PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

1. DATE

6 Feb 59

2. LOCATION

Boulder, Colorado

3. DATE-TIME GROUP

Local Afternoon 5 PM

GMT 06/2400Z

4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION

☒ Ground-Visual ☐ Ground-Radar

☐ Air-Visual ☐ Air-Intercept Radar

5. PHOTOS

☒ Yes

☐ No

6. SOURCE

Civilian

7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION

N/A

8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS

one

9. COURSE

N/A

10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING

A white blob appeared on a photograph which was not noticed until after the photo was developed.

11. COMMENTS

Source overexposed successive prints and the white blob began to show the outlines of a window. Source discovered that the big double west window of the Law Building is in the exact center of the blob. When the window is opened at just the right angle, it reflects the sun at the exact spot where source was standing when he took the picture.

12. CONCLUSIONS

- ☐ Was Balloon
- ☐ Probably Balloon
- ☐ Possibly Balloon
- ☐ Was Aircraft
- ☐ Probably Aircraft
- ☐ Possibly Aircraft
- ☐ Was Astronomical
- ☐ Probably Astronomical
- ☐ Possibly Astronomical
- ☒ Other Reflection
- ☐ Insufficient Data for Evaluation
- ☐ Unknown

ATIC FORM 329 (REV 26 SEP 52)

Drawing by [redacted]
To be returned
[redacted] & LB

[redacted]
Boulder, Colorado
7 June, 1960

Dr. [redacted], Director
Harvard College Observatory
Cambridge 38, Massachusetts

Dear Dr. Menzel:

I am very sorry to be so late in answering your letter of May, but it came right in the middle of finals, and so I couldn't take the reflection negative in to be printed. However, I have now done so, and I also took it over to the HAO as you asked.

However, there is a complication; it turns out that the contour densitometer is not there now, and has not been for several years. It is now down at the Sacramento Peak Observatory in New Mexico. Also, Mr. [redacted] and Mr. [redacted] say that the machine is being coupled with something else or something, and may not be operating. However, I am going to write Sac Peak, sending the photo and your letter, and ask them to run it through.

In looking at the bright spot on the blackest print, the outlines of a window begin to show. They are fuzzy and blurry and much bigger than life, but nevertheless there if one looks carefully. Or at least, there are some lines through the image that look like the outline of a window frame. On one of the less black prints, it appears as if the lines could be faint images of the country beyond showing through, though. There is no indication of the sun itself to the eye, though.

By the way, how did your appearance on the show "Today" on May 16th go? Unfortunately, our TV set was out of order that week.

An enclosing the next-to-the-blackest print for your reference, and also an extra copy of the picture printed normally, as you asked. Write soon.

Yours truly,

[redacted]

June 14, 1960

Mr. [redacted]
[redacted]
Boulder, Colorado

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Thank you for the two photograph copies. I shall be interested in the microdensitometer records if Sacramento Peak is able to furnish them.

My TV appearance on "Today" did not go too well. Mr. Keyhoe hogged the show and I had difficulty getting a word in edgewise. I felt rather disgusted about the whole thing. Especially since Dave Garroway himself turned out to be something of a "believer" and joined with Mr. Keyhoe in attacking me.

Again many thanks for your interesting information.

Cordially yours,

[redacted]
Director

DHM/mam

HARVARD COLLEGE OBSERVATORY
CAMBRIDGE 38, MASSACHUSETTS

June 14, 1960

Major Robert J. Friend
Aerospace Technical Intelligence Center
Wright Patterson Air Force Base
Ohio

Dear Major Friend:

I think you might like to have for your records another flying saucer case, which my arm-chair method completely solved. I enclose herewith copies of the correspondence and a photograph.

Thanking you for your interest and encouragement,

I am,

Cordially yours,

[redacted]
Director

DHM/mam
Encls:

May 12, 1960

Mr. [redacted]
[redacted]
Boulder, Colorado

Dear Mr. [redacted]

Thank you for the extra photo and the interesting picture of the sun pillars. This is a good example, though I have a somewhat better one that I used as illustration in my book. As I may have indicated, I hope to do another edition or, preferably, an entirely new complete book.

