

Spacemen in Saxon Times

by W. R. Drake

A.D. 35 "And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus and suddenly there shined around him a light from heaven." (Acts, Chapter IX, Verse 3.)

PAUL, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, pursued the road to Damascus vowing to bring men and women, followers of the recently crucified Christ, bound unto Jerusalem. Suddenly this dramatic light from heaven transformed Saul, the persecutor, into Paul, the Apostle, whose teachings promoted the Christian Church.

For nearly two thousand years theologians have deemed this light to be a spiritual illumination, a catharsis, awakening the soul, making the sinner reborn into a saint. Believing our earth the unique abode of life in God's Creation devout Christians throughout the centuries interpreted in poetic terms the light from heaven as a divine inspiration regenerating the new Paul. Such sudden and wondrous redemption has graced many of our world's great men and mystics of all religions, but let us for the moment discard the inhibitions of conditioned beliefs and consider Saul's conversion as factually true. Could a beam of light under intelligent control from the skies have shone upon Saul, and a voice directed him to evangelise for Christ, as centuries earlier identical lights and voices had inspired Abraham and Moses, and as today the very same lights and voices are alleged to prompt sensitives and flying saucer 'contacts' all over the world? If such a startling interpretation can be substantiated, a thrilling illumination transforms religion and human thought.

If such lights from the skies were chronicled before and after A.D. 35 would it not be logical to suggest that the light inspiring Paul and our whole Western world emanated from an extra-terrestrial source with all the tremendous revolution this revelation would bring?

Lights in the sky were mentioned by many classical writers:

B.C. 217. "At Falerii the sky had seemed to be rent as it were with a great fissure and through the opening a bright light had shone."

(Livy. *History of Rome*. Book XXII. Chap. 1.)

B.C. 213. "At Ariminum a bright light like the day blazed out at night, in many portions of Italy three moons became visible in the night-time."

(Dio Cassius. *Roman History*. Vol. II.)

B.C. 102. "In a camp in Gaul a light shone at night."

(Julius Obsequens. *Prodigiorum Libellus*.)

A.D. 70. "In Jerusalem, when the people were assembled for the Feast of Unleavened Bread on the eighth of April at the ninth hour of the night, a light shone on the altar and on the Temple so brightly that it seemed to be full day and this lasted for half an hour."

(Josephus. *Jewish War*. Book III, Chap. VIII.)

The prodigies recorded by Julius Obsequens in Roman times and throughout the whole Bible were chronicled in the Middle Ages by Matthew of Paris and in recent centuries by the works of Charles Fort, all similar to the UFO phenomena witnessed today, but probably the most striking manifestation of a light from heaven under intelligent control was mentioned by the Venerable Bede in Saxon days thirteen centuries ago. Bede (673-735), 'the father of English history', was the most learned Englishman of his age; the forty books he wrote are particularly noted for the care with which he sought out and selected reliable information. Any incidents he quoted therefore merit credence as actual facts not as visions. In his tiny cell at Jarrow Bede was famed as a scholar and teacher of Latin, Greek and Hebrew; he was no narrow-minded pedant for in addition to his *Ecclesiastical History of England* he wrote *De Natura Rerum*, an encyclopaedia of all the sciences then known, setting down the theories of the Greek philosophers that the world was round, a truth that the Church

was to stifle for a thousand years.

How would theologians and our UFO students today evaluate the light transfiguring Saul on the road to Damascus in A.D. 35 in view of that controlled light from the skies illumining the Saxon monastery at Barking in A.D. 664?

A.D. 664. "In a monastery at Barking near the Thames in the burial ground at night as the nuns were singing at the graves, behold suddenly a light sent from heaven like a great sheet came upon them and the light lifted up, moved to the other side of the monastery, then withdrew to the heights of heaven. The self-same brightness of the light made the sun at midday seem but dark. In the morning young men in the Church reported that the beams of light entering in the chinks of the door and windows did seem to pass all brightness of the day before."

(Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book 4, Chap. 7.)

Visitants from space on their millennia-old surveillance scrutinising Man's evolution on Earth?

This light focused from the skies exactly thirteen hundred years ago illumined more than an Anglo-Saxon monastery; it illumines now a vast and startling revelation revolutionising the very foundations of human thought.

