

SOME MULTIPLE SIGHTINGS FROM BLUEBOOK'S FILES

Dr. Richard F. Haines, Ph.D. © 1983

As we stated in FSR Vol. 28, No. 6, when welcoming our new Consultant on to our mast-head, Dr. Richard Haines is well known as a NASA scientist. He has already written five articles for us, which appeared in Volumes 21, 22, 26, and 27 respectively, and he is a specialist in the fields of human vision, perception, physiology, and related disciplines. He is an Adviser to CUFOS (Dr. Hynek's Center for UFO Studies), and also serves as an Editor of *UFO Phenomena* (Bologna, Italy.) He has written a book, *OBSERVING UFOs* (Nelson-Hall, Publishers, Chicago), and edited the important anthology *THE UFO PHENOMENON AND THE BEHAVIOURAL SCIENTIST*.

The paper which follows has never been submitted elsewhere, nor has it been previously published in abbreviated form. — EDITOR.

INTRODUCTION

WELL documented UFO sighting reports involving more than one "object" occur from time to time and are important because of their potential for shedding light upon the nature of the phenomenon (phenomena?). This report reviews three such sightings by U.S. Air Force pilots and crew and a commercial pilot and passenger. The first two sightings took place within 16 days and 315 miles of each other in California and Nevada. In the first case ten elliptical gray objects were seen by three air crewmen in full sunlight while in the second as many as 16 amber lights were seen by a lone pilot at night. In the third case six very bright white lights were viewed for five minutes during the day by a commercial pilot and passenger flying S. W. of Tuscaloosa, Alabama. These are not isolated reports but are drawn from a larger assortment of sightings, sightings that deserve in-depth analysis. Before we speculate upon their possible causes, let us review what took place.

CASE 1. APRIL 12, 1953

Pilot's narrative account. (From summary data pages of the U.S. Air Force Technical Information Sheet dated 12 June 1953. Project Bluebook file, Library of Congress microfilm reel 18.)

"Flying a C-47 at 10,500 MSL, I was seated in the right seat looking out the side window. Something flashed by between the nose section and the right engine below the ship. I took over control and made a steep turn to the right. I picked up the objects after approximately 90° of turn. They were in a large sweeping right turn and descending. There were approximately 10 of the objects and they were in the air in a loose, changing formation.

"They appeared roundish in shape and dark in color. As the distance became greater between us and the objects, they turned darker. As we continued turning to the right, the objects were between us and the sun and the sun's rays were reflected off for a few seconds. The estimate of the speed of the objects was

arrived at by our radius and speed in a steep turn at 140 miles per hour and the radius of turn of the objects.

"The two other observers were Lt. John Cripe, pilot, flying in the left seat and Lt. Frank White, navigator, standing between Lt. Cripe and myself. They picked up the objects without my pointing them out.

"At all times during the observation the objects were at a less altitude than we were and were between us and the ground.

"As we completed our turn of approximately 360° and resumed our course, the objects blended into the background of hilly country and disappeared from sight on approximately the same heading as we were flying." (Report by Major Fred G. Padelford, co-pilot).

Additional facts. (From unclassified file report T53-7362)

"Objects observed were round and flat. Size of a flying T-6, metallic in color, ten in number in loose, changing formation, no trail or exhaust. Unable to estimate extremely high speed of objects because of distance and objects' large radius of turn. No sound . . ." (page 1 of TTY transmission to Air Technical Intelligence Center, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio).

"No aircraft were observed in the area and the pilot reported no radio facilities at Sweetwater Airport. No report was made until landing at Stead AFB, Nevada. Weather at the time of sighting was slightly hazy, visibility 30 miles. Although the observers reported seeing no aircraft in the area, it is believed that the objects were aircraft (probably trainers) because of the color, maneuvers, and distance at which they were observed." (page 12, Report T53-7362 dated 12 April 1953).

"Objects were headed 110 degrees; when first observed in flash beneath C-47 objects were higher than after 360 degree turn of C-47. Composite altitude estimate was 7,500 feet MSL but Maj. Padelford estimates only 1,500 feet above terrain . . . Witnesses are estimated to be usually reliable and uninterpreted ob-

ervation is estimated as probably true. Maj. Padelford is flight CO of "A" flight, 8th. ARS with thirteen years service. He took over control when objects flashed beneath C-47 and initiated 360 degree right turn. He felt that speed of objects was too fast for ducks . . . No further question in observers' minds of ducks. Winds aloft unknown (sic), wind in general from WSW at twenty knots. Turbulence mild. Weather clear with a few high scattered clouds. Visibility more than thirty miles with extremely thin haze the only restriction. No earlier radio or TWX report. No additional information available. No report follows." (Page 2 of TTY, Ibid., JWPNV 13N).

