

~~SECRET~~
UNCLASSIFIED

Ruralville, South Carolina

22 December 1952

I. Description of Incident

At 0915 EDT on 22-12-52 over this location steadily sighted a slender silver object about the size of a half-dollar. Object was seen for a period of 10 to 15 seconds and apparently was oscillating, rising and gaining altitude alternately. The pilot was on a 270° heading at 20,000 ft. and saw the unknown at a relative bearing of 130° at approximately 20,000 ft. The weather was clear with 087 conditions.

II. Discussion of Incident

Since this sighting occurred 20 minutes before a similar one at Greenville, North Carolina, the possibility of the two pilots actually seeing the same object has been looked into. The following conditions have been noted: The objects could not have been a single weather balloon launched by Ruralville, South Carolina, because the prevailing winds for the general area were from 300° at 15 knots, or blowing directly against a free floating object and carrying it south of the original observation point, nor north. Secondly, the objects could not have been a single jet aircraft traveling from Ruralville north to Greenville. The distance is 115 miles between sightings and the sightings were 12 minutes apart thereby necessitating a ground speed of 600 mph. With a general wind from the north blowing at 15 knots at 20,000 ft. it seems unlikely that a jet could hit this speed. Furthermore the description of the unknown as "round and silver" from experienced fighter pilots indicated that the objects probably were not jets. Although there was much local air traffic in both sightings, aircraft has been eliminated as a possibility for the above reasons.

Both sightings occurred within an hour of a prohibited retrograde weather balloon release at Greenville, North Carolina, and an unobserved release around the Ruralville area. Taking the descriptions given of both objects, which are, incidentally, very characteristic of balloon observations reported by WVIC, the conclusion reached is that the object seen at Ruralville was possibly a balloon. At Greenville probably a balloon.

III. Remarks

Possibly a balloon.

T
M
I
S

P
A
C
E

I
S

U
N
C
L
A
S
S
I
F
I
E
D25
~~SECRET~~
UNCLASSIFIED

100-366