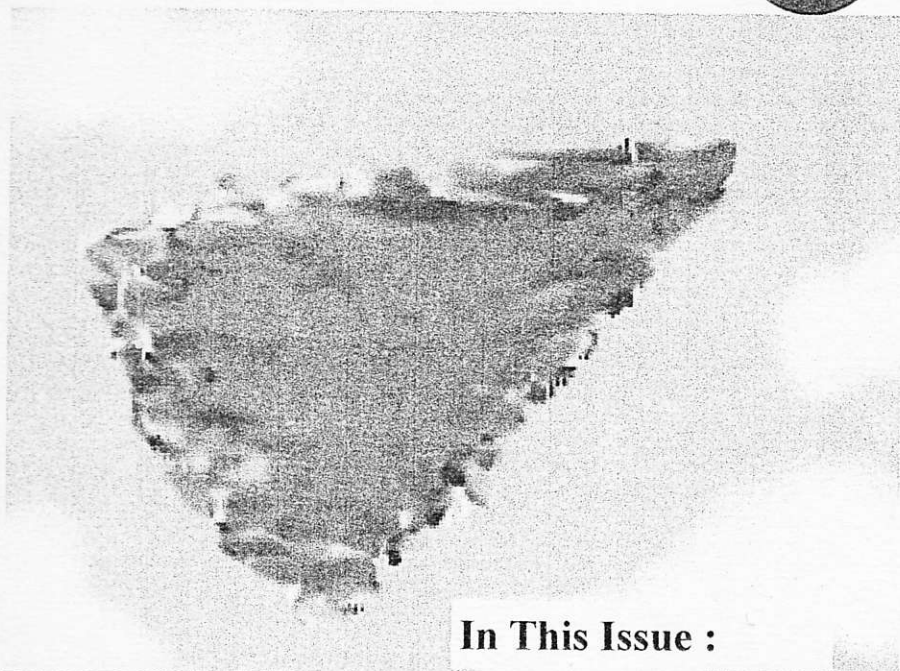
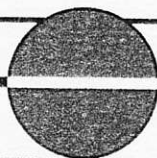


# BUFORA BULLETIN

Journal of the British UFO Research Association

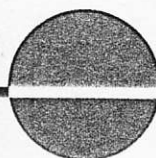


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UFOs – The Photographic Evidence  
Hypnagogia

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BUFORA Bulletin

## EDITORIAL

### Science and UFOs

In the few days before I write this both the newspapers and the Internet have been full of reports and replies made by astronomer Dr Jacqueline Mitton at a recent scientific meeting. The gist of her statement seems to have been that governments have been slow to fund the search for extraterrestrial life partly because of the public's obsession with UFOs.

There was much debate over what exactly she had said and if a certain amount of licence had been applied in some of the reporting, but never the less it raises an important point.

In the UK a large proportion of 'pure' scientific research (as opposed to that mainly carried out by companies directed towards a product) is funded by the government. Research proposals are assessed and rated excellent, good and not good. However in most years more than 50% of excellent proposals have to be turned away because of lack of funds.

In this climate funds are given to those projects that have the most likelihood of producing successful results. Many of the scientists involved in the few, often privately funded, SETI programmes think there is little possibility of success. And any study of UFOs has similar likelihood. Any thoughts of officially sponsored funded research must fade into the distance.

## **FROM HERE AND THERE**

### **New Council Members**

We welcome Kate Taylor and Brian James to the BUFORA Council. They are both well known to many members as contributors to the Bulletin and as active members of both the Research and Investigation sections.

### **Near Miss**

The CAA has just released a report on a near miss of an Oslo bound aircraft on 12th June 1998. The pilots reported that a small metallic object passed within 20 feet of their aircraft. The captain first reported a flare, then said it looked like a small fighter, the co-pilot reported just a bright light. Air traffic control recorded nothing on radar. Following their year long investigation, the CAA were unable to identify the object.

### **Jim Keith**

We regret to report the death of conspiracy researcher and author Jim Keith on 8th September 1999. Reports are that Mr Keith died of complications during surgery to repair a damaged knee.

### **Philip Mantle**

Former Council member Philip Mantle has been in the wars again and has

spent some time severely ill in hospital. The good news is that he is now recovering. We send him our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

### **BUFORA Website**

Richard Conway and Jay Loring have been working hard on redesigning the BUFORA website. This is now beginning to take shape. Sections about meetings and parts of the research pages are up and running. The website is at :

[www.bufora.org.uk](http://www.bufora.org.uk)

### **Bulletin Writers Panel**

In order to help in the running and compilation of the Bulletin, a writers panel has been assembled. Invites have been issued to several people. We are pleased to be able to report that Gloria Dixon, Brian James and Kate Taylor have joined.

### **Strange Daze Website**

Following on from the announcement in issue 12 that Gloria Dixon had become editor of Strange Daze magazine, we can now report that Strange Daze now has its own website. This can be found at :

[www.strangedaze.ic24.net](http://www.strangedaze.ic24.net)

## **The SETI@HOME Project**

Steve Gamble

As announced in the last Bulletin, a group of BUFORA members have been working on the SETI@HOME Project. This is a large multinational project to look for possible signs of extraterrestrial civilisations in radio transmissions.

About five years ago NASA started a project to look for radio transmissions from extraterrestrials using some of the largest radio telescopes in the world. Unfortunately, after a couple of years budget cutbacks meant that the project was axed. The project scientists did not just give up, but set about trying to raise funding for the project from private sources. This they managed to achieve, and so Project Serendipity was born. I believe the current project is smaller than the one originally planned, but nonetheless it is going ahead. This uses observing time using some of the largest radio telescopes in the world to look for intelligent signals across a small part of the spectrum. To do this they target regions of the sky where there are stars similar to our Sun.

As a parallel project, the SETI@HOME project seeks to map a whole band of the sky at high resolution. They are doing this by piggy backing their equipment on other experiments using the large radio tele-

## **NIC MEETING CAMBRIDGE 23rd October 1999**

I plan to hold an NIC meeting in Cambridge on 23rd October, which will begin at 2pm and finish at 6pm. The venue will be the Family Room, Unicorn Public House, Church Lane, Trumpington, Cambridge.