Figure 1 is a copy of sketch made by Major Padelford on page three of his report showing the approximate flight path of his aircraft and that of the unidentified objects. A minor discrepancy is that the dashed path of the UFOs is shown departing from the aircraft along a line about 15 degrees farther clockwise than that of the aircraft (UFOs departed on an estimated heading of 300 degrees). This difference may simply be due to a simple drawing error.

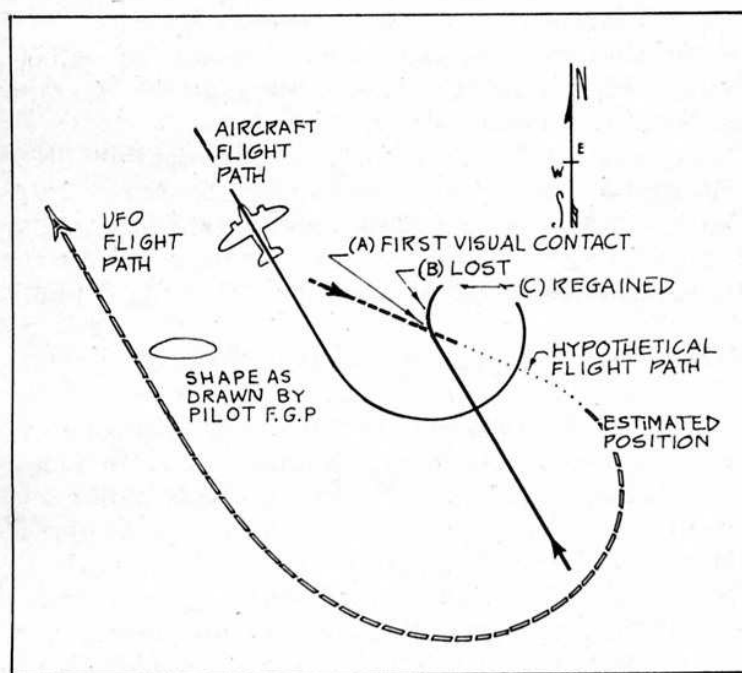


Figure 1. Rough Sketch of Flight Paths of UFO and Aircraft (April 12, 1953) 1510 hours Pacific Standard Time.

General comments. It must be noted that this sighting took place over rugged peaks of the Sierra Nevada mountains about 80 miles S. E. of Reno, Nevada. These peaks are as high as 11,646 feet (Mt. Wheeler to the West) and 11,239 feet (Mt. Grant to the East). The aircraft was flying at 10,500 feet altitude in excellent visual flight rule (VFR) weather toward its destination, Stead A.F.B., near Reno. If the UFOs had been training aircraft it would seem unlikely that such close formation flying would be taking place so close to the

rugged hills and mountains and at such a relatively high speed (estimated by the primary witness as being 500 knots).

In conclusion, it would appear that the official explanation for this sighting as being a formation of aircraft is not supported by the facts. The primary witness, Maj. Padelford, drew a rough sketch of the shape of the objects which was four times wider than thick and slightly rounded on each end with no other details. He also estimated each one to be about 15 feet in diameter and from one to five miles away. These details do not correspond to the appearance of aircraft that were in service in 1953. In addition, the primary witness concluded on his report form that the cause of the sighting was "unknown." His thirteen years of service should have prepared him to make such a judgment as this by exposing him to a wide variety of aerial phenomena and aircraft.

CASE 2. APRIL 28, 1953

Pilot's narrative account. (From page 2 of signed statement by 1st. Lt. Ralph R. Scowden, USAF, dated 28 April 1953. Project Bluebook file, Library of Congress microfilm reel 18.)

"I was flying through Cajon pass when I first saw two lights ahead. These two lights were amber and although they did not look like wing lights, I tried to watch them, assuming then to be a two ship formation. I lost them and later saw two more when over Fontana. These two were joined by two more and these four seemed to be flying a normal four ship formation. At no time did I see any normal colored navigation lights. Then more lights joined the first four in a grouping action. This group seemed sometimes to be abreast and sometimes to be just flying in a group as sparrows do.

"Although I had no way of telling their speed, they seemed to be moving parallel and slightly toward me at first and then later seemed to go southward.

