

UNCLASSIFIED
"incident 207"

2
DATE: 14 Aug 1947
TIME: 1600 PST
TYPE OF UPHOT: Rocket
STATE: N to S (180 degrees)
DIRECTION: 5' long - 14" deep
MATERIAL: Polished Chrome
SPEED: high
ALTITUDE: 750'
LENGTH OF VIS: OBSERVED: Short Period
TYPE OF OBSERVATION: Auto
MANEUVER: Very shallow dive

LOCATION: 5 miles South of Placerville, Calif.
SCENE: Civilian Couple
DATE IN TO AVIC: ---
MATERIAL: Polished Chrome
SPEED: high
ALTITUDE: 750'
LENGTH OF VIS: OBSERVED: Short Period
TYPE OF OBSERVATION: Auto
MANEUVER: Very shallow dive

Temporary ATIC Form 329
(2 Jan 52)

UNCLASSIFIED



Pyb Meteor

UNCLASSIFIED

Incident #67 -- near Placerville, California -- 14 August 1947

If details of the observers' statement are accurate, it would be difficult to assign an astronomical origin to the object seen in this incident. There are a few statements which, taken alone, strongly suggest that a meteor was observed: high rate of speed, "seemed to be in a shallow dive," white smoke trail, "disappeared in a puff of dark gray smoke." However, unless the description of the object (4-6 feet long and 10-14 inches wide) and the estimated distance (less than 1000 feet) are illusory, the meteoric explanation will not hold.

[REDACTED]

COPY

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1030 hours 18 August 1947

Telephone message received from Mr. Al Beck, City Editor, Oakland Tribune:

Mr. Ray A. Switzer, 3431 David Way, Sacramento 2, Calif., and insurance executive with the firm of LeMira and Mallis, of Sacramento, reported the following incident:

At 4:15 P.M. on August 14, while driving on Cedar Grove Road, 4 to 5 miles southeast of Placerville, Calif., he, accompanied by his wife, observed a "vapor" trail moving from north to south. Closer observation revealed a piece of "shiny metal" at from 500 to 1000 feet altitude moving at a "high rate of speed". The object appeared to be very "rocket-shaped" than disc-shaped. It appeared to be approximately 6 feet in length and was "tilted" in a semi-circle.

The object struck the ground with a "puff of black smoke" about 100 feet below the top of a hill which was approximately 750 feet ahead of the automobile driven by the observer. An intervening canyon prevented investigation of the location where the object was observed to have landed.

The observer is unable to identify the location where the object was observed to land.

(Mr. Switzer is a University of California graduate, and is personally known by members of the Oakland Tribune staff. He is a brother-in-law of Col. Gray of the Marine Hospital of Southern California)

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICE: ID. 6211301

1. On 20 August 1947, this agent and Special Agent Hubbard interviewed Mr. W. Switzer, Insurance Adjustor, at his home, 3431 David Ave., Sacramento, California, and he stated in substance: On the afternoon of 14 August 1947, he was driving his automobile from Placerville, California, on the Solar Avine Road. Mr. Switzer's wife was in the front seat of the automobile and Mr. Switzer's mother and the two Switzer children were in the back seat of the car. At about 1500 hours they were on a point roughly 20 to 25 miles southwest from Placerville when Switzer saw a white smoke trail out of the corner of his eye. In searching for the object which he saw in effect, four to six feet in length, and about fifteen inches high, of a metal color, bright like highly polished chromium. In relation to the travel of the automobile the object was first seen at 1:30, and when the object reached a point about 100 feet in front of the car, it was engulfed in a puff of dark gray smoke about ten feet in diameter. The object was traveling at a terrific rate of speed and seemed to be in a very shallow dive. When the puff of smoke appeared, the object disappeared completely and there were no particles seen to have fallen from the smoke. The point where the object was engulfed in smoke was about eight hundred yards distant (in front of) Switzer and he recalled that the object being hidden from view by vegetation in terrain. The object appeared rectangular in shape except for one vertical surface, and he it appeared to have a top surface that was very slightly curved. Mr. Switzer wanted to tell his wife about the object but she refused to get out in an effort to say something and she drove the car to a point where the object had disappeared. The object seemed very high in relation to the terrain and seemed to be falling in the direction of a canyon.

2. In a separate interview Mr. Switzer concerned in the information obtained from the above interview in the following particulars: The smoke trail was about 100 feet in length and about 100 feet in diameter. The color was white and there was no sound in the smoke. Mr. Switzer estimated the object to be about five feet long and about 15 inches wide, the top surface being slightly curved. The object appeared to be much larger in front than in the rear.

3. In a separate interview Mr. Switzer stated that when the object was seen, the sun was to the Switzer's back, and that the object appeared to have a very bright reflection. Mr. Switzer has been contacted by the office of Insurance Investigation for the last several days and he seems to be a man not desirous of publicity. The other aspect of the investigation is the object. Mr. Switzer is in the process of contacting the office of Placerville, Calif., and his new address will be Box 45, near Laurel Canyon, Calif. Arrangements have been made to meet Mr. Switzer at 1:00, 21 August at Moffett Hotel, Placerville, Calif., for the purpose of going back over Solar Avine Road to locate the point where the object disappeared.

