

Playa Sangrilá photographs (Uruguay)
Tynemouth UFO
Dogs disturbed at Temagog (Australia)
Object seen from Observatory (France)
Landing report from Delphos (U.S.A.)
The Aldridge case: P.C. Leek's photos
(investigated by Dr. J. Allen Hynek
and J. Hennessey)

We regret to state that in spite of this impressive record *FSR Case Histories* does not yet receive the support from our readers that it merits: its circulation

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

FROM time to time we receive rather bitter complaints from some of you about the lateness and irregularity of deliveries of *FSR*, and about letters which go unanswered. You are quite right to complain, but we should like you to know the reasons behind these troubles. There is a world of difference between making excuses and giving explanations; and if those of us responsible for *FSR* were a bunch of amateurs, then it would be excuses we would be making to you. But we are all professionals in our various fields, and none more so than our Editor; so it is explanations I shall offer you in the hope you will understand our difficulties; and, in understanding, forgive us. We need your forgiveness because we depend entirely upon our subscribers, and it is exceptionally galling to us to know we are letting you down.

There are twin roots to our troubles; the first is lack of money—in that we lack the advantage of backing by a well-to-do Society or other vested interest—and this leads directly to the second, voluntary labour. I wonder how many of you realise that every member of our organisation is an unpaid volunteer, working solely for the love of it, and receiving—in the case of only one or two—a meagre sum for out-of-pocket expenses. Our staff are dedicated to the belief that we have a duty to you, and to anyone else into whose hands our journal falls. Our Editor devotes his whole private life to *FSR*, and he is out of pocket each year to the tune of hundreds of pounds: each time we hold a committee meeting in my home, it costs my friends hard cash to get there and get back again, and we don't think it right for the likes of us to take expenses.

We carry on primarily because the Editor is determined never to give up; and he won't give up until he gives up the ghost, just as his predecessor did. But the trouble with any enterprise which is run for the love of it, is that the moment there is a breakdown or slow-up

has grown, and continues to grow, but too slowly at present. The 1,250 regular readers is not enough. We need 2,000—ideally more even than that—to keep the publication alive. What we fail to understand is how the other 1,750 regular subscribers to *Flying Saucer Review* can put up with seeing only part of the world-wide picture.

We plan to continue to publish *FSR Case Histories* for some time to come, and hope that those readers who have not already done so will seize the opportunity to take out a subscription and give much-needed support to this worthwhile venture.

of any kind, owing to health or other factors, there are no spare lovers to take our places, and the pile-up sets in immediately.

There is also the perennial trouble with delay at the printers, and our printers have experienced in full the many difficulties associated with the Miners' strike and resulting power cuts.

Then there is the question of the unanswered letters. Without a high-powered secretary, our Editor just cannot answer more than a few of the letters which cascade on him every week. He has his work cut out, not only with the exhausting and frustrating work of actually editing, arranging and proof-reading *FSR*, but even with keeping in touch with our generous contributors, who are also unpaid.

You might perhaps believe that the pavement is littered with talented men and women with time on their hands, who are just panting to offer their services free to help our cause. If our cause was dumb animals, the Red Cross, battered babies, or the rehabilitation of criminals, we would only have to crook a finger to have secretaries and clerical assistants queuing up on the doorstep. But our cause is not a favoured charity, or one with which the ordinary man can identify himself: it is a mysterious cause, a puzzling cause, and a challenging cause; a cause in which we have to be very careful that it is not a Venusian from Victoria, or a re-incarnated Archangel Gabriel who is waiting on *our* doorstep to offer their services gratis.

So, dear subscribers, be patient with us. We could, of course, reduce our costs, and perhaps pay one assistant, by giving you an inferior journal mimeographed on lavatory paper, and filled with meaningless saucer-droppings. But we won't allow that. Standards of both content and appearance must, we believe, be sustained at all costs; and that is what we manage to do, regrettably at the expense of irking and irritating our readers.

CHARLES H. GIBBS-SMITH.

