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## Willis T. Sperry

The interview with Willis T. Sperry can be read here:  [Transcription \(../pdf/Sperry-Willis-2000.pdf\)](#)

Captain Willis T. Sperry began flying at the age of eleven with his older brother, and by 1939 was a pilot with American Airlines. On May 29, 1950, he and co-pilot Bill Gates, along with Flight Engineer Robert Arnholt, were enroute from Washington DC to Nashville when they observed a brilliant bluish light ahead of them, growing rapidly bigger. To avoid collision they banked sharply off course to the right while the UFO passed by on the left, briefly silhouetted against the nearly full moon. As the cigar-shaped object passed behind the wing the pilots returned to their course to discover the object pacing the aircraft off the right wing, as though it had circled behind and come up after them. Banking to the right in order to get a better view, the UFO suddenly accelerated to the east and disappeared at a high-rate of speed.

This interview was conducted at Capt. Sperry's retirement home in California with the kind assistance of his daughter, Avalon Hill. Sperry was 98 years old at the time. Several months following the interview Sperry passed on.

### Links to related documents:

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Sperry's Letter to September, 1950 Flying Magazine

<http://www.project1947.com/fig/1950b.htm#flying> (<http://www.project1947.com/fig/1950b.htm#flying>)

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Sperry's Blue Book Interview with W. B. Klemperer

<http://www.project1947.com/fig/1950b.htm#klemp> (<http://www.project1947.com/fig/1950b.htm#klemp>)

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Transcript of 1964 KABC-TV Interview with Sperry

<http://www.project1947.com/fig/1950b.htm#kabc> (<http://www.project1947.com/fig/1950b.htm#kabc>)

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Notes of Interview with Dr. James E. McDonald

<http://www.project1947.com/shg/sohp/sperrymcd.html> (<http://www.project1947.com/shg/sohp/sperrymcd.html>)

Summary of Sperry Sighting by Loren E. Gross

<http://www.project1947.com/fig/sperryleg.htm> (<http://www.project1947.com/fig/sperryleg.htm>)

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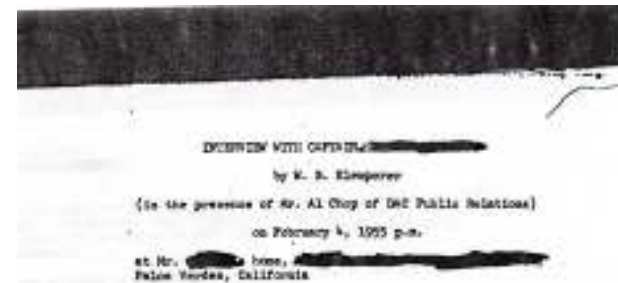
Sperry letter to Robert Barrow (1976)

Page 1 ([http://4.bp.blogspot.com/\\_PYXPeHRTbBU/SGqanrSplUI/AAAAAAAAABQw/OZ6107DU5R8/s1600-h/1976-0217a+wts.jpg](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_PYXPeHRTbBU/SGqanrSplUI/AAAAAAAAABQw/OZ6107DU5R8/s1600-h/1976-0217a+wts.jpg)), Page 2 ([http://1.bp.blogspot.com/\\_PYXPeHRTbBU/SGqan9mhTel/AAAAAAAAABQ4/pnCQQXEvk7A/s1600-h/1976-0217b+wts.jpg](http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_PYXPeHRTbBU/SGqan9mhTel/AAAAAAAAABQ4/pnCQQXEvk7A/s1600-h/1976-0217b+wts.jpg))

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Captain Willis T. Sperry.



1. Captain [REDACTED] has been a pilot with American Airlines since 1935, for 15 years. He flies all types of commercial airplanes. Presently he is on regular DC-6 coach service between Los Angeles and Chicago. He has about 15,000 flight hours, accumulated at the rate of approximately 1000 hours per year. He is considered extremely reliable and experienced. During the war he flew DC-4's regularly between New York and England. (In 1943 I met him at Prestwick, Scotland. I have known Willis Sperry since when he was a high school boy in Tallmadge, Ohio, in the late twenties; I knew his parents well, and his older brother was one of my closest friends. I taught Willis a few things about gliding in those days.) Capt. [REDACTED] has traveled a great deal, also flies light airplanes on vacation trips with his wife within the USA as well as into Canada and South America.

2. Captain [REDACTED] related from memory, which he still vividly, his experience of an encounter with an UFO on 29 May 1950. He was flying (in the left seat of the cockpit) a DC-6. The airplane had left Washington Airport at about 9:30 p.m. and was steadily climbing towards a 20,000' level. The weather was clear except for the ground was covered by haze. There was a full moon about 25° above the horizon. He was headed 240°(mag) for Nashville, Tenn. At about 9:30 p.m., some seven miles west of [REDACTED] suddenly [REDACTED] "Watch it, watch it!" and drew his attention to an UFO ahead of them, growing rapidly bigger. It was a brilliant bluish light. To avoid a possible collision they sharply banked and veered sharply left off their course to clear while the object passed by on their left side slightly higher in opposite direction from an 11 o'clock position to a 7 o'clock apparent position. During this maneuver the UFO happened to pass between the observers and the upper half of the moon, showing a dark silhouette of a slender hull resembling of a submarine, its length about half the moon's diameter, its height a fraction of that. The bright blue light appeared to be at the tail end.

As the object had passed behind their wing the pilots banked the plane to the left and returned towards their old course. Even so, the cockpit discovered the object again through the right window "as though it had stealed behind them and come up after them". He then looked to the

