessed on the night in question. To emphasize it a bit clearer, this is not an official USAF statement from Detachment #5, 4773d Grd Obsr Sq, but is an opinion and a statement by one individual member of the unit. Thank you and good luck.

*WME*  
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Mrs. Phyllis Killian, a GOC volunteer at Black Hawk, S. Dakota, called in to the Rapid City Filter Center that she had one unidentified object south-east of her post. When first noticed, the object glowed a bright red. The object then began to move to the west, changing color to green and getting greener as the speed increased. Upon reaching a position directly south of Black Hawk, it stopped abruptly and returned east to the approximate position where it was first noticed. Then it disappeared behind the ridges of hills to the south-east of Black Hawk.

W/O Bennett, controller on duty at the AC&W, received the report from the Filter Center. When he got the report that the object was heading south toward Rapid City (Black Hawk, pop. 75, is 7 miles NNW of Rapid City) he sent 3 airmen from the radar site out to look for it. They reported a light moving generally from north to south at a high rate of speed. This light was visible for 10 seconds.

At the same time, Bennett had 2 blips going south on the scope. He could not get a decent track because of ground clutter in the area.

An airborne F-84 was vectored into the area and after a search made visual contact. The F-84 was being vectored into a blip that was remaining stationary about 15 miles NE of Black Hawk. Bennett believed the F-84 pilot saw the target that was on the scope. Shortly after the Tally Ho by the pilot, the target started to move on a heading of about 320° magnetic (305 TOC.) Four good blips were obtained. Photos of this track were taken but the camera malfunctioned and the photos were useless. The last blip occurred out at a distance of 70 miles.

Stockham, the F-84 pilot, had visual contact for 20 to 30 seconds. The object appeared to be over Piedmont S. Dak. when he first sighted it. It

*How large what & altitude? How fast? + for how long? How fast? what was next any. vel.? What is geometry here?*

*For only 10 sec to? 70 blips? here were light? the went look simultaneous. what were record etc. done?*

*Piedmont? B.H. P.C.*

*How long did it take to get here? (how soon) + was motion smooth. like an airplane? toward Rapid City??*

*What are did it cover in 10 sec, odd they should come out just during the central 10 sec.*

*where's Piedmont*

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*What was ground observers doing?*

seemed to be moving twice as fast as his F-84 or (he estimated) 800 mph.

The object was "brighter than the brightest star" he had ever seen; a

"bright light varying in intensity."

As Stockham gave chase, the light "just disappeared." Now low on fuel, he broke off and returned to base.

There are 6 statements from civilians in the Black Hawk area. Of these,

5 stated that the object disappeared when the jet approached and re-

appeared when the jet left the area. Two people said the light disappeared

and reappeared in exactly the same positions. Mrs. Killian said also that

the speed of the object indicated it was travelling about "3 or 4 times as

fast as the jet interceptor." While the jets were absent the light hovered,

glowing brightly "a flaming red color, then diminish in intensity and then

glow brightly again."

*How long was any one light visible continuously to anybody?*

Lt. Needham, in the second F-84, took off.

There was no blip on the scopes at the time. Needham was vectored to the area on Killian's visual report. *a subsequent 1 hr. or 10 min. later !!?*

Several minutes later, Needham spotted an object. At the time of detection

he was on a course of 330° from Ellsworth AFB at 15,000 feet. The object was approximately 30° to his right and appeared to be at a lower altitude.

The object was a light of varying intensity and alternated from white to

green in color. The object appeared to move spasmodically up and down and

then continue on its previous course. During the pursuit Needham climbed

from 15,000 to 26,000 and turned to a course of 360°. After being steady

on 360 for a short time the radar lock-on light of the A-4 gunsight came on

and remained on. On 360, the object was directly ahead of his a/c but at

a slightly greater altitude. The object then appeared to move rapidly to a

much greater altitude and the light decreased rapidly in intensity. Finally,

*Only while the jets absent.*

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when he felt he was losing ground, he broke off the chase and was given a vector back to the base.

*For how long?*  
This chase was being carried on the radar scope back at the Ellsworth AC&W. Bennett was following both an unknown target and the F-84. *For how long?* Both were on a heading of 345 true course. The blip seemed to stay about 5 to 10 miles ahead of the F-84. The chase continued until the F-84 was about 80 miles out. The target continued off the scope. Needham said the light definitely moved in relation to the stars.

*always?*  
*how far in this?*  
R.C.?  
The F-84 was now on a 180° heading, returning to the base. The AC&W called to advise him of another UFO which had been reported (by whom?) to be in the vicinity of the base. Needham went down to 17,000 to go under a cloud layer. After a few minutes he saw an alternating white and red light a few miles west of the base. The light disappeared, re-appeared, and then disappeared completely. This object did not appear on the AC&W scope, but only as a blip on their height-finder indicator at 8,000 feet. During this time the radar light in the a/c blinked off and on. Needham thought this indicated a malfunction of his equipment.

*Must have come back from north.*  
Approximately 5 minutes later, Needham reached the field. When east of the base on a heading of 330° the AC&W called to request that he attempt to take gun camera pictures of the original object. After a short search he located what appeared to be the original object and shot 40 feet of film, none of which came out. Then he landed.

22:35

Sgt. Harry of the Bismarck Filter Center, 220 miles NNE of Rapid City, received a call from Bennett that UFOs were entering the Bismarck area of control.

22:42

*Angular rate?*  
Harry, on Filter Center roof, spotted a well-lighted object moving at what seemed a high rate of speed approaching from the SW toward Bismarck. The color of the object changed from red-green to bluish white as Harry sighted along power lines to determine the object's position and the fact that it

*with it against the wind?*

actually was moving. Five other Filter Center people came out on the roof and verified Harry's observations. *What was the duration of this total operation?*

*Must have felt it was a balloon.*

Leaving the others to continue observing, Harry went inside and called the weather bureau to check on balloon launchings. All balloons were accounted for.

23:20

Harry called Jack Wilhelm, CAA control tower operator at the Bismarck airport, 5 miles SE of the Filter Center. *what was they? Wilhelm*

*ask Harry this -*

After Harry gave altitude and azimuth positions, Harry located the object 285° from his position. It resembled a bright star. He examined it with 7 x 50 binoculars, establishing that this object was not a star. It had a very definite color of bright green changing to yellow with occasional flashes of red. *How? Still could be a star. Was there there?*

By this time another object had been spotted by the Filter center observers at 23:11. Wilhelm also observed this object at az. 75°. It appeared identical with the first. The second object was watched by Wilhelm for 15 minutes, during which time it moved once to the south. Most of the time it was motionless. Meanwhile, the first object changed position, gradually disappearing from sight (both to Wilhelm and the F.C. people) moving to the northern horizon.

00:15

First object disappeared.

00:45

00:47

Two more objects were spotted in the north-east. These objects had movement up and down and sideways, but these movements did not cover a large area of sky. The color of these objects changed from white to red to green. Three Filter Center observers stated that the color was greenish when the objects were in motion. The fourth object to appear was of a more reddish color than the others.

*Ha! Undoubtedly Doppler effect!*

01:09

A C-124 Globemaster flew over Bismarck, westbound at 8,000 feet.

As the aircraft flew over, the object appearing closest to it (#4) seemed to send out constant static like signals in red and green. This "signal effect" was seen by Wilhelm, at the airport, and Harry, at the Filter Center.

Wilhelm was in radio contact with the C-124. The crew was instructed to look for the object. They saw nothing.

By this time a scattered cloud layer was beginning to move in over Bismarck. Objects faded into clouds.

No radar is available at Bismarck. All sightings were visual. About 45 people in Bismarck called in to the Filter Center to report the objects. Except for a few scattered clouds, the skies were CAVU, with "millions of stars", until 01:30. Winds aloft data indicate that the objects could not have been free-drifting and maintain the course and positions observed. Star charts set for the times of observation show that there were no bright stars in the positions where the objects were observed.

*A chart of what both men saw #4 is related to C-124. my first help how we can get the path of C-124.*

01:50

*any names?*

Rob

UNCLASSIFIED <sup>17</sup> August 1953

SUBJECT: Report on Trip to Minneapolis, Minnesota; Rapid City, South Dakota; and Denver, Colorado

FACTS AND DISCUSSION:

1. Capt E. J. Ruppelt departed Dayton on 10 August 1953 for Rapid City AFB, South Dakota, to investigate a report of an unidentified flying object. A stop over was made at Minneapolis to check flights of Navy balloons.

2. Mr. Kieth (Telephone Main 8158, Ext. 7052) was contacted at the ONR, Navy Balloon Project, Physics Department, University of Minnesota. Balloon tracks from all Navy projects for 5 and 6 August 1953 were checked. No balloons were in the Rapid City, S. D., or Bismarck, N. D., area. A flight was launched at 1200 CST on 5 August but the load released and the balloon bag was lost shortly after launch. It was considered impossible that this balloon could have gone clear to Rapid City or Bismarck, however. Mr. Kieth also reported that CAA in Grand Island, Nebraska, found a downed balloon on 6 August. It was not a Navy balloon, and they had no track on it.

3. On 11 August, Capt John Bristol, Operations Officer of the 740th AC&W Squadron at Ellsworth AFB was contacted (Telephone 4940, Ext. 8254). Approximately two hours were spent reviewing the incident.

4. W/O Bennett, Controller on duty at the time of the incident was interviewed. His account of the incident was almost identical to that given in the initial TWX. He was on duty at 2005 MST when a Mrs. Phyllis Killian, a GOC post observer, called in an unidentified flying object northeast of her post at Blackhawk, S. D. (Note: Sunset 1920 MST - twilight 33 min.) She reported through the Rapid City Filter Center. She reported that the object was stationary, then moved south toward Rapid City. When W/O Bennett got the report that the reported object, or light, was heading toward Rapid City, he sent three airmen from the radar site to look for it. They reported a light moving from generally north to south at a high rate of speed. (See paragraph for details on their observation) At this same time, W/O Bennett observed two "blips" going south on the scope. He could not get a decent track because of ground clutter in the area. In a few minutes the GOC post in Blackhawk (Mrs. Killian) called in that the light was back in nearly its original position. An airborne F-84 was vectored into the area and after a search made visual contact. The F-84 was being vectored into a "blip" that was remaining stationary about 15 miles NE of Blackhawk. Bennett said he believed the F-84 pilot saw target that was on the scope. Shortly after the Tally Ho by the pilot the target started to move on a heading of about 320° mag. Four "good" (Benett's description) "blips" were obtained. Photos of this track were taken but the camera malfunctioned and the photos were no good. The last "blip" occurred at 70 miles and at this point the aircraft was returned to base. (This does not exactly correlate with the pilot's report in paragraph .)

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DOD DIR 5200.10

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~~SECRET~~  
UNCLASSIFIED

*at same time?*

Mrs. Killian, the GOC observer, reported seeing the aircraft and the object. Both were moving. The object seemed to be out-distancing the F-84. As soon as the F-84 landed another F-84 took off for CAP. Just about the time it was airborne the Blackhawk GOC post (Mrs. Killian) called the third time stating that the object was back again. Nothing was on the scope (there was possibly a target in the ground clutter) so the F-84 was ~~not~~ *Needham* on the visual report. The pilot soon got a Tally Ho and started an intercept. About this time Bennett picked up both an unknown target and the F-84. Both were on a heading of about 300° magnetic. The DTD seemed to stay about 5-10 miles ahead of F-84. The chase continued until aircraft was about 60 miles out the intercept was broken off. The target continued off the scope. At this time the Bismarck Filter Center was alerted to look for UFO's. When the pilot got back over the base he saw another light (see pilot's report paragraph X.) This was not picked up on the PPI scope but Bennett did get a return on the height finder equipment in the general direction of the light, it was 8,000 ft. At 0023 MST Bismarck began to call in reports. These were covered in the TWX.

5. <sup>The pilot</sup> Lt Stockham who was on the first CAP was interviewed next. He stated that he had been making passes at a B-36 north of Rapid City when GCI called and said they had a target west of Rapid City. He searched for about twenty minutes west and south of Rapid City but saw nothing. He returned to base and was about to land when he observed a light NW of the base. He started out on a heading of 350° magnetic, the object was high (30° - 45°) at 11 o'clock from him. He checked the possibility of a reflection, and determined that this was not the cause. He continued his course keeping the object at 11 o'clock for a better view. After about 30 seconds it disappeared then reappeared for another 30 seconds at the end of which it abruptly faded and was not seen again. The object was silver in color and varied in intensity. It appeared to "pull away" because it got smaller. The comment as to size was that it was "brighter than the brightest star I've ever seen".