Editor's note: We have come through a nightmare period since the end of 1970, with the odds stacked high against us: the Postal Workers' strike, Mrs. Spencer's illness and resignation, the temporary move to Beckenham, the power cuts, post affected by the rail go-slow, and our recent move to a new 'home'. I mention this list of 'troubles' in support of Mr. Gibbs-Smith's timely explanation: however, he has omitted one small, but important, point. This was a desperate occasion earlier this year when it was discovered that, unknown to us, an editorial assistant had suffered a breakdown in health and had failed to send to the printers vital pages for the January/February *FSR*, an omission which added more than two weeks to the delay already experienced. And now, may I thank Mrs. Joan Odell for having housed and distributed our magazine for a year, and welcome Mrs. Enid Guinness, a reader volunteer who has taken Mrs. Odell's place.

AN ENIGMATIC FIGURE OF THE XVIIth CENTURY

Aime Michel

The third of a series of articles written specially for *Flying Saucer Review*.

Translation from the French by
Gordon Creighton

EVERY ufologist who intends not to forego his curiosity exposes himself to two opposite dangers: namely, of taking a UFO for something else, and of taking something else for a UFO.

These dangers are especially menacing when we are dealing with ancient events for which we have no other resort but History. There are certain of these facts however that are so extraordinary that it is difficult to avoid being fascinated by them. I will relate one of them here, briefly and with little documentation, leaving it to competent historians to answer the problems to which it gives rise, if that be possible and if indeed those problems exist.

One of the greatest religious figures of the XVIIth century is Saint Vincent de Paul, born in 1579 in the little village of Pouÿ, near Dax, in the present French département of Landes, and dying in Paris on September 27, 1660. Founder of the Order known as the Lazarists, Monsieur Vincent, as he was called, illuminated, with his love for mankind, his piety, tender but never fanatical, and his intelligence, a particularly cruel period of history, a period marked by bloody wars between France, Spain, England and pretty well all the countries of Western Europe and by all manner of disorders. In that pitiless world, Monsieur Vincent spent his life in succouring the poor and unfortunate, the victims of the wars, the prisoners, the lost children, and in furnishing the image of a different sort of mankind.

Endowed with a superior mind, he commanded the attention of all who knew him, from the poorest peasants up to the Popes and the Kings themselves. Even those who maybe now read his name here for the first time know him already without realising it: who has not seen, at least once in his life, a little sister of St. Vincent de Paul, with her celebrated birdlike, winged, coif?

Well now, in the life of this great man, a life that has been written about and researched many, many times by scholars, there is a gap. From July 1605 till June 28, 1607, nothing is known of him apart from what he himself has said about it, and what he has said about it is even stranger than our ignorance of it.

From here on, in what follows, I shall be quoting the earliest of his biographers, Louis Abelly (1603-1691), Bishop of Rodez (département of L'Aveyron), author of a *Life of Saint Vincent de Paul*, in two volumes, the first edition of which, according to Larousse, was dated 1664, and of which I have the third edition, dated 1684.¹ Abelly knew Vincent de Paul well. As can be seen from their dates (his huge book having appeared only four years after the death of Monsieur Vincent), Abelly

studied his hero during the lifetime of the latter. One can also see, in reading it, that he had had access to numerous family documents and religious and legal documents, as well as to letters and correspondence, much of it highly personal. The documentary part of the book, one might add, consists principally of straight copies, pure and simple, of these documents.

Abelly is a person of mediocre intelligence, with no imagination. In this biography of a saint, designed to edify the reader, there is not one tiniest allusion to the least little miraculous happening. The saint appears to us here as a worthy contemporary of Descartes. He is a Descartes of virtue, with tenderness added. In his life there are no marvels, no supernatural phenomena, no devils, no angels, no miraculous healings, and God appears in it only through the love that the saint inspires.

But . . . there is that two-year gap. Let us follow the documents copied by Abelly.

Vincent is the third of the six children of Jean de Paul and his wife Bertrande de Moras, poor peasants "making the most of their soil by their own hands." The exceptional intelligence of the boy is noticed by "a Prior of the neighbourhood." So he is sent to college, and then to the University of Toulouse, where he distinguishes himself by his "wisdom" (i.e. his intelligence) and his "modesty". Those who have dealings with him during this period already see in him a saint.

At the beginning of 1605, writes Abelly, Vincent (*he is now 26 years old—A.M.*) went on a journey to Bordeaux, for motives unknown to us; but there is reason to believe (it is Abelly speaking) that it was for certain great advantages that it was desired to secure for him; for, in one of his letters written at this period, Vincent says he had embarked upon the journey ". . . for a matter which called for a great outlay of money and which he could not declare (specify) without being foolhardy (risk of being mistaken)."

