

THE E.T. CONCEPT IN HISTORY

Lucius Farish

THIS contribution is occasioned by one of Gordon Creighton's remarks in a recent issue of *Flying Saucer Review*.¹ In discussing the history of those whom he terms the "Gentry," Creighton wondered if anyone prior to the early 1950s had claimed contact with "extraterrestrials."

Further, Mr. Creighton remarked, "What does seem certain, at any rate, is that, during the American Visitation of 1897 for example, not one of the entities allegedly met told any American that he was from another planet, and not a single American is reported in the press of that time as having thought there was anything 'interplanetary' about the whole affair."

Let us take these subjects one by one and see how well they stand the test of examination:

(1) Did anyone claim to have met inhabitants of other planets prior to 1952 or thereabouts? Yes, most definitely!

In the revised paperback edition of Vallée's *Anatomy of a Phenomenon*,² reference is made to the Jesuit scholar, Athanasius Kircher, who "'could not find his words' to convey to his readers the admiration he felt for the inhabitants of Venus. He describes them as young men of a wonderful beauty, whose clothes were as transparent as crystal . . ."

Athanasius Kircher (1601-1680) wrote on a wide variety of scientific subjects, but most of his writings have never been translated from the original Latin. However, in Gustav Davidson's *A Dictionary of Angels*,³ a bit more information is given concerning Kircher's "visits to various planets."

According to Davidson, Kircher was accompanied on his celestial flights by "the genius Cosmiel." On

Saturn, he found the "sinister" genii inhabiting that planet. The "guardian angels of all the virtues" were found living on the "Elysian shores of the planet Jupiter."

If some Latin scholar among the FSR readers should wish to translate more of Kircher's writings into English—a worthy project, it would seem—the interplanetary accounts will probably be found in two works—*Oedipus Aegyptiacus* (Rome, 1652) and *Voyage Ecstatique* (Rome, 1656).

Vallée also mentions one David Fabricius, a 17th Century writer who claimed to have met the "inhabitants of the Moon." Investigation of Fabricius' writings might well disclose more pertinent details.

Some time in the late 1800s, a book entitled *The Man From Mars* was published. The author, Thomas Blot, claimed to have met an inhabitant of the Red Planet in the mountains of California. The Martian had not arrived by spaceship, but through a process which seems to have been a mixture of astral projection and teleportation (if such a thing can be conceived!). Long discourses by the Martian, largely of a philosophical/sociological nature, are contained in the book. The only copy this writer has seen had the copyright date missing, so it is not possible to say precisely when the incident allegedly occurred. However, it was at the time of an extremely close approach of the planet Mars.

One modern contactee, Albert Coe of Beverly, New Jersey, claims to have been in contact with people now living on Mars and Venus who are descendants of a race which once lived on "Norca," a planet of the star *Tau Ceti*. Coe says his original contact occurred in 1920 and they have continued over the past 52 years.⁴

REJUVENATION FOLLOWS CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH UFO—Continued from page 13

as soon as we got there she suddenly awoke and fled in terror, scratching my arms as she escaped from me.

The Dead Catfish

The Bromatology analysis has not yet been received. The water of the small stream where the dead fish were found is normally drinkable. Two or three metres wide and about 50 or 60 cms. deep, its water is always crystal-clear and its flow is regular, indeed at times very fast. No more dead fish have been found since the first batch.

I must repeat that on the occasion of my second visit to the witness, and also all the other persons engaged in investigating this case, again emphasised their wish to remain anonymous and, despite our pleadings, they also insisted that even the name of the town be withheld. They consider that this is the only way in which they

can be sure of avoiding a mass invasion by reporters and curiosity-seeking intruders.

Buenos Aires, February 27, 1973.

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NOTE BY EDITOR OF FSR

The name of the town, the name of the witness, and the name of the Secretary to the local Government Office who participated in the interrogation of Sr. V.M., are on record with us, and in accordance with Señor Romaniuk's express request we shall not reveal them until advised that we may do so.

[As indicated in our note on p. 10, some of these details have been published in Germany, so the restriction is now lifted.—c.B.]

These are only a few examples of "pre-flying saucer" contactees.

