PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

1. DATE: 19 Feb 51	2. LOCATION: East Africa	12. CONCLUSIONS ☐ Was Balloon ☐ Probably Balloon ☐ Possibly Balloon ☐ Was Aircraft ☐ Probably Aircraft ☐ Possibly Aircraft ☐ Was Astronomical ☐ Probably Astronomical ☐ Possibly Astronomical ☐ Other ☒ Insufficient Data for Evaluation ☐ Unknown
3. DATE-TIME GROUP Local Morning GMT	4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION ☐ Ground-Visual ☐ Ground-Radar ☒ Air-Visual ☐ Air-Intercept Radar	
5. PHOTOS ☐ Yes ☒ No	6. SOURCE: Crew and Passengers	
7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION: 17 min	8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS: 1	9. COURSE: E

10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING

Shape like bullet with fin. Maneuvers-climbing. Contact was made with Nairobi to see whether French Constallation a/c bound from Eastleigh to Tannarive, whose course was apprx that of the flying saucer. Only info gather was that the French a/c was about 17,5000 ft.

11. COMMENTS

Insufficient data for evaluation. Photos were taken but are not in file.

ATIC FORM 329 (REV 26 SEP 52)

UNCLASSIFIED
(Classification)

DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE
778.5612/2-2851

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : Dar es Salaam

260 — DESP. NO.

February 28, 1951 — DATE

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

AF291190

AIR POUCH — PRIORITY

26

REF : —

SUBJECT: APPEARANCE OF AN ALLEGED "FLYING SAUCER" OVER MT. KILIMANJARO, TANGANYIKA

For Dept. Use Only

RECD: MAR 12

ACTION: NEA

ACTION: INFO DER EUR OLI

INFO: mls

NOTE: Distribution was delayed due to improper preparation of original master. DC/R 3-2251 O.C.

The Consulate reports the alleged appearance of the first "flying saucer" to be observed in East Africa which it is stated was seen about 10,000 feet above Mr. Kilimanjaro the morning of February 19, 1951 by the crew and passengers of the East African Airways "Lodestar" plane while flying from Nairobi to Dar es Salaam.

From descriptions given by the crew and passengers the object, although termed a "flying saucer" appeared to be bullet shaped with a fin at one end. It was observed through binoculars by several of the passengers and was declared to have three definite stripes along the body as well as being metallic. As soon as the "flying saucer" was observed, contact was made with Nairobi by radio to ascertain whether the French Constellation aircraft bound from Eastleigh to Tannarive, whose course was approximately in the direction of the "flying saucer" could have been mistaken for it but no information could be furnished beyond the statement that the cruising altitude of the French plane was about 17,500 feet.

The "saucer" was seen for about 17 minutes by both the crew and passengers of the Lodestar after which it began to climb rapidly and move eastward toward the coast. It was stated by some of the passengers that to the naked eye the "saucer" appeared like a bright star although through binoculars its shape was relatively clear. One of the passengers, Mr. [redacted], an American, is reported to have taken a picture of the "flying saucer". Although the Consulate attempted to contact Mr. [redacted] its efforts were unfortunately unsuccessful and he is reported to have departed for Zanzibar the following morning after his arrival in Dar es Salaam. It is also reported that a color film was taken of the object by Mr. [redacted], also an American, who was aboard the plane. Mr. [redacted] is alleged to have used 30 feet of film to "shoot" the "Saucer" and to be confident that he would obtain some result.

To make certain that there was no mistake concerning the "saucer", [redacted], Master of the plane, obtained the signatures of all of the nine passengers to a document stating they had personally observed it.

In view of the alleged appearance of various "flying saucers" in the United States and in other parts of the World it is believed that this information concerning the first one to be

1-456

7-3712-34

UNCLASSIFIED

RECORDED — PREPARATION TIME

INFORMATION COPY
Retain in divisional files or destroy in accordance with security regulations.

seen in East Africa may be of some interest to the Department,

H. Gordon Minnigerode

H. Gordon Minnigerode
American Consul

HGMinnigerode/GB

Copies to:

London
Nairobi
Mombasa

The *Review* publishes for the first time in its columns two sightings from the past. They will probably be new to many of our readers, but our purpose in reprinting these accounts from the *Australian Flying Saucer Magazine* of May, 1952, is to correct an impression gained by the general public that sightings today are caused by misinterpretations of aircraft, satellites and what are now regarded as conventional projectiles manufactured by one or other of the powers on earth. The first Russian Sputnik, it must be borne in mind, was launched in 1957. Neither Russia nor America had penetrated outer space before that year.