6. <sup>The pilot</sup> Lt Needham, who flew the second CAP, was interviewed next. He stated that he took off and started to climb when GCI told him that GOC had a light. He was north of Ellsworth AFB on a heading of 360° magnetic when he saw a light 30° to 40° to his right and level. He thought it was a star or planet but as he looked away it appeared to "jump" 15° to 20° in elevation. (Note: Due to the speed of the aircraft and the fact that the pilot was intent on identifying the object he was not exactly sure of his positions. All positions are subject to some error.) The light seemed to be paralleling his course. The first thing the pilot did was to check for reflections in the cockpit (i.e. canopy, gunsight head, etc.) He was sure the light was no reflection in the aircraft. The light, which the pilot estimated to be considerably brighter than a star changed intensity and changed in color from white to green. When the object was first sighted the aircraft was at 15,000 ft. The pilot started to climb and the light appeared to climb faster. This was because the angle of elevation increased. He climbed to 26,000 ft. All this time

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both the radar blip of both the object and the aircraft were being carried and the pilot was talking to the controller on UHF. As the pilot turned into the light on his initial sighting he turned on his radar gunsight. As he swung onto the target the warning light came on. No range was obtained since the sight starts to measure at about 4,000 yards. All this might indicate was that something was beyond 4,000 yards. The light remained on until the chase was broken off. After the chase, on the way home, the light blinked on and off several times indicating a possible malfunction. The sight was not checked by maintenance on return and had not been checked since. Why, I don't know.

The F-84 chased the light for about five minutes, or to about 80 miles north of the base. The light appeared to make slow changes in color and intensity. The pilot stated that the light definitely moved in relation to the stars. After the intercept was broken off the aircraft returned toward base. On the way back the pilot "s'ed" the F-84 and could see the light over his shoulder. He finally quit looking to find the field.

About 20 miles out of base he got a visual on a similar light that changed from red to white. He was on a heading of 180° magnetic at 12 to 14,000 ft. and the light was 10° low to the right. He thought it was a car going around curves in the hills but changed his mind when the red and white lights were of equal intensity. This target was in the ground clutter of the radar but something at 8,000 ft. was picked up on the height finder radar. The light slowly went out then came back in. It seemed to be west moving since the aircraft was kept on a constant heading and the angle of azimuth and elevation increased. The light was first observed for 30 seconds, it faded, reappeared, then faded again after 30 seconds.

As the pilot came around the west side of the air base and up (north) the east side he saw another light and turned into it to take photos. (The photos were no good.)

8. The two airmen who went outside the radar site to visually observe the object being carried on the scope were interrogated next. Two attached questionnaires cover their observations. They were taken outside the radar building and pointed out what they had seen.

9. A visit was made to the Weather Bureau Station at the Rapid City Municipal Airport to check weather and balloon launches (Note: the air base launches no balloons). The observer on duty looked up the balloon track for the balloon launched at 2000 MST on the 5th of August and it went south from the Municipal Airport. This puts it out of the area of the sighting. Data on inversions was not available as it had been forwarded to Asheville, N. C. (Note: The balloon tracks and weather for 2000 MST on 5 August should be requested from Asheville.)

10. No attempt was made to contact the GOC observers at Blackhawk. They had been interrogated by base personnel and were "all excited". It was believed Capt Ruppelt's talking to them would only further excite them, needlessly. Their statements are in the Form 112. add paragraph "E" on next page here

*delete*

11. No attempt was made to go to Bismarck, N. D., since plane and train connections were bad and it would have required at least four more days of travel. Their report, Form 112, is being forwarded.

12. On ~~20~~ August <sup>JAR</sup> the large type balloon tracks at Lowry were checked. Two balloons (see tracks) were lost and could have been in the area at the time of the sighting.

*Discussion*

13. A few comments on the sources can be made:

a. W/O Bennett, <sup>Controller</sup> Observer - This man left the impression that he was trying to prove the existence of a UFO. It is very unfortunate that no scope photos were available to corroborate his story. He saw targets on the scope, there is no doubt about it, but whether they acted exactly as he stated is unknown.

b. The two airmen that went outside to observe the object that was being carried on radar and reported by the GOC were not sure of what they saw, at least this is the impression they left. They were told to go out and look for a light so they saw one. Their description fits that of a meteor. They only saw a "streak" in the sky. They did not see it return north, only go south.

c. <sup>the first pilot</sup> Lt Stockham only got a glimpse of a light so he could not add much.

d. <sup>The second pilot</sup> Lt Needham gave the impression of being "on the ball". He obviously was trying to convince himself the light was a star, but was having difficulty. He took a realistic approach and had done some logical reasoning. He was worried about the fact that the light moved relative to the stars.

e. All the sightings at Bismarck are doubtful. The AC&W Station called the Bismarck Filter Center and told them to "look for flying saucers", a perfect set up to see every star move around.

CONCLUSIONS:

*delete*

14. No definite conclusions can be made. By knocking out doubtful sightings the only thing that can be reasonably assured is that a GOC post observed a light. This could have been a balloon or star. Radar picked up something in the general area of the GOC post observation and vectored an aircraft toward it. The pilot saw a light and took after it. He got a radar lock on but it could have been a malfunction of the sight. The star Capella is possibly (???) visible low on the horizon to the north and the pilot could have seen this except for the fact that he swears the light he saw moved relative to other stars. It might have been a balloon except that he would have caught up with a balloon very soon, in a minute or two.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

*delete*

15. It is recommended that further study of this incident be made by Dr. Hynek and A/1C Futch.

SGT HARR  
 MR WILHELM  
 LT KOONTZ  
 MRS OWENS  
 MRS DAHL

INFORMATION

FROM

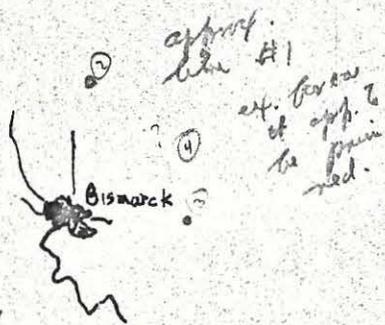
STATEMENTS ONLY

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Harry #1 - he called Koontz,

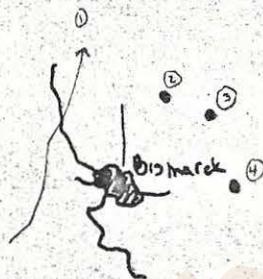
Owens  
 Dahl

Koontz



erratic  
 - all directions  
 no app. order  
 wind or glau  
 sighted along  
 stat. obj. to  
 see if they were  
 moving.  
 color, 4, us, v.  
 cont. changing

Harry



Called from A.C.

① 0542Z - 0715Z

② 0611Z - 0850Z

③ 0745 - } 0840 - 0850  
 clouds

④ 0747

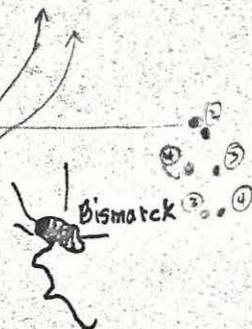
Wilhelm



① 0620+

② Few min. later,  
 for 15 min

intermitt until 0840-  
 then clouds



① 0542 - 0715

② 0611 - 0850

③ 0745 - 0850

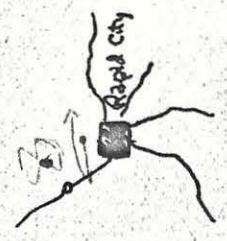
④ 0747

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 DOD DIR 5200.10

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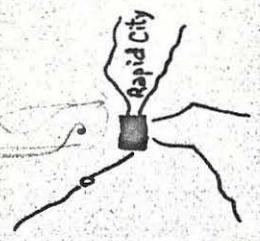
No times stated by Owens  
 except that at 0900± ② was only  
 still clearly visible

MRS. DAUGHER RAUGHT 2005  
MRS. JIM AUBREY 2005

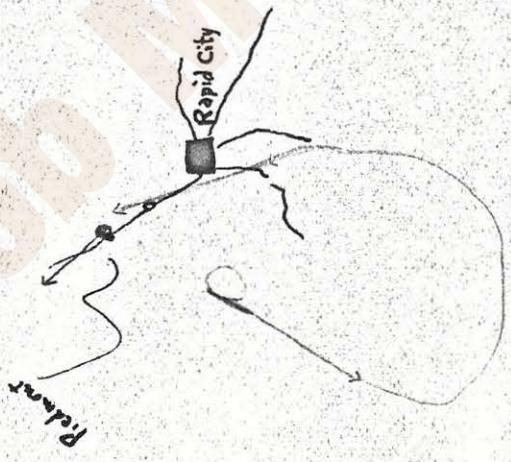


*Handwritten scribbles and lines*

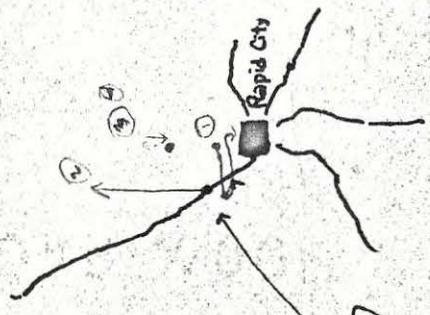
NEEDHAM



STOCKHAM  
FLIGHT PATH  
OBJECT



KILLIAN



0 5 10 15 20 25 miles

*Black Hawk*

The following information is verbatim from the Military Personnel Operations Log located in the Bismarck Filter Center, info pertains to the Various sightings of Unidentified Objects on 5-6 August 1953.

"5 August 1953-A/1C Richard B.J. Haugen on duty at 1600 hours.---Report on unidentified object, received first call from Velva observer. She hadn't seen it but a farmer at Bergen, N.D. had seen it, had called her, so she notified. Then I in turn called Mr. Otto Baden, Post Supervisor at Bergen, N.D., and asked him. He reported that it was round, very large, and by the natural eye it looked white and through the glasses it looked red on top, white in the middle and red on the bottom. But, he said that it could have looked that way because of the sun shining on it. It was sighted at 0040Z and he could see it yet at 0100Z. We got the 2nd call on it from Balfour, N.D. from Mr. Pete Weidler, the Ground Observer Supervisor, and he stated that it was round, slightly oblong, white in color and only one object. It was moving very slowly, east-Southeast of Balfour/ There was no sound, it seemed to be just sitting. It was seen constantly from 0045Z to 0115Z. The 3rd call was from Mr. Mel Alme, Post Supervisor at Drake, N.D. He looked at it through 7 power binoculars and its altitude was about 1500 feet. It was round, 6-8 feet in diameter, white in color and moving very slow. He said that he was sure it was a weather balloon. This information was called into our Direction Center (GRADY) as soon as I received it. The Duty Controller said it had been identified as a weather balloon and that we would not have to send in any further reports. (The following info is the report on the objects sighted here at Bismarck and pertains directly to the Reports sent in by the Center) "I received a call from the Grady Controller at 0343Z. A bright shining object was flying Northwest at a very fast rate of speed. It appeared red while traveling slow and greenish when traveling faster. A Rapid City woman noticed it first. Then a pilot from Grady saw it and tried chasing it but couldn't overtake it. It would be coming up through A A area, so didn't notify posts or other personnel. Called Billings and let them know as it probably would come into their area. Grady called at 0515 on the unidentified object. It was 70 miles south of Dickenson.