(2) Did any of the "airship contactees" of 1896-97 claim to have met extraterrestrials? No—not exactly. Some of the people who met airship crews seem to have wondered if the "aeronauts" were terrestrials or otherwise, but no one openly voiced an opinion on the matter. There are only "hints," such as that of the Texas contactee who said he would not have been more astonished had he entertained inhabitants of the Moon. Or the Missouri man who met a nude man and woman from an airship and wondered if "Adam and Eve had come to Earth again." Or even Alexander Hamilton, the Kansas rancher who unwillingly provided a steak dinner for a group of airship occupants and wondered if they were "devils or angels."

(3) Did the newspapers of the airship era quote anyone as believing the strange aircraft were of E.T. origin? Again, the answer is a definite Yes.

The first reference to a possible E.T. source for the airships came in November 1896, during the wave of sightings on the U.S. West Coast.

In the November 24, 1896, edition of the Sacramento, California, *Bee*, the following letter appeared, headed "A Visitor From Mars?":

"To the Editor of the *Bee*—Sir: There is nothing improbable about our recent airship visitor. The only doubt that can arise is as to the origin of this particular aerial messenger.

"In my investigation of this subject, it would seem that this visitor is from our neighbouring planet Mars. We know, from the evidence of scientists and astronomers that Mars is many millions of years older than this earth. It is but reasonable to agree and conclude that the inhabitants of our nearest planetary neighbor, are more advanced in the sciences, and have more knowledge of the use of the great electric power than the denizens of the earth. Many thousands of years' experience have given them the perfection of inventions which would appear marvelous to our mundane people.

"The Lord Commissioner of Mars has evidently sent one of his electric aircraft on an exploring expedition to the younger but larger worlds.

"The airships are constructed of the lightest and strongest fabrics and the machinery is of the most perfect electrical work.

"Aluminium and glass, hardened by the same chemical process that forms our diamonds, contribute the chief material of their most perfect airships.

"When in use, these vessels, at a distance, have the appearance of a ball of fire, being operated wholly by the electric current generated on such vessel.

"The speed of our Martian ships is very great, and can be regulated to the rapidity of a thousand miles a second.

"In fact, with the Martian inventions, space is almost annihilated. These aerial craft can so adopt their courses that when they desire to rest they can anchor within certain degrees of latitude and wait

for the revolutions of the earth, for instance, bring any particular locality desired, much nearer them, without the necessity of any aerial navigation.

"In Mars, all the great electric power is converted by the waves of the ocean, thus making electricity a common utility for everything necessary for their arts, sciences, manufactures, commerce, and transportation.

"It is supposed that the Lord Commissioner of Mars, in sending out his airship is seeking to establish telegraphic or telephone communication between the planets.

"It is probable, that in a short time this embassy will make a call upon the President. Perhaps they are delaying until Major McKinley assumes the administration of affairs, on the theory that there may be more advanced ideas in this event.—W.A., Sacramento, November 24, 1896."

Consider the now-familiar elements in W.A.'s story: The "hardened" aluminium and glass used in airship construction were paralleled by Adamski's comments about metals which were processed to the point of translucence. Where W.A. described the airships as having the appearance of a "ball of fire" when seen at a distance, modern contactees and theorists speak of "heavy forcefields." The speed of the "Martian" airships—"a thousand miles a second"—and their ability to "orbit" over a precise area are details which seem not to belong to the world of 1896. Unless, of course, W.A. had obtained his information "at first hand"—as seems likely.

Who else thought of Martians in 1896-97? Several people, apparently. Following the rustling of Alexander Hamilton's heifer by "hideous people" in an airship, the Colony, Kansas, *Free Press* commented: "The *Free Press* having turned the 'NOCTURNAL AERIAL VISITOR' completely over in its mind, is now of the opinion that the airship is not of *this world*, but is probably operated by a party of scientists from the planet Mars, who are out, either on a lark, or a tour of inspection of the solar system in the cause of science."

The Van Buren, Arkansas, *Daily Argus* of May 12, 1897, featured the opinions of a local resident concerning the aerial visitations: "Everybody has a theory concerning the airship story. The most acceptable theory is that it is of mundane origin, and that the secret concerning it will soon be known. Capt. Bostick stands alone in his theory, he asserting that it is an invention of some inhabitant of Mars who is down on a prospecting tour and is studying our system of government."

The St. Louis, Missouri, *Post-Dispatch*, in an editorial entitled "What Light Do We See?," speculated that the airships might be "visitors from Mars, fearful, at the last, of invading the planet they have been seeking. It is certainly time for Camille Flammarion to spread out an illuminated problem in Euclid which the Martians could recognise as a message of peace and good will as well as a hospitable invitation to alight."

