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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Mogul Balloons & Foil-like Material

From: James Easton <pulsar@compuserve.com>
Date: Tue, 3 Jun 1997 17:21:03 -0400
Fwd Date: Tue, 03 Jun 1997 20:57:16 -0400
Subject: Re: Mogul Balloons & Foil-like Material

Regarding...

>From: DRudiak@aol.com
>Date: Tue, 27 May 1997 15:03:26 -0400 (EDT)
>Subject: Re: Mogul Balloons & Foil-like Material

Dave Rudiak wrote:

>Charles Moore in his A.F. interview vaguely remembered that they
>started experimenting with mylar as a balloon material around 1950.
>But he was quite firm that nothing like that was available in 1947.

Dave,

It seems that's the case.

>>Although this foil-rubber material sounds like it might be material
>>from a balloon, the balloon trains consisted of neoprene and
>>Bessie's description doesn't seem to be consistent with that.

>I'm glad you recognize that. I've been pointing out this
>inconsistency for what seems like centuries now.

There are only certain possibilities; either Bessie's description confuses neoprene and separate foil-like material, it's an accurate description and describes terrestrial material which hasn't been identified, or it wasn't terrestrial at all.

Judging by her overall comments, it was wreckage from an object which resembled a balloon, as she notes. Which seems to leave only two options.

With no obvious candidate for the double-sided, foil-rubber material, it could well be that when first interviewed in 1979, Bessie's recollections were not entirely reliable, some 30 years later.

There's also of course Mac Brazel's corroborative testimony, as originally carried in the Roswell Daily Record on 9 July, 1947. It's recorded that Brazel described "tinfoil, paper, tape, and sticks" and reportedly confirmed "at least one paper fin had been glued onto some of the tinfoil. There were no words to be found anywhere on the instrument although there were letters on some of the parts".

Significantly, as you appreciate, it's also stated he claimed, "Considerable scotch tape and some tape with flowers printed upon it had been used in the construction. No string or wire were to be found but there were some eyelets in the paper to indicate that some sort

of attachment may have been used".

This matches what Bessie Brazel Schreiber says she was shown by Mac, i.e., "sticks, like kite sticks, attached to some of the pieces with a whitish tape" and "tape [which] was about two or three inches wide and had flower-like designs on it".

As for any suggestions that Brazel's testimony had now been influenced by the military, that doesn't seem to equate and apparently he wasn't sufficiently intimidated to prevent it being reported, "he had previously found two weather balloons on the ranch, but that what he found this time did not in any way resemble either of these".

If Brazel had been "encouraged" to support the weather balloon story, doesn't it seem odd he would be allowed to say that no string or wires were evident and that he would also be fed a story about tape with flower-like designs and "letters on some of the parts"?

If it was a pre-ordained script, why not keep it simple?

>Another problem is that Schreiber said some of the pieces were still
>attached to sticks. That means it couldn't be a balloon, but would
>have to come from a radar reflector.

I concur. This tends to support the premise that some of Bessie's recollections are not completely reliable. It should perhaps be expected, she was only 12 years old at the time.

>Another problem is that Shreiber failed to mention any foil backed
>with paper. Again, the description doesn't seem to match.

She did recall, "there was what appeared to be pieces of heavily waxed paper and a sort of aluminium-like foil", which certainly sounds more like balloon wreckage than an ET spaceship.

>Nor did she mention anything like the smelly rubber debris of a
>neoprene rubber balloon that later showed up in Fort Worth. None of
>the debris field witnesses did.

Were any of them asked about this?

>So these portions of Schreiber's statements really don't match Mogul
>at all. Also she mentioned a completely unknown writing on some of
>the pieces which she couldn't make out.

Yes, she reportedly stated:

"There was what appeared to be pieces of heavily waxed paper and a sort of aluminium-like foil. Some of these pieces had something like numbers and lettering on them, but there were no words we were able to make out".

"They were written out like you would write numbers in columns to do an addition problem. But they didn't look like the numbers we use at all. What gave me the idea they were numbers, I guess, was the way they were all ranged out in columns".

At the weekend, Karl Pflock was the guest at a conference on the CompuServe MUFON forum. I put some relevant questions to him, one of which concerned this point.

Although I don't have an exact transcript as yet, in essence, Karl stated that Charles Moore confirmed it was common practice to use the materials as a "notepad" for calculations.

I hadn't heard this confirmation before, but have wondered if that was possibly the case. It seemed the most likely explanation. Why would Bessie say, "they didn't look like the numbers we use at all"? We can only speculate - what would scribbles look like on material which had been subjected to the elements for a while, would the characters have become smudged, etc...

