



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

TUCSON, ARIZONA 85721

INSTITUTE OF ATMOSPHERIC PHYSICS

May 1, 1970

Mr. Stuart Nixon
NICAP
1536 Connecticut Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C., 20036

Dear Stuart:

I have now checked my files on that interview with the Navy officer involved in a North Atlantic airborne sighting. The description and details that he gave me sound so very similar to what you recently learned from G. E. Bethune concerning the 2/8/51 sighting in the North Atlantic that there seems little question that they are one and the same.

The retired officer that I talked to is William D. Bridge, now living in the San Diego area. I telephoned him on 4/29, briefly described how you had run down Bethune, and asked him if the name rang a bell. He immediately confirmed that he flew with Bethune when he was in the VR-1 squadron (transport duty) based at Patuxent River NAS. He did not positively recall Bethune to be the pilot of that flight, but he agreed, after I sketched the similarity of the accounts, that there was now essentially no doubt of that. I gave him the date, and he will again search his records to see if he can run anything down, now that he has that stronger lead. He indicated he'd send me a letter if anything emerges from that check. *(But earlier searches in his files failed to locate his logs on the matter.)*

I'll put down below a summary of my telephone notes made from an interview on 4/6/69 with Bridge. I had heard of his sighting from a friend, Jim Crooks, an engineer with Convair (who himself recounted an interesting sighting of his own before telling me I should get in touch with Bridge). Bridge retired from the Navy last year, and is now Executive Director of a planetarium project for Balboa Park in San Diego. ^{*} He had been an aerologist, as well as a naval aviator before retiring.

I'll dictate this directly from my original telephone notes, since I have never before had it transcribed. This will have the effect of bringing up points somewhat out of order, in the way that this happens in an ordinary interview. However, I believe you will have no difficulty in working with it in this form. I'll use separate numbers

** Not to be so identified in investigation. But he did not work that his name be kept confidential as OK to use name. Don't say he in San Diego - just name*

RECEIVED
MAY 11, 1970

Margin notes made by and on 5/10/70 during phone interview with Bethune

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to facilitate later reference, should that be necessary on either your part or mine.

- (1) Bridge had finished Navy flight school in May, 1949, and then went to photographic school in B-24s at Patuxent. In January, 1950, he shifted to transport duty with VR-1 and was with the VR-1 squadron for three years. After that, he went to Monterey for post-graduate school in aerology and oceanography, and later served as an aerologist. The sighting in question is the only UFO he ever saw in his Navy experience, nor did he ever encounter anyone else in the Navy who had seen anything in this category.
- (2) The incident in question occurred in the winter, probably December-February, and presumably in the 1951-52 period. He dates it to winter because it was on the north route between Iceland and Newfoundland where it occurred. In winter, it was necessary to do westbound flights far north to avoid the strong westerlies blocking westbound flights through the Azores route. *(get stream line for south in winter)*
- (3) The incident occurred at night, and he placed it at perhaps 150 miles west of Greenland. They were in a C-54 (Navy designation R5D, same as civilian DC-4). He was a copilot-navigator, responsible for weather observations and for position reports. At the time of the incident, he was doing navigational work and was not in the copilot's seat himself.
- (4) His recollection is that they were flying at about 8,000 ft.* All of a sudden, someone in the cockpit saw, down on or near the water, ahead of the starboard wing, a glow. Bridge recalled that it looked like a ball of light when it was down below. When the copilot saw it, he yelled, and Bridge got up to look at it.