Following is the report logged by Lt. C.W.Koontz.-----Lt. Koontz was called. Officer arrived 0528. Position of unidentified object now given by Grady to be approx. 15 miles North of Rapid City. Flying no particular direction. Posts in EB and CB area alerted. Later expanded to parts of DB, EB and EC. At 0538 Grady gave position in DB area moving NE. S/Sgt Harry at 0542 then sighted object at EB 0248. Reported as star like object moving erratically in a small radius at 2 to 3 thousand feet. Verified by Haugen, Dahl, Owens, Mandigo. At 0611 another object was sighted by S/Sgt Harry and Lt. Koontz at approx. EB 1754. Again verified by Haugen, Hahl, Owens, Mandigo. At 0648 call received from Art Wehr at Anamoose...reported seeing object at approx 0200 ? .. assumed by officer to be same object as reported earlier by Bergen, Balfour and Drake. Mr. Wehr quite sure it was not a balloon. Upon calling CAA discovered all balloons raised at 0400 Z-down at 0423, almost two hours after reports. At 0715 object to west moved west then north and faded over the horizon. Reported by Jack Wilhelm, CAA representative to have left trail some-what like that of a sky-rocket. At 0745, object reported at EB 2549 by Owens, S/Sgt Harry, then verified by Dahl and Lt. Koontz. At 0747 object reported at EB 2050. Verified by Owens, S/Sgt Harry- Verified by Dahl and Lt Koontz. At 0850 Z all objects NE and E of Filter Center had faded. People present during observations, Mrs Gert Dahl, Mrs Mike Owens, Mr Charlie Mandigo Lt. CW Koontz, S/Sgt Harry and A/1C Dick Haugen.

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DOD DIR 5200.10

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1. Hotel Res. — ✓  
- morning flight ✓

2. Go over angles at r  
of. ✓

3. winds abt - sup. hrs.

4. Photographs —

• Sev. on roof ✓  
Airport

5. Capt of boy. ✓

6. Map of S.D. ✓

~~95 people~~

Mark photographs

Sgt. Smith rpt. on Killdeer

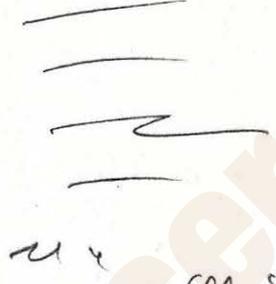
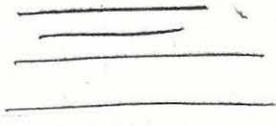
Photographs — Black Hawk  
have Killdeer mark —

Did Aldress ever observe indep. of Killdeer

contradictor in time — Mr. K (1) 20:45  
45 min later in N.E. — yet Aldress  
said they saw them at 20:05.

Fills each from airports

321 Time



u u u u u u u u

1" = 2500 ft  
13,000 ft  
2 1/2

Rob Mercer

DETACHMENT #5  
4773D GROUND OBSERVER SQUADRON  
225 $\frac{1}{2}$  Broadway West  
Bismarck, North Dakota

9 December 1953

Dr. J. Allen Hynek  
Professor of Astronomy  
Emerson McMillin Observatory  
Ohio State University  
Columbus 10, Ohio

Dear Dr. Hynek;

I received your letter which followed our phone conversation and will endeavor to assist by answering the specific questions included in the letter, and also to give any personal ideas or concepts which may assist you in the investigation of the phenomenon.

1.. Our official log book contains in narrative form the following information: "Received call from Controller at 0343Z, 6 Aug 53, that a bright, shining object was flying NW of Rapid City at a very fast rate of speed. Object was then moving into the Alfa Alfa area of our Plotting board and believed to be penetrating the Billings Filter Center area which lies adjacent to ours on the West. We did not alert our posts or call other personnel at this time, however, we did call Billings and have them be especially watchful. We were also told that an intercept attempt was made but no contact was made." The previous information was attested to by A/1C Richard B.J. Haugen prior to his contacting 2d Lt. Charles Koontz, our Detachment Commander, and myself.

a. A/1C Haugen, at 0515Z, received another call from the Controller and was told that the Object was now about 70 miles South of Dickinson, N.D. at Grid position of CA 0655. He then called Lt. Koontz and myself and we arrived at 0523Z. The position of the object was then given as 15 miles North of Rapid City. We then alerted the West-Southwest area of our plotting board. At 0538Z, the Controller then stated that the object was now in DB 0052 and moving towards Bismarck. At this time I stepped out on top of the roof of the adjacent building and sighted the object which I made the initial report on.

2. Question #2 regarding "well lighted object".

a. The Object was "welllighted in this sense". That it definitely stood out in the night sky as seeming to be at least twice the size of any of the thousands of the stars out at the time, and because its color was changing. Its color was changing, and I firmly believe it to be true, from a bluish-white to a red-orange or green combination. I might add right here, that I am slightly color blind on certain colors such as a blue-green or very close shades of red-green. Therefore, to isolate the colors of any object, even clothing materials is difficult unless the colors are a distinct or a true color. I did see the colors mentioned at this time and also on the other objects. The object when maneuvering, which it seemed to do, reminded me in a way, of a darkened aircraft with light shining out from within. Also, when moving up and down or sideways, the light seemed <sup>to</sup> become brighter in intensity.

740TH AIRCRAFT CONTROL AND WARNING SQUADRON  
Ellsworth Air Force Base  
South Dakota

17 December 1953

Dr. J. Allen Hynek  
Emerson McMillin Observatory  
Ohio State University  
Columbus 10, Ohio

*NO*

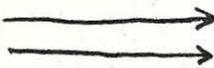
Dear Dr. Hynek

This is in pursuance of our recent phone conversation and the letter which I received a very short time ago. Only one other letter was found that was sent by you and she stated that she may answer the letter but would need clarification as to where the letter came from and why it came from there. It was explained to her without divulging any information so it is very possible that she will answer.

The questions you asked me in the letter have been answered here to the best of my ability and I sincerely hope that they will help you in finding the source and whatever they are.

1. In my opinion the blips observed on the scope were definitely the same as those observed in the sky at the time, due to the first sighting. I made contact twice with them and on the second occasion for about fifteen minutes at which time the aircraft were vectored toward them and had a Tally-Ho.
2. In request for the total length of time that the object was on the scope, the first was about two minutes as I got ten or eleven definite blips with the speed of the antenna set at six rpm per minute. The second time in which I had another aircraft scrambled for the object was the longest as I carried it on the scope for approximately ~~fifteen minutes~~ as it moved from the Northwest to East and then directly North on a heading of 360°. A fighter pilot had a Tally-Ho on the object. It would move erratically or seem to move north, stand still or with no movement. The pilot stated that it would move with an up and down motion. I had the pilot climb to 26,000 feet indicating 330 knots. He was then above the object and getting in position for a pounce when the object started on a climb to the north with an estimated speed of a near 1,000 miles per hour and it then left the scope. The speed was almost twice that of the F-84. The blips on the scope showed up to be approximately the same size as those made by a B-36.
3. The only time I noted any difference in speed between the plane and the object was when the plane was in "pounce" position and the object took off due north at a terrific rate of speed.

*contradiction*



4. In reference to question four, a statement was made at the time of the sighting. The following is the statement:

At 2005 MST, Mrs. Phyllis Killian of Black Hawk, South Dakota who was manning a post of the Rapid City Filter Center when she sighted an object which was bright red and very low at approximately four miles north east of Black Hawk. The object then made a pass over Rapid City at a very high note of speed and then returned back over Rapid City to approximately seven miles from where it was first sighted and continued to hover in one position. I had three men from the control room to take a look and all gave the same reply of seeing the object. The three men were S/Sgt Mc Donald, S/Sgt Burgess and A/LC Phillips. The object was round, changing colors from bright red to Greenish Silver depending on speed. There was no sound that could be heard although they stated it looked like a "V" shaped vapor trail was following the object.

The maneuverability of the object is very sharp in all directions, such as up and down and sideways.

I had a Lt. John W. Stockham on Cap for the first sighting and vectored him to the direction where the object was sighted last and at approximately fifteen miles north east of Black Hawk, Lt. Stockham made a sighting of the object. Upon trying to close in the object took off in a north west direction on a heading of about  $320^{\circ}$  at a high rate of speed. Lt. Stockham stated object was a bright silver color when last sighted. From the time the first object was sighted until object faded was about thirty-five minutes. At 2024 MST, Lt. David K. Needham was scrambled for CAP when report came from Mrs. Killian at Black Hawk that an object was about seven miles from where other sighting was at a medium altitude with the same color and actions the same. Lt. Needham was flying at 26,000 when vectored to  $270^{\circ}$  to check report. At approximately 20 miles north east of Black Hawk, Lt. Needham gave a Tally-Ho on object at about fifteen angels. I gave Lt. Needham directions to intercept or get a visual but every time he came very close the object would go up or down on speeds up to where he would lose sight of the object. I had two blips on the scope which coordinated with the report from Lt. Needham which was moving very fast. I vectored him to them and had the crew chief set up the camera to take photos of pictures of the scope. We had approximately fifteen blips of the object on a heading of  $360^{\circ}$  which Lt. Needham was trying to intercept out to 85 miles. At that distance I turned the fighter around and we took thirteen pictures on the scope. I called 54th FIS Maintenance to see if Lt. Needham had film in the gun camera to get an aerial picture and stated he had, so on his way back to home plate at about thirty miles from the station he sighted object again. Lt. Needham stated he had shot almost a complete rollof film of the object. Lt. Needham was brought back to the base and all GOC Filter Centers were alerted in the northern area, as that was the direction of the last sighting of the objects.

At 0723Z, Bismark Filter Center gave a report of sighting object west of Bismark at a very low altitude with the same discription as the other sightings. The reports from Bismark Filter Center were all taken by T/Sgt. Reece. All people that have made sightings were instructed to make a personal statement as to what they saw in all respects.

5. From my experience as a radar operator, I have tracked balloons, aircraft, cars, trucks, etc., and have had experience with interference from other radar sites but to the best of my knowledge and experience, I would definitely state that this was none of the above mentioned. I had Maintenance check the equipment at the time and there was normal function at the time of the sighting. The night was very clear at the time and I was not carrying any other aircraft on the scope so I do not think it is possible due to the direction and speed and erratical tracking that it would be an echo from a jet or ground object.

Any further assistance that may enable you to solve this problem will be willingly given.

Sincerely,

*Howell I. Bennett*  
HOWELL I. BENNETT  
WOJG USAF

*Warrant Officer, J.G.*

Rob Meigs

*NO*

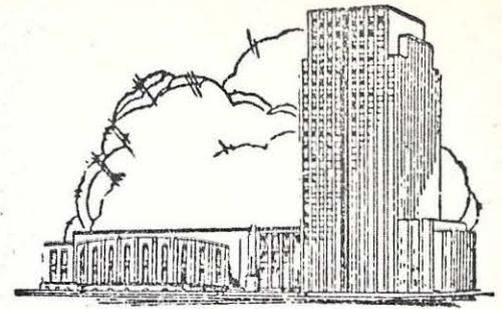
# Bismarck Junior College

"The College with a Future"

7th AND Ave. D



SIDNEY J. LEE, DEAN  
RALPH WERNER, REGISTRAR



Bismarck, North Dakota

January 14, 1954

Dr. J. A. Hynek  
Dept. of Physics & Astronomy  
Ohio State University  
Columbus, Ohio

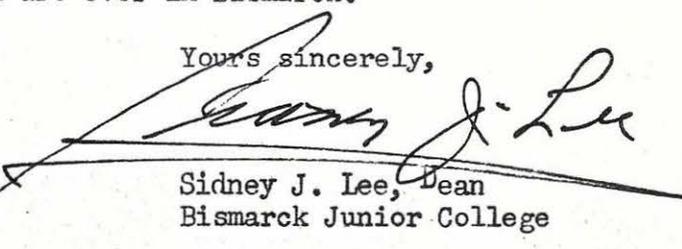
Dear Dr. Hynek:

I contacted Col. Harold Barker of the North Dakota National Guard this afternoon about the matter we discussed. He will ask General Heber Edwards to make an investigation and to report to you whether or not the National Guard might have been carrying on some type of experiment on the evening of August 5, 1953, which might have resulted in the phenomena that was reported.

I also contacted Ira Nelson, engineer for Radio Station KFYZ, and he confirmed the visit that he had had with Captain Charles Hardin in the matter. According to Mr. Nelson, Leo Litt, an employee of Station KFYZ had observed some unusual formations in the sky on the night of August 5, 1953. Mr. Nelson will have Leo Litt write out a statement describing what he saw and will have it sent to you.

If I hear anything at all which may be of assistance to you in this matter, I shall let you know. I enjoyed meeting you and Captain Hardin and I hope I can have the pleasure of visiting with you again if you are ever in Bismarck.

Yours sincerely,

  
Sidney J. Lee, Dean  
Bismarck Junior College

SJL:cm

~~NO~~

January 26, 1954  
P.O. Box 752  
Bismarck, No. Dak.