Abelly, very stupidly, supposes that Vincent wanted to get himself appointed to be a bishop through the "mediation" of a duke. An absurd supposition, because throughout his life Vincent will never cease to refuse all titles and honours, even those coming from the Pope.

Vincent returns to Toulouse, and then sets out again, this time for Marseilles, ". . . to attend to a matter concerning an inheritance." And it is there that he vanishes, in July 1605, to reappear, only after two years, at Aigues Mortes (100 kilometres to the west of Marseilles).

Naturally this model young man gave his masters and patrons an explanation for his absence. The explanation is as simple as (at first sight) it seems likely. We have the full account of it, in Vincent's own handwriting. This is

a letter, dated July 24, 1607, and addressed to "Monsieur de Commet the younger." If we are to believe what he says, just as he was due to return to Toulouse by road, Vincent had changed his mind and had taken a ship bound for Narbonne.

"The wind would have been favourable enough for us to have arrived that day at Narbonne, which would have been a distance of fifty leagues, if three Turkish brigantines (the brigantine is a square-sailed schooner—A.M.) had not made towards us and attacked us, having been skirting the shore of the Gulf of Lions in order to catch the boats coming from Beaucaire, where there was a fair."

So, according to what Vincent tells us, he is made prisoner by the Turks, taken to Tunis, sold as a slave, then sold again, the victim of a hundred adventures, all of which he relates in detail, but which I shall refrain from reporting here for one very simple reason: namely, that if the reader wants to know them he has only to stand up and take down from his library shelf Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and turn to the story of the Prisoner of Algiers. For Algiers substitute Tunis, change a few trifling episodes, and it's all there: including the renegade Christians, the Muslim masters' womenfolk, seized with pity for the handsome young Christian slaves, etc., etc.

O.K. then. The two accounts are similar. So one of them has copied the other. Which . . . ? The answer is easy: Vincent's letter is dated July 24, 1607, while the first edition of *Don Quixote* (in Madrid) was in 1605. The plagiarist is consequently the saint. This is where, first of all, the historians will have to pronounce their verdict: is it possible that the incredible similarity in the two accounts can be explained by *two identical adventures*? Would I have been less struck by the resemblances if I had read numerous accounts of captivity under the Turks? (Incidentally, it was not I who made this discovery—if it be one—but a Lazarist Father, a spiritual son of Saint Vincent, and of whom I shall speak later.)

We know that, for his captivity story, given in *Don Quixote*, Cervantes took as his inspiration his own captivity, from September 1575 to October 1580, that is to say thirty years earlier. In thirty years, many things had changed. For example, in 1605 the Turks were no longer holding Frenchmen as slaves, and Vincent himself says so: he declares that, in order to deceive the French Consul, the Turks had passed his party off as Spaniards. But is it then so difficult for a Frenchman, speaking his own language, to make himself known?

All right, people will say. This piece of plagiarism is, after all, of no importance. The young Vincent must have had some nice innocent adventure, some little love affair that would not have been approved of by his patrons. So, to give a good explanation, he will have simply copied out a passage from an obscure Spanish novel not yet known in France.

But, in that case the subsequent behaviour of the saint would indeed have been incomprehensible. Let us return to Abelly, who relates the history of this letter, which is our sole documentary source covering the two mysterious years.

The letter was found among the papers of a Canon of Dax named Saint-Martin by the latter's nephew in 1658, fifty years after it had been written.

The nephew, thinking that Monsieur Vincent would find comfort in reading his adventures of long ago (!) sent him a copy of it, two years before his death. But Monsieur Vincent read it and then threw it on the fire! Then he wrote to Monsieur de Saint-Martin thanking him for the copy and asking him for the original, and six months before his death he repeated this request with great insistence.

Suspecting that the letter contained something laudatory of Monsieur Vincent and that he only wanted it back in order to have it burnt as he had burnt the copy, the person who was writing at the dictation of Monsieur Vincent slipped into the letter to M. de Saint-Martin a note asking him to send the desired original to someone *other than* Monsieur Vincent if he did not want it to be destroyed.