*Height say 19,000 ft. with altimeter. Said it was
cruise as high as 19,000 feet. I don't have
photo in library as for*

- (5) When it was down below, it looked like only a ball of light. When it came up off their starboard side, it looked like an orange glow in the form of an annular ring with a rather dark center, as he recalled. He thought that, as it came up, the center started to darken in such a way that it took on the general appearance of a bright ring. He did not recall any moon, thinks it was extremely dark. No structure could be seen to the object, when seen from the side view.
- (6) It climbed up to their general altitude and lay a bit forward of the wing, as Bridge recalled. He watched it very briefly, and then went back aft to notify the passengers. He thought that about three-fourths of all the passengers must have seen it, and that there were something like thirty or so on the passenger list. (He did not volunteer any comment to the effect that they were relief crews.) *I failed to include him on this in my 4/29/70 call*
- (7) They had a Navy psychiatrist aboard, or anyway a psychiatrist, and he wouldn't even look out. The psychiatrist sat on some cargo, puffing a corncob pipe, and said he wasn't too concerned. He made some comment about already having seen the little green men with beanies, and it was enough for him.
- (8) Bridge thought that the distance to the object might have been something in the neighborhood of a half mile, based on his ^{best} general experience with judging distances. The light was much larger than any aircraft light. We discussed the matter of angular size, and, after a good bit of discussion and my explanations of the meaning of angular size, it seemed to boil down to an angular diameter of perhaps a degree at closest approach. I do not believe too much reliance can be put on that figure, however.
- (9) After he had notified people in the back, he looked out the window to try to see it, but

*Feb 8, 1951
~ new moon
no obs*

*he looked,
called it
"flying saucer"
said he didn't
believe in it.*

the wing got in the way, so he went back up forward. By the time he got back into the cockpit area, the object was already gone, so he did not himself see it shoot forward. The pilot and copilot told him it had gone out of sight in about 5 seconds, once it started accelerating. They looked all around to try to find some clouds, to see if there was any kind of atmospheric explanation, but no clouds could be seen, as Bridge recalls. He said they gave the matter a fair amount of attention right then because they were fairly sure that Intelligence personnel would want to know details. The fact that the glow had moved forward relative to them suggested to them that it couldn't be the glow from any of their own lights off nearby clouds. There was no undercast either at that point, which lay maybe 150 miles southwest of the tip of Greenland.

- (10) He thought the total duration of the sighting was in the neighborhood of three minutes. It was not possible to subdivide that into any meaningful subportions during the time it was down below, climbing, hovering, etc. He did indicate that it climbed rather rapidly, and he mentioned the extremely rapid departure once it started.

- (11) After it moved on out over the horizon to the west, in the general direction of their heading towards Gander, they got on the radio and notified Gander of the UFO. They asked Gander if it could see anything on radar, but Gander did not report back, as Bridge recalled.

- (12) He recalled that they landed at Gander and were met by Intelligence personnel, who told them that they had nothing on radar.

- (13) Bridge was not sure of the pilot's name, but offered the name of Paul Abrams as a possibility. He thinks that Abrams is retired now, too. Abrams was a reservist, Bridge a regular USN officer. (Note the name Erdman in Keyhoe's account, possibly a switch from Abrams,

*Navy Intelligence talked with
Bethune and some of crew at
Paterlyant and had them write
facts of sighting down*

*Bethune says
Army
Intelligence*

*Bethune says
radar
confirmations
described to
him several
months later
by witnesses*

phonically reminiscent of Keyhoe's switch from Bethune to Benton. The name of Abrams should be tried on Bethune at the same time that he is asked to recall if Bridge was, in fact, the copilot-navigator of the flight. It is important to realize that there was a second copilot, and the latter, whoever he was, was actually in the copilot's seat at the time of the incident.)

*Check Bethune
on name Paul
Abrams*

- (14) My notes indicate that Bridge guessed they might have been 400-500 miles from Gander when this occurred. It was USAF Intelligence people who met them. Bridge recalled that ~~these~~ ^{the passengers} were mostly dependents and some State officials, according to my notes.

See G. K. with 150 mi SW of Greenland

Sept 4 Stob

- (15) The flight in question was a FLOG flight (Navy Fleet Logistics Group). If I got the story right, FLOG was a name that superseded NATS (Naval Air Transport Service). FLOG was not really part of MATS, Bridge noted. (I believe I got it straight that Bridge was flying with squadron VR-1, but my notes are such that VR-1 could be some generic designation for air transport squadrons in general. That should be double-checked with Bethune.)

