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Fort Meigs, Michigan

17 February 1953

I. Description of Incident

At 2004 EDT an unclassified aerial object was sighted visually by members of the 82nd Squadron at Fort Meigs. The object was sighted in two sites northwest of their station at an estimated 2000' above the horizon. It appeared to be larger and brighter than a star and never showed changing colors. There were no unusual features visible. The object was moving south at a low rate of speed and eventually faded out completely after becoming much less bright in intensity. This object was viewed visually from 2004 EDT for five minutes until 2009 EDT.

At 2008 EDT, the observers tracked the object on a search radar set. Position of the object on the radar set was 300° bearing in a 350° course at 55 knots. The object was observed at 2008 EDT for 17 minutes until 2005 EDT. No height finding equipment was available at time of observation, but the observers estimated the altitude at 1000' from the radar returns. Weather conditions at time of sighting were: visibility and ceiling - unlimited, with moderate winds from the west.

II. Discussion of Incident

The possibility of the reported object being a balloon was checked by the reporting officer. The nearest balloon launch station is at Muskegon, Michigan, which is 122 miles from Fort Meigs. A pilot type balloon was released from Muskegon at 2000Z. It is not likely that this balloon caused the sighting because the object in question was sighted at 2004Z.

Both the visual and electronic sightings were made by the same personnel, consisting of two officers and three airmen. All of these men have three or more years experience in radar. A radar scope camera was installed, but was not in operation at the time of sighting.

No known meteorological disturbances or activity existed at the time of sighting, or at any time that day.

After checking with surrounding bases and flight plan courses, it was found that there were no known aircraft in the general area.

The ground beam is very low on the northwest horizon at this time of year and is easily seen. This fact might explain the visual sighting, but beam will not show on a radar scope.

Further analysis of this sighting awaits additional weather data for the date and area of sighting. Until this information is received, this report is pending an outcome.

III. Conclusion

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