Which was in fact done, and it is thanks to this that we know about it. But it can be seen how anxious Vincent was, as he lay at death's door, to make every effort to secure the destruction of the only document that gave a plausible explanation for his missing two years. His attitude is puzzling in the highest degree. His biography is indeed full of features indicating that on every possible occasion he would always condemn his own shortcomings and errors, even when they were mortifying.² Had he lied in that letter, *and had he been able to proclaim it*, there is scarcely any doubt that he would have done so. He did not do so.

So, either he did not lie, or he was unable to re-establish the truth. But, if he had not lied, why then this anxiety, this obsession, shown by the two missives which he sent? If we reflect about this attitude of his, we find only one explanation for it: being prevented by some unknown reason from re-establishing the truth, his scrupulous soul desired at least to destroy the lie. He did not manage to do so, and History is forced to record a major enigma.

For, let us look at the sequel. The young Vincent, just back from two years of slavery immediately after the termination of his studies (his diploma is dated October 1604), thus returns to his native soil at Aigues Mortes. Who then is he? A little peasant with a degree in Theology, who had not been heard of for two years. He has, it is true, one witness of his captivity; he has brought back with him a "repentant former renegade from Christianity" (who we shall never hear mentioned again). But even so, with or without a repentant renegade, he is still a nobody. Well then, what does he do? What would have been the most likely thing for this son, mourned for two years by his family, to do on returning to his homeland? It would seem that the first thing for any normal man to have done would be to go and embrace his father and mother.

Not a bit of it. No sooner is Vincent back at Aigues Mortes with his "renegade", than they set off in search of the Vice-Legate of the Pope, at Avignon. And this important personage of the ancient papal capital at Avignon not only receives the unknown little graduate and his "renegade", but immediately sends them off to see the Pope in Rome, *and departs for Rome with them*.

The attitude of Pope Paul V towards the little Gascon

peasant is no less surprising. He keeps Vincent there close by him in Rome, until the end of 1608, dining at the Vice-Legate's table and "liberally furnished with all his needs." After which, the Pope sends him off to Paris, *charged with a mission to King Henry IV of France*. Nothing is known about this mission, except that it was (and remained) "secret". He was accommodated in the Faubourg Saint Germain in Paris, among the attendants of Queen Marguerite, and was a very close friend of Sieur Dufresne, her secretary.

We will not follow Monsieur Vincent throughout his long life. One sole point (at any rate among those that are known to me) is of interest to us here, and that is the reason why he should have explained his two-year absence by "having been in the hands of the Turks," rather than by any other sort of story.

His contemporaries, who attribute to him no "miracles" in the supernatural sense of the word, nevertheless testify that he "knew things". For example, he knew how to cure gravel—which modern doctors call *urinary lithiasis*. Not by prayers, or the laying on of hands, or by any other magical means, but by means of remedies, just as our present-day medicine does. The most disturbing reference to this "knowledge" of his is to be found in the same letter to the "Monsieur de Commet the younger" referred to above, in which Monsieur Vincent gives the account of his alleged captivity. This Monsieur Commet Junior had recently lost his elder brother, who had died, in fact, from gravel. And this is what Monsieur Vincent writes to him:

"Oh, how many times have I since wished that I had been in slavery before the death of Monsieur your Brother! *For I think that, had I known the secret which I now send you, he would not have died.*"

This "secret" was a medicinal prescription that has not been preserved. But the important fact is that, in the lines preceding the two above-mentioned sentences of Monsieur Vincent, he explains where he got the knowledge of this "secret". Let us hear what he has to say:

"In Tunis I was sold to a fisherman who was soon constrained to get rid of me, as there is nothing that agrees so ill with me as the sea. This fisherman sold me in turn to an old man, a Spagyric Doctor, a Sovereign extractor of Quintessences, and a most humane and kindly man, who had laboured for fifty years in search of the Philosopher's Stone. He loved me greatly, and took pleasure in discoursing to me on Alchemy, and then about his own Law (the Koran) towards which he made every effort to draw me, promising me great riches, and all his knowledge.

"God always wrought in me a sure and steady belief in my deliverance through the prayers that I assiduously directed to Him and to the Virgin Mary by Whose intercession I do believe firmly that I was delivered. The hope that I had of seeing you again, Monsieur, thus made me more attentive to gaining the knowledge of the method for curing the gravel, in which I saw the old man do marvels every day. He taught me it, and even had me prepare and administer the ingredients. Oh, how many times, etc. . . ." (here follow the two sentences already quoted above).