*Check Bethune
on this for
accuracy*

VR

- (16) The Air Force Intelligence personnel interviewed mainly the crew, since they had had a better view and less cabin light to interfere with the visibility than had the passengers.
- (17) My notes indicate that Bridge several times contrasted the appearance of the object when far below to its side view off their starboard wing. He referred at one time to a "dark ring" when seen in side view, but mainly seemed to indicate that it was a bright center around a dark area in the middle. I may have gotten confused in my note-taking about that concept of the "dark ring." In any event, telephone interviewing is always risky with respect to getting shape-descriptions, of course.

*actually
FLAW
Flight
Logistics
7 Air Wing
Staff*

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- (18) I checked my files on the *Look* article by Liddell. I managed to secure a Xerox of that article through Interlibrary Loan service, but unfortunately do not have the precise date of the issue. The only date I have indicated is February, 1951. That still tends to rather strongly cross-check Bethune.

*maybe you can
find exact date
not listed by
Cptol, I note*

Regards,

Jim

James E. McDonald

JEM/msr

April 6, 1970

Com. Graham Bethune
17 Morningside Drive
Toms River, New Jersey 08753

Dear Com. Bethune:

I must confess I feel somewhat awkward writing you, because I doubt that you ever expected to hear from anyone here at NICAP. Many times over the years, we have tried to find time to initiate correspondence with some of the witnesses in important sightings, but somehow our best intentions were always thwarted. I can remember how Major Keyhoe used to worry about this, because he felt, as I do, that communication was basic to our research.

My reason in writing now is to ask a rather special favor. As editor of our newsletter, I want to begin publishing some historical features on older sightings. The many scientific and technical people who read the newsletter have often expressed interest in follow-up articles on cases that happened years ago. This interest derives from the tendency of the popular press to emphasize recent reports that have news angles, rather than to offer information on events that date back a few years. For many of our readers, a thoughtful follow-up is at least as interesting as a news story.

In this connection, I would like to do a kind of "revisit" piece on the observation you and your men made in 1956. This has always been a fascinating case to me, and I am sure a recap report would help add to what has already been published. To prepare the article, I would like to visit with you for a brief time and review the sighting and ask a few questions. I am also most anxious to show you a painting that was done for us on your experience, and to get your comments as to its accuracy. We have never exhibited or published the painting, because without some feel for its reliability, we felt we might be doing more of a disservice than a service by making it public. You could help us greatly in this regard, and I would be pleased to bring the painting with me, if you would be willing to look it over.

I will be in New Jersey on business on the weekend of April 25-26. Anytime then would be convenient for me to come to Toms River, with the exception of Sunday afternoon. Even Friday evening, April 24, would be all right. I do not want to impose on you, but if you had even an hour or so available on that weekend, I would be most grateful if you could spare it for us.

I should hasten to say, perhaps, that we will keep your name entirely confidential if you wish. Our only interest is to obtain first-hand information on the events in question. To my knowledge, NICAP has never used your name publicly, and we will certainly honor that practice if you prefer.

As soon as I hear from you, I will finalize my plans and drop you a confirming note. Having lived in New Jersey and attended school there, I am always looking for an excuse to return, so I hope we may be able to get together. I once had the good fortune to come to Toms River to speak before the Presbyterian Church, and I will always remember that beautiful autumn day and all the friendly people who made my stay so pleasant. I daresay the town has changed a lot since I was there, because

a number of years has elapsed in the interim. Perhaps not too much, though, because we still hear from Rev. D'Angelo and his wife, who were kind enough to put me up while I was there.

Thank you very much for whatever help you can give us. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Stuart Nixon
Acting Secretary-Treasurer

CSN/sm

I called him 4-21-70 and set up
meeting for 4-25-70 at 3 pm.