"I contacted Long Beach tower in an attempt to have my sighting confirmed, and was informed that there were Navy jets round-robinning to Catalina Island. It is quite possible that if there were a number of them flying, I was looking down their exhausts. But as I said before, I never saw any conventional navigational lights near these lights, and I saw them from Fontana to the time that I entered the haze level at Long Beach when they appeared to be due South and going away." (Signed by 1st. Lt. Ralph R. Scowden)

Additional facts. (From unclassified file report, AF Form 112, Part 1, Air Intelligence Information Report dated 1 May 1953 from the 2370th. Air Base Squadron, Long Beach, California):

The only witness to this event had been a rated pilot since 12 March 1944 (9 years) and had a total of 885 hours pilot time. He provided the following additional facts concerning his sighting: The objects

were circular in shape, "fire amber" in color without an exhaust or other visible trail. Their means of propulsion was unknown and they made no sound. There was no way of estimating their speed or size. They made no particular maneuvers "... except the changes in formation. When the new elements joined formation, they just appeared." He was flying a single engine T-6 low wing, metal body training aircraft at 150 mph at 7,000 feet altitude. The sighting took place between Cajon pass (about 60 miles N. E. of Long Beach) and Long Beach airfield. The major portion of the sighting occurred over Fontana, California.

The objects seemed to stay between his 9.00 and 11.00 o'clock (relative to aircraft heading) position while he was en route to Long Beach (225 deg magnetic). They then moved to his 3.00 o'clock position when he turned to enter the Long Beach traffic pattern. The weather was clear with an inversion layer at about 3,000 feet altitude and haze below this altitude. Jet aircraft were known to be flying out of El Toro Marine air base (located about 34 miles S. W. of the town of Fontana).

General comments. The approximate distance from Fontana to Long Beach is about 47 miles. Flying at 150 mph, the aircraft would travel this distance in 18.8 minutes. If the pilot had been watching a flight of Navy jets for this period of time the jets would have had to be travelling extremely slowly on a fairly linear track (relative to the T-6 aircraft). Due to the presence of both commercial and private air traffic in this region it is mandatory that military aircraft fly with their navigation (and other) lights on. Nevertheless, the pilot did not see any red or green lights associated with the amber lights. It is also curious that new lights simply appeared instantaneously within the formation rather than merge smoothly, assuming they were military jets in formation.

CASE 3. FEBRUARY 1, 1954

(Note. Two occupants of the same high altitude balloon research support aircraft viewed the multiple UFOs at different times and locations. The passenger's account is given first and is labelled (a). The pilot's account is labelled (b) and describes the objects about 75 minutes after the earlier observation.)

(a) Local time of sighting: 1400 Central Standard Time. Aircraft location: Approximately between Jackson, Mississippi and Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

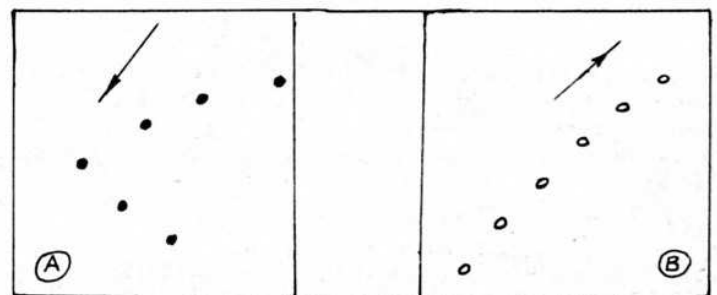
Passenger's narrative account. "Both myself and Mr. ----- (dashes indicate unreadable text) were keeping a close watch on the balloon. I observed first two objects in formation — very quickly they were joined by four others. The five objects were observed in this formation in trail behind the leader. They appeared very quickly and joined this trail formation. While in

formation they were spaced very evenly. When I saw three of the objects I asked Mr. ----- what he could see. He saw exactly what I did. While he was watching I took pictures with a 16 mm Bolex with a 6 inch telephoto lens. As I was taking pictures the objects moved slowly under the balloon and to an ENE direction. Very suddenly the objects seemed to go straight up at right angles to their level flight position. They remained in perfect trail formation and seemed to 'peel' or 'break' straight up at terrific speed and disappear.

"In my opinion these were not reflections from the aircraft windshield nor were they reflections from stars. The sky was a clear -----."

Additional facts. (From page 9 of "Tentative Observers' Questionnaire" in the Bluebook file):

This observer indicated that the plane's location was "... over (an) area between Jackson, Miss. and Tuscaloosa, Ala." Because the exact location is not yet known a range of longitude and latitude coordinates is given in Table 1. The aircraft was travelling Eastward at 120 mph. There was a slight breeze and the skies were clear and dry at their altitude of 6,000 feet. The observer estimated (with certainty) that each object subtended an angle equivalent to a basketball (i.e., about 20 deg arc) held at arm's length and that they seemed to be at a very high altitude (estimated to be 80,000 feet) and about 15 miles away. All six objects travelled straight up out of sight. The observer's sketch of the six UFOs is reproduced in part (a) of Figure 2. He indicated that he had seen objects like these previously during a "... similar balloon chasing run...". He did not report the earlier sighting, however.



