

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
ALL-WEATHER FLYING CENTER
CLINTON COUNTY ARMY AIR FIELD
Wilmington, Ohio

10 January 1948

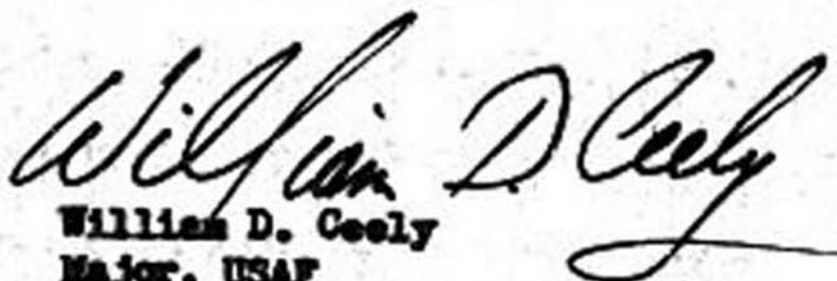
SUBJECT: Report concerning Public Information release of 8 January 1948.

TO : Col. J. Francis Taylor, Deputy Chief, All-Weather Flying Division.

1. A purely local release of information was made by the Public Information office of this station relating only what observers reported to Public Information concerning the appearance of what was termed a "sky phenomena." (See inclosure 1.)

2. Before this release was cleared to the Wilmington New-Journal, Wilmington, Ohio, permission was obtained from Public Information Office, Hq. AMC.

3. Public Information has extracted a United Press release of 22 December 1947, relating that a new comet should be visible in the northern hemisphere about January 1. This statement was issued by Professor Harlow Shapley, Harvard Observatory, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. (See inclosure 2.)



William D. Coely
Major, USAF
Public Information Officer

NEWS RELEASE

Inc # 118

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
 ALL-WEATHER FLYING CENTER
 CLINTON COUNTY ARMY AIR FIELD,
 WILMINGTON, OHIO

8 January 1948

COPY

(INCLOSURE 1)

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WILMINGTON, Ohio, Jan. 8-- A sky phenomena, described by observers at the Clinton County Air Base as having the appearance of a flaming red cone trailing a gaseous green mist, appeared in the southwest skies of Wilmington last night between 7:20 and 8:55 P.M.

S/Sgt. Gale F. Walter and Cpl. James Hudson, control tower operators at the air field, first saw the phenomena at 7:20 P.M. and observed its maneuvers in the sky until 8:55 P.M. when it reportedly disappeared over the horizon. The sky phenomena hung suspended in the air at intervals and then gained and lost altitude at what appeared to be terrific bursts of speed. The intense brightness of the sky phenomena pierced through a heavy layer of clouds passing intermittently over the area and obscuring other celestial phenomena.

M/Sgt. Irvin H. Lewis, S/Sgt John P. Haag, Sgt. Harold E. Olvis and T/Sgt. Leroy Ziegler, four members of the alert crew, joined the control tower operators in observing the sky phenomena for approximately 35 minutes.

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(ENCLOSURE 2)

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New York, Dec. 22. -(U.P.)-The orbit of the new, as yet unnamed, comet streaking through space has been determined tentatively and the "fire ball" with its long tail should become visible in the northern hemisphere about January 1, Prof. Harlow Shapley said today.

Prof. Shapley, director of the Harvard Observatory, said the comet is mostly a southern hemisphere show, but that it should be bright enough in the northern hemisphere to be visible to the naked eye, possibly during Christmas week.

On a basis of the tentative calculation of its orbit-the path, or route on which it is traveling-the new comet should be seen shortly after sundown in the constellation Capricornus, which is near the southwestern horizon.

"It should be visible for several nights, probably longer," Dr. Shapley said.

He disclosed that the new comet already has been photographed and spectrographed by the McDonald observatory in Texas, and that some "interesting results" have been obtained. He said three calculations of the comet's orbit have been received at Harvard Observatory, which is a clearing house for astronomical matters.

From these calculations it has been possible to make a tentative determination of the comet's orbit. Scientists, however, have not yet been able to determine the interval at which the comet may return.

"It may be 100 years or 1,000 years," Prof. Shapley said. Halley's comet completes its orbit in about 75 years. Observers of the new comet in the southern hemisphere have reported it is not as large as Halley's, but much brighter. It is not expected to be so bright when it becomes visible in the

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northern hemisphere.

The comet, according to the calculations, came within 10,000,000 miles of the sun on Dec. 2, and it is now receding at a comparatively slow speed, astronomically speaking.

Prof. Shapley said that the appearance of the new comet probably would not cause a shower of meteors on earth as many other comets, including, Halley's, do. He explained that the new comet's orbit is at too great a distance for the earth to receive a shower.

Extracted from
DeLand Sun News
DeLand, Florida
22 December 1947 issue.