April 28, 1970

Mr. Graham E. Bethune
17 Morningside Drive
Toms River, New Jersey 08753

Dear Mr. Bethune:

Please find enclosed the copy I promised of Major Keyhoe's account of your sighting. I really appreciate your willingness to annotate this for us, because it will enable us to put together a proper file on the case. I am including a self-addressed return envelope for your convenience in sending the material back to us. When you make the annotations, please change everything that is inaccurate, no matter small the detail may be. We like to have our data as exact as we can get it.

You will be interested to know that something very funny (and lucky) happened last night, quite by chance. Dr. James McDonald of the University of Arizona (whom I believe I mentioned to you) was in town for a scientific meeting, and we had supper together. During the conversation, he mentioned a man he had met not so long ago in San Diego who reported seeing something over the Atlantic in early 1951. He did not tell me the man's name, but when we began to discuss the report, I realized he had to be talking about your experience. The details of the two reports match in every respect (except the man could not remember the exact date). I told Dr. McDonald of my talk with you, and of your intention to get the names of some of the other crew members. Needless to say, we are now very interested to see if we can get additional information from this other man as well as yourself, and then hopefully track down more of the witnesses. It would be especially interesting, for example, to find that Navy doctor and get his recollections.

In looking over my notes, I find I was never able to write down the information from your log book. Would it be possible for you to make a copy of those pages and include it with the other material you are going to send me? It would really be helpful if you could.

I will be sure to let you know how our work on your case progresses. You and Mrs. Bethune were very kind to spend so much time with me, and I do appreciate it. After I left you, I continued on to New York to keep another business appointment, and the trip went very well. The view of the New York area from Telegraph Hill is spectacular at night.

Thank you again for your hospitality.

Sincerely,

Stuart Nixon
Acting Secretary-Treasurer

GSN/sn P.S. Also enclosed are two report forms for you and Mrs. Bethune to describe your sighting in Detroit.
Encl.

July 28, 1970

Mr. Stuart Nixon
National Investigations Committee
On Aerial Phenomena
1536 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

RECEIVED AUG - 3 1970

Dear Mr. Nixon:

Sorry for the delay in replying to your request. I reviewed Major Keyhoe's account and began annotating. However, I think it better to write out what happened with a few sketches. Also, enclosed is a copy of the pages from my log book.

Background

I was a senior Lt. at the time of the sighting with 4,150 Navy flight hours and 1,340 civilian flight hours. I had flown some 1,800 hours in the South Atlantic (1943-1945) most of which was at night in Seaplanes over the water off the coast of Brazil with many flights to Freetown in Africa. From 1945 to 1950, I was in VRF-1 in New York and in VR-31 in Norfolk. In these two squadrons, I made over 200 transcontinental flights. In 1950, I reported to VR-1 NATC Patuxent River, Maryland as Asst. Maintenance Officer and Transport Plane Commander (PC). In 1951, at the time of the sighting, I was Plane Commander in the R5C (C-46) and R4D (C-47). I was first pilot in the R5D (C-54), Patrol Plane Commander (PPC) in most Navy Patrol Planes and qualified in a total 38 types of naval aircraft. I was being checked as Plane Commander in the R5D on this flight by LCDR Kingdon and was in command of the aircraft.

In 1953, I was transferred to FLAW (Fleet Logistic Air Wing Staff, formerly NATS, Naval Air Transport Service,) as Transport Control Officer and later Chief Pilot. In 1956, I was transferred to the Bureau of Aeronautics Representatives Office as Engineering Officer at Detroit. Captain J.O. Taylor, USN, who is referred to in the book, was the commanding officer. At the time (1956) that I relayed this sighting to him, I was a LCDR up for CDR: a Plane Commander in the R7V(Super Constellation); was thirty-four; had flown the Atlantic for about nine years: had been flying since 1941; had 6,900 Navy hours and over 1,400 civilian hours and held all the qualifications that I could. I think this explains some of the statements made by Capt. J.O. Taylor. *(first?) - or - January?*