(a) Passenger's Sketch

(b) Pilot's Sketch.

Figure 2. Copy of Observer Sketches of Six UFOs on February 1, 1954.

(b) Local time of sighting: 1515 Central Standard Time. Aircraft location approximately 35 miles S. W. of Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Pilot's answers to USAF questionnaire. (From page 7 "Tentative Observers Questionnaire" completed soon

after sighting. Project Bluebook file, Library of Congress microfilm reel 20. No narrative was available.)

The purpose of this particular flight was to visually observe and photograph a research balloon flight and associated parachute drop from it of an object. The aircraft was heading Easterly and the pilot was looking East when he observed six "very bright white" and apparently solid objects which seemed to change their speed and direction when they moved. At times they hovered but they never appeared to change in size or color nor did they break apart, give off smoke, or flicker. No sound was heard that could be associated with them. Part (b) of figure 2 is a reproduction of the pilot's sketch of the objects in a formation different from that of his passenger's. The pilot estimated the angular size of each object to be about equivalent to that of a pea held at arm's length (i.e., about 8 to 10 minutes arc diameter). He saw them move under and to the left side of the balloon; his estimate of their altitude was between 90,000 and 100,000 feet and about 35,000 feet away. He thought that they were travelling at 80 or 90 mph. All six disappeared "suddenly." When they moved they travelled in trail behind one another as shown by the direction of the arrow in Figure 2. Interestingly, the pilot also said that he had seen similar objects before (in January, 1953) during another balloon tracking operation, however, he was travelling in a radio control truck at the time.

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General comments. Clearly, the passenger's judgment of the apparent size of each object is grossly different from that of the pilot. The fact that both of their sketches are approximately the same size suggests that his reference to a basketball at arm's length is in error and should have been a smaller reference object. Perhaps his judgment was biased by his use of binoculars which magnified the objects' apparent size. Indeed, without knowing the size of the objects it is almost impossible to judge their distance or even to make very accurate angular size estimates. It is unfortunate that neither observer was asked to compare the size of the objects with that of the balloon (whose dimensions, geographic location, distance, etc. were known). It is important to note also that the six objects changed formation during this 75-minute-long-sighting (see Figure 2) in a non-random manner.

Summary of Major Sighting Events;

Table 1 presents a summary of key details of all three cases for purposes of comparison. Potentially useful patterns sometimes come to light in this way. From comparing these three cases the author got the impression that the objects were under controlled flight rather than just floating on the breeze. In the first and third cases all of the objects seemed to react to the C-47 and balloon, respectively. The absence of any noticeable condensation trail, smoke, or other atmospheric disturbance is suggestive of objects that are the same temperature as the surrounding air or which radiate energy that does not interact with the air in visible ways. As occurred in a previous multiple UFO sighting on May 19, 1952 involving seven UFOs, (see F.S.R., Vol. 26, No. 2, 1980, pp. 6-12) all witnesses were definite about all of the physical appearance characteristics of the UFOs. The existence of strange aerial objects is not in question. Their identity is.

Discussion

The author could not find the photographs alluded to in case 3. Since the balloon-borne camera was operated by the U.S. Navy's Office of Naval Research (ONR) and not by the Air Force it is possible that Project Bluebook office never received a copy of it. The aircraft passenger of case 3 stated that "Pictures by the Down Camera on balloon show the same objects-". This indicates that he saw the photographs and that there were more than one. This passenger also photographed them from the aircraft with his 16mm movie camera; however, they were not in the Bluebook file.

That these aerial objects were not birds, meteors, balloons, or radio-controlled vehicles should be obvious from the sighting data. The author cannot agree with the conclusions for these sightings given by the U.S. Air Force. To him they remain unidentified.