So (as Monsieur Vincent asserts), the "secrets" which

he knows were got from an Arab alchemist who was "a Sovereign extractor of Quintessences." I don't know what the reader will be thinking about this Arab alchemist capable of curing the malady that, even half a century later, was to send Cromwell to a better world. Monsieur Vincent states specifically that he was the alchemist's slave from September 1605 to August 1606. He does not tell us by means of what language the Arab "took pleasure in discoursing to him on Alchemy," when, according to what he himself says, he had only been in Tunis a few weeks. The whole affair is strange, to say the very least.

* * * * *

Finally I must say something about the Lazarist Father to whom I referred at the start of this article. He wrote to me following upon a piece that I had had published in a review and in which I spoke of the possible influence of the Rosicrucians on Cyrano de Bergerac, Descartes, and other authors of the beginning of the XVIIth century. In it I expressed the idea that the Rosicrucians had perhaps played an important part in the educational formation of some of the founders of Experimental Science, that they had perhaps even contributed greatly to the first discoveries. My paper was not an erudite one: it was confined to the formulation of the questions, and the expression of the hope that some research might be done in that direction.

I read the letter sent to me by the Reverend Father, answered it, and then, as what he had said concerned only Saint Vincent de Paul, a personage in whom I was then quite certain that I would never be interested, I threw away the letter without noting down the address of the writer. With the result that what I am now going to report is unsupported by any references. I report it in the hope that erudite readers of *Flying Saucer Review* may be able to rediscover these precious references, and perhaps even the name of my correspondent (a Frenchman), if he has published anything.

The Reverend Father in question explained to me in his letter that he was working on a new biography of the founder of his Order, employing modern critical methods; that the two-year gap was a great puzzle to him; that the account of the captivity in Tunis looked like a plagiarism from Cervantes and presented difficulties; that the hypothesis that the Rosicrucians might have played a more important rôle in the ideas of that epoch was an interesting clue for him, as the disappearance of Monsieur Vincent might then be explicable by some fact-finding mission, which his Superiors might have entrusted in secrecy to this highly intelligent and devout young student, to go to the various places in Europe where there were influential Rosicrucians; that such a mission to people who were very learned and very clever but who were bound to discretion and prudence owing to the intolerance of the age might then explain perfectly certain incomprehensible facts that had been reported by those who were eye-witnesses to the visit of Monsieur Vincent to Avignon (to the Vice-Legate) and to Rome.

For, continued the Lazarist Father, both at Avignon and in Rome, before the Vice-Legate and before the Pope and the Cardinals, Monsieur Vincent, so these witnesses had said, *had displayed machines that were incomprehensible, one of them being in the form of a*

head, with bust, which talked. The machine, so they said, had actually talked before all that audience of learned and sceptical men. The secret of how it worked (or of its origin) had, it seems, been imparted in confidence only to the highest authorities. My Lazarist correspondent was very worried about all these matters, which "did not sound genuine," and which nevertheless would have explained so well the thundering success enjoyed by Monsieur Vincent on his return.

Who was Monsieur Vincent?

With or without a machine that talked, the personality and the deeds of Monsieur Vincent merit our close attention. His two-year disappearance remains a puzzle, the suspect explanations that he gives for it; his knowledge and learning; the absolutely *improbable* unfoldment of his life right from the very moment of his return, *in an epoch of History when only men of noble or bourgeois origins had a chance of doing anything whatsoever or of approaching the great ones of this world*—the whole affair is puzzling and perplexing. The latest French historical encyclopaedia says of him:

"By reason of the wide scope of his work, the moral balance-sheet of which it is beyond the power of any figures to portray, he has been called the Great Saint of the Great Century."³

He died on Monday, September 27, 1660, at half-past-four in the morning, "at the very hour," says his biographer, "at which for forty years past he had been wont to invoke the Holy Spirit." His body did not assume the usual rigidity of corpses. A commission of doctors and surgeons performed an autopsy, and found inside his spleen "a bone of the width of a white *écu*, and of a length greater than the width," which these learned men judged to be "most extraordinary."