Dr. J. A. Hynek  
Dept. of Physics & Astronomy  
Ohio St. U.  
Columbus, Ohio

Dear Sir:

It has been called to my attention by Ivar Nelson, chief Engineer of KFJR, Bismarck, North Dakota that you wished a description of the sighting of an unidentified object <sup>which</sup> ~~was~~ visible to the unaided eye on the night of Aug. 4, and the morning of Aug. 5, 1953. *or objects*

The local air-raid filter center had sighted two objects on the evening of Aug. 4. One appeared due West of the city of Bismarck and another in the Northeast.

My first knowledge and sighting of these objects were at approximately 12:05 A.M. Aug. 5. As near as I could tell the one in the West appeared to be directly due West; and the other approximately 50 to 70 degrees North and East of due North as estimated at the KFJR transmitter location, which is approximately 13 miles east of Bismarck, No. Dak.

As to the description of these objects all that I can say is that they appeared much brighter than most of the stars and at times appeared to take on a rather dull blueish tint.

They appeared to move in the heavens, but at a rather a slow rate and unless a person braced his head against some stationary object to eliminate head movement it would be hard to tell that they were moving.

The one in the West eventually disappeared below the horizon and the one in the North-east gradually seemed to blend in with the rest of the stars until it was no longer visible. The time of the last sighting of both objects was about 1:30 A.M.

I hope I have in some measure helped in your research.

Very truly yours,  
*Dr. H. L. ...*

27 January 1954

Mr. Sidney J. Lee, Dean  
Bismarck Junior College  
7th And Avenue D.  
Bismarck, North Dakota

Dear Dean Lee;

Thank you for your letter of January 14th. I appreciate no end your interest. We are still puzzled by the phenomenon.

I am particularly interested in the National Guard possibility, and likewise in the possible additional testimony of Mr. Litt. This will be important corroborative information. Would you be kind enough to ask him to be sure to include compass angles and elevation angles and times of sightings.

I would also appreciate it if you would casually mention this phenomenon to responsible people of your acquaintance. It is barely possible that one of them may know the answer. Thanking you again for your interest, I am,

Sincerely yours,

J. Allen Hynek,  
Professot of Astronomy

jah/jg

4 February 1954

Mr. Leo H. Litt  
P.O. Box 752  
Bismarok, North Dakota

Dear Mr. Litt;

Thank you for your letter of 26 January. Your observations are of particular value to us since they were made at a considerable distance from the others.

Do you remember the passage of a C-124 type aircraft from east to west, after 01:00? If so, would you be kind enough to draw a sketch of your position relative to the Filter Center, giving angles to the objects (angles along the horizon and also vertical angles). In any case, however, we would appreciate the sketch giving the approximate track of the objects and the duration of the sighting.

We are also interested in the motion of these objects across the sky. I should like to ask you to think back to the occasion and pretend that for each object you held your hand out-stretched at arm's length, fingers spread apart, so that the lower knuckle of your middle finger was centered on each object, in turn. Now then, when each object was moving it's fastest, how long would you say it would have taken it to move to the next finger? Less than a second? Less than a minute? How long would it have taken to move across the entire span of your hand?

What, in your mind, would be the strongest arguments that these objects were not aircraft, stars, or balloons?

Those of us who are pursuing this investigation certainly appreciate your cooperation and interest in this matter. Hoping to hear from you at your early convenience, I am,

Very truly yours,

J. Allen Hynek,  
Professor of Astronomy

h/g

Copy to Sidney J. Lee

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Final Report

Case C-7

Rob Mercer



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DOD DIR 5200.10

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DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.  
DOD DIR 5200.10

[REDACTED]

An account of the investigation by Capt. Chas. Hardin, USAF, and J. A. Hynek, of the reported visual/radar sightings of Unidentified Objects at Bismarck, N. Dakota and Black Hawk, S. Dakota, on 5/6 Aug. 53.

We arrived in Bismarck at about 1900C, 12 January 1954, where Sgt. Wesley Harry of the Bismarck Filter Center met us. Within 20 minutes we were at the Filter Center and had been offered a cup of coffee. We first examined the original logs of the incident, and Sgt. Harry pointed out that the Filter Center was first alerted at 0515Z 5 August 1953, that an object was about 70 miles south of Dickinson, N. Dak. At 0523Z another call came in stating that an object was 15 miles north of Rapid City. At 0538Z a call came in that an object was just south of Almont. At 0542Z, or 2342CST, Sgt. Harry sighted an object from the Filter Center roof. He had gone out on the roof to look toward the SW to see if he could see anything of the reported object.

Re; Fig. # 1. Sgt. Harry's description of the object has been treated many times in the reports and so I asked him primarily about motions. Fortunately he had power lines near by and as soon as the object appeared he checked his position on the roof by marking points around his shoes. The motion of the object was described as indicated on photos # 1 and 2. He stated that this represents the mean motion of the object, but that in between it moved erratically up and down as much as one or two times the distance between the horizontal telephone wires. He insisted the motion was abrupt. Apparently it came in rather rapidly, but when it got west of the Filter Center it hovered, moving up and down.

Mrs. Owens spent most of her time watching this object and her evidence was essentially the same as that of Harry although she did not see it as soon.

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She maintained that in the western part of the sky it would remain stationary, then hop up several degrees very quickly — almost instantaneously — stop, move to the left and then swerve down in sort of a slanting motion, repeating these maneuvers many times. By this time everybody at the Filter Center was very excited and, as they said, shaking, because they had the feeling that somebody was watching them."

This original western object disappeared sometime between midnight and one a.m. Just about midnight, however, the Filter Center people almost simultaneously saw other objects to the east. Object # 2 was sighted at 0611Z to the north of east. At 0745Z and 0747Z two other objects toward the east were seen. The plots of these objects are given on photos 3 and 4. The best drawing of the positions and motions of the objects comes from Sgt. Harry and is included as Fig. 6A.

Mr. Wilhelm was located at the CAA Control Tower,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  air miles away such that the Filter Center had a bearing of  $321^{\circ}$  from the tower. He saw all 4 objects also, but not exactly in the same positions. Since there was a chance here of getting a fix on these objects, we spent a fair amount of time having Sgt. Harry and Mr. Wilhelm sight the remembered positions of the objects at the time a C-124 Globemaster came by at approximately 0800Z. This establishes a point in time, and Fig. 2 and 4 show the position of the object at the time of the passage of the C-124. Object # 1 in Fig. 2 is denoted by the "x". Harry stated that the bearing of object # 1 was  $264^{\circ}$  at an  $08^{\circ}$  altitude. Wilhelm gave the position of the object as  $295^{\circ}$  and  $13^{\circ}$  altitude. The altitudes do not check, but the bearings place the object about a mile and a half west of the Filter Center. If one adopts a mean value of altitude, the fix places it at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the airport and  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles from the Filter Center. The motion over a good number of degrees, the apparently close position, and the many changes of color would appear to rule out a star.

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[REDACTED]

Object # 2, at the time of the passage of the C-124, is indicated on Fig. 3 and 6. Mr. Wilhelm states that the object was almost due north and had an elevation about equal to that of the "guardians of the pole," which would place it about  $30^{\circ}$  up. We visited the control tower several times, once at night with the sky clear, and had ample chance to check positions and comparisons with stars. Wilhelm has had much opportunity to observe stars from the control tower, and it appears inconceivable to me that a man with 13 years experience could have mistaken stars for these objects. Furthermore, Mr. Wilhelm examined the objects with binoculars and pointed out that though they resembled stars, their motion and their color changes were such as to rule out this possibility. At any rate, if one adopts the angles and altitudes of object # 2, one finds that it was about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the Filter Center and about 5 miles from the airport at an altitude of about 10,000'. This is obtained as a mean of two figures: 5 thousand and 15,000 feet. Mr. Wilhelm, it appears, consistently estimated altitudes higher than Harry.

Object # 3 is indicated on Fig. 4 and 6. Fig. 5 shows the relation of the Filter Center to the tower. The bearing of the Filter Center is  $321^{\circ}$  as computed from a surveyor's map of the city. As will be noted, from the Filter Center, object # 3 was a little to the north of east, where as from the tower it was a little to the east of north. This places it almost exactly 3 miles from both the Filter Center and the tower. Again, in altitudes, there is some discrepancy, but taking the mean of 3,000' and 8,000', we get something of the order of a mile high.

Harry as well as Wilhelm stated that object # 2 was the highest in the sky, and # 3 and 4 considerably lower. Object # 4 appears to have been the farthest away, since, as Fig. 4 and 7 show, it had about the same bearing from

[REDACTED]

the tower as from the Filter Center. The angles must be regarded as indeterminate, and as far as altitude is concerned it appeared higher from the tower than from the Filter Center. The altitude is indeterminate since we do not know the distance. All observers said the objects could not truly be distinguished one from the other. One or more objects, then, were visible from 0542Z until 0850Z; that is, for approximately three hours.

We interrogated not only Sgt. Harry but Mrs. Owens, Mr. Mandigo, Lt. Koontz, and Mrs. Dahl. While their stories did not agree exactly (and <sup>it</sup> this would have been suspicious if they had) there was general agreement as to color change, motions, and the fact that the objects actually had been there.

One other behavior of the objects is worthy of mention, and it was pointed out repeatedly. At the time of the passing of the C-124, the object closest to it — object # 4 — appeared to blink in a sort of a signaling way. It was likened to the signaling of a ship's signal blinker but not as fast. It was most pronounced in # 4, but they said it was taken up by # 3 and then # 2, as though a wave had passed from # 4 to # 2.

#### ANALYSIS

##### Origin:

##### 1. Stars:

There is the possibility that object # 2 might have been Capella, although if the motion as drawn by Harry is to be trusted, this is ruled out. Likewise, in the triangulation from the airport and the Filter Center. Object # 2 appeared to the NE of the Filter Center and due North of the tower. The tower directions are to be trusted since the window faces directly North and object # 2 was seen

square out of the window. It is the opinion of this observer that unless all six observers are unable to distinguish a star from anything else, the stellar explanation will not hold. Further, the angular positions appear to rule this out.

2. Balloons:

If these objects were balloons, they would have to be captive balloons because of their restricted motion and the fact that they did not rise. Extensive inquiries were made as to the possibility of any experiments going on in that area at the time. The weather bureau was consulted, since in previous years there had been some cosmic ray experiments by Dr. Pickard and Dr. Nehr. In both cases they had consulted the weather bureau for wind conditions. The weather bureau knew of no experiments at that time. The Dean of the Bismarck Junior College was consulted to see if he might have known of any experiments at the time. He took us to see the head of the North Dakota State Museum, and he also knew of nothing. We asked to check the hotel register of the best hotel in town, and found no names that might have had any connection with scientific experiments. We likewise checked the newspapers for that period, and although this incident was mentioned, nothing else bearing upon it was. The newspapers did mention that television towers were being erected at approximately this location at the time. Accordingly, the engineer of the TV station was consulted and he stated that at no time were any experiments carried out relative to the construction of the towers.

3. Aircraft:

All observers are reasonably well experienced with aircraft, with of course Mr. Wilhelm being the "authority" among the observers.

Aircraft must definitely be ruled out. The only hope is that these were balloons, but in the absence of any evidence for experiments going on at the time, or of these lights behaving as balloons, this appears a desperation solution.

All that can be said is that if the angles are correct, or even approximately so, since after all, one person saw the object to the north and the other observer saw it to the east, the phenomenon<sup>on</sup> was a local one. The objects were not observed in the O.P.s around Bismarck though these had been alerted, and it was not reported in Mandan, which is just 5 miles west of Bismarck. They are reported to have a very active Observation Post. In Captain Ruppelt's original report, he stated that although he did not visit Bismarck, he felt that in as much as they had been alerted to watch out for something, they became excited and "saw lights." I cannot accept this interpretation in the least since the observers interrogated were in my opinion a definite cut above the average person. The operation of the Filter Center seemed to be very efficient and it was apparent that they had recruited very good people for the work. Sgt. Harry in particular appears thoroughly reliable and accurate and is very much "on the ball." I would personally tend to discount the rapid up and down motion and the erratic motions because it is well known that a point of light watched consistently will appear to do very strange things. But for the changes of position, especially since the objects were around for nearly three hours, and the changes of color, appear to be substantiated. However, even the color changes may be entirely subjective, so that when one filters down the Bismarck evidence, one comes to the conclusion that some objects were observed there which were not stars nor aircraft and if they were balloons they were extremely strange ones whose presence was totally unexplained. It is most unfortunate that pictures were not taken of these objects, and it is the recommendation of this observer that

[REDACTED]

future communications from ATIC should stress emphatically that pictures be taken and instructions included for taking star trails for practice.