It was, of course, extremely satisfying to me that your reconnaissance proved the correctness of my reflection theory. As for the size of the reflection, there is no mystery at all. The image of the reflected sun is extremely bright. It is overexposed on the film and thus the image spreads. As one further experiment, you might try over-printing the negative, so that the entire picture comes out practically black. As you make successively longer exposures, you will find that the size of the bright area diminishes. When we get down to the smallest size, you may conceivably find something interesting, though I doubt that the resolution of the camera would show at that distance. However, it is worth trying. You might take this letter over to the High Altitude Observatory and ask one of the astronomers there to run the picture through their contour densitometer. If that is operating, such a picture would give exactly the information I am seeking.

I am to be on television, the program called "Today," the morning of May 16. I am planning to take your photograph along with me and perhaps I may show it. My subject: Flying Saucers. I shall be interviewed at the same time as they interview Keyhoe, who is a strong believer in flying saucers.

With best wishes, and looking forward to hearing from you again, I am,

Cordially yours,

DHM/mam

[redacted]
Director

[redacted]
Boulder, Colorado
7 May, 1960

Dr. Donald H. Menzel
Harvard Observatory
Cambridge 38, Massachusetts

Dear Dr. Menzel:

I would have answered you sooner on your letter about the flying saucer picture I sent you, but the weather has been so bad that it would have done me no good to go up on Flagstaff, as I would have seen nothing! However, I was able to go there yesterday, with the visibility 40 to 50 miles. Using some more copies of the photo as a guide to parallax, I was able to find and stand in the exact spot from which the picture was taken. It seems that the Law Building is in the area of the white blob, and its big double west window is located in the exact center of the blob. Of course, the position of the sun now is different than in February when the picture was taken, but I did a little figuring, and came up with the following: when the window is opened to just the right angle of tilt, the position of the February sun is such that its image will be reflected right to that particular spot on Flagstaff Mt. Therefore, this reflection theory is very probably correct, though I fail to see why the reflection is such a large object on the photo. (The picture was taken very late in the afternoon, as you can see.)

I am including a 5x7 enlargement of the whole area covered in the negative, which may be more suitable for your new book. Yes, I would be delighted to have you use my photo.

I have read the 1953 edition, and I see that you also deal with such unusual natural phenomena as sun pillars. Therefore, I am also enclosing a picture of the latter. It was taken at about 14h UT on the morning of February 23, 1960. When I first saw the pillar, it was about 15° in height, but fading rapidly. Of the 3 filters which I have, Wratten 25A, X1 and 80B, it seemed to be the most prominent through the 80B, so this was also used in the photo. All this took some time, and by the time I was ready to snap, the pillar was only 10° high. Therefore, I just took the picture with the shutter set the same as it had been overnight; the exposure was 1/300 @ f/5.6 on Tri-X 35mm film. As you can see, there were 9 inches of snow on the ground, and I just didn't have time to get ready to go outside.

There is almost no trace of it in the photo, but there was also a faint round ball of luminescense right below the pillar before and during the exposure. The faint light streak 25/32 of an inch to the right of the pillar is a defect of the print, as are all the others except the pillar. I am sorry that the pillar shows so poorly, but the fellow who printed this tells me that the negative is so flat it is a wonder that anything shows besides the brighter area at the pillar's base. The pillar seems to be about 8° high on the print in its extremities (including a little bit above the darkish cloud) if you are doubtful about

April 19, 1960

Mr. [redacted]
[redacted]
Boulder, Colorado

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I must apologize for not having written earlier in reply to your letter of 18 March. I have, however, been traveling a great deal and just now getting around to some of the less urgent correspondence.

I find your picture quite interesting. I am very familiar with Flagstaff, having spent considerable time in Boulder and being a native of Denver. This appears to be a picture pointing roughly East. My first question is the time of day that you took the picture. From the lighting, I would say that you must have had the sun more or less at your back, so that this could not be just an ordinary type of reflection, resulting from having pointed the camera in the general direction of the sun. Do you, by any chance, wear a ring? The reflection from the stone may have gotten into the camera in some way.

Will you make one test for me, which I consider the most likely in view of the effect. The sun appears to have been pretty low at the time. Is there in the approximate position of the blob some house with a fairly large window that could have been reflecting the sun? Stand at approximately the same spot and look over the region with a field glass. A bright spot like this often spreads enormously. You can see from the picture that the sun must have been shining brilliantly. The shadow especially of the large barn on the right, gives us some idea of the height of the sun. This was in February. The angle of the sun will now have changed.