In the last week in February 1951, LCDR Fred Kingdon, Lt. Graham Bethune, Lt. Koger were flown along with Admiral Brown, commander of the Sixth Fleet to Keflavik, Iceland. The Admiral continued on to London. The purpose of our trip was to set up Keflavik as a scheduled stop and crew rest station for our North Atlantic flights and to observe anything unusual in Iceland such as smuggling of arms, etc. We wore civilian clothes, carried cameras and played the part of tourists as directed by higher authority. The Icelandic government had informed the United States of their fear of Communist activity and possible take-over of their government. We were scheduled to

return as one of the crews on scheduled flight 123 on the 7th or 8th of February. Flight 123 originated at Patuxent River as Flight 122. Its scheduled route was Patuxent River; Quonset Point, R.I.; Argentia; Newfoundland; Lajes Azores; Port Lyautey; Morocco; and London, England. At London, the flight number changed from 122 to 123 for return to the United States. In the past, Keflavik had been used as a fuel stop only. If the winds were too strong to make it non-stop to Lajes Azores, the plane commander would fly to Keflavik, fuel, then go to Argentia, Quonset Point and Patuxent River, vice Lajes then to Argentia.

Sighting

Lt. Al Jones, Lt. Meyers and Lt. _____ originated flight 123 in London and flew to Keflavik. LCDR Kingdon and Lt. Koger and I were to fly to Argentia (1,451 nautical miles) while LT. Jones's crew and another crew on board slept. The departure from Keflavik was normal. It was a clear northern night. The type where you could make out the horizon clearly but dark enough to where you could not see the white caps on the water clearly. The flight time on this leg was usually seven and a half to eight and a half hours, depending upon the winds. We were flying at 10,000 feet with a ground speed of over 200 knots on a heading of 238° to 242°. The moon had been down a little over two hours, we were about four and one half hours out of Keflavik and over one hour past the weather ship. Since the aircraft was on auto-pilot, (this was standard procedure during clear weather so both pilots could watch for other aircraft.) LCDR Kingdon and myself were on constant watch for other aircraft. I observed a yellow glow in the distance about 30 to 35 miles away, about ~~THE~~ 1 o'clock position and below the horizon. My impression was that there was a small city ahead because it was the same glow you get from a group of lights on the surface before you get close enough to pick them out individually. Knowing that we pass the tip of Greenland, my first thought was that we were behind schedule and had drifted North but remembering that we had passed over the weather ship, I knew that this was not the case. I called LCDR Kingdon's attention to the glow and asked him what he thought it was. He said that it looked like we were approaching land. I asked Lt. Koger to check his navigation. He did and replied that we were on flight plan and on course. The lights were further away than we thought because it took us from eight to ten minutes to get close enough to where the lights had a pattern (our ground speed was over 3 miles per minute) about 15 or 18 miles away. At that time, due to the circular pattern of lights, I got the impression that possibly two ships were tied up together and that lights were strung for either transferring cargo from one to the other or that one was in some kind of propulsion trouble. I asked the navigator, Lt. Koger, to check his ship plot. He replied that there were no ships plotted in this area and that we were not close to the shipping lanes anyway. The radioman also went on the air to the weather ship who verified that there were no ships in the area. Since it was time for Lt. Jones's crew to relieve us, I had the plane captain awaken them. When Lt. Jones and Lt. Meyers came up forward, I pointed the lights out to them. Their only comment was that it has to be a ship because it's