The likeness of the prodigy to "a great sheet" of light shining on those monks and nuns was surely prompted to the pious Bede by the Holy Scriptures apparently describing a spaceship manifesting to Peter, when in A.D. 41 the Apostle was praying upon a housetop in Joppa about the sixth hour.

"And saw heaven opened and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners and let down to earth."

(*Acts*, Chapter X, Verse 11.)

A voice commanded Peter to "rise, kill and eat."

"This was done thrice; and the vessel was received up again into heaven."

(*Acts*, Chapter X, Verse 16.)

Freeing our minds momentarily from the miasma of religious dogma, we are startled by the resemblance between this sighting and the scoutship allegedly appearing to Adamski in the Californian Desert in 1952; indeed the Spaceman's remarks to Peter seemed as trivial as the Venusian's conversation with Adamski. A fantasy, when all the wisdom of the universe awaits revelation!

As he penned in scholarly Latin his account of this heavenly light examining the monastery at Barking only nine years before he himself was born, Bede's thoughts would doubtless dwell on that Visitant in A.D. 43 who delivered Peter from Herod in Antioch when the Apostle "was sleeping between two soldiers bound with two chains and the keepers before the door kept the prison."

"And behold the angel of the Lord came upon him and a light shined in the prison, and he smote Peter on the side and raised him up saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands."

(*Acts*, Chapter XII, Verse 7.)

If we accept this incident as literally true and believe that it was a spaceman who rescued Peter and another who spoke to Paul on the road to Damascus, does this make us less religious? Should these demonstrations not expand our worship of God and of His universe?

Lights in the sky recorded over Ancient Rome re-appeared at intervals in Saxon times, although Bede tended to associate these heavenly searchlights with macabre happenings.

"About 600 A.D. Peter, Abbot of St. Augustine Monastery near Canterbury, was sent as a legate to Gaul and was drowned near Ambleteuse. For several nights a light from heaven played over his body until the neighbours adjudged him to have been a man of God, disinterred the body and buried it in St. Mary's Church, Boulogne."

(*Ecclesiastical History*, Book 2, Chap. XXXIII.)

"In 634 A.D. the body of Oswald, King of Northumbria, slain in battle lay in a chariot outside the monastery of Bardney in Lincolnshire. For all that night long a pillar of light reaching from that chariot unto heaven stood, so that it was plainly seen in all places almost of the same province of Lindsay."

(*Ecclesiastical History*, Book III, Chap. XI.)

A.D. 690: "Two English priests were murdered by heathens in Saxony and their bodies thrown into the Rhine. A very great beam of light reaching to heaven followed their bodies as they floated in the river. Pippin, Duke of the Franks, had their bodies buried very honourably in the Church of St. Cunibert."

(*Ecclesiastical History*, Book V, Chap. X.)

We are startled by the resemblance to that "pillar of fire" which guided the Children of Israel through the Wilderness.

"And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night."

(*Exodus*, Chapter XIV, Verse 21.)

Each age interprets celestial prodigies in terms of its own thought-patterns; the Romans beheld martial Gods and flying shields, the Jews Angels with wings and vessels of precious jewels, Adamski saw Venusian Supermen and spaceships. It is natural therefore that the pious religious communities of Saxon England should view signs in the skies as manifestations of the heavenly hosts. Indeed the Anglo-Saxons seemed to imagine

heaven as a christianised Valhalla of their Teutonic ancestors and Bede recounts many instances of angels descending from heaven.

In A.D. 664, shortly after the beam of light investigated the monastery at Barking, another manifestation there intrigued Bede.

"Tortgyth, a sister at Barking monastery on a certain night when the daylight began to appear, as she went out of her chamber that she abode in, saw plainly as it were, a corpse brighter than the sun, wound up in muslin and carried upward being taken indeed from the house in which the sisters were wont to rest. And as she diligently marked what it should be that drew upwards, this vision of the glorious body which she beheld, she saw that it was lifted up on high as it were by cords brighter than gold, until it was taken into the open heavens and could be seen by her no longer."

(*Ecclesiastical History*, Book 4, Chap. IX.)