Bryden A. ... Special Agent, 44-2

1000 #67

#67
1

1. Date of Observation . . . 14 Aug 47
2. Time of Observation . . . 1600 UNCLASSIFIED
3. Where was Object(s) Sighted . . . FIVE MILES SOUTH OF PLACERVILLE, CALIF.
~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ 35° 42' 45" North 120° 47' 15" West
4. Observer's Position GROUND
 (i.e. ground, air, control tower, etc.)
5. Name and Address of Observer . . . MR RAY A. SWITZER AND WIFE
 . . . BOX #43 . . . AUBURN, EL DORADO COUNTY, CALIF.
6. Occupation and/or Hobbies . . . INSURANCE EXECUTIVE WITH THE FIRM OF MC GUIRE AND
 WALLIS AND IS A GRADUATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
7. Attention Attracted to Object (s) By
8. Number of Object(s) Sighted
9. Size of Object(s) . . . 5 ft Long 12-14" in depth.
10. Color of Object(s) . . . Polished Chromium.
11. Shape (Sketch if Possible) . . . Seemed rectangular except for a short period when it
 appeared to have a slightly curved top surface. Seemed tilted in a semi circle.
 More rocket shaped than disc shaped.
12. Nature of Luminosity
13. Estimated Distance of Object from Observer . . . Estimated 750 ft.
14. Speed of Object(s) . . . High rate of speed.
15. Time in Sight . . . Short period.
16. Tactics . . . In a very shallow dive.
17. Sound Made by Object(s) . . . Not stated
18. Direction of Flight of Object(s) . . . North to South.
19. Apparent Construction (Of What Material or Substance) . . . Metallic
20. Effect of Objects on Clouds and/or Exhaust Trail . . . A white smoke trail was first
 observed. Later object was enveloped in puff of dark gray smoke.
21. Weather Conditions Existing at the Time . . . Fair with sunshine
22. Peculiarities Noted . . . Disappeared in a puff of dark gray smoke
23. Summary of Incident
 See Reverse

Observer first noticed a white smoke trail and while searching for its source he saw an object 4 to 6 ft. in length by 10 to 14 inches wide and of metal color which gave off a very bright reflection like highly polished chromium. It was first observed at 1030 position to the automobile. Upon reaching a 1200 position it was engulfed in a puff of dark gray smoke about 10 ft. in diameter. There was a change in the color of the smoke. The object was traveling at a terrific speed and seemed to be in a shallow dive. When the puff of smoke appeared the object disappeared completely. No particles were observed falling from it. The point of disappearance seemed to be about 800 yards in front of Switzer. There was no possibility of being hidden by vegetation or terrain. It appeared rectangular for the most part, but once it appeared to have a very slightly curved top surface. It seemed more like a rocket than disc like. It seemed tilted in a semi circle.

NOTE:

Agent notes the point of observation would afford a sweeping view thru 140° of the canyon and the south side of Weber Creek. (Switzer was not definite as to what part of the field of view he had seen the object and indicated that it could have been as far as the horizon.) Any object or particles thereof would be in a six square mile area of wooded mountainous terrain full of canyons and ravines.

Agent thought that witness could have ~~XXXX~~ seen a conventional type of Aircraft which due to the distance from which it was observed presented no distinguishing features for the short period it was observed, however agent could not account for the smoke trail.

INCIDENT INDEX

1. Astronomical

a. High probability:

#26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 48, 49, 59, 60, 66, 69, 70, 94,
95, 96, 97, 98, 101, 102, 103, 104, 116, 119, 132, 136, 140,
147, 148, 158, 174, 184, 185, 187, 197, 203, 204, 208, 216,
219, 238.

b. Fair or low probability:

#19, 20, 23, 24, 28, 35, 36, 46, 50, 63, 67, 80, 82, 93, 100,
112, 120, 121, 129, 130, 144, 153, 160, 166, 167, 175, 192,
199, 202, 205, 220, 230, 240.

2. Non-astronomical but suggestive of other explanations

a. Balloons or ordinary aircraft:

#3, 11, 22, 41, 42, 53, 54, 73, 81, 83, 91, 92, 113, 114, 115,
126, 131, 138, 141, 145, 155, 156, 157, 159, 160, 161, 163,
169, 171, 173, 178, 180, 182, 188, 190, 194, 195, 196, 198,
200, 201, 209, 210, 217, 222, 235, 237, 239.

b. Rockets, flares or falling bodies:

#4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 25, 56, 65, 78, 106, 107,
108, 109, 133, 170, 211, 218.

c. Miscellaneous (reflections, auroral streamers, birds, etc.):

#39, 89, 123, 124, 128, 146, 164, 181, 189, 214, 221, 231, 234.

3. Non-astronomical, with no explanation evident

a. Lack of evidence precludes explanation:

#38, 44, 45, 47, 55, 57, 72, 86, 87, 88, 90, 99, 110, 117, 118,
125, 127, 137, 139, 149, 150, 177, 179, 191, 206, 212, 213,
229, 232, 233.

b. Evidence offered suggests no explanation:

#1, 2, 10, 17, 21, 29, 37, 40, 51, 52, 58, 61, 62, 64, 68, 71,
75, 76, 77, 79, 84, 105, 111, 122, 135, 151, 152, 154, 162,
168, 172, 176, 183, 186, 193, 207, 215, 223, 224, 225, 226,
227, 236, 241, 242, 243, 244, 134.