on the water and we are overtaking it fast. At this time, we were about 5 to 7 miles away, it was about 30° to our right and we had to look down at about a 45° angle. The lights had a definite circular pattern and were bright white. Suddenly, the lights went out. There appeared a yellow halo on the water. It turned to an orange, to a fiery red and then started movement toward us at a fantastic speed, turning to a blueish red around the perimeter. Due to its high speed, its direction of travel and its size, it looked as though we were going to be engulfed. I quickly disengaged the automatic-pilot and stood by to push the nose over in hopes that we could pass under it due to the angle it was ascending. The relief crew was standing behind us, everyone began ducking, a few heads were hit on objects. It stopped its movement toward us and began moving along with us about 45° off the bow to the right, about 100 feet or so below us and about two to three hundred feet in front of us. It was not in a level position, it was tilted about 25° . It stayed in this position for a minute or so. It appeared to be from 200 to 300 feet in diameter, translucent or metallic, shaped like a saucer, a purple red fiery ring around the perimeter and a frosted white glow around the entire object. The purple red glow around the perimeter was the same type of glow you get around the commutator of an auto generator when you observe it at night. When it moved away from us, it made no turns as though it was backing up about 170° from the direction that it approached us and was still tilted. It was only a few seconds before it was out of sight. (Speed estimated in excess of 1500 MPH). All of our cameras were within reach but no one was calm enough to think about taking a picture, most were wondering what it was. Our impression was that this was a controlled craft. It was either hovering over the water or sitting on it, it detected us and came up to investigate. After Lt. Jones's crew had taken over (a normal single crew was three pilots, two radiomen, two mechanics, a nurse and an orderly. The pilots take turns navigating.) I proceeded aft and learned that most passengers had observed the same thing. Since I was unable to identify the object, I asked Dr. Mosier, CDR US Navy, FLAW Staff Flight Surgeon, if he had observed the object. He replied that he had and that he did not look because it was a flying saucer and he did not believe in such things. I immediately returned to the cockpit and informed the crew to keep quiet about what we observed because it might have been our first sighting of a flying saucer (during those years when you mentioned you had such a sighting, you were believed to be crazy). Lt. Jones informed me that it was too late because he had called Gander to see if the object could be tracked by radar. When we landed at Argentia, we were met by Army (possibly Air Force--I can't remember), Intelligence Officers. The types of question they asked us were like Henry Ford asking about the Model T. You got the feeling that they knew much more about what you observed than you did. You also had the feeling that they were putting words in your mouth. It was obvious that there had been many sightings in the same area and most of the observers did not let the cat out of the bag openly. When we

Arrived at Patuxent River, we had to make a full report to Navy Intelligence. Most of the things referred to in the account are true about conversations with Intelligence Officers and others, so I won't go into detail in this area. However, when I asked one Intelligence Officer his opinion, he stated, "Well, most people are afraid of mass hysteria like the Orson Wells radio program created." He said, "It is like this: if a neighbor came to your house and said your car was on fire, you would probably think he is joking and not take a look. In a few minutes another neighbor, then another, then another, each saying the same thing, finally you would go take a look and find your car on fire." I found out a few months later that Gander Radar did track the object in excess of 1800 MPH. I did not see the reports made by other members aboard the aircraft. I did talk to the Air Force at Wright-Patterson AFB in Dayton in 1957 but did not look at the report. They said they had it and many similar reports.

I would like to ask you not to use my name in anything you write since the Navy did ask us at the time not to discuss this. Possibly at some future date I will get a reading on their present thoughts. I have been unable to locate any of the pilots names in my records. Fred Kingdon was with the FAA in Atlanta, Ga. about two years ago. There is an Al Jones who is a member of the Quiet Birdmen in Seattle, but I haven't determined if it is the same one yet. I will forward any information on other crew members when I get it. I would like to have the name of Major Keyhoe's book so I can obtain a copy. Hope I have been of some help and that the drawings help also.