The local nature of this phenomenon should be stressed. The appearance of the first object in the direction to be expected from the alert from Roller Skate may be regarded as coincidental. It seems improbable though certainly not impossible that these were the same objects observed near Rapid City.

We can conclude that there is no ready explanation for these objects. To call them aircraft, balloons, or stars becomes somewhat of a desperation move, though the balloon hypothesis would be the least objectionable. The objects were star-like, changed a great deal in color, and were probably fairly local. With reference to the last point, if they were local they were not large, or at least the lights were not very bright because the lights apparently were not much brighter than a 1st magnitude star, and some observers stated that often they were considerably fainter.

Until further explanation is forthcoming, this incident must be put down as one of the best examples of the nocturnal meandering lights which have been reported elsewhere in the literature. To do otherwise would be to doubt the first order objectivity of observers who stood up very well under considerable questioning. The triangulations also bear out Sgt. Harry's visual estimates of the distances, even though such estimates must be subjective. He stated the first object was 2 to 3 miles west of the Filter Center and calculations show 2 miles. Object # 2, he felt was 6 to 8 miles away, and calculations show approximately 3 miles.

Despite the fact that the incident started in Rapid City and Black Hawk, the evidence there does not hold together in the manner of the Bismarck

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evidence. The observers are more excitable and less matter of fact and certainly have less scientific background than the observers in Bismarck, with one or two exceptions.

Three kinds of evidence are present in the South Dakota sightings: visual from the ground, from GOC; radar evidence,; and visual from the air. All visual sightings at Rapid City and Black Hawk were quite low on the horizon. This itself makes matters suspect. The initial incident which started the whole train of events was the sighting by Miss Killian at about 0305Z, of an object which appeared in the south-east, moved rapidly to the SSE, changing color from red to green as it did so. It then hovered there for awhile, she said, and went back quite quickly and disappeared back of the hills. When asked to estimate the time it would have taken to cross the fingers of her out-stretched hand, she estimated about 5 seconds. This is quite in contradiction to the original statements. She was observing it from the front steps of a neighbor's cottage, and accordingly, Fig. 9 and 10 are shots taken from the exact position of the observation. Mrs. Daughenbach, who saw the object simultaneously, said at first "it's nothing but the red tower light." (There is an FM tower with a red obstruction light barely visible from their porch.) This establishes at any rate the redness of the color. The changing to green might be subjective although both were emphatic that it did this. Both women were asked quite independently to draw in the path of the object, and the paths more or less agree, as seen in Fig. 9 and 10. Since this was the instigating incident, it is interesting to speculate whether this was an aircraft. Miss Killian, although an excitable and rather cocky individual, and in some respects overbearing, is nevertheless rated as one of the best observers connected with the Filter Center. She is reputed to know planes in detail and has on occasion identified the aircraft as to type and motor when it would

only dimly be heard in the distance. To the direct question as to whether this might have been an aircraft, she emphatically stated that this was out of the question; that she knew aircraft, period!

She alerted the Filter Center, and they immediately notified the ADC radar at Ellsworth AFB. The base is located about 10 miles directly east of Black Hawk and Black Hawk is about 7 miles NW of Rapid City. Three posts therefore formed a triangle and it is most unfortunate that at any given time objective observers were not present to give directions. No such observations exist, and the distances of these objects, if present at all, are indeterminate.

Miss Killian next states that she saw an object directly overhead which moved very rapidly to the north. She was the only one who saw this, however, and it is possible, in my opinion, that this might have been a meteor. She states of course no; she knows meteors!

At about that time she got into her car and went over to the Aldren farm, about 3/4 mile away. She went over after the object had disappeared to pay a neighborly call and tell them what she had seen. As she was talking to Mrs. Aldren it was the latter who sighted the second, or really the third object. It's position is indicated in Fig. 11. Note the closeness to the horizon. This object did not move, was starlike, and in my opinion could very well have been the star Capella. It remained in approximately the same position, they state, for over 2 hours. The Aldren boys and the elder Aldrens were inside, and would pay no attention to the talk of the women outside who said they saw some strange object. Jim Aldren told me that he felt the women were just seeing things. Finally, he came out and became convinced that some object was present. He is shown in Fig 11 pointing to the approximate position of the object. Certainly there are a lot of open spaces there in which to

locate objects.

In the meantime, the original sighting of the object shown in Fig. 9 and 10 had been reported to the radar center, and strangely enough, unknown blips appeared on the radar. Lt. Stockham was up on CAP at the time, having been up for some time, and Mr. Bennett, the radar operator, asked him to have a look around. For quite a while Stockham did not see it (Stockham was not present in Rapid City, but arrangements were made to interview him by phone from Great Falls, Mont.) He stated essentially what he had in his original report: that he finally did notice the object which was bright and star-like, that he observed it for only 20 to 30 seconds, and that it had gone away from him extremely rapidly.

Fig. 12 is the radar scope diagram drawn by Bennett. Unfortunately the radar camera did not work. Bennett, who was quizzed in hospital because of a broken arm, stated emphatically that the blips had definitely been "painted", and that each successive blip designated on the chart was actually a successive one. That is, each swing of the antenna produced the next blip. He stated that he had the F-84 and the UFO in at the same time.

Stockham had come down because of low fuel, and Needham had been sent up. Bennett stated he had Needham and the unknown on the scope until the object was out beyond 85 miles heading north. The radar, it is generally conceded, was not malfunctioning, but some people at the post indicated that reflections, or "anomalous propagation," were not unknown.

There is an interesting personality conflict in both Bennett and Needham. Bennett is rated as excitable, but pretty sure about what he sees. He stated, when asked why Needham had not continued pursuing the object, that Needham had become so excited that he was almost unintelligible on the radio

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and that Bennett felt it would be best to bring him back to base before something drastic happened.

Needham was interviewed for an hour and a half, and of all the people interrogated he was the most difficult to pin down. On one hand he stated that the object had been below him, had risen, and had pulled away from him with considerable speed; and in the next breath he felt that he had seen a star. He stated that Bennett was excitable, and that the radar gun sight in his plane which had locked on was probably malfunctioning. He gave the appearance to me of one who <sup>was</sup> is trying to back out of an unpleasant situation. He did not wish to commit himself on anything, and gave the impression that the less he heard of it in the future the better. This may be because he felt he had not acquitted himself adequately in pursuing the so-called object. At the time of the pursuit, however, it must be stated that he had had only 12 hours of night flying experience. He substantiated the point that on moon-less nights, it is impossible to have a horizon aloft and that any light that is seen generally appears to be in motion. Mr. Bennett had sent out three radio men from the radar room to take a visual look. The general opinion as to the competency of these men varies. There seems to be enough evidence that they are not particularly reliable, and although they stated in signed statements that they had seen objects moving around, it is impossible to evaluate the correctness of these statements. All three men have since been honorably discharged from the service and could not be located for questioning.

#### ANALYSIS

As far as the Rapid City sightings are concerned, we have a train of circumstances which, if entirely coincidental, are remarkable indeed.

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Even if we grant that the original sighting was an aircraft, which is stoutly denied by the observer, and that the 2nd object was a star, which is equally denied by the observers, it appears odd that of all the nights for the radar to show strange blips would be on that night. The testimony of the pilots had best be omitted, since it can be taken positively or negatively with equal ease. The alerting of the Bismarck Center at that critical time and their sighting the object(s) is also most coincidental and might well go down in the annals of improbability if the entire incidents were unrelated and the product of mistaken identification.

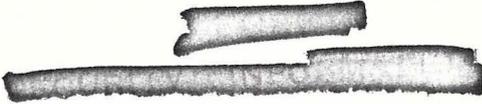
#### FINAL CONCLUSIONS

In the absence of what might be called truly scientific data and in the absence of photographs or other tangible evidence, the facts as stated by about a score of observers separated by 220 miles, are open to two widely opposed interpretations.

One is, that an aircraft was originally sighted, second, that the object observed at the zenith was a meteor, third, that the object in the north-east was a star, fourth, that quite coincidentally, the radar showed reflection blips, fifth, that the pilots were chasing stars, sixth, that an experiment of some sort was going on in Bismarck, evidence for which is entirely unobtainable from local sources, and that the experiment was instigated at precisely the time that the other set of strange coincidences 220 miles away caused the Bismarck Center to be alerted.

This, I say, is an explanation, but one which appears to strain the concept of coincidence to its extremes. Even were the Bismarck incident alone it would be worthy of attention, but fitting as it does into the pattern of the total happenings of that night, it is rather phenomenal.

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The other interpretation, of course, is that unknown aircraft, with the term very broadly defined, were active in the area.

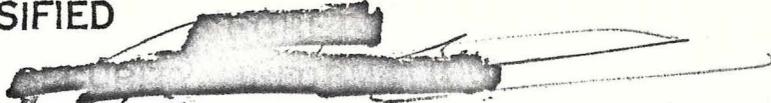
The lack of clinching data at a time like this is particularly deplorable. If, for instance, in the Bismarck area a simple Cessna had been available to make the trip of a few miles to see what the lights were, it would have settled a lot. However, as has been pointed out, perhaps the lights hovered in the Bismarck area because they were not pursued, as where in the Rapid City area they showed extremely rapid motion on the radar because of pursuit. Further, the ground observers stated with utter conviction, that when the jets were up, the lights went out, and as soon as the jets were out of the way the lights reappeared. The entire incident, in the opinion of this observer, has too much of an Alice in Wonderland flavor for comfort.

Original Signed by  
J. ALLEN HYNEK

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DOD DIR 5200.10**

  
**UNCLASSIFIED**

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



1. First sighting by Sgt. Harry  
at 0542Z from Bismarck Filter  
Center roof. Looking S.W.

2. Due West from Filter Center  
roof. Continuation of path  
of object # 1.

Project  
PPS-10

No. C-7



3. Harry's # 2 object.

UNCLASSIFIED



~~SECRET~~



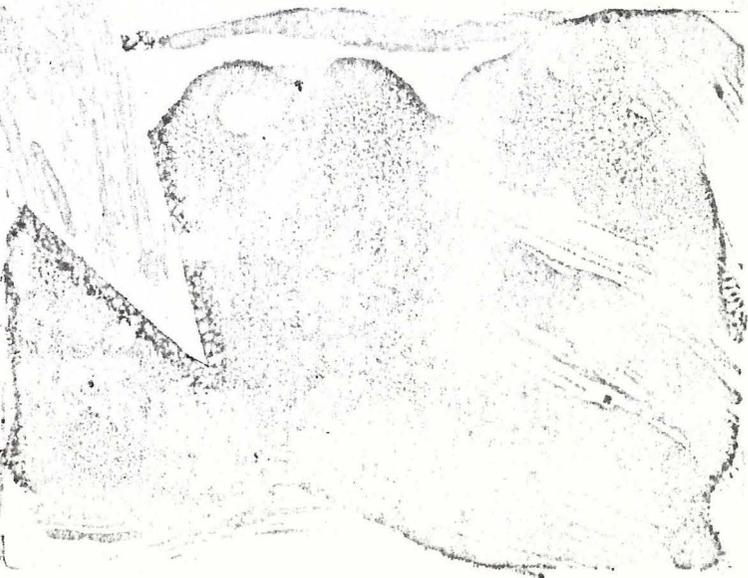
- 4. East from Filter Center. Harry's objects 3 & 4 at time of C-124 passing through area.
- 5. Relation of Filter Center to CAA Control Tower.
- 6. Due North from Tower. Harry's # 2 & 3 objects; same as Wilhelm's # 3 & 4 objects.

