

I should return home, I will go home tomorrow. But if you wish me to stay longer, I shall agree to do so. That is why I came.

[End of the A. V. Boas deposition.]

Notes by Gordon Creighton

¹ There is a discrepancy between this and Dr. Buhler's version as given by me in *FLYING SAUCER REVIEW* for January/February 1965. In Dr. Buhler's version, Antônio Villas Boas said that these short projecting things "like planks" made a 30° turn when the machine took off. I think it possible that Dr. Buhler and Dr. Mario Prudente Aquino (who, as Dr. Buhler tells me, spent only about 1½ hours interviewing Antônio, whereas Dr. Olavo Fontes had Antônio with him in Rio de Janeiro for several days) may have misunderstood this point, and that their mention of a 30° turn really refers to the movement of the rudder. There are a good many minor discrepancies of this kind, and Dr. Buhler says he may make another trip to the Interior to see Antônio and try to clear them all up.

² Here is another discrepancy. In the account published by Dr. Buhler, if I have understood it correctly, there is no reference to the man having pointed first at himself, then at the ground and then at the sky. Instead, he is represented as having gone down the ladder with A.V.B. and, on reaching the ground, as having "made two holes in the earth, pointing first to one hole and himself and then skywards, and

then to the other hole and to the earth and A.V.B." (though I notice with regret that in our attempt to squeeze the story into the available space, we did not describe this miming by the man as fully as we should have done). This, then, is another discrepancy to be ironed out. One wonders whether something has crept in here from another case? (For example, in the José Higgins case one of the entities allegedly made holes in the ground and pointed to them as though they represented planets.)

³ In his new book, *El Gran Enigma de los Platillos Volantes*, Antonio Ribera reproduces an absolutely astonishing photograph, said to have been taken in the Italian mountains near Genoa in June 1963, which appeared in the newspaper *Domenica del Corriere* of September 9, 1963. The photograph shows a landed craft which I believe (as Ribera does) to be **identical with A.V.B.'s machine**. It shows the flat "dish" on top, the two short projecting "planks" or "wings", the "cat-walk", the ladder, and the three legs. It can be seen quite clearly that these legs resemble those of a camera tripod, being thicker at the top and with a square cross-section, while the lower part is thinner and appears to be round in cross-section. (See also Antonio Ribera's letter in *FLYING SAUCER REVIEW* for May/June 1965, with our artist's line reproduction of the machine shown in the Italian photograph.)

[Dr. Olavo Fontes's medical report will be given in Part 5 of this article.]

MAIL BAG

Correspondence is invited from our readers, but they are asked to keep their letters short. Unless letters give the sender's full name and address (not necessarily for publication) they cannot be considered. The Editor would like to remind correspondents that it is not always possible to acknowledge every letter personally, so he takes this opportunity of thanking all who write to him.

The truth about Aurora

Sir,—As a postscript to our article 'Airships over Texas' we wish to inform the readers of the *REVIEW* of new developments regarding the alleged airship observation in Aurora, Texas, of 17 April 1897. Given the highly unusual character of the report, we brought it to the attention of Dr. Hynek, the Air Force's scientific consultant, who very kindly proposed to make a private investigation of the matter. A friend of Dr. Hynek in Texas checked our references to the local papers and sent his conclusions as follows: "After reading these accounts, I drove to Aurora and stopped at the only service station there. The proprietor of the service station is named Oates and the station and his house are on what was Judge Proctor's place. It seems as if Aurora was once the largest town in Wise County and was also the county seat and Judge Proctor was a Justice of the Peace. Mr. Oates would neither confirm

nor deny the authenticity of the story but he told me to contact a Mr. Oscar Lowry a few miles down the road in the town of Newark, Texas, which, incidentally, is another thriving metropolis of slightly over 300 inhabitants.

"I found Mr. Lowry just where I was told I would, 'down the road apiece by the schoolhouse.' When I told him what I wanted he asked me to sit down on a bale of hay (I found him in his barn) and he would tell me the story. He was about eleven years old when this happened and he also told me that no less than twenty others have been there before me.

"Mr. Lowry said that Aurora was a busy little town until the railroads put down their new tracks and neglected to include Aurora in their plans. As a result, the town began to diminish as people moved to be near the railroad. E. E. Haydon was a cotton buyer and writer who lived in Aurora and wanted to do something to help keep people in town and to make it a tourist attrac-

tion. He got the idea, I suppose, from the actual sighting he had read about and made up his story. The T. J. Weems that was supposed to have been a U.S. Signal Service officer was actually the town blacksmith and, according to Mr. Lowry, the Proctor place never had a windmill on it. To further substantiate the hoax, the cemetery is a Masonic Cemetery and a chart is kept on who is buried there. There are no graves unaccounted for. Mr. Lowry said that Mr. Haydon later told others about his story and many went on letting people believe it.

"The old courthouse is gone in Aurora and Decatur is the county seat of Wise and just a few houses are left in Aurora."

The authors feel that this clarification of the Aurora mystery only adds to the flavour of the entire episode. We are thankful to Dr. Hynek and his friend in Texas for providing us with this colourful new piece of Americana. D. B. Hanlon and J. F. Vallée, Chicago, Illinois.