Sincerely,



G.E. BETHUNE

Cdr. G.E. Bethune
17 Morningside Dr.
Toms River, N. J. 08753

August 12, 1970

Commander G. E. Bethune
17 Morningside Drive
Toms River, New Jersey 08753

Dear Mr. Bethune:

Thank you for your letter of July 28. It was most kind of you to go to so much trouble to provide us the needed information. I have taken the liberty of sending a copy of the letter to Dr. McDonald, who you will recall, has been in contact with a man named William D. Bridge, who claims to have been a member of your crew at the time of the sighting. When Dr. McDonald reviewed the Air Force records on your case, he found no reference to Bridge, and if I remember correctly, the name did not ring a bell with you. There may be no way to determine for sure if Bridge was on the flight in question; in any event, we will continue to attempt to locate some of the other witnesses.

Per your request, we will not use your name in any article we might publish on your sighting. I hope to use some of the material you sent in our newsletter, as I indicated to you before, but I am not certain as to how much or when. I will, of course, send you copies of anything we publish.

The name of Major Keyhoe's book is FLYING SAUCERS, TOP SECRET. I doubt that you will be able to buy a copy, because the book is out of print and there are few copies available through second hand book stores. If I can locate an extra copy, I will send it to you.

Again, our appreciation for your interest and help. I will be in touch if anything further develops in connection with your sighting.

Sincerely,

Stuart Nixon

SN:kah

October 14, 1970

Mr. Fred W. Kingdon, Jr.,
4480 Janice Drive
College Park, Georgia 30337

Dear Mr. Kingdon:

We have recently had occasion to speak with Commander Graham Bethune regarding an unusual experience he had in 1951 while flying for the Navy over the Atlantic. He indicated to us that you were among the other members of the plane's crew who shared this experience with him. From the details he has provided us, we feel the incident is both interesting and of definite importance to our research, so we are attempting to contact some of the other witnesses and secure their accounts of what happened.

In this regard, we would be most grateful if you would consent to recall for us the experience as you remember it, and provide us any drawings or documentation (flight log? diary? correspondence?) you feel might help us prepare an accurate file on the case. Our intention is to publish the results of our investigation in our newsletter (copy enclosed), so that our membership might be informed of the incident and be encouraged to consider it in the light of other evidence pertaining to the UFO problem. Our scientific and technical members, in particular, would be fascinated to learn of this occurrence, and we would like very much to provide them as complete and reliable a report as possible.

Commander Bethune has asked us to not use his name in any material we publish on the case, and we are pleased to comply. If you would wish the same understanding to apply to any information you might supply us, we would be happy to agree to it. We realize you might not be able to remember as many details as you would like to after nineteen years, but we would urge you to write down as much as you can and let us see it. By piecing together bits of information from many different sources, we have been able to build an extremely useful file on hundreds of cases, and in your case we are already encouraged by the amount of data Commander Bethune has so kindly offered.

When we publish our report on this experience, we will send you copies. Your cooperation in this matter is sincerely appreciated, and we look forward to any information you can provide. Enclosed is some literature on NICAP that may be of interest.

Sincerely,

Stuart Nixon
Secretary-Treasurer

SN/sn
Encl.

Fred W. Kingdon, Jr.
4480 Janice Drive
College Park, Ga. 30337
24 October 1970

RECEIVED OCT 29 1970

Mr. Stuart Nixon
Secretary-Treasurer
NICAP
1522 Connecticut Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Nixon:

This will acknowledge and thank you for your letter of 14 October 1970 concerning my UFO sighting over the North Atlantic in 1951.

I well remember the details of this incident as it was of such magnitude that one could never forget.

My log book indicates that the incident occurred on 8 February 1951 while flying Navy 350, Bureau No. 56501, on a scheduled passenger flight from Keflavik, Iceland to Argentia, Newfoundland. The crew consisted of myself as Aircraft Commander, CDR. Graham Bethune as co-pilot and CDR. Noel Koger as navigator. After radioing our UFO sighting report we were met at NAS Argentia by a U.S. Air Force investigating team who classified the incident as TOP Secret. No one was permitted to retain copies of their statements.