I hope that as many provisional and accredited investigators as possible can attend this meeting where there will be discussion and debate on the issues of BUFORA's moratorium on hypnosis, the postal training course and a general look at the way UFO investigation is conducted and the problems that are emerging in several areas particularly with regard to UFO video footage and photographs. I look forward to seeing you all in Cambridge.

Gloria Heather Dixon.

scope at Arecebo. This means that their equipment has to point at that region of the sky that the main experiment wants to observe, but they believe that over a two to three year period they will be able to record all of the band they are interested in at least twice.

The SETI@HOME project has less funding than Project Serendipity, al-

though several large companies have made substantial donations. (Computer manufacturer Sun Microsystems is one that springs to mind as having donated probably several hundred thousand dollars of computer equipment.)

However, due to their lack of funds they have developed a novel way of analysing the data they collect. They have developed a program which runs on a computer instead of the normal screen saver. This means that when the computer would normally be idle it can be doing useful work.

They have recruited approaching 1.2 million people from around the world, in over 200 countries or states to run this program. When the program starts to run it downloads a packet of raw data across the internet. Then the computer can disconnect from the internet. Next time the screen saver activates, the computer starts processing the data. How long it takes to complete work on an individual packet of data depends on what type of computer is being used and how fast the processor is. When all the work on a given packet of data is completed, a message asks permission to connect to the internet. The results are sent back to SETI@HOME and a new packet of data is downloaded. The downloading process takes less than five minutes.

At SETI@HOME all the results are correlated and if somebody finds a signal worthy of further study SETI@HOME send an email to in-

form them.

The scientific team involved in the project have said that there is only a very slim possibility that the project will find any evidence of extraterrestrials. But if you don't look the you definitely won't find any evidence.

By the 20th September the BUFORA team had processed over 300 packets of data and contributed collectively over one year of computer processing time.

There are those who will say "Why is BUFORA getting involved in looking for extraterrestrials?" Well, although over 40 theories have been put forward to explain UFOs, one of those is the possibility that UFOs are extraterrestrial. And since BUFORA is supposed to investigate all possible theories, it is legitimate to look for ET.

It is the opinion of this writer that there is no hard evidence of ETs visiting our planet, but if evidence is found from space that ETs exist, this possibility must move up the pecking order.

(New recruits to the BUFORA team would be welcomed)



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be accessed at :

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# **The Good, the Bad and the Downright Ugly - a look at the how the media portrays the subjects of UFOs and the paranormal.**

## **Part Two**

Anthony Eccles

The idea of this article is to examine how the media has treated the subject of the paranormal over time. I have specifically focused on the subject of UFOs.

In Part One I explored how unusual aerial craft had been reported and portrayed in the newspapers, especially with the multitude of 'scareship' sightings that were observed in the US and Europe in the latter part of the nineteenth century. These mysterious airships that were noted as travelling great distances in such short time spans. These machines seemed to go slightly beyond the capabilities of the airships being created at that time.

Obviously, the idea about flying machines was not new. Sometimes an array of new spangled machines became the focus for fantastic voyages into unconquered territories such as outer space. Jules Verne had written a book about a journey to the Moon during the later years of the nineteenth century, where the human spacemen had encountered Moon beings. H.G. Wells wrote, in 1897, about the Earth being invaded by Martians that wreaked havoc in large tripod walking ma-

chines.

Despite the fact that some had appreciated these early science fiction novels, the ideas that humans would one day go into space were not really accepted as people were using steam, gas and primitive internal combustion engines as a means of travel alongside horse and carriage. In 1898 a German produced car called the Cannstatt Daimler could travel at a top speed of 25 mph. On Dec. 17, 1903, two American bicycle manufacturers, Orville and Wilbur Wright, made the first aeroplane flights in history, near Kitty Hawk, in North Carolina. Orville flew their wood, wire, and cloth aeroplane 37 metres at a speed of 48 kph. In 1900, Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin flew his first airship, the LZ-1. It was 128 metres long and could reach a top speed of about 27 kilometres per hour. Fantastic speeds and altitudes were far from being obtained. But few had recognised that the human ability to create first in the imaginations of the mind would eventually one day become a physical reality.

Like anything else that is created, inventions and their modifications were a time consuming affair, they become rapidly improved during periods of warfare. Therefore, space travel, at the beginning of the twentieth century, was not seen as a realistic concept except, perhaps, with the passing of a great length of time. At a time when people were witnessing mysterious airships and their unusual pilots, real airship and aeroplane technology was very limited. The inventions we have



created for today began as mere thoughts in the imaginations of creative people, such as authors, just over a hundred years ago.

This ties in nicely with observations about exotic UFO sightings in that the UFOs take on the appearance of shapes that later become the shapes of our own advanced technological aircraft.

The first half of the century was a fascinating era for the observations of strange anomalies and experiences. The popular texts tend to cover UFO sightings from the Nineteen Forties, and particularly from the US, more than anywhere else in the world. This can be possibly explained due to the fact that there is more information available regarding US sightings. Typical of this was a fascinating event that was seen in the press and was known as Foo Fighters. These were seen during the Second World War and were reported seriously by the newspapers in the belief that they were unique secret weapons being built by Germany.

The stories of pilots were sometimes supported by statements made by the Army Intelligence who were obviously interested into looking closely at such a weapon. Surprisingly, at the close of the War the Allies had discovered that the Axis forces had come across these strange fireballs too, calling them Feuerball. One of my arguments was that if the Allies had known that these were not secret weapons and that they could not identify the source of such a phenomenon, would the reports of such

events reach the pages of the newspapers? If so, would they have received Army Intelligence backing that stated that these things were being seen for real and that they did not know what was responsible for them? My answer to that would be no.

The Second World War had ended by plunging the world into a new era, the Atomic Age. This was the beginning of a very tense period of politics that was known as the Cold War. This was a significant time as the observation of unidentified flying objects by credible witnesses had increased, especially as the public became more aware of what Atomic science could accomplish, such as exploring into space.

