

Air Attache, Australia

18-008-03

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22. Where an impression of distance has been formed in most cases the observer was of the opinion that the lights or objects were within a few mile radius, and where an estimate of elevation has been made the consensus of opinion is between 50° to 60°. Although various impressions of color/s and sizes of lights were given, it is considered that the variations in reports were in most cases due to the short length of time the light was seen.

23. The investigating officers formed the following opinion:

- The sighting was of a light, not of an object.
- The light was of a considerable distance (not less than sixty (60) miles) from the earth's surface.
- The light was probably caused by a meteor or similar body.

In regard to the above opinions although several reports stated that an object had been seen, it is considered that the observers in these cases may have been influenced by a previous reading of reports in newspapers and magazines. The distance factor is borne out in that all observers were facing the southern sky and whilst all had the opinion that the light was merely a few miles away, the most westerly sighting at 22°45'10" (see pages 18 and 19) was approximately fifty (50) miles south of the last northerly sighting. It will also be noted that the observer in para. 12 gave the elevation as between 50° and 60°. This observer was some thirty (30) miles south of SYDNEY which further supports the opinion of great distance, there being little change of elevation although the observer is thirty (30) miles closer to the light. Furthermore, newspaper reports of sightings in Victoria at the same time, which were not investigated, support the opinion that the lights or objects were a considerable distance from the earth's surface.

24. In support of the meteor theory many observers gave their impression as a large light or lights, followed by smaller lights. The investigating officers are of the opinion that this impression could be given by the break up of a large meteor.

25. Recommendations.

It is recommended that any future investigations as a result of newspaper reports be conducted as follows:

- Copies of all leading State and Interstate daily newspapers be obtained covering the period of the reports.
- The Commonwealth Meteorologist be contacted for an opinion as to reports and sightings made by official observers.
- Individual interviews that be undertaken if deemed necessary.

26. Attached are copies of various reports which appeared in SYDNEY newspapers.

(A.C. BARRON)
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Area Intelligence Officer

(Signed) M.C. MERRAT
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