PROJECT 10073 RECORD

1. DATE - TIME GROUP 21 April 49 ~~0115Zx~~	LOCATION 22/0115Z Unity, Maryland 321
3. SOURCE Civilian	10. CONCLUSION Other (CLOUD/CONTRAIL)
4. NUMBER OF OBJECTS One	
5. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION 15 minutes	11. BRIEF SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS Object appeared as a ribbon of light, which seemed to be extending itself irregularly downward. There were no shapply demarked linesand the central portion was brighter. The observer used binoculars.
6. TYPE OF OBSERVATION Ground-Visual (BX)	
7. COURSE East	
8. PHOTOS ☐ Yes ☒ No	
9. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE ☐ Yes ☒ No	

FTD FORM 0-399 (TDF) Previous editions of this form may be used.

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INCIDENT NO. 321

1. Date of Observation 21 April 49 Date of Interview 13 May 1949

2. Exact Time (local) 2015 hours

3. Place of Observation Unity, Maryland

4. Position of observer Ground, through 7X binoculars

5. What attracted attention to object Moderate light

6. Number of objects one

7. Apparent size 2 to 3° Wide

8. Color of object White

9. Shape Ribbon of Light

10. Altitude First seen at 70° then dropped to 20°

11. Direction from observer South

12. Distance from observer not known

13. Direction of flight of object(s) Eastward

14. Time in sight 15 minutes

15. Speed See Narrative

16. Sound and odor None

17. Trail See Narrative

18. Luminosity Appeared to give off own light

19. Projections None

20. Maneuvers See Narrative

21. Manner of disappearance Faded rather rapidly

22. Effect on Clouds No clouds

23. Additional information concerning object

24. Weather Conditions Dark moonless, fairly bright starlight

(over)

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Other (cloud/

Name and address of observer: [redacted]
National Parks Assn., [redacted], Wash., D.C.

Occupation and hobbies:

[redacted]
National Parks Association

Comments of Interrogator relative to intelligence and character of observer(s):

NARRATIVE SUMMARY:

At 10:15 P.M., at Olney, Maryland, I glanced at the sky and noticed a fairly wide streak of ribbon of luminosity, perhaps a degree in width, which seemed to be extending itself irregularly downard as I watched. I focused my 7 x 50 binoculars on this light, and saw that it was formed as a long cloud of luminosity, with no sharply demarked lights of any sort, except that the central portion was decidedly brighter and seemed to glow. The light ran from almost at the zenith to about 15 degrees of the southern horizon. The ends were faint, evenly toned across the entire band, but the central portion assumed the feature of two parallel lines of light, marking the edges of the ribbon, that became increasingly bright.

The whole was in motion, for in about a minute it turned toward the east, and the bright portion bunched up, with a distinct curl of light rising from it, while the rear of the fainter part of the ribbon broke into two arms, one upward to the east, the other downward to the south. Finally, about two minutes later, the brighter portion, moving fairly rapidly eastward, but at about a constant altitude, had coalesced to form a broad, bluntly pointed head (somewhat like a large comet), with two fainter tails curving upward and downward. In another minute, the whole had faded, but did not entirely die out for perhaps three minutes more.

I am sufficiently familiar with astronomical occurrences to be sure this was not a meteoritic phenomenon nor a display of aurora borealis, and it certainly was not a comet. It may well be something quite normal of occurrence, and if so, I should appreciate your kindness in having one of the staff of the observatory suggest to me what it may have been.

CONTROL NO	SUBJECT: Rpt	DECIMAL FILE NO.	FOLLOW UP ON
3 - 44	Investigation of Unidentified Aerial Objects		DATE

FROM: [redacted] Wash D.C — DATED n/d

TO: IAXS — NO. INCLS. 0

RECORDING DESK: AXT-1 — DATE RECORDED: 7/1/48 HOUR 1330

ROUTED TO	SUSPENSE DATE	ESTABLISHED BY (INITIALS)	DATE
1 IAXS	N/R		
2			
3			

DATE OF REPLY | OTHER DISPOSITION:

TRANSMITTAL
AMC FORM NO. 10-2
(30 NOV. 47)
SEE OTHER SIDE FOR REMARKS

MCIAXS/GWT/amc

MCIAXS

Mr. [redacted]
[redacted]
Washington 6, D. C.