I would like to draw the reader's attention to a wave of sightings that really began in the Thirties, but received recognition again in 1946, and had appeared over the skies of Scandinavia, especially Sweden.

Up until this time the press had always been curious about the subject of UFOs and have been willing enough to tell people's experiences as they were reported to have happened without unnecessary ridicule or scepticism. During this period, the Swedish 'ghost aeroplane' phenomena took the European press by storm, it appeared to not only appeal to the public's curiosity but it also carried with a number of serious implications for the Swedish authorities and about the nature of the subject itself.

The sightings had consisted of huge



multi engines craft that hovered and flew over a number of cities making a thunderous noise. One such example had even occurred over New York on the 26 December 1933. The New York Times had reported the incident describing the mysterious object as circling over New York with such a tremendous noise and flying during a terrible blizzard. At 9.30 in the morning the aeroplane had been visible then vanished only to return nearer three in the afternoon, persisting flying in weather not suited to any flying at all. All airfields had cancelled their flights throughout the time of the blizzard, no emergency landings had been made, no aeroplanes were reported as missing, no aircraft had been logged as flying for that day!

In Piteå, Northern Sweden, on the 22 January 1934 a clergyman of Langtrask had reported that during the previous two years he had seen strange craft in the sky time and time again. Twelve of which had flown over his parish in the summer of 1933, one after the other and always in the same direction south-west to north-east. Each of these weirdly shaped craft had flown at a very low altitude with no markings or national insignia. One on occasion they had flown so low that there appeared to be three *humans* in what appeared to be a cockpit! A striking detail was that the machines had only one wing on either side. A detail that occurs in aircraft during the late thirties and early forties such as aircraft from the Second World War! Had the clergyman seen such an air-

craft being flown over Sweden!

Such visual experiences had described a variety of craft, but all of them appeared with no markings on their body. In February 1934 these sightings were rapidly increasing. This alerted the Swedish government. For the first time the joint defence ministries of Sweden, Norway and Finland decided to carry out an investigation, in an attempt to recognise the origins of these mysterious aircraft.

Description details, conveyed by public and military observers, were very similar. The 'ghost aeroplanes' were larger than anything that had been encountered, even by the standards of aircraft being developed in Europe. They could fly in all weather conditions and over dangerous mountain terrain. The combination of government efforts came to a blank, they could not find the country of origin, bases for the aircraft to fly from and ground guide for the weather conditions.

A press release was made by the Swedish Major-General Reuterswärd, which said;

*"It is obvious from a comparison of these reports that illegal air traffic is taking place over our military restricted areas.*

*Many reports have been received from reliable persons who have closely observed these mysterious fliers. And the same observation is made repeatedly: the machines possessed no national*

*insignia or identification marks. It is impossible to explain away the whole phenomenon as imagination. The question is, who are they and why have they penetrated our airspace?"*

Between 1934 and 1936 the phenomenon seemed to disappear. Well for a short while anyway, but the sightings returned in 1936. The objects had flown further north this time, passing in a southerly direction over the top half of Norway, then diagonally into Sweden and then back again.

To deviate slightly, it would be worth mentioning that in this year a film hit the cinema screens in 1936 which starred Raymond Massey. It was based on a novel by H.G. Wells called *The Shape of Things to Come*, the film was called *Things to Come*. Briefly, the film depicted the Earth after a terrible war. A plague ensues wiping out most of the population. The few survivors begin a new life and rebuild society. They invest their few resources in technology, but they are unable to sustain life on Earth for very short time. What is created, with this technology, is a single rocket ship which is designed to send a selected few to a distant but fertile planet that could support human life. Maybe I could suggest a tenuous link between science fiction and real experiences on a sub conscious level. If we had film footage of these ghost aeroplanes from 1936 would we today recognise the basic shape as a B-52 bomber, for example, the kind that were used in Vietnam?

Back to Sweden and a decade later, after a devastating World War, the huge ghost aeroplanes were suddenly replaced by phantom rockets or 'ghost rockets'. This would be a good example of any apparent paranormal attachment to these sightings illustrating that the phenomenon appears to stay one step ahead of our own technological inventions. A decade later these 'ghost rockets' would appear at a time when weapon scientists were working on the development of rocket and missile capabilities. A method of either delivering an atomic bomb to an enemy nation or take humans to the stars.

Concern in Scandinavia was shown in the way large numbers of biplanes were deployed by the Swedish Air Force to intercept these 'ghost rockets'. Media coverage of these events was not only extensive, it had also consisted of a number of rare photographs that had captured the phenomena in flight.

These 'ghost rockets' had closely resembled the German V-2 rocket bombs that were used by Hitler to target civilian centres in England and France. Rockets had actually been witnessed crashing into lakes! Furthermore they seemed to be busy crashing into lakes than the land itself.

However, by 1946, who was still using these rocket bombs? Were the Americans and Soviets experimenting with V-2 technology over Scandinavian airspace? If this was the case then the US Government had not mentioned any-

thing to their Swedish allies.

Sweden had been mostly neutral throughout World War Two and had developed powerful industries such as Saab. Shell Oil had also been responsible for linking Sweden to the US. However, the rocket shape was not the only shape observed, these UFOs had appeared as lights, cigar shapes and other types of winged machines. Interesting too was that this phenomenon had also spread into Southern Europe, even to the limits of Northern Greece! At times the rockets had been seen as being very large and bright green in colour, they were sometimes referred too as flying green fireballs. The Soviets were the obvious choice for blame, they were assumed responsible for these rockets that could fly at speeds of up to 1000mph! Obviously, the accusations were denied by the Soviets.

In the year of 1946 there were many trips into and out of Sweden by a number of retired military personnel who had found their way into business. One of these ex-military had been General James A. Doolittle. He had been famous for the US strategic bombing over Africa, Italy, Germany and Japan. He was working with Shell Oil and met with a number of business delegates and also a number of military officers.

These trips had always been suspected of secret meetings between the Swedish and US intelligence to discuss the 'ghost rocket' events. This has always been denied, however, during these

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meeting a small number of US military personnel had been present and whisked off to meetings.