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS:  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.  
DOJ DIR 5200.10



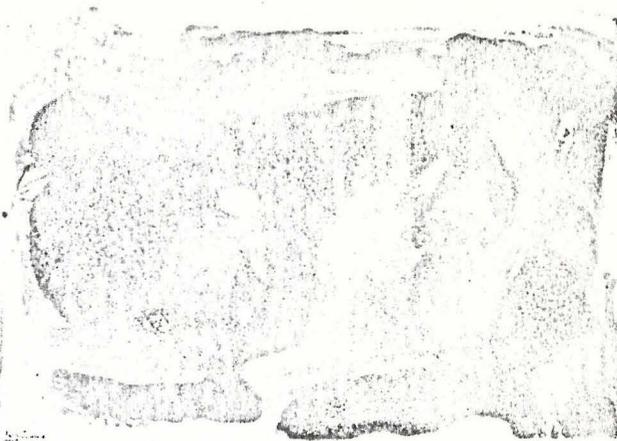
Project HENRY  
PPS-161

No. C-7



~~SECRET~~

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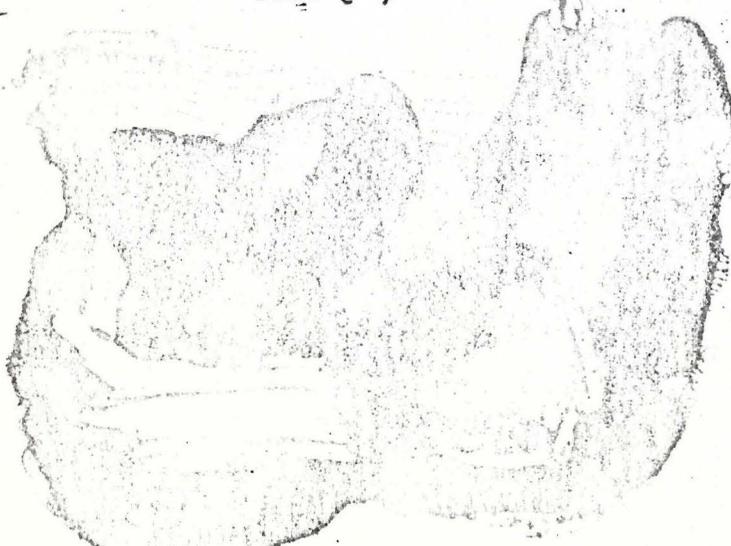


7. Due East from Tower. Position of Harry's # 4 object (Wilhelm's # 2) at time of passage of C-124.
8. Approach to Bismarck CAA Tower.
9. Killian original sighting from Daughenbach front steps, Black Hawk, S. D.
10. Daughenbach observation of same object. Looking S.E.
11. View N.E. from Aldren farm. Object marked.



Project HENRY  
PPS-161

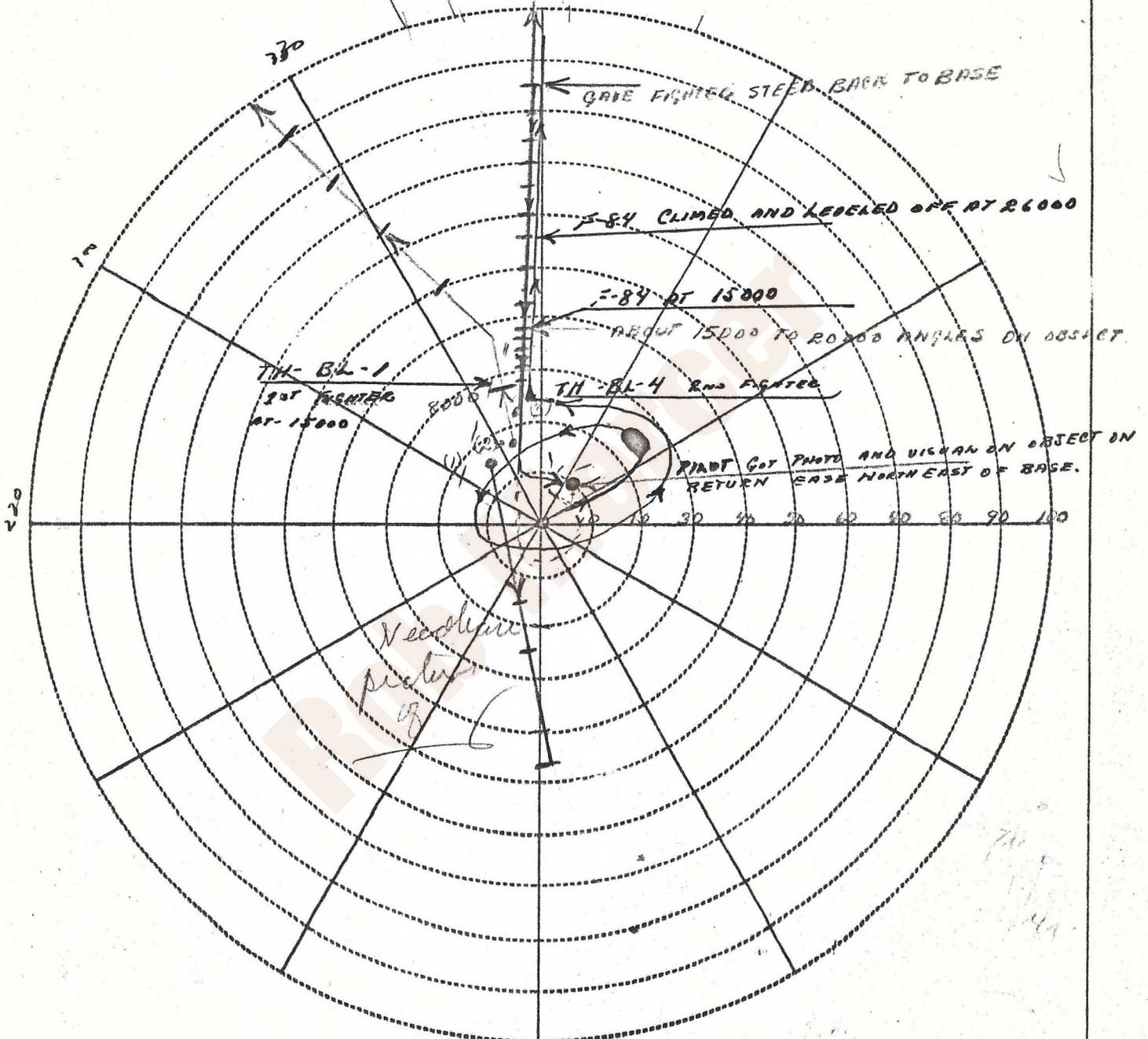
No. C-7



30. IF SCOPE PHOTOS ARE NOT AVAILABLE, PLOT THE TARGET TRACK AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE. GIVE THE TIME AND ALTITUDE (IF MEASURED) FOR EACH POINT PLOTTED. PUT THE NECESSARY RANGE SCALE ON THE DIAGRAM.

DOWNGRADED BY [redacted] ON [redacted]  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.10

UNCLAS

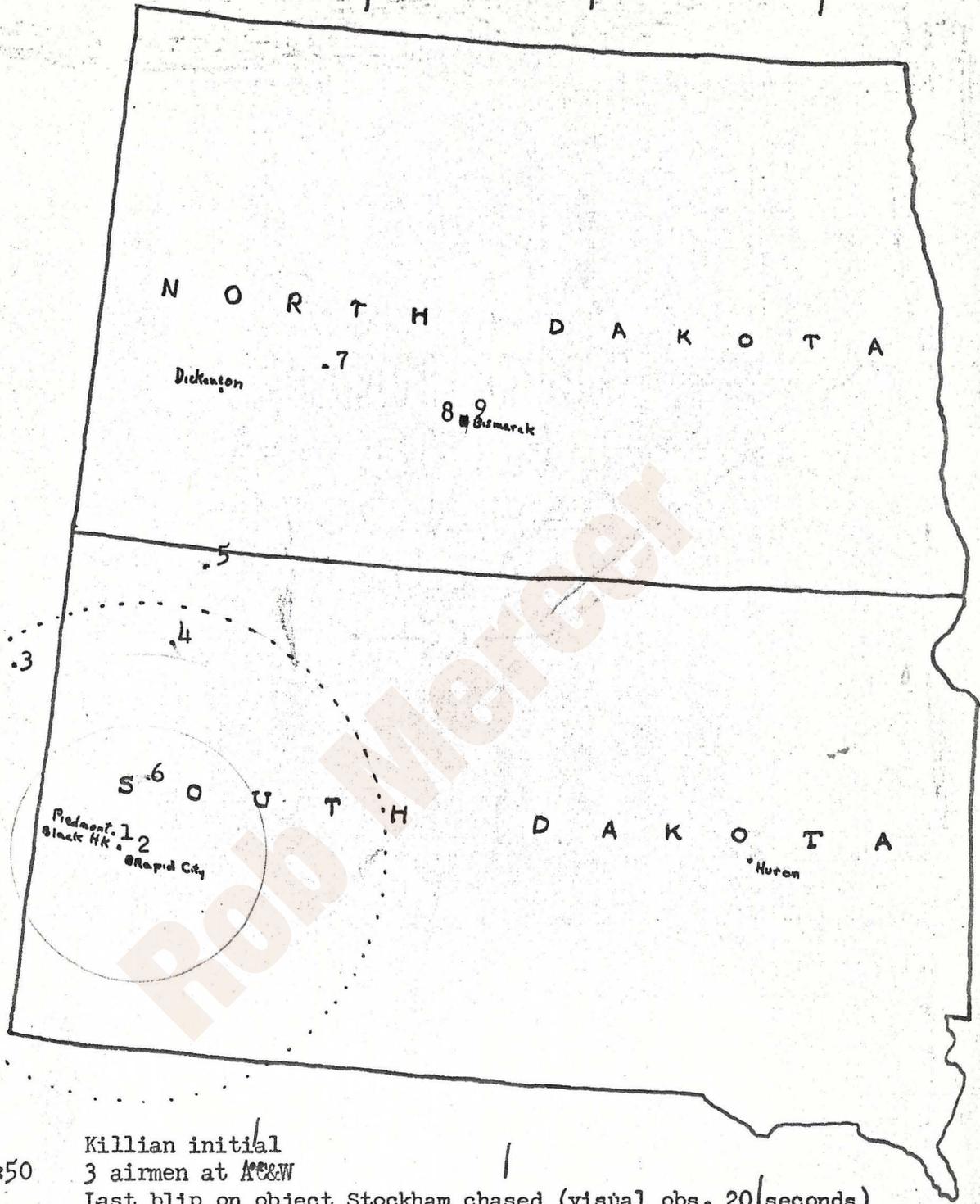


- o INITIAL SIGHTING OF OBJECT
- + BLIPS AS SHOWN ON PPI SCOPE
- Y DIRECTION OF OBJECT
- Y FIGHTERS DIRECTION

these headings are magnetic, not true.  
K.