Since receiving your letter I have contacted CDR. Bethune. He advises that he has had inquiries concerning this incident since 1956. He also advises that Chapter 1 of Maj. Kehoe's book, UFO-Top Secret, seems to relate to this incident, even though the date is shown as 1959 and the aircraft a R7V. I have been trying to locate a copy of this book through the library systems here but have been unsuccessful.

If you can provide evidence that this file has been declassified by the Air Force and Navy I will be glad to relate all details to the best of my ability. I am sure that after 19 years it is no longer classified, however, I have no way of obtaining this information.

Sincerely,


Fred W. Kingdon, Jr.

October 29, 1970

Mr. Fred W. Kingdon, Jr.
4480 Janice Drive
College Park, Georgia 30337

Dear Mr. Kingdon:

Thank you for your letter of October 24. It was kind of you to reply so promptly. We were pleased to receive confirmation of your part in the 1951 incident, and we appreciate your willingness to provide us that information.

All Air Force files on UFO sightings have been declassified and removed to Air Force archives at Maxwell AFB in Alabama. Access to the files is by written request, and members of the public may apply, although a preliminary security check is made. Dr. James McDonald, a scientist at the University of Arizona who is doing research on UFOs, visited Maxwell in May of this year and examined some of the file material on your experience. I am planning a visit myself for sometime next year.

Assuming this is sufficient assurance on the question of the files, we would be most interested to see what details you can offer on the sighting. Sketches, a copy of your log book, and any other material you can provide will be very helpful. Also, any background information about yourself or the flight would be appreciated.

Regarding Major Keyhoe's book, it does indeed describe the case in detail, although there are a great many errors in the account. The book is out of print and almost impossible to find in second-hand book stores, but I can send you a copy of the chapter of interest if you wish.

I might mention that my father and his family are from Rome, Georgia, and we have relatives elsewhere in the state. Perhaps, if I am ever down that way, we can get together. I always enjoy coming back to the South.

Again, our thanks for your letter and cooperation. If there is any way we can return the favor, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Stuart Nixon
Secretary-Treasurer

GSN/sn

December 9, 1970

Mr. Graham E. Bethune
17 Morningside Drive
Toms River, New Jersey 08753

Dear Mr. Bethune:

We have finally found an opportunity to publish the details of your 1951 sighting. I am enclosing the two issues of our newsletter in which the account appears. If, in reviewing the account, you find any errors, please let me know so that we can run a correction. I have tried to play the story straightforwardly, without any journalistic embellishments, as I said I would. I hope it meets with your approval.

As you know, we have located Fred Kingdon and secured his agreement to supply us information on his own part in the sighting. We were very pleased to hear from him, and we appreciate your help in finding him.

By the way, I don't believe we have received the forms you and Mrs. Bethune were going to fill out for us on the Detroit sighting. Did you send them in?

Again, our appreciation for your kind cooperation during the past months, and for your hospitality during my visit. I will let you know if we get any reaction to the sighting account.

One more thing: Do you have any contacts at Willow Grove NAS who might be able to check on possible Navy knowledge of a sighting that took place over the Station in 1966?

Sincerely,

Stuart Nixon

GSN/sm
Encl.

March 15, 1971

Mr. Fred W. Kingdon, Jr.
4480 Janice Drive
College Park, Georgia 30337

Dear Mr. Kingdon:

This is just a note to say that we remain very much interested in receiving your personal account of the 1951 UFO sighting, per my letter of October 29, 1970. Having not heard from you since your initial communique, we were afraid you had changed your mind about helping us, or had failed to receive the October 29 letter.

From our point of view, it is important that you record your recollection of the sighting as best you can, without first consulting published or private versions that might confuse or color your own memory of it. A rough account, just as you remember the experience, is best for us, even if it has omissions or mistakes in it. Please do not feel you have to provide us a polished report that agrees in every detail with any other information we may have.

Again our thanks for your interest and willingness to provide us the information. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Stuart Nixon
Secretary-Treasurer

GSM/sm