In one newspaper, on the 21 August, Doolittle had told the *Stockholm-Tidningen*

*"We are not here for any military negotiations, only for our company. Of course we would like to stay in Sweden more than two days. Maybe I would be able to see one of the renowned ghost bombs. Naturally, I don't know anything about them, but I would be glad if I did."*

Military documents had recently confirmed that the Swedish and US military had not directly discussed the

ghost rocket issue. If both governments had liaised over the rocket affair it would have been done secretly with the use of intelligence offices. The press, though, had reported the incidents as they occurred with no biased deviation from what had been reported, the Swedish military was supportive of the press and had not appeared to deceive them.

As an aside, in the United States, Project Twinkle had been set up in the late Forties as a result of the appearance of unusual green fireballs which had been witnessed by a number of military personnel as well as members of the Project's staff. These sightings were studied by a Dr. Lincoln La Paz who was an expert in meteors. Having seen one with his own eyes he continued the Project's experiments using three camera locations so that they capture the event on film. It failed. The results of the study remained inconclusive on witness testimony alone.

In 1947 two major took place that had made some people think more about their place on this world and in the cosmos. I would like to address how the media had treated these events because they were responsible for influencing the public's perception of the UFO phenomenon, the possibility that humankind might one day come into contact with beings from another world.

I have, in the first part of this article, covered the sighting of pilot Kenneth Arnold on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1947, where the

press had taken Arnold's description of the objects he had seen and coined the phrase *flying saucer*. This was an obvious influence for the content of American B-movies with their far out aliens and wobbly saucer craft. But in the following month, July, something happened near Aurora in New Mexico. It was this event that decided how the military were to use the media to influence the public's opinion of flying saucers and play down the growing numbers of sightings that alarmed the US air force later on.

Without going into too much detail of an event that has been recently been given so much attention time and time again by media sensationalisation and hoaxing,

Roswell, Corona and Aurora were small communities situated near the important White Sands missile testing range and Roswell Army Air Force base. Roswell base was the first base to store atomic weapons and the first to drop one on Japan. The location of this epic event is very important geographically as the vast desert landscapes that can be found there in New Mexico and nearby Arizona have always had an important role to play with ongoing military development of new secret technologies.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1947, there was a thunder storm over the area of Roswell. That evening a local ranch hand, by the name of 'Mac' Brazel, heard a tremendous bang nearby. It was, apparently, not until the following morning that he had discovered a huge amount of debris on his land. The wreckage had allegedly cov-

ered an area three quarters of a mile long and two to three hundred feet in width, debris that could not be caused by the crash of a weather balloon, an object which the US Army Air Force cited later was the cause of the debris!

A few days later, Brazel decided to head on into the nearest town approximately eighty miles away to report it to the local sheriff who, in turn, had contacted Roswell Army Air Force Base to see if the debris had been military. This was not the case and a couple of officers went out to have a look at the wreckage. One officer was from the Counter-Intelligence Corps, the second was Major Jesse A. Marcel who worked as Roswell's Intelligence Officer. Both men accompanied Brazel back to his ranch to examine the debris. Following their night's stay at the ranch, Marcel showed the two men the scatter of debris. The material found had apparently unusual properties, so much so that they had loaded their vehicles up to take a portion of it back to the base for analysis. Not only had they spent most of the day picking up pieces of *wreckage*, but by the time they had loaded their car up there was still plenty more lying around the field.

The day of the 8<sup>th</sup> saw the army cordoned off the rancher's land completely, no one could enter it unless they had permission. It had become a military operation. On this day the Roswell military would officially issue a statement to the press. This was released from First Lieutenant Walter Halt, the base's public relations officer under

the insistence of the Base Commander, Colonel William Blanchard. Blanchard believed in having close ties with the local community, and if the press release that morning was justified it was for the fact that something unusual had really happened and that it happened on community soil.

However, the principle reason was that when the intelligence officers had shown the type of debris found Colonel Blanchard was concerned that some of the locals would attempt to locate the field and help themselves to the yet unidentified wreckage. The press release was to act, not only as a means of informing the locals of what had happened, but to specifically ensure that the public were convinced that the Army Air Force had a more or less complete flying disc and that was no debris to be picked up for the taking. This served to buy the army air force time remove all of the debris.

### POSTAL TRAINING COURSE

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Blanchard had considered all official communication regarding the incident to be top secret.

The press release of the 8<sup>th</sup> appeared like this;

*"Here is the unqualified statement issued by the Roswell Army Base public relations officer:*

*The many rumours regarding the flying disc became a reality yesterday when the intelligence office of the 509<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group of the Eighth Air Force, Roswell Army Air Field, was fortunate enough to gain possession of a disc through the co-operation of one of the local ranchers and the Sheriff's office of Chaves county.*

*The flying object landed on a ranch near Roswell sometime last week. Not having phone facilities, the rancher stored the disc until such time as he was able to contact the Sheriff's office, who in turn notified Major Jesse A. Marcel, of 509<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Intelligence office.*

*Action was immediately taken and the disc was picked up at the rancher's. It was inspected at the Roswell Army Air Field and subsequently loaned by Major Marcel to higher headquarters."*

This had reached the local newspapers very quickly, particularly the Associated Press. The Roswell Daily Record had received phone calls from newspapers in London, Paris and Hong Kong.

Brazel was escorted to the military base for questioning, upon his next appearance he would be escorted into the local radio station and his story this time would be considerably different to the one he first gave. He stated live on air that what he had really found were pieces of rubber, balsa wood and sticky tape. The message this time was to clearly state that the wreckage was that of a weather balloon. Even the area of the debris had been shortened to two hundred feet square.

Blanchard was to use to media in a way that appears to offer some explanation for the findings of the debris. Knowledge of its existence was the source of certain rumours that had already been spread throughout Roswell. Blanchard's release was to have two functions, firstly Blanchard had no choice but to buy some time for his staff to bring in all of the wreckage on the field, and secondly, he was to partially inform the public of what had been happening.