104

700



- 1. 2005 Killian initial
- 2. 2055 :50 3 airmen at A&W
- 3. Last blip on object Stockham chased (visual obs. 20/seconds)
- 4. 2155 1:50 Needham breaks off, 85 miles N of base
- 5. 2215 2:10 70 mi. S of Dickinson plot. Radar or visual???
- 6. 2216 2:05 Needham returning to base sights lights 'in hills'
- 7. 2238 2:33 UFO called in to BIS Filter Center
- 8. 2242 2:37 Harry first sights from roof
- 9. 0150 5:45 Clouds obscure objects

Distances: (air)  
 Rapid City — Bismarck 220 miles  
 Rapid City — Black Hawk 7  
 "4" — "5" 32

## Object Fixes

Date:

Object #1 At Time of calling Wilhelm

From Filter Center:

$$Az = 264^\circ$$

$$Alt = 8^\circ$$

From Airport

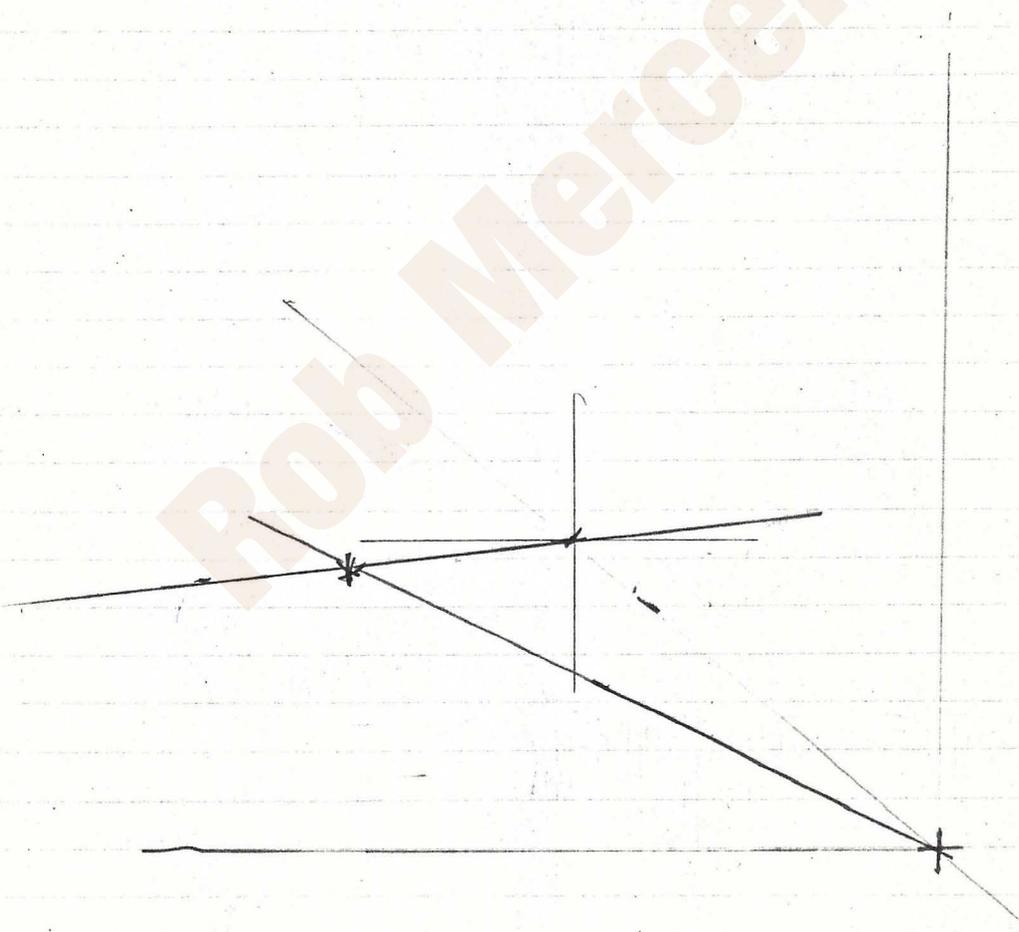
$$Az = 295$$

$$alt = 13^\circ$$

altitudes are discrepant and cannot be used. Use  $10^\circ$  from F.C. for a general value.

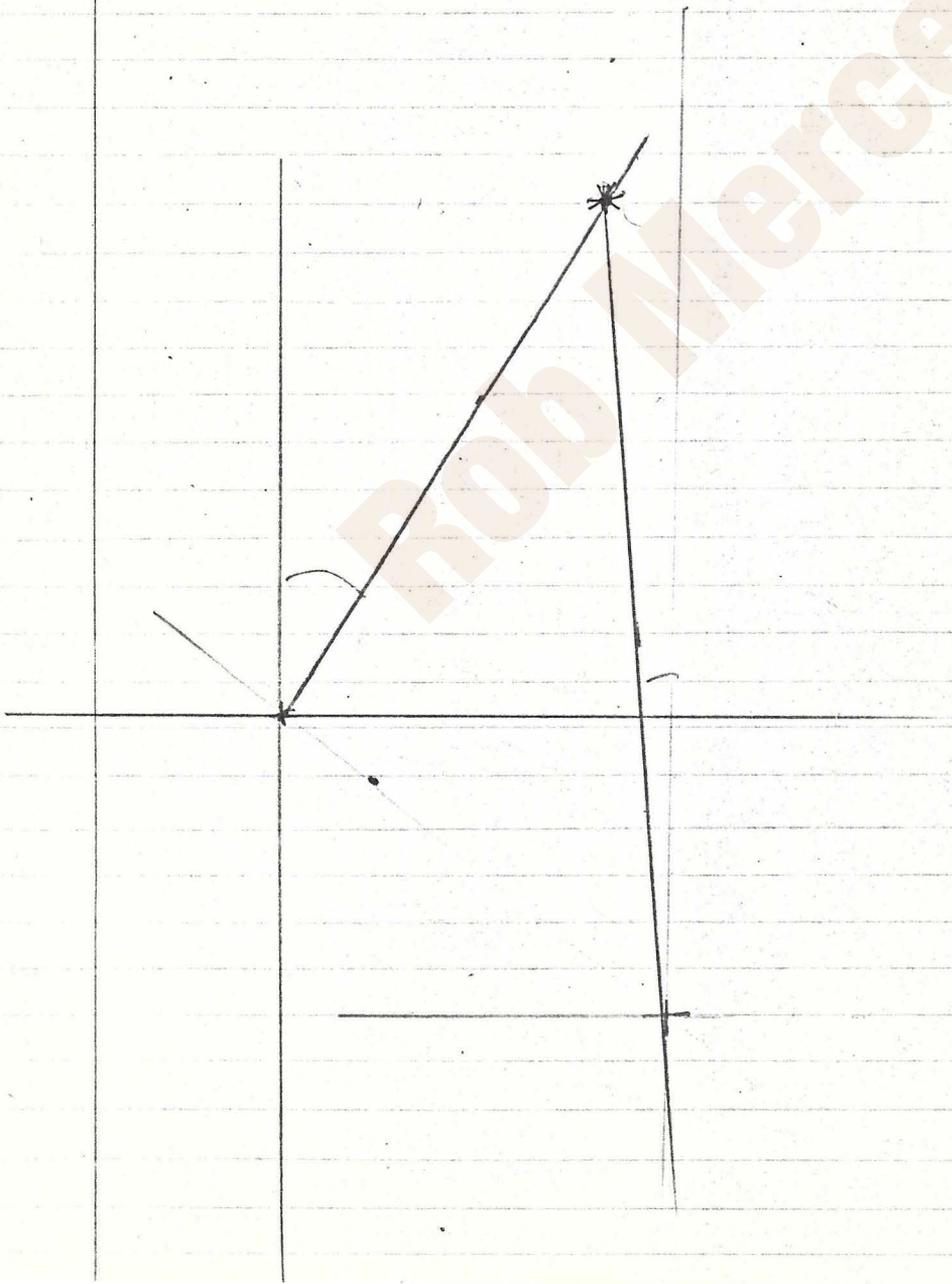
Object not reported in Mandan - 7 mi. WNW of Bismarck.

Lt. Col. Carl P. Mayer  
6156 N. Winthrop Ave.  
Chicago 48.



$3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Airport  
 $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles from F.C.

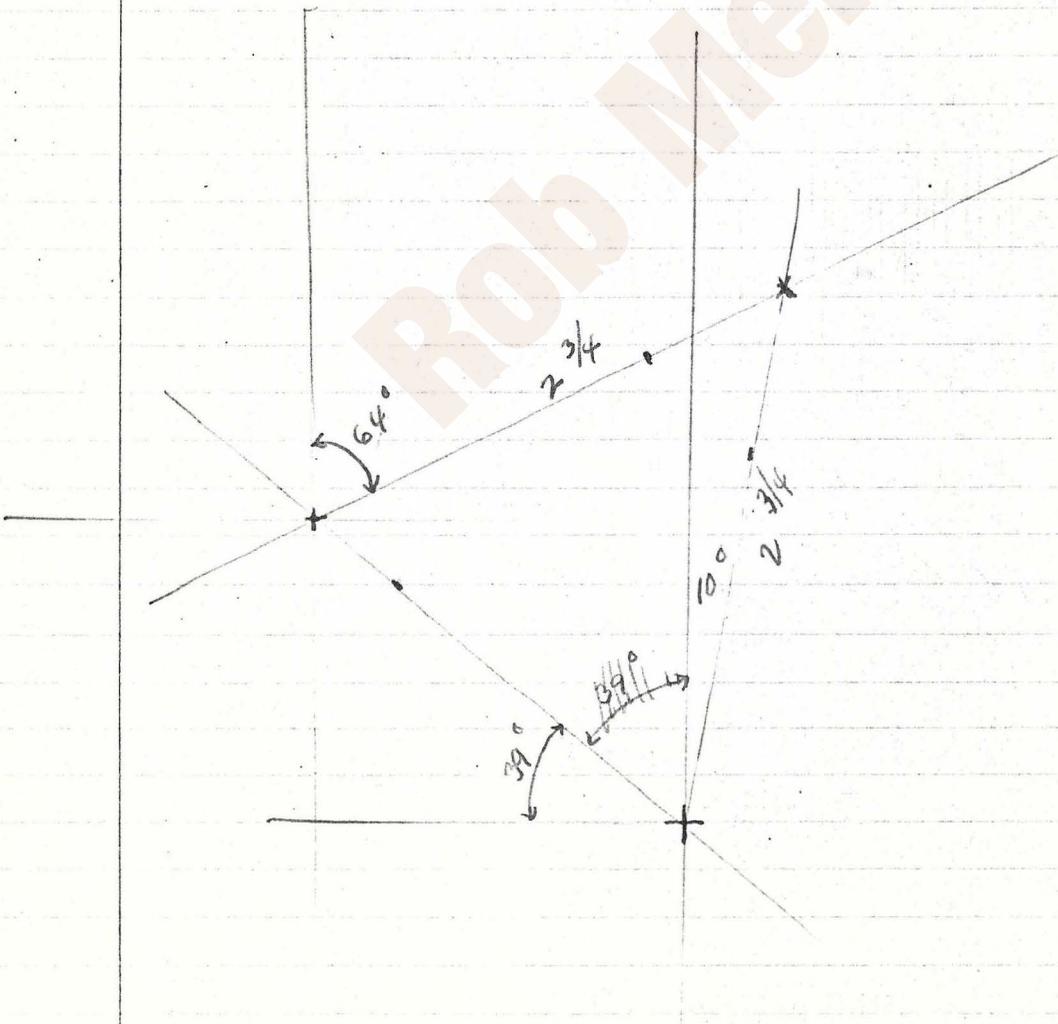
Object # 2  
at time of passage of C-124 2 A.M.



Obj 2, 3 miles from  
F.C.

4 1/2 from  
Airport

Object #3



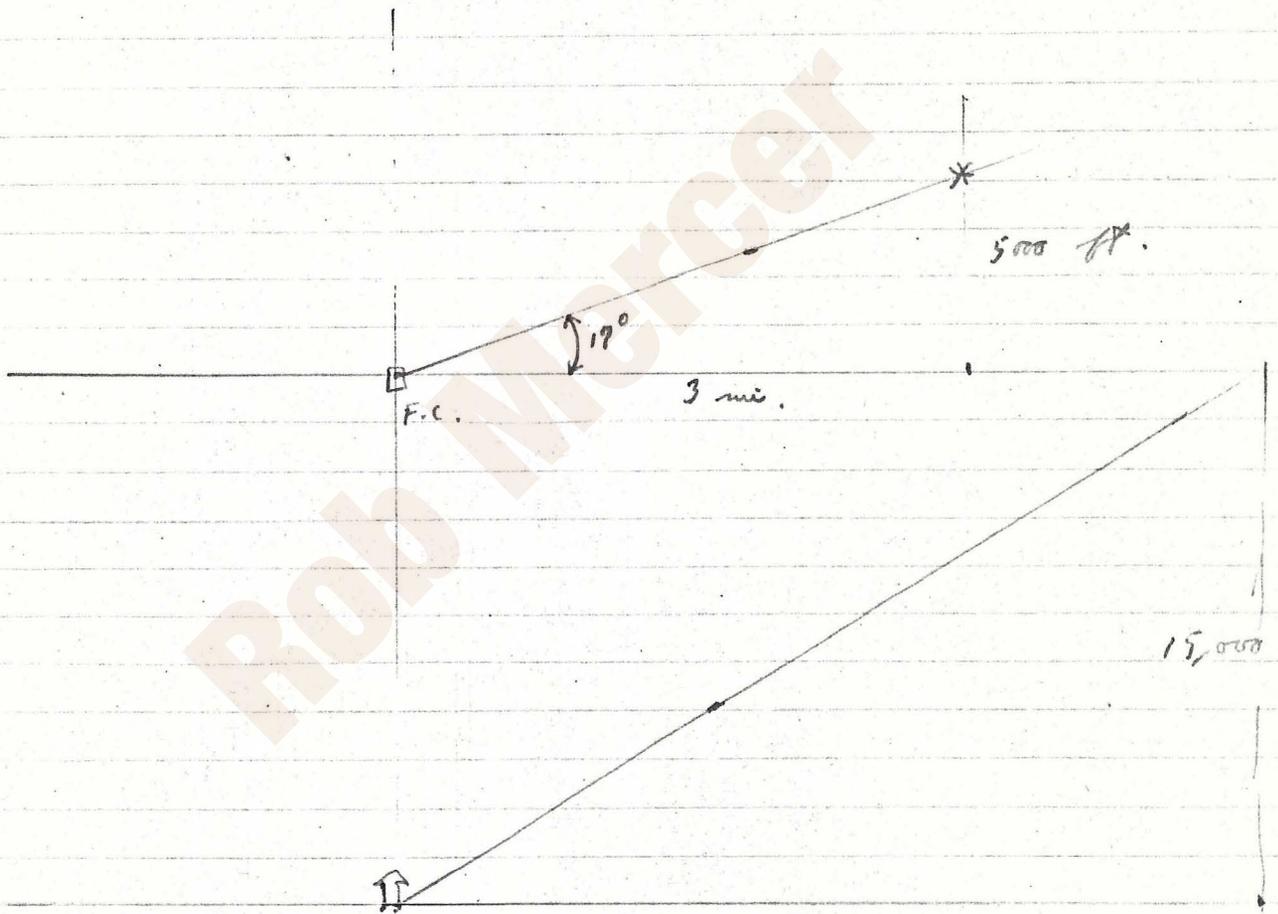
Object # 4.