Dear [redacted]

23 MAY 1949

Receipt of your letter, dated 13 May 1949, is acknowledged by this Headquarters.

Your reported sighting of an unidentified aerial phenomenon has been made a matter of record and is being incorporated into our present study of this subject. It is unfortunate the exact date of observation was not remembered as this factor is of considerable importance if comparison with known aerial objects is to be made. It is hoped your reply from Harvard Observatory may possibly reveal the date of this incident.

The inclosed questionnaire may be used as an outline in recording pertinent information to the sighting mentioned in your letter. It is desired that the completed form be directed to:

Commanding General
Headquarters Air Materiel Command
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio
ATTN: MCIAXS

Sincerely yours,

1 Incl:
Guide to Investigation

W. R. CLINGERMAN
Colonel, USAF
Chief, Analysis Division
Intelligence Department

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[redacted]

Washington 6, D.C.
May 13, 1949

Technical Intelligence Division
Air Materiel Command Headquarters
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio

Dear Sirs:

Last month I observed a phenomenon in the sky that I assumed to be astronomical, and as I could not identify it, I wrote to the Harvard Observatory about it. The observatory answered that it was not astronimical, in their opinion, Mr. Sidney Shalett writes in the Saturday Evening Post that you wish to be informed of such observations, so I am addressing you on the subject. My reason for writing is partly that someone else may have reported the same event to you, and my notes will serve as verification.

Unfortunately, I do not recall the exact date. If you wish, you can obtain it by procuring my letter from the Harvard Observatory, which was written half an hour after the occurrence. I believe it was on April 13 or 23.

At 10:15, P.M., I returned to my home at Unity, Mayrland, about 25 miles north of Washington, D.C., five miles north of Olney, Md. It was a dark, moonless night, with fairly bright starlight, and considerable moisture in the air, but no mist. There was no wind. I glanced up at the southern sky, and noticed a rather faint broad streak of luminosity about 60 degrees above the horizon. The lower end appeared to be dropping toward the southern horizon.

I carry 7 x 50 binoculars in the car, so I immediately got them out and focussed them on this light. It appeared brighter through the glasses, and could be seen to be a ribbon of light, perhaps one or two degrees wide, elongating rapidly toward the ground. The upper and lower end of this band were rather faint, but the central portion was much brighter. This central portion formed two very bright parallel streaks, with fainter luminosity between them. I could see nothing that appeared to be solid, and there were no sparks or other lights evident. This condition is shown in sketch #1.

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About 20 degrees above the horizon, the lower end stopped descending, and turned suddenly eastward. I went into the house and asked Mrs. Seth H. Low to come out to see the light. When we again focussed the glasses on this light, perhaps a minute or two after I left the yard, the luminosity had the appearance shown in sketch 2. The upper end was fading slowly, and another band of light of about the same intensity now extended toward the north; the bright portion was a little east of the junction of the two, and had bunched up, with a small wave of bright light curling up from it; this merged into a fairly luminous portion still moving eastward.

Rather rapidly, the brighter portion seemed to absorb the eastward prolongation, until the whole had somewhat the shape of a comet with two tails. The "head" was a bright, swirling cloud of light, and looked a bit like an astronomical nebula does through a telescope. Soon the entire light began to fade, and was gone by 10:30.

I am familiar with the appearance of northern lights, comets and meteors, and know this was none of those phenomena; at the same time I am not convineed that it was not astronomical. It was impossible to judge, of course, whether this display was in distant space, or closer to the earth. The only physical object mentioned in Mr. Shblett's article that even remotely fits this description is the nylon balloon. We can see the glow of Washington's lights on the southern horizon, and a collapsing balloon might account for the light itself - except that it is hard to explain the long-lingering glow of the upper end of the light on that basis, and the actions of the light were not what one might expect of a collapsing balloon, even if wind were blowing in the higher altitudes.

I hope this rather sketchy account may be of some interest to you. I presume that whatever I saw, it was some perfectly normal occurrence, and nothing extraordinary.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

#1

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} unidentified stars

#2

#3

looking south

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