Brazel's treatment and change of story seemed to have been purposefully done to undermine the significance of the reality behind the event. The media had been deliberately used to spread misinformation which appeared to have worked. This seemed apparent as Brazel was reluctant to talk anymore, and also due to the fact that he had been seen later with a brand new truck, a new meat store and a new home. For someone that had earned very little money as a ranch hand he was suddenly doing very well. This

strongly suggests that Brazel had been bought by the military. If this is true about Brazel then does all the military attention make sense if the Roswell event was merely due to a downed weather balloon?

The event had caused such excitement and confusion within the military and the Pentagon. Marcel was soon ordered to fly to Fort Worth in Texas where Brigadier General Roger M. Ramey of the Eighth Air Force was to give a press release in an attempt to finally kill the story.

There, the newspapermen were shown some wreckage on the floor. Marcel was asked to pose for a photograph holding onto some of the supposed debris from the alleged crash site. In front of a number of staff one of the other officers was asked to identify it and he replied that the pieces were part of broken weather balloon which had a special attachment called a Re-win target that was hexagonal in shape.

The press were handed a story that seemed to knock down their heightened expectations of the reality behind flying saucers. Of course, this latest version of events had a number of effects. Firstly, it had prevented the situation from escalating out of hand, and second, the intelligence officer Marcel was obeying orders by appearing as the scapegoat and ridiculed, he was acting the obedient and patriotic soldier. This was to affect his personal credibility as an officer.

If we look closely at the front page of the Roswell Daily Record for Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July it contains a large and simple heading.

#### *Gen. Ramey Empties Roswell Saucer*

Adjacent to a picture of the identified wreckage there is a column headlined

#### *Ramey Says Excitement Is Not Justified*

the article begins;

#### *General Ramey Says Disk Is Weather Balloon.*

*Fort Worth, Texas, July 9. An examination by the army revealed last night that mysterious objects found on a lonely New Mexico ranch was a harmless high-altitude weather balloon-not a grounded flying disk.*

The use of the word *harmless* is carefully chosen as it suggests that the public had believed flying disks to be dangerous or at least a threat to national security. To the left of that front page Sheriff Wilcox is photographed talking into the phone. For the first time journalistic ridicule regarding the subject was used.

Under the sub heading of

#### *Sheriff Wilcox Takes Leading Role in Excitement Over Report 'Saucer' Found*

the text continues with



*That worried look on the face of Sheriff George Wilcox, in the picture above, comes from having been cast, more suddenly than he liked, into the role of leading man in the world comedy which developed over the purported finding of a flying saucer at the Foster ranch, in the Corona community, north west of Roswell.*

This provides a platform of disbelief for any reader who may have been paying any attention to the sudden and dramatic initial revelation that a flying saucer had been taken by the military. The media had been fed what appears to be a large lie for the sake of covering up a major army air force project. Journalism, where it concerns UFOs and other unusual phenomena, had been manipulated by the US military for the first time. It makes me question whether it really was the authorities that manipulated the media machine in the first place. Maybe this explains why today the media uses manipulation, sensationalism and ridicule as a tool for its own sake, knowing the success these tools have played in the early years.

Roswell, without looking deeply into the depth of research that has been done, has a couple of immediate questions stand out like a sore thumb. If the debris was from a weather balloon why did intelligence officer Jesse Marcel not recognise it, especially as he has observed these on a regular basis? If it was only a weather balloon, why was such a fantastic story fed to the press? After all Colonel Blanchard and other members of base staff had exam-

ined the wreckage. A weather balloon crashing would have not been the cause for such a far fetched press release. Finally, all flights of weather balloons had been logged, and access to that kind of information is available. None were apparently logged for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 1947, so why is there still a shroud of secrecy remaining over the Roswell affair? Details of Project Mogul, the project to identify Soviet Atomic testing in the atmosphere, are available. There still persists military silence over this, even to the extent where a US Senator has had an extremely difficult time trying to find any official paperwork relating to the incident.

Following Roswell was an official investigation into the UFO subject. By late 1947 the army and the air force had separated into two units. The air force was beginning to embark on an examination of reports that were both from military and civilian sources. Roswell had been quickly forgotten about by the public, but the sightings of strange aerial craft continued over American and European skies. In the next issue I will look at how the US Military had attempted to satisfy the public's demand for answers with the set up of Project Sign, Grudge and Blue Book and what the media's role was with them.

## **Hypnagogia, Lucid dreaming, and the Bed-based abduction scenario.**

Kate Taylor

Despite the recent downturn of public interest in the UFO phenomenon, reports of abductions by aliens have maintained a steady presence in the sphere of UFO investigation.

There are many kinds of abduction scenario being reported, ranging from those which occur in cars on lonely lanes, in isolated fields, and most commonly in bed at night-time.

Belief in abduction by aliens has almost reached the point of hysteria, and in this article I hope to be a voice of calm and to give what I consider to be extremely probable explanations for these events. I will be focusing upon the bed-based abduction scenario as this is the one most commonly reported, and thus the one which I believe needs to be exploded if only for the sake of the public's mental health.

From my own research and experience as a BUFORA investigator I am convinced that hypnagogia (the state of consciousness between wakefulness and sleep), and other sleep states are responsible for the vast majority of bed-based abduction scenarios.

So many "abductions" occur at night whilst the experiencer (I prefer this objective term to the more subjective

"abductee"), is in bed, that this very fact suggests some sleep state may be the cause.

Falling asleep is not as simple a matter as we might first think. As more research into consciousness continues, so our understanding of sleep is gradually developing further, although to a large extent in this area we are still, pardon the pun, fumbling in the dark.

The process of going to sleep as Empsom<sup>1</sup> notes "requires a readjustment before the 'normal' daytime mode of thinking changes to that of drowsiness, and is finally displaced by the onset of sleep."

It is during this time, as we slip into sleep, that our consciousness makes preparatory adjustments for the night ahead and that by definition hypnagogic states occur. Common features of this progression to sleep include the increasing lack of sensory awareness of surroundings, and the changing of the quality of thought, which "changes to become less logical and sometimes bizarre"<sup>2</sup>. Such thinking and mulling over of the day's events occur frequently in most people's progression to sleep, in some people, however, hypnagogia also occurs. As Susan Blackmore notes<sup>3</sup> "As one falls asleep both sensory input and arousal fall. The input controlled model of reality gets less and less input and less and less demands on it. Other trains of thought may temporarily become stronger and even briefly take over "reality" status (producing the familiar

experience of hypnagogic imagery) ...”