In Michigan, the Benton Harbor *Daily Palladium* of April 13, 1897, commented on the airship reports:

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TAIZÉ: A CASE RIGHT OUT OF THE ORDINARY

J. Tyrode

We take this extremely valuable and well investigated report, with the kind permission of the Editors, from the journal *Lumières dans la Nuit*, No. 122 of February, 1973. Translation from the French by Gordon Creighton.

THE EYEWITNESSES in this case fall into three groups:

1. Some 30 people or thereabouts, whose names, for the most part, are not known. Among them: Monsieur F. Tantot of Mâcon; Mlle. R. Faa de Masullas, of Sardinia; an anonymous man from Dijon. The rest of them are chance acquaintances of these three. The only one who might be found easily, should this be useful for our purposes, is an Italian student.
2. A group of four single witnesses, already named in 1.
3. Monsieur Tantot, on his way home, and a group of motorists, unknown, regarding whose identity no research has yet been conducted. We request them, should they so desire, to let us know who they are. Anonymity guaranteed.

The sites, and the weather on August 12, 1972

- i. A level area on the outskirts of the religious community of Taizé. (Geographical coordinates for Taizé: 46° 31'N; 4° 40'E, approximately.)
- ii. A spot on National Highway N.481, between Cluny and Mâcon, after one leaves Cluny. (Coordinates: 46° 26'N; 4° 39'E.) The BAVIC Line passes at 18 km. to the NNW of Taizé (see map showing details of the region). The weather was overcast, no stars being visible. Rain was falling during the termination of the Taizé sighting.

Taizé

The Taizé religious community, founded by Père Roger Schutz, a Protestant monk (and a Burgundian by origin) who studied Theology at Lausanne. Friar Roger is himself the director of the community at the present time. His life work is devoted to the cause of the Ecumenical Movement.

The sparse dwellings at Taizé, many of which, abandoned, have been bought up by Friar Roger, are scattered around on the crest of a hill (altitude about 250 metres) which dominates by some 50 metres or so the surrounding plain. The Friar has built a chapel there, to which people come from all over the world. In 1972, 35 nations took part in the celebrations organised there by him.

One meets there people from every walk of life, almost exclusively young people. These are housed in tents, like military bell tents, in Spartan conditions, sleeping on the ground in the wet weather and saying their prayers seated on the ground. These tents stand above the village, on the top of a hill, and there is a road leading up to them. On the whole of the terrain

on the other side of this road there are a cafeteria, and car-parks, and the young people have also fashioned a sort of rustic theatre there, cut out of the bare ground, where they are able to gather together for meetings. This theatre is right on the edge of the crest of the hill, and it was here that the sighting began.

This extraordinary affair lasted from 2.00 a.m. to 5.00 a.m. on August 12, 1972.

Two o'clock in the morning

A large group of young men and girls were up there, talking. Who were they? This can only be ascertained with very great difficulty. There were about thirty of them, but they are not anxious to give their identities. If it is absolutely indispensable, we could get the names of four of them, but the declarations already secured from three of them are sufficiently explicit and detailed for us to be able to draw up a circumstantial report on the facts of the case.

Among those present there were thus the young man from Dijon, Mlle. Renata Faa de Masullas, Monsieur F. Tantot, plus the young Italian student whose name I do not know at the present moment. None of those present believed in flying saucers, or at any rate none had ever taken any interest in such matters.

The Alarm is Given: Arrival of the Object

The group of youngsters were in the middle of their discussions. Suddenly Mlle. Renata Faa, facing towards the valley, saw "something" coming down out of the sky.

In order to give a better grasp of the scene, let us explain that, from the observation point where they were, they could see, towards the West, several rows of hills. Ahead of the 250-metre high slope on which they were gathered, they could see first of all another crest of the same height, then beyond that a second crest rising to 300 metres, and finally a third one beyond that, the top of which reaches 418 metres. These ridges are separated by shallow valleys, the downward slopes of which are gentle, while the rises on the other sides of the valleys are a bit steeper, putting one in mind of the steps of a stairway. Commencing just in front of the witnesses was a smooth descending area occupied by a vast ploughed field, bordered on the far limit by a hedge.

So Mlle. Renata was the first to see the approach of what she took to be some sort of star, and she shouted to her companions to look, but they did not look in the right direction and failed to see the motion of the "star," which had been too brief. Meanwhile,