The Great Mount Kilimanjaro Mystery

I. D.

FEBRUARY 19, 1951, dawned bright and clear at Nairobi, Kenya Colony, East Africa. At Nairobi West Airport, the regular Monday morning Lodestar was readied as usual for its morning flight to Mombasa, and soon passengers filed aboard, little dreaming, any of them, of what was to meet their astounded eyes barely 20 minutes later. At 7 a.m. exactly, with nine passengers and a crew of two aboard, the Lodestar took off.

All went well until 7.20 a.m., when suddenly the radio officer drew the attention of his superior, Captain J. Bicknell, to a bright object like a white star, apparently hanging motionless easily 10,000 ft. above Mount Kilimanjaro. Captain Bicknell's first reaction, he said later, was to say nothing. The two watched the strange object for three minutes, then, as it showed no signs of vanishing, informed the passengers. One began promptly studying the oddity, amazedly, through a powerful pair of field-glasses, whilst the radio officer flashed an excited call to Eastleigh, nearby, giving an account and description of the thing. Eastleigh's suggestion flashed in return was that the object might be a drifting meteorological balloon, but checking on that possibility, after inspecting the enigmatic object for several minutes, Captain Bicknell found that the more he examined it, the less it could possibly be mistaken for a balloon. It was a dull silver colour and marked at regular intervals along the fuselage with vertical dark bands. The entire outline, he found, was unmistakeably distinct: nor, though it appeared to be incredibly distant, was its sharp outline obscured in the least detail by intervening haze.

Captain Bicknell estimated the thing was over 200 ft. long, bullet-shaped, and apparently constructed of metal which shone brightly. On first sighting it, the Lodestar was heading roughly towards it and, watching it closely as they approached, Captain Bicknell perceived another detail. The thing possessed a square-cut vertical fin at one end. There were no signs of movement; it was absolutely stationary. So it remained for 17 minutes.

Passengers of the Lodestar were now taking turns with the field-glasses, and two of them had commenced taking photographs, when suddenly the enormous thing began to move eastwards, slowly at first, and rising as it did so. Before it reached 40,000 ft., at which point it was ultimately lost sight of, the sides of the awesome, whale-like object were seen clearly to be without a break in their smoothness; no windows or portholes relieved the harsh purity of line, no engine mounts or jet pods marred the perfectly streamlined hull.

The day being exceptionally clear, there were no cloud formations in evidence anywhere, and Captain Bicknell calculated that in the three minutes of visible movement the bullet-shaped object covered 60 miles; that, in other words, its speed could have been nothing short of 1,000 m.p.h. during the period of observed flight. It left behind no vapour trail and, to all who saw it, had no visible means of propulsion.

During an interview some days later, Captain Bicknell said that his impression was that the unidentified thing was some kind of flying machine, and with this his radio officer, a Mr. D. W. Merrifield, unhesitatingly agreed. A "mirage" was suggested as the possible cause, but the radio officer discounted it. "Mirages are rarely seen without cloud," he stated, "nor would that explain the object's movement." He com-

mented that if the object was a flying machine "it was 500 years ahead of anything we have today."

Nairobi *Sunday Post* the following Sunday said: "If this report had come from a few isolated individuals it would soon be discounted, but it came from responsible airline officials and nine ordinary travellers." It, too, dismissed both the balloon and mirage theories, and concluded that hopes of a "natural" explanation had begun to fade. Other theories ranged from Martian visitors to radio-controlled weapons.

Fragmentary evidence accrued since then increase the sum total of knowledge but little. U.S. *Life* magazine early in 1952 published a sketch of the object, which showed it to closely resemble an ordinary lipstick tube lying on its side. Later, in connection with learning the whereabouts of the photographs taken from Captain Bicknell's plane, the Australian Flying Saucer Bureau learnt that "the only known public photograph of the object shows a blurred spot on the film." A motion-picture film taken by another passenger was "quite clear," but the same reliable source stated, either laconically or ominously, it is hard to tell which, that "the man with the film is supposed to have disappeared."

—AN OUTSTANDING SIGHTING—

THE MT. KILIMANJARO ENIGMA.

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So the case stands, at present, one of the most puzzling and enigmatic unexplained Saucer Sightings recorded in Australian Flying Saucer Bureau Files.