Hypnagogic states can encompass many different sensory and perceptual experiences, ranging from hearing music to, more commonly, hearing one's name being called. As Empsom<sup>4</sup>, “these experiences are easily confused with reality, and sometimes result in the sleeper waking up completely and attempting to answer the voices”. Visual imagery is also a common feature of the hypnagogic state, and can be either animated or static, “very commonly people see static landscapes, moving faces or a sequence of pictures or geometric shapes”<sup>5</sup> In a study of Aberdeen university students carried out by Peter McKellar his subjects ‘quite frequently likened the images to lantern slides’<sup>6</sup>.

The kind of imagery experienced in hypnagogia can also vary from that of full dreaming by being more vivid, possibly because the full sensory perception of wakefulness has not yet dissolved completely into that of dreams.

All the above will no doubt have rung some bells for anyone involved familiar with abduction literature or involved in UFO research. My purpose in writing this article is to demonstrate that abduction experiences may not be all that they seem to be, and that rather they may have their roots in very earthly, yet unusual, stages of sleep. I will be focusing upon and deconstructing many of the more sensational abduction theorists’ most precious tenets.

The best way to illustrate the relationship between hypnagogia and other states of sleep to abduction is to look at a case. In 1998 in the course of my duties as a BUFORA investigator I interviewed John Adams [pseudonym] who had made a high strangeness report to the organisation. From my interview with Adams, numerous classic abduction scenario features became apparent. Indeed, Adams himself was convinced that he had been abducted. The classic abduction scenario often begins with the experiencer linking the high strangeness events to seeing a UFO, and here was no exception. Adams made the connection to a sighting when he was 12. With the saturation of entertainment and factual media by UFOs it is unsurprising that such individual and most likely unrelated events can become linked in the experiencer's mind. Consciousness of UFOs has been raised to such an extent that more cases than ever before are being reported, with the knock-on effect that people are more likely to believe in UFOs and abductions unquestioningly.

Next came another classic feature of the scenario with strange things being experienced while in bed. Adams had been in bed for scarcely a few minutes when he perceived a there to be a shadowy figure across the door of his bedroom. As he had not been in bed for long, yet was tired, it is highly probable that he was entering the hypnagogic state. Seeing/feeling a presence as one begins to fall asleep is a common hypnagogic factor.

This feeling naturally made Adams feel defensive, but after verifying that there was no-one in the room he returned to his sleeping position. He remarked that he did not feel fully conscious or fully asleep at this time. Adams then reported hearing an odd sound like gas being released from a bottle, but dismissed it as part of the typical night-time noises of the house. As we saw earlier, auditory experiences are common in the hypnagogic state.

Bed-based abduction scenario experiencers frequently report strange lighting effects as part of the events, as Whitely Strieber records<sup>7</sup>, "Then I was startled awake and saw, to my horror, that there was a distinct blue light being cast on the living-room ceiling. I was frightened because it wasn't possible for there to be any light there ... I watched this light creep slowly up the ceiling ..."

John Adams also experienced strange light. What was originally a small spot of light from near his bedroom window expanded to being approximately 30 centimetres in length, tilted and then came to rest above his head. As I noted earlier, seeing strange shapes is common in hypnagogia. Empsom remarks that a possible explanation for these experiences<sup>8</sup> "... Especially the sequences of geometrical shapes, or flashes, may be the result of discharges from the retina occurring in the absence of any stimulation - the so called entoptic phenomenon - which can also be observed when the eyes are open in the pitch dark." If you think this sounds a little far-fetched you can ex-

perience a similar effect by lying face down, eyes closed on a pillow. In this situation a veritable kaleidoscope of bizarre geometric shapes and flashes can be seen.

Neurologist John Hughlings Jackson was the first person to propose the Perceptual Release Theory<sup>9</sup> which aims to explain the genesis of hallucination and dreams. The theory holds that as the senses gradually get less input as one falls asleep, the cortex is still alert and looking for information to process. As such it forms its perceptions from what would have been disregarded in the waking state, "... Such as the low-level random discharges from the retina. According to this theory, half-formed thoughts, memories as well as low-quality visual and auditory inputs now become grist to the perceptual mill, combining to give hypnagogic images."<sup>10</sup>

Research such as McKellar's has also provided evidence to suggest that people can, for a long time, not realise that they have hypnagogic experiences on a regular basis. Indeed, it can often be a chance trigger event that makes them realise that they actually do. I defy anyone not to notice the stark similarity between this undeniable scientific reality, and those who would have us believe in latent "abduction" memories which are "awakened" by a chance trigger. Is it not more likely that such recoveries of "abductions" are in fact memories of hypnagogic states?! As McKellar notes, hypnagogia "can be overlooked for a very long time even by those who subse-

quently do realize that they do have the experience frequently ... False negatives seem to occur by a process of ignoring what one is not alerted to notice, as well as from emotional blockage."<sup>11</sup> Such similarities between hypnagogia and "abduction" are too important to be overlooked.