Walt Whitmore Jnr claimed to have seen the debris Brazel brought into town. He reportedly confirmed, "Some of this material had a sort of writing on it which looked like numbers which had been either added or multiplied".

>This WASN'T the infamous tape with "flower patterns." All of this is
>conveniently overlooked by Mogul zealots.

It was a point I hadn't seen addressed and at least it now has one explanation.

I guess that doesn't qualify me as a zealot. Drat!

>If it wasn't for Schreiber's description of the "flowered tape," the
>Mogul people would have no case at all...

This would seem to overlook Mac Brazel's own corroborative testimony and Loretta Proctor's comments that Mac "said there was more stuff there, like a tape that had some sort of figures on it...there was also something he described as tape which had printing on it...the colour of the printing was a kind of purple".

There is also of course the "bakelite" which Moore identifies as the ballast tubes. Then there's the parchment parachutes and the descriptions of parchment in the debris, and considerably more besides to support the Mogul case. For example, from Dave Thomas's article in the July/August 1995 "Skeptical Inquirer":

"Brazel's daughter, Bessie Brazel Schreiber, in a 1979 interview conducted by author William Moore (no relation to Charles B. Moore), described some aluminium ring-shaped objects in the debris that looked like pipe intake collars or the necks of balloons. (The mention of the rings appears in William Moore's transcript of the interview, but was not included in his book The Roswell Incident.)

She estimated that they were about 4 inches around, and said she could put her hand through them. Charles Moore points out that Flight 4 carried several 3-inch-diameter aluminium rings for assisting with the launching of the balloon train, as well as larger rings used to hold the sonobuoys. These were cut from cylindrical tubing stock, and then chamfered to prevent damage to the ropes".

>I really don't know what to make of Schreiber's testimony.

[...]

>It's conceivable she read her father's newspaper interview back in
>1947 and adapted her descriptions, including the "flower tape," to
>that.

How would we then explain Loretta Proctor's confirmation that Mac Brazel also told her about the tape with purple printing?

>I've also considered the possibility that maybe she witnessed
>another balloon crash and recovery at some later time, perhaps one
>of the metallized neoprene-coated nylon balloons. Maybe she got the
>two events confused in her mind.

That's an interesting possibility, but in the absence of any evidence, I would go along with the idea that some of her recollections are simply, and understandably, mixed up.

>Currently there is NO plausible conventional explanation for the
>anomalous physical properties attributed to the foil, wood-like
>beams, and other materials.

Which would presumably contend that...

- "some material that looked like wood" and was "like balsa wood",
"like balsa wood in weight"...
couldn't have been "balsa wood beams that were coated in an
"Elmer's-type" glue"

- the tape with "what looked like pastel flowers or designs", where
"the color of the printing was a kind of purple"...
couldn't have been the "purplish-pink tape with flower and heart
symbols on it" which was frequently used in radar targets

- the "hieroglyphic-type characters", or "symbols", which were
"pink-purple, lavender...pink and purple...a violet-purple type color"
and which "had an embossed appearance"....

couldn't have been that same tape, Charles Moore noting the symbols were "embossed on the back of the tape"

- the whitish tape...
couldn't have been...whitish tape

- the "bakelite"...
couldn't have been the ballast tube, as Moore indicates

- the heavily waxed paper...
wasn't simply heavily waxed paper

- the "parchment"...
couldn't have come from the parchment parachutes

- the "heavy gauge monofilament nylon fishing line"..
wasn't the monofilament nylon line used in rigging the Mogul arrays

- the foil-like material...
couldn't possibly have been foil used in Mogul balloon construction
- perhaps from the radar targets - it's true properties possibly not so "anomalous" and essentially impossible for us to evaluate 50 years later.

I think it could be contended that all of these are plausible, conventional explanations.

Although I doubt all the questions will ever have answers, I had brought this topic up because some of the answers might be attainable.

I'm not entirely in agreement with Karl's conclusion that descriptions of the foil-like material are somewhat exaggerated and the tale has grown in the telling. However, even if there is no conclusive explanation for *all* of the materials described, there does seem to be sufficient evidence that much of the material was compatible with balloon debris.

If it was "not of this earth", the tape with purple flowers needs to be explained away for a start. It seems that's key corroborative evidence for a radar target.

Charles Schmid also described "some material that looked like wood" and which "had some writing that looked like flowers on just one side". He confirmed, "it had pink petals, centered like a flower".

Doesn't this sound like the 12 year old Marcel Jnr's "metallic I-beam" with "hieroglyphics"?

Perhaps the same "little members with symbols", which his father said "did not look metallic", but "something like balsa wood".

James.
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