To all of which I will now add a fact that I only discovered while writing this article, and not without being moved. Looking up the village of Poüy, his birthplace, in the *Dictionnaire des Communes de France*, and not seeing it there, I got out the *Michelin* map of the Landes region, and I found that "*The birthplace of Saint Vincent de Paul*" is marked thereon for tourists

(*Michelin* map No. 78, *pli* 7, on Departmental Highway No. 27, between Dax and Buglose).

Saint Vincent de Paul was born on BAVIC. Not "near" Bavic, twenty, or ten, or five kilometres from it, but exactly on the line.

Notes

- ¹ *La Vie du Vénérable Serviteur de Dieu Vincent de Paul, divisée en deux livres*, by Louys Abelly, Evesque de Rodez. Third edition, Paris, 1684.
- ² Abelly, Vol. II, Chapters 15, 16, 23, 24, 27, etc.
- ³ Robert Philippe and collaborators: *Histoire de la France*, Volume 1550-1650. CAL, Paris, 1971, p. 118.

Editor's Note

It is probable that the point of this article will be more fully appreciated when readers come to the fourth of Aimé Michel's current series, due for publication in the next issue of FSR.

Meanwhile, for those readers new to the study of UFO reports, and who are unaware of the meaning and significance of the BAVIC line, it is noted that it is a line which when drawn on the map runs through Bayonne and Vichy in France. Discovered by M. Michel and labelled an "Orthotenic" line, it is that straight geographic line on which were located a number of sighting points of UFOs—including those at Bayonne and Vichy—on September 24, 1954. This was shortly after the beginning of the great autumn "wave" of that year. The full account of this and of the discovery of several other multi-point orthotenic lines is given in M. Michel's famous book *Flying Saucers and the Straight Line Mystery* (Criterion Books, New York, 1958); the French versions (they followed the English-language edition) are *Mystérieux Objets Célestes* (Arthaud) and augmented editions published by Editions Planète (114 Champs Elysées, Paris 8) in 1966 and 1967.

An interesting feature of BAVIC is that a number of other incidents have taken place on the line, which also features prominently in M. Michel's *Palaeolithic UFO Shapes* (see FSR Vol. 15, No. 6, November/December 1969).

TRANSLATORS NOTE

MIGUEL DE CERVANTES MSAAVEDRA (1547-1616), immortal author of the equally immortal *Don Quijote*, was a soldier against the Turks and Moors between 1570 and 1575. The most important engagement in which he served was the great Spanish naval victory of Lepanto (1571) over the Turkish fleet, at which he conducted himself with conspicuous gallantry. Besides receiving a gunshot wound in the chest, he had his left hand permanently crippled, for which he was proud ever after to be known by the nickname of *el manco de Lepanto* (the one-handed man of Lepanto). The Spanish Commander-in-Chief, Don Juan of Austria, promoted him to the grade of *soldado aventajado*, which meant higher pay. A few years later, Cervantes was in line for a possible

commission as an officer, but this would require a visit to Madrid, so, with his brother Rodrigo, who had been serving with him, he embarked for Spain in the galley *Sol*.

But, six days later (September 26, 1575), the *Sol* was captured by the renegade Christian turned pirate, Arnaute Mami, and Cervantes and all the rest of the Spaniards were sold into slavery in Algiers. As Aimé Michel has mentioned, Cervantes was a slave for five years (not two as in the alleged case of Monsieur Vincent), for he was unlucky enough to be carrying letters of recommendation to some important people in Spain, so the Moors thought he must be a far bigger fish than he really was. It took all of five years for his family, aided by the philanthropic order of the Trinitarians, to raise the ransom of 600 gold ducats

which the Moors demanded. His brother Rodrigo had been ransomed earlier.

Those who desire to consult Cervantes' description of his own captivity among the Moors will find it in the *Captive's Tale* (Chapters 39, 40, and 41 of *Don Quijote*—or *Don Quixote*—as the word used to be written in Spanish).

Owing to the age and great rarity of Abelly's *Life of Saint Vincent* (certainly never translated into English) I imagine that only a few French readers will be able, like the unknown Lazarist Father and Aimé Michel, to compare the two texts for themselves. Whether it really is a case of plagiarism should be easy enough to establish from the minor details.