Having examined visual and auditory abduction scenario phenomena, what then of the paralysis which is often reported? This can be explained easily, for as Andreas Mavromatis notes<sup>12</sup>, "Certain characteristics of sleep such as motor impotence, and of dreaming ... also appear in hypnagogia." In such reports of paralysis the experimenter often relates only being able to move their eyes, however, this can also be explained scientifically, "since all skeletal muscle groups except those that govern eye movements and breathing suffer a profound loss of tone during REM sleep, it is to be expected that most muscular response to dreamed movements will be feeble."<sup>13</sup>

Feelings of paralysis or strange physical sensations may also be caused by the incorporation of outside events into the hypnagogic state/dream. For example, lying awkwardly on one's arm for too long may produce a feeling of numb paralysis; similarly, becoming entangled in the bedclothes may also give a strong sense of immobility. An example of how such events can become incorporated can be seen in a most vivid hypnagogic dream related by Maury. Maury imagined that he had been sentenced to death by guil-

lotine at the hands of French revolutionaries and even felt the blow of the blade on his neck, much to his understandable terror. When he awoke, however, he found that what had actually transpired was simply that a pole had fallen on his neck in the night. In a theory which could have great implications for explaining "abductions", sleep researcher Ouspensky suggested that the dream could have started in reverse order with the pole falling on Maury's neck which "roused Maury into a half-sleep state in which, terrified by the strange and guillotine-like event, he imagined himself being beheaded, this image in turn gave rise to the scaffold ... which led to the Paris streets ... i.e. the appearance of one image gave rise to another and so on, by association and as an answer to Maury's bewilderment and shock"<sup>14</sup>. Ouspensky thus postulated that it was possible to dream a dream in one order of events and remember it in another order completely.

It should be noted at this point that hypnagogia is not the only possible explanation for these bed-based "abductions". Lucid dreaming and false awakenings must also play a considerable part: "The lucid dream is not unlike the initial dream in terms of mental state. They differ from each other mainly in the fact of their temporal occurrence: the initial dream occurs early in the sleep cycle whereas the lucid dream takes place at the tail end of it ... lucid dreams tend to grade imperceptibly into false awakenings ..."<sup>15</sup>

A more unusual aspect of the abduction scenario reported by the experiencer is that of floating, or being floated through the air and seeing the ground or indeed the Earth beneath them. Again, I believe that this may have its origins in sleep-related phenomena. While Susan Blackmore's work on OBEs and lucid dreaming is of particular interest here, from my own experience I believe that an over-active imagination in the hypnagogic state can also cause such experiences. As someone with a keen interest in space and aviation I have often, when drifting off to sleep, had the feeling of being very high in space, as if in orbit, looking down at the Earth. At that moment the image is magnificently realistic, and almost tangible. I attribute such an experience, however, not to being abducted by aliens but rather to my own subconscious knowledge of many such NASA photographs. That is where the difference between objective scientific study and carefree sensationalism lies!

I am aware that due to the constraints of space there have been some things in this article, such as shared bed-based abduction experiences, which I have not been able to discuss, I certainly hope to be able to do this in a future issue, and I am open to any (constructive) comments readers may have on my work.

I hope that I have shown that the typical "abduction" experience is not as paranormal as some of the more sensationalist ufologists would like us to

think, and that this article will perhaps encourage deeper thinking around this issue.

And the last word? Well, that goes to Glenn Campbell, who shows just how easy it is to "see" UFOs in our dreams:

"On at least one occasion, while parked at night along SR-375, I have seen big multicolored spacecraft move silently above my car. These were huge triangular or saucer shaped craft with many lights and complex surfaces ... Although the craft were very close to me and my view of them was vivid, I felt somehow paralyzed at the time and had difficulty controlling my own movements and attention. The craft seemed to change in ways I cannot describe, and although I tried frantically, I had great difficulty analyzing what I saw. Were the craft real? To my mind they were. It took some time and logical thought before I recognized that since I was lying face down on the back seat of the car, I could not possibly be seeing what I thought I was out the front window. The impressive craft were a dream, probably triggered by my desire to see UFOs."<sup>16</sup>

The author welcomes your e-comments at: [katherine.taylor@las.ox.ac.uk](mailto:katherine.taylor@las.ox.ac.uk)

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## Visual Evidence?

Brian P James

*Of all manner of the wide range of 'anomalous phenomena', perhaps UFOs are one of the most fleeting and elusive? Certainly they are one of the hardest to capture on any visual medium (Well, for most of us anyway!) As Steve Gamble has emphasised at some of the London lectures, and in some respects contrary to its title, BUFORA doesn't investigate actual UFOs, but the reports of the UFOs that the witness perceives - which is a very important difference.*

UFO reports rely on the perhaps flawed recollections of the witness, and certainly a recollection that might vary with the course of time. How much more credence could be given to a report backed up by 'visual evidence'? In the 'early' days of the 'flying saucer' era, we had many still photographic images presented as evidence to back up the eyewitness reports. Some of these photos looked dubious, such as the Adamski 'Scoutships', and similar types of objects photographed by other witness's - yet even some of these have been re-examined favourably by modern digital imaging techniques. Other photos, such as the McMinville photos, and perhaps the Trindade Island photos, still stood up to thorough examination to this day. However, after 50 years, despite all the analysis, have these images really proved the witness's case - not really. Recently, some researchers seek to put a new 'spin' on the interpretation of

some of these photos, with experimental stealth-type aircraft are being mooted as explanations for even these 'classic' UFO photos.

Perhaps we might think that as cameras became better (And yet cheaper), and into greater use, that the evidence would be more reliable and conclusive? We only have to think of Eduard 'Billy' Meier and Ed Walters to think of two examples where sadly this is not the case! What about the ever increasing popularity of cine-film through into the 1960s? Again, sadly, some of the dubious-looking Adamski footage immediately springs to mind, although modern verification of original frames suggests that the 'cardboard cut-out looking' ships were indeed large and possibly solid objects some distance from the camera.

Perhaps the age of video provides us with the answers that we seek? We've all seen the commercially-produced videos of UFO footage from round the world, but are they really proving the case for real UFOs, never mind ET vehicles? I don't think that many of would dispute that much footage is of poor quality, and is often woefully out of focus, especially night-footage, when most home-quality camcorders haven't a clue what they are trying to focus on. I think that most of us with a camcorder could walk outside on any night and shoot footage of blurry flashing lights (Its very easy for me, as the main G1 flight corridor for Heathrow is over my village!) A good test of the camcorder's low-light capability

is to point it at a bright star or planet, and go to maximum zoom (optical or digital). What does the CCD in the camera actually see? For various reasons, I have had the opportunity to use three different makes of 8mm camcorder, and four different models, but all have produced curious anomalous images that have nothing to do with the object that the camera was pointed at. The reproduced image (Fig. 1) here is

a good example, taken with a Samsung 8mm camcorder that I had.