10 mm  
9 mm



# Altitudes

Object # 2 : Data : From F.C.  $17^\circ$  Alt  
Range 3 mi  
From Tower  $31^\circ$  alt  
 $4\frac{1}{2}$  mi

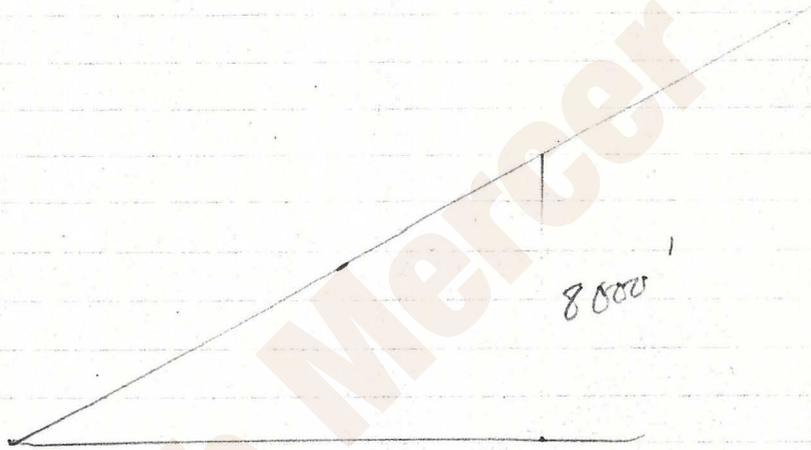
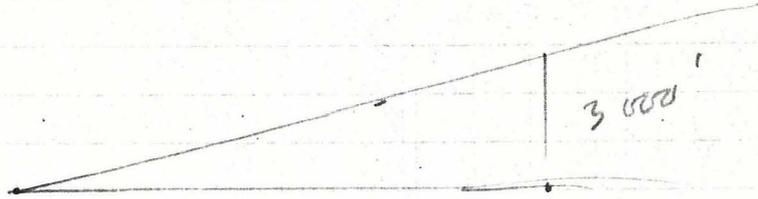


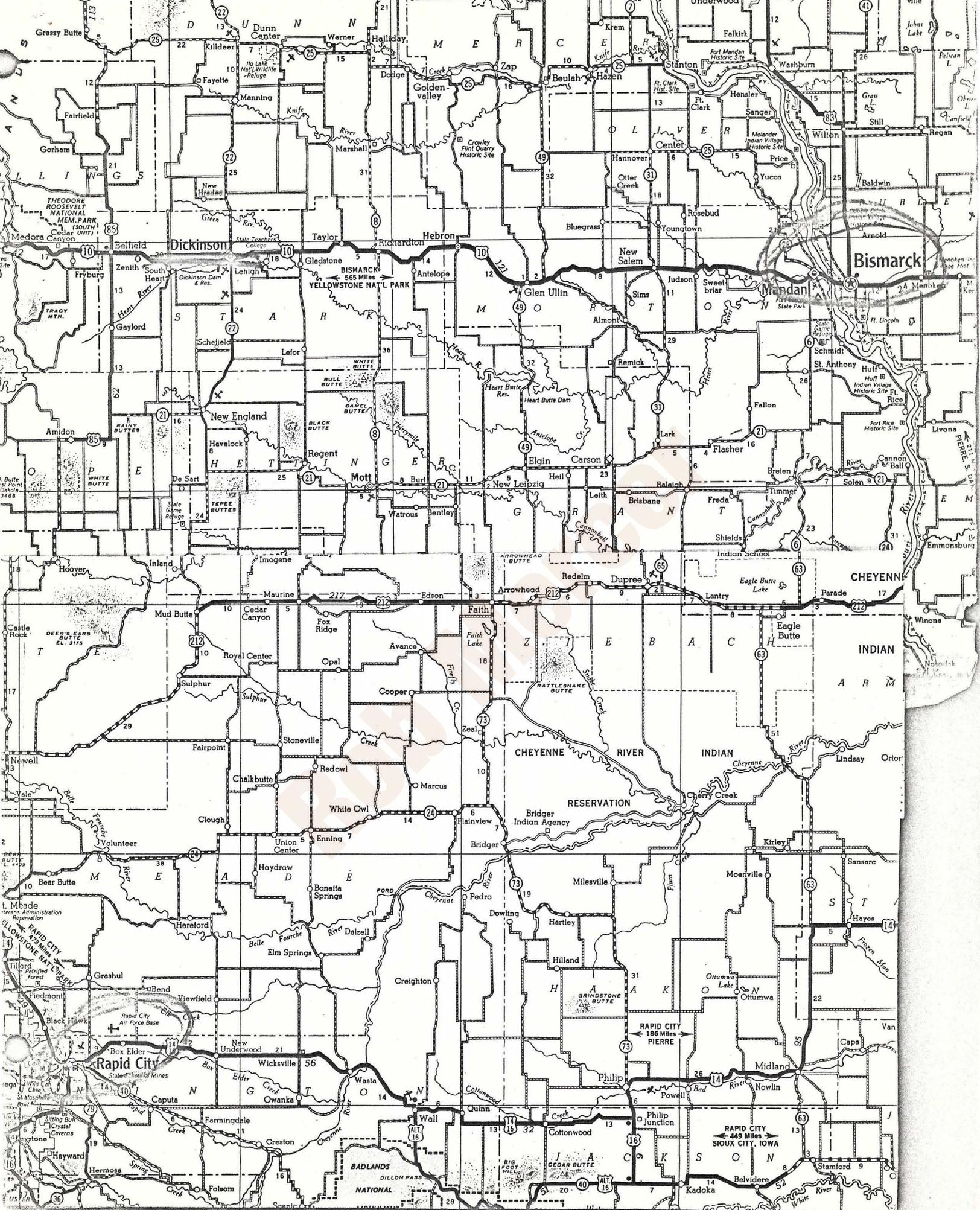
Object # 3 Data

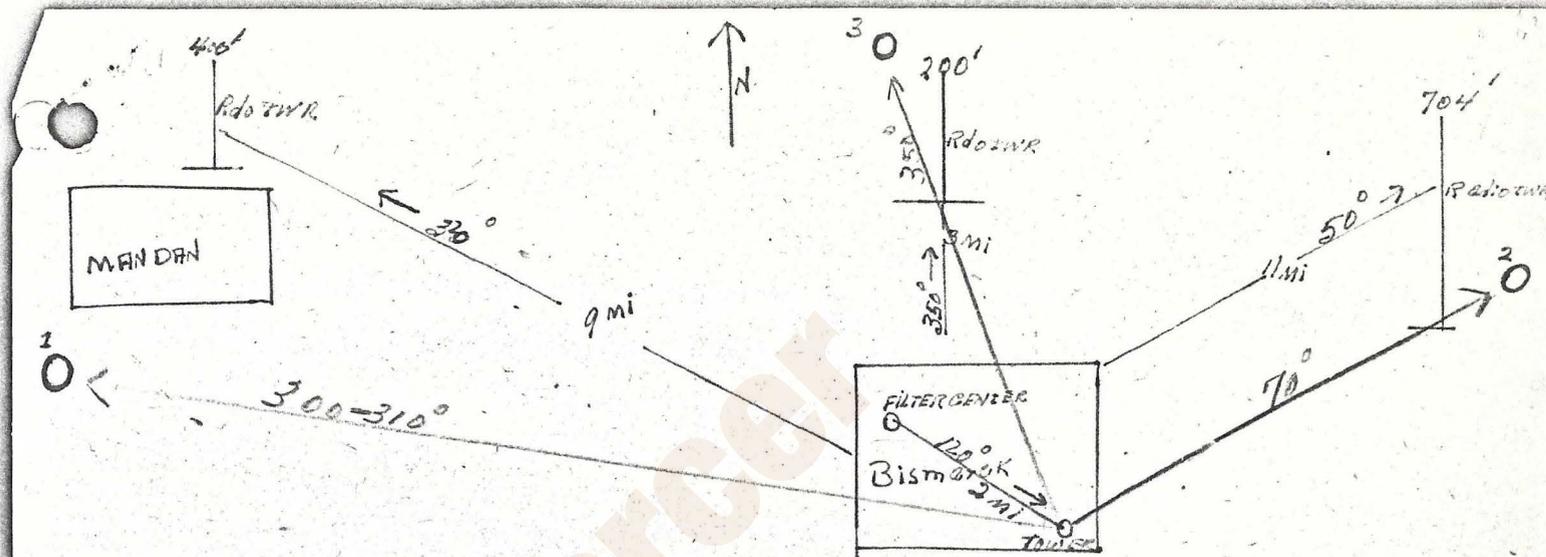
F.C.  $62^{\circ} 12'$  alt

Tower:  $27^{\circ}$  alt

$2 \frac{3}{4}$  miles from each.







○ Denotes approximate position of objects from tower. All mileage is based from the tower and not from city.

The 1 - 2-3 number on objects is the order in which they were first seen.

Fig 6A

Object #1 Faded here at 0659Z  
Altitude now 2000 feet or less  
Distance 4-5 miles.

NORTH OBJECT #2 (Object #2 Faded about here at 0842Z  
First sighted here Estimated Distances 6-8 miles). Altitude  
at 0613Z--- seemed to vary from 2000 ft.-6000 ft.

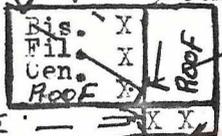
Object #3 Faded here  
at 0745Z at 0847Z. Estimated  
distance 6-8 miles  
Altitude seemed to be  
between 2000-4000 feet

Object #4 Faded here  
at 0850Z - Estimated  
distance 7-8 miles)  
Altitude between 2000  
and 4000 feet.

Object #1  
sighted here  
at 0545Z

Object #1 Seemed to hover  
in encircled area and erratic  
movement took place.

Wismarck Filter Center



3 other points of observation  
adjacent Bldg.  
Point of my observation

Westbound ← COMMERCIAL & MILITARY AIRWAYS & FLIGHT PATH OF USAF C-124 ←

C-124 crew was contacted  
at about 0759Z to try and  
make a visual airborne  
observation. They could  
not see anything, probably  
due to cloud and weather  
front moving in.

CAA Control Tower  
and point from which  
Mr. Wilhelm observed  
Objects.

Object #1  
First sighted  
here at 0542Z  
Altitude 4000-5000 ft.  
Distance 4-5 miles

- LEGEND:
- ⊗ = Object #1
  - = Object #2
  - ⊠ = Object #3
  - = Object #4

Unidentified Objects sighted on  
5-6 August 1953. Visible for 3 hours

X equals the points of observation  
This is a rough sketch and is some  
what out of proportion, however,  
the distances and times are as  
accurate as we could get them.