

A UFO crashed near Roswell New Mexico in 1947. The report in the papers on July 8, 1947 would bring news to the world that aliens were real (Stacy 36). However, the U.S. government quickly quashed the story before it was widely spread. A cover story was released by the 8th Air Force; the wreckage was actually that of a downed weather balloon (Wyly). The press bought it, and the story has laid cold for 30 years. In the late 70's, several witnesses, who where tied to the incident, shared their accounts, and claimed the wreckage was of the unordinary. In the 80's, a string of books, articles, and TV shows raised the specter of a military cover-up (Stacy 40). Recently, the government released a new story. I will summarize the events, then discuss some important evidence connected with them.

On July 2, 1947, during a severe thunderstorm, a saucer flew near to the ground at a great velocity. It exploded. Its pieces scattered over an area near Corona, New Mexico. The next day William "Mac" Brazel, foreman of the Foster Ranch, and his seven-year-old neighbor, Dee, found the remains of the wrecked UFO scattered over a large area. When Brazel drove Dee back home, he showed some of the material to her parents. They all agreed the material was unlike anything they had ever seen. On July 6 Brazel drove into town with a few pieces of the wreck. He showed the material to the Chaves County Sheriff George Wilcox. The sheriff called the Roswell Army Air Field(AAF) and talked to Major Jesse Marcel, the intelligence officer. After inspecting Brazel's material, Marcel reported to his commanding officer Colonel William "Butch" Blanchard, who ordered Marcel to get someone from the Counter Intelligence Corps and proceed with Marcel to the ranch and collect as much wreckage as they could load into their vehicles. Marcel, Sheridan Cavitt, and Brazel arrived at the ranch that night. The next day was spent collecting debris into Cavitt's vehicle and Marcel's car. The material they collected was only a small part of the entire wreckage.

In town, news had spread and a local radio station began transmitting the UFO information on the teletype machine. The transmission was interrupted by a message apparently from the FBI, asking for the relay to cease. Military police picked up the material that Brazel had left at the sheriffs office. The pieces were sent to Eighth Air Force headquarters in Fort Worth, Texas, then to Washington. Marcel and Cavitt didn't return to the base until early the next morning. That morning, Colonel Blanchard ordered for a press release to Frank Joyce at radio station KGFL. The report told that the Army had found the remains of a crashed flying saucer. General Clemence McMullen, in Washington, called Colonel Thomas DuBose under Eighth Air Force Commander General Roger Ramey, in Fort Worth. He ordered for a cover-up of the crashed saucer story and for some of the crash material to be immediately sent to Washington. Later that day, Marcel flew to Fort Worth with the crash debris he had collected. Ramey called a press conference, and declared that what was found near Corona, NM was actually the wreckage of a weather balloon. At the conference he and Marcel kneeled in front of what they claimed to be the weather balloon wreckage taken from the crash site.

A large group of soldiers and MPs were sent to the crash site to limit access to the area. A few miles from the debris field, the main body of the saucer was found. A day or so later, four extraterrestrial bodies were found some distance from the crash site. They were partially decayed and had been gnawed on by an animal. Three of the bodies were greatly mangled. The body in the best condition was the size of a small child with slender long arms, a large head, greyish skin with greyish silk-like material coveralls. These aliens were kept under a tarp within a tent on the site. Several high ranking military officials were at the site. The bodies were eventually placed in dry ice and transported to the Roswell base, then to Fort Worth (Schmidt).

The material from the crash site was described by many observers. Three general materials that were reported. There were small beams that looked like tan or light brown plastic. They were very light-weight, like balsa wood, but without grain. They reportedly couldn't be cut or burned. On some of the balsa wood-like material were markings similar to hieroglyphics. One of the materials looked like

tinfoil except it wouldn't tear. It could be wrinkled but retained its original shape. It was reportable as thin as the tinfoil in a pack of cigarettes. It was so thin that it weighed nothing. There was also another tinfoil-like material that was stiff and couldn't be dented with a 16 pound sledge hammer. However, it also was very light weight. There was a thread-like material that looked like silk but was not made up of strands but more like a wire, all in one piece. It was strong like deep-sea fishing line (Schmidt).

The government had officially reported that the wreck was that of a weather balloon (Wyly). If that were the case, there wouldn't have been any need for secrecy. According to testimony, military officials admonished subordinates and civilians not to talk about what they saw. That includes the Roswell police and fire departments, local ranchers, a group of archeologists, and two campers (Rayl 10). If what crashed were a weather balloon, surely Major Marcel would have recognized it as such before the AAF released the first report of a saucer. The wreckage described by many was nothing similar to a weather balloon and too spread out over a large area. Most of the witnesses who handled the material would have recognized that it was not that of a weather balloon. Furthermore, there is no reason the government would transport a wrecked weather balloon from New Mexico to Fort Worth, Texas (Schmidt).

There was speculation that the wreckage could have been that of a secret rocket or airplane. Possibly a German V-2 missile gone astray from U.S. Air Force testing. However, in 1947 the only military testings in New Mexico were rocket testing in White Sands 75 miles away. These rockets were fitted with self-destructing mechanisms for any errant paths (Thompson 233). If any of these were the case, the military wouldn't have had to wait, several days, until a rancher reported the debris, before recovering it. If it were a secret, the government would have said "This is secret, and no more questions will be answered, period." Furthermore, any military secret in 1947 would no longer be a secret today (Schmidt).

Impelled by his New Mexico citizens and his own curiosity, Representative Steven Schiff began his own research of the mystery four years ago (Rayl 11). He forced the Air Force to drop the cover story it had maintained since 1947. Two years ago the Air Force revealed that the crash in Roswell had been that of "Operation Mogul," an experimental high-altitude balloon designed to monitor the first tests of Soviet Atomic bombs. That still leaves many unanswered questions. Schiff and many others have tried to get several branches of the government to reveal further information about the Roswell incident (Stacy 40). But, until the government does so there may be no clear answer. The U.S. government claims either the information doesn't exist, was destroyed in 1947, or would be a threat to national security. However, the truth can only be contained for so long (Sagan and Thornton 115).

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