In the following chapter X, Book 4, Bede continues:

"In Barking monastery Ethelburga was succeeded by Hildilid and over the grounds there often appeared the heavenly light with a fragrant odour of a marvellous sweet savour, later marvels occurred as though the bright light brought curative powers . . ." Bede goes on to marvel that the wife of a certain Count herself blind prayed to God in that place and recovered her lost sight.

In that same wonderful year A.D. 664 "The devout and godly Sebba, King of the East Saxons, reported that three men came to him arrayed in bright apparel as he lay sick."

(*Ecclesiastical History*, Book 4, Chapter XI.)

Fourteen years afterwards a boy in a monastery at Bosham near Chichester who was ill described a visitation by "Two men altogether notable in their array and countenance, one shaven like a clerk, the other had a long beard . . . sent from heaven itself."

(*Ecclesiastical History*, Book 4, Chapter XIV.)

In A.D. 776 the *Annales Laurissenses* described two flying shields spitting fire, which routed the Saxons besieging the Knights of Charlemagne at Sigiburg. The Norman chronicler, Gaimar, in his curious epic *Lestorie des Engles* written in A.D. 1135 mentions prodigies terrifying the people of Northumberland in A.D. 793:

"At the time I tell you of, signs were shown to the country; red signs appeared such as no man living ever saw before, like scarlet they spread. They appeared near the earth, then came great whirlwinds and lightnings, which men saw."

These same phenomena were recorded by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for A.D. 793.

"In this year terrible portents appeared over Northumbria and miserably frightened the inhabitants, these were exceptional flashes of lightning and fiery dragons were seen flying in the air."

Abbot Einhard, the contemporary biographer of Charlemagne, describes how in A.D. 810 the Emperor on a road from Aachen saw a ball of fire fall from heaven and with a great light speed from east to west. In fright Charlemagne's horse flung him to the ground and the old King was sorely bruised.

The "red signs" of A.D. 793 returned in A.D. 827 to the Pyrenees. A mediaeval Latin manuscript *Ludovici Pii Vita*, a biography of Louis the Pious describes how the King sent his son, Pippin, to lay waste northern Spain. A free translation runs:

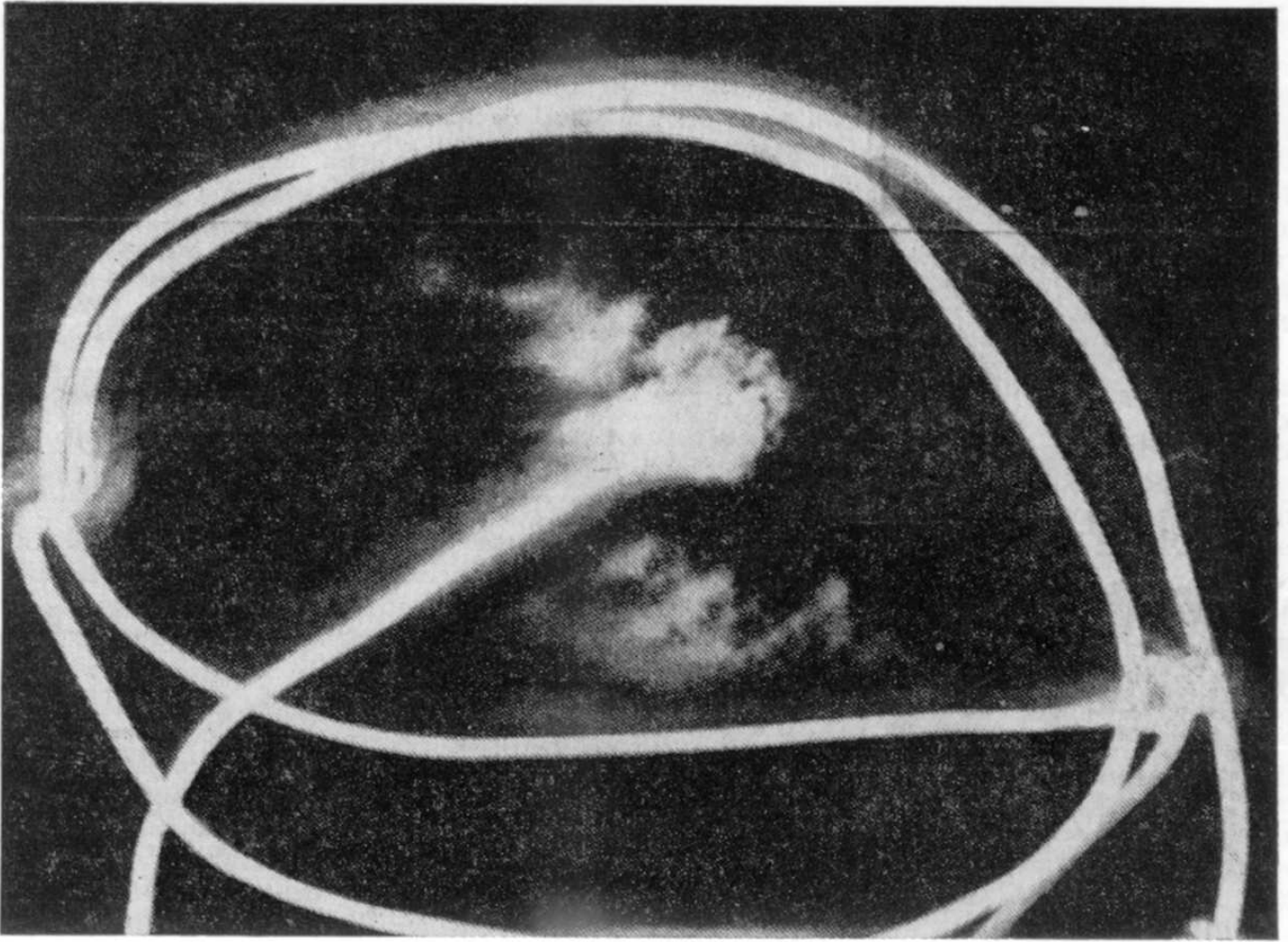
"In truth there preceded this slaughter those terrible aerial visions during the night glowing red like human blood and blazing with a palish fire."