At any rate, make this test and let me know. I am, as a matter of fact, rewriting my book on flying saucers with a lot of new material. If I should want to use your photograph would you be willing to let me do so, with proper acknowledgment, of course.

the scale. I will be glad to send a larger copy of this photo if you feel you can use it. Please let me know if you want any more information.

Sincerely yours,

[redacted]

PS: The black left corner of the 5x7 is apparently my finger!

Copy [redacted]

photograph [redacted] sketch

[redacted]

18 March, 1960

Dr. Donald H. Menzel
c/o Harvard College Observatory
Cambridge 38, Massachusetts

Dear Sir:

On February 6, 1959, while on Flagstaff Mt., a 7000' foothill west of Boulder, I took what I thought would be an ordinary scenic picture of Boulder through my brother's Brownie Holiday, which is a $7 box camera. On development, however, a small black blob showed on the negative; one strongly reminiscent of a "flying saucer."

The enclosed picture is a 6x enlargement from a small section of that negative. The exposure was 1/25 second at f/11, through a 25A filter, on Tri-X. Development was normal commercial.

Absolutely nothing was seen in the area with the eye alone either before or after, but I must admit that I wasn't looking for anything unusual.

NICAP in Washington snatched up a copy of the photo right away, but they will not give any kind of explanation for the phenomenon. As you have written an informative book on UFO's, I was wondering if you would be willing to offer an explanation. I do not remember the weather conditions on that date, but could find them out for you. I will send the original negative if you wish.

The picture was taken at about 5 pm, and the direction of view is approximately southeast.

Yours truly,

[redacted]

I believe that the Boulder Library probably has a copy of my book, "Flying Saucers." You might be interested in reading it.

Thanking you for your kindness in sending me the picture and again please accept my apologies for a tardy communication.

Sincerely yours,

DHM/db

Donald H. Menzel
Director

This case includes one (1) 4"x5" negative
and one (1) 7"x4" photograph and eight
(8) 8"x10" photographs.

An unusually fine large UFO inserted itself into a photograph taken on February 6, 1959, near Boulder, Colorado. The witness had spent the afternoon climbing on Flagstaff Mountain and, about 5:00 P.M., snapped a picture of the town of Boulder, to the southeast. Although he had seen nothing unusual in the sky or in the air, the negative, when developed, showed a small black blob that printed as a white, luminous, roughly spherical object,--a typical flying saucer.

Civilian saucer investigators in the area procured a copy of the photograph and sent it to NICAP for evaluation. The witness himself did not immediately assume that he had photographed an interplanetary spaceship hovering over the city of Boulder; instead, he sent a print and a description of the circumstances to Dr. Menzel, who was well acquainted with the geography of Boulder and Flagstaff Mountain. Dr. Menzel suggested that the blob of light could have been produced by some type of reflection: "The sun appears to have been pretty low at the time. Is there, in the approximate position of the blob, some house with a fairly large window that could have been reflecting the sun? Stand at approximately the same spot and look over the region with a field glass. A bright spot like this often spreads enormously on the film. You can see from the picture that the sun must have been shining brilliantly. The shadow, especially of the large barn on the right, gives us some idea of the height of the sun. This was in February, and the angle of the sun will now have changed. Please make this test and let me know."

Not until the first week of May, however, was the witness able to repeat his excursion and make the necessary tests. Using a copy of his original picture as a guide, he was able to stand in the exact spot from which he had taken the picture. He then realized that the Law Building of the University of Colorado stood in the place occupied by the UFO and that the big double window of the Law Building was at the exact center. In May no reflection appeared, but from calculations he found that the position of the February sun was such that the window, when open at just the right tilt, would reflect the sun's image to the exact spot on Flagstaff Mountain from which he took the picture. The image of the reflected sun is extremely bright and the film had been overexposed: therefore the image had spread on the film to create the large UFO. To confirm the hypothesis, the witness tried overprinting the negative so that the entire picture came out practically black, and with successively longer exposures the size of the bright UFO diminished. As he got it down to the smallest size on the blackest print, he could see the fuzzy outline of a window [2].

Boulder, Colorado
6 February 1959

6 February 1959, Boulder, Colorado

Reflection

by [redacted]

[redacted] Street

K-2

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