That Monsieur Vincent himself can

(Continued on page 17)

A REMARKABLE CASE FROM MENDOZA, ARGENTINA

Antonio Baragiola

IN a covering letter to Monsieur F. Lagarde, I wrote:

"For those who have behind them years of experience in these matters, the job of analysing the data furnished by witnesses of UFOs has now become, as one might say, a matter of habit and routine, and all too frequently the testimony of the witness is so poor, with so few details of any scientific value whatsoever, that sometimes it would perhaps be better just to fling it into the wastepaper basket than to give it any mention.

"This time however the situation is far different indeed, for I am so intrigued by this fantastic sighting that I am making an Editorial on it—not at all like my usual modest circulars. But I am doing so in the hope that the various data contained in this piece of reporting will at last produce an explosion—and a violent one—amid the blind indifference of the bureaucrats who have set themselves up as investigators.

"But let us hope it will be an explosion that will blow open the windows; that it will let in the fantastic, flitting to and fro like a butterfly; that it will open the way for the extraterrestrial that is already present, here and now, among us. For what ails mankind is not so much its lack of knowledge of the unknown, but its *mental myopia in order not to want to see* what lies beyond its own constructs.

"Señor Julio Suárez Marzal is a Mendozan painter of world renown. He is recorded in a bibliography which is so impressive that it would take several pages to put it down on paper, and even then without mentioning actual paintings. Just to give an idea, we may say that his *curriculum vitae* shows him to be Professor of the Department of Painting (a full-time university appointment) in the School of Plastic Arts of the National University of Cuyo. He is the founder of the "Emiliano Guinazu" Provincial Museum of Fine Arts, Casa Fader de Mendoza. He has taken part in many art exhibitions and has many times been mentioned by the most discriminating of art critics. He is an intimate friend of Victor Petorutti ("the Argentinian Picasso"), and a great expert on the Andes, for his sensitive spirit feels strongly drawn, ever since his childhood, towards the majestic summits of the Andean peaks. He is a specialist in mural paintings, etc.

"As regards those who, in addition to Sr. Marzal, also saw the UFO, we will mention that in fact the latter was only a few metres from the Headquarters of the 8th Mountain Infantry Brigade of the Argentinian Army. The importance of the scene of the sighting lies in the fact that, being of high security significance, it is where the Headquarters of the 8th Brigade is located, and the building houses not only the quartermaster's department and the Intelligence department, but also the permanent communications centre (radio) through

A French rendering of this report appears in *Lumières dans la Nuit* (No. 115, December 1971) and Monsieur F. Lagarde of their Editorial Board has very kindly sent us in addition a full copy of the French text with the message that it is the express wish and hope of Señor Baragiola that we too will find room to publish the case. As Monsieur Lagarde observes, it is indeed most remarkable and most important, on account of the circumstances, the new and highly valuable details recorded, and the exceptional calibre and standing of the eyewitness, Professor Julio Suárez Marzal. We express our thanks to all parties concerned for the special permission to publish the account.

It must be borne in mind that Gordon Creighton's translation is not from the Spanish original (which we have not yet seen) but from Mme. Boulvin's French rendering. The processes of double translation are bound to have impaired much of the style and flavour of the original, but we feel confident that our version contains no error of substance.

—EDITOR.

which contact is maintained via the army radio network with all military garrisons in the Mendoza region.

"What follows is Sr. Marzal's own account, and all the sketches and analyses are by him.

"*Publication of this report in the daily press or in journals of general circulation is forbidden unless the special consent of the investigator and of the eyewitness has first been obtained (this implies no commercial considerations).*

"*Lumières Dans La Nuit* and those other journals to which the present letter is addressed are authorised to publish the story, and I request that they will publish it in full."

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Before we proceed with the report I would like to emphasise the great skill of the witness, Sr. Marzal, in grasping and explaining details. He was so impressed by what he had seen that he spent a considerable period of time in going over in his mind and recording with precision every least detail of the phenomenon he had observed.

Statement by the witness, Señor Julio Suárez Marzal

The Place Where It Occurred

The observation took place on May 24, 1971, from a dentist's surgery on the first floor of a building on the calle Pedro Molina, right in the very centre of the city of Mendoza, with a wide open space towards the south, extending as far as the promenades of the civilian quarter. We observed, in the direction of the Military Circle, far off and high in the sky, an unidentified object.

I remained alone in the dentist's surgery, while Dr. Walter Griehl ran to get some binoculars, returning just as the object was disappearing.