This prodigy caused great wonder for it was independently confirmed by Einhard in his *Annales Eginhardus*.

A few years later, about A.D. 840, Agobard, Archbishop of Lyons, penned: *De Grandine et Tonitruis* scolding the French peasants for believing that tempests were caused by storm-raisers, demon-riders of the skies.

The literature of Anglo-Saxon times abounds with chronicles of lights from heaven, discarnate voices, apparitions to sensitives or saints, identical to the prodigies of Ancient Rome, the wonders of the Bible, the marvels in earth and sky throughout the Middle Ages. All correspond with the flying saucer phenomena and the spacemen appearing today.

What if the Scriptures are true but our interpretation is wrong? Why must our conditioned minds wilfully ignore the persistent surveillance of our Earth since ancient times?



A reproduction of M. Pierre Leger's photograph which appeared in *Ouest France* of July 2. The photograph was taken at midnight, June 27

Mystery photograph from France

Within a ten days interval, two inhabitants of Saint-Remy-des-Monts witnessed a celestial phenomenon which could not fail to cause astonishment. *Ouest France* in its issue of July 2 asks: "What was it? That is difficult to say. Perhaps it was an artificial satellite or even an object of extra-terrestrial origin."

M. Pierre Leger, a designer, and his mother were returning from a visit to friends looked towards the sky when "a sort of ball of an impressive white luminosity", to quote M.Leger's own description, was seen to travel across the sky from the north-west towards the south-east. M.Leger and his mother were able to observe the object for about twelve minutes. Then the thing disappeared. On Saturday, June 27, at about midnight M.Leger was returning from the cinema when once again he saw the object which seemed to be hovering and then advancing very slowly. He rushed into the

house, called to his mother and grabbed his camera. For about twelve minutes they both watched the object which was clearly distinguished from the stars by its great size and intensity.

"Then I seized my camera and with my shutter open I followed the convolutions of this object which moved without any noise whatsoever," Pierre Leger explained to the newspaper reporter. The *Ouest France* declared that it was unable to offer any explanation of the phenomenon, though in a caption to the photograph it describes it as "disturbing."

It must be born in mind that M.Leger was moving his camera with the shutter open so the path of travel shown in the photograph is not the true trajectory. Nevertheless, M.Leger's remark that the object was much larger than any star is amply demonstrated by the width of the impression on the photographic plate.

(Credit to Mme. Saunier)