Summary Table
Main Characteristics of Three Separate Multiple UFO Sightings

Date/Time of Sighting	April 12, 1953	April 28, 1953	February 1, 1954	
	1510 Hrs. PDT (day)	2200 Hrs PDT (dark)	1400 Hrs. CST (day)	1515 Hrs. CST
Location of Aircraft	38° 31' N 119° 12' W 80 miles S. E. of Reno, Nevada	34° 10' N 117° 25' W 45 miles ENE of Long Beach, California	32° 45' N 87° 45'- 90° 00'W Mississippi — Alabama area	33° 00' N 88° 00' W 35 miles S. W. of Tuscaloosa, Alabama
Aircraft Altitude (ft)	10,500 MSL	7,000 MSL	6,000 MSL	12,000 MSL
Local Ground Elevation	5,500 (est.) (ft)	1,000 (est.) (ft)	(from 750 to 1250)	
Heading/Speed	300° /140mph	225° /150 mph	90° /120 mph	
Aircraft Model (Type)/serial number	C-47 (2 engine, propellor)/3133	T-6 (1 engine, propellor, 2 man trainer)/ 44-81209	not specified but probably reciprocating engine light plane/ not specified	
Sighting Duration (min)	2	15	not specified	5
Distance (miles) travelled during Sighting (approx.)	5.4	37.5	—	10
Eye Witness Details	3 (military), pilot, copilot, navigator	1 (military), pilot	2 (commercial pilot and passenger) Passenger, 36 yrs old, wore glasses	Pilot, 33 yrs old, no glasses
Details of UFOs/number	10 (approx.)	Varied from 2 to 16 maximum	6	6
/appearance	Round and flat, elliptical, metallic gray, solid	Round, small amber colored lights	Round, small bright objects	Round, small very bright white objects
/atmospheric traces	none seen	none seen	none reported	none reported
/maneuvers	flew in loose, changing formation through large radius right-hand turn. Approached plane from 10.30 position, turned 180° to same heading as aircraft.	only formation changes reported. Two lights were joined by two more then more joined. All stayed in same relative position to aircraft.	moved slowly under balloon and then to one side. Suddenly all rose straight up at right angles to their (previously) level flight paths.	moved between balloon and then to the left.
/disappearance	Gradually faded from sight by “blending into the background of hilly country.”	Faded from sight as aircraft descended to land.	Rose vertically until out of sight.	“Suddenly”
/apparent speed	500 kts (est.).	—	—	—
/other features	Reflected sunlight for a few seconds. Seemed solid. Size est. to be that of T-6 type aircraft.	No shape seen. No colors seen other than amber.	All were evenly spaced.	
Weather Details	30 mile visibility, scattered clouds, slight haze, winds 20 kts from WSW,	Clear visibility, no clouds, winds now known	Clear visibility, warm and dry, slight breeze	
USAF Conclusions for Sighting	“Probable aircraft”	“Mirage of ground lights”	“Insufficient Data”	

SPANISH WOMAN RECALLS ABDUCTION 36 YEARS AGO

(Translation from Spanish)

REPORTING from the town of Ciudad Real (100 miles south of Madrid) to the Spanish newspaper *El País* of October 25, 1983, Alfonso Castro gave details of the extraordinary case of Próspera Muñoz.

Until 1979, this lady, now aged 44, had no recollection of the fact that she had undergone inexplicable experiences and had been visited by alien beings whom she describes as strange, short of stature, dressed in white, and possessed of enormous eyes.

Two such entities emerged from a silvery, shining craft which approached her silently among the vines at her house in the country in Murcia Province when she was there with her sister Anita. She was aged only 6 or 7 at the time.

Today, this lady works as a telephone operator in the Exchange in Gerona in the far north-eastern tip of Spain. She is a simple, peaceful, tranquil type of person, and seems to be very intelligent. Under hypnosis however she has produced a story that has evoked wide interest.

The affair first became known in December 1982 when the doyen of Spanish investigators, the Catalan Antoni Ribera, gave an account of it at the International Ufological Congress in Rosario (Argentina).

Curiously enough it had been Toni Ribera himself who had "triggered off her remembering". Four years ago, she had been reading one of his books, *El Gran Enigma de los Platillos Volantes*, when snatches of her own experiences began to surface in her mind.

sister Anita (a little older than herself) she saw the two beings coming towards their cottage near Jumilla (Province of Murcia, South-Eastern Spain). And she says these beings told her then of the strange role that she would play and of the experiences that would befall her.

Later, on that same day, the two beings returned to the two girls. During the following night, her sleep was disturbed. She awoke to find the entities there, and agreed to go off with them for several hours, taking her mastiff dog (thoroughly terrified) with her. During this time they fulfilled a promise already made to her, by taking her for a trip around the world.

Inside their craft, which she recalls as being "like a two-storeyed chalet", she was astounded by the technological apparatus as well as by the strange creatures that operated it.

•The examination

Stretched out on a sort of small cot-like bed, and in a half-conscious, swooning state, she found herself being examined by the humanoids who, as she recalls,



The first encounter

She thinks it was when she was about 6 or 7, on a warm morning in 1946 or 1947 when, alone with her



Próspera Muñoz