What exactly was I pointing the camera at? This sort of image has been seen many times in supposed footage of a UFO, and sometimes has an even more 'Batman-like' appearance. In this image, we see a distinct cut-out section in the upper half, and there is a clear trail going across to the right, suggestive of a propulsion system! In fact the camera was pointed at the planet Jupiter, and was at its maximum zoom of 30x, and with manual focus engaged. The notch in the top is a quirk of the shutter system on that camera, and the trail is a simple fault in the image processing system, when it sees a bright image against a dark background, and is caused by the scan-

ning system as it scans left to right, the same as normal TV picture is built up (I would ask readers to remember this fact, we will return to it later on.)

We should be very critical when view-



ing video footage, even more than film footage or still photographs. Video cameras can give images that can all too easily deceive the eye. I have lost count

the number of times that I have heard people describe a 'propulsion trail' coming from poor quality footage of lights or dark objects, that are quite clearly nothing more than processing faults from the camcorder's CCD, as we have already seen in my own footage of a motionless planet - Jupiter. A very recent case from Oxford also illustrates the other major 'hazard' of home camcorders - auto focus! The local evening paper, the *Oxford Mail*, ran an article on a mysterious pulsating UFO that was filmed over Oxford in late July. The footage was viewed by reporters from NewsQuest Oxford, and by investigators from a local group - who were all said to be 'stumped' by the footage of a pulsating 'firework-like' UFO. However, a two-minute phone conversation with the

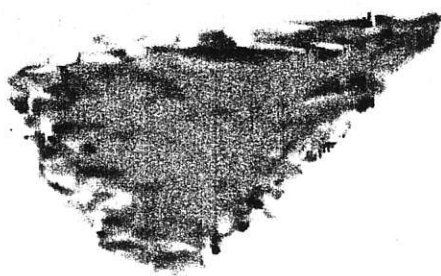
videographer explained the video footage. He was unfamiliar with a new camcorder, and didn't even know if he was filming with auto or manual focus. The witness stated that the pulsating effect was only seen on the video, not by the naked eye. Unfortunately, this video case was yet again simply down to the camcorder not being able to get a focus lock on a small point source of light, and cycling from one end of its focus range to the other.

Surely in daylight, camcorders can produce clear evidence? Well, think of how much daylight footage is still relatively poor in resolution, mainly caused by high magnification of the zoom being used. Take a look at another reproduced image (Fig.2), again taken by myself on an 8mm camera, shot on the first day I a new 8mm camcorder, and unfortunately reproduced many times afterwards.

This seems to show daytime footage of the well-known flying triangle, did I capture an FT on one of their flights across

southern Britain? Again, I will remind you that this is a conventional object, so what is it? Does the blurred delta-like shape give any clue? In this case, it certainly does not. What the camera

was actually being pointed at was a Boeing 737, flying out of Heathrow airport! Again the camera was on its maximum zoom of 30x, and was set with auto-focus, which was capturing the image very badly. This same triangle or delta shape was seen on countless occasions when I aimed that camera at conventional aircraft, including Boeing 747 'Jumbo-jets', as they passed almost overhead, while the camera was set to auto-focus. When I first saw this image through the camera's viewfinder I was very surprised. Surely an even out-of-focus conventional aircraft, with its fuselage, and broad centrally-placed wings, would look different to this, perhaps even a diamond-shape, but no. all were misinterpreted as a delta-shape. It is becoming clear that we need to look very closely at the witness report against the footage.



**Fig. 2**

And what of 'enhanced' camcorder footage - the classic Mexico City 'hockey puck' type of object immediately comes

to my mind. Now, I will stick my neck out here - I freely admit to not being an 'expert' in video imaging, and nor do I have extensive (And expensive) computer image processing facilities.

However, looking at footage like that of the Mexico 'hockey pucks' why do I get a distinct unease at the way that they all appear to spin left to right? Remember I mentioned about the scanning lines moving left to right as a TV picture is built up? . I would be far happier if more video footage of rotating or spinning objects, actually showed a rotation going right to left, namely against the scanning motion of the camera's CCD. Are we deluding ourselves in the quest for evidence?

We are now definitely in the 'digital age' of photography, both as still images and video. This in itself brings yet more difficulties in establishing 'visual evidence'. With digital photography, the actual capturing of the image onto the storage medium is only a small part of the process. The very quality of the image is governed by the camera's available resolution, and at this stage is still inferior to an image taken on a photographic film. The camera user may be using 'economy' settings on the camera, so as to squeeze more images onto the storage medium. Unfortunately the resulting image can become very pixelated or 'blocky', so evaluation of any captured UFO can become nearly impossible. Perhaps the major part of digital imaging is in how the images can be processed on an average home computer. And by 'processed', I mean resized, cropped, masked and enhanced. This is to say nothing of the image having its colour, brightness, contrast and intensity adjusted. While this sort of image manipulation might be used by a researcher or analyst in evaluating an image, it is also

true that we have the possible situation of images being merged in a way that would take many hours by optical photographic means. In short, the possibilities of changing the images, or outright 'hoaxing' of images are perhaps endless. Those of you who have seen the by now infamous Oliver's Castle crop circle/UFO video footage from 1996 will know just how elaborate video footage can be 'produced' just a few hours (I use the term 'produced' in the context of film-making) on a computer. Certainly digital imaging is a double-edged sword, it can be a research tool, but it can also be used by those who have other objectives.

After 50 years of UFO photographs and images, perhaps we have an interesting paradox. As we strive for that elusive one photo, or clip of footage, that actually proves beyond doubt that a UFO is from 'elsewhere', the methods at our disposal actually cast more and more doubt on what that image might show. The burden of proof becomes heavier as technology gets more complex, and we may yet have to rely more and more on the witness accounts.

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## **BUFORA LECTURES**

Meeting are held at the University of Westminster, 35 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5LS starting at 2pm and lasting until approximately 5pm. (We are currently looking at alternative venues, but if nothing suitable can be found it may be necessary to raise admission £2-50 (members); £4-50 (non-members)).

### **Saturday 6th November, 1999.**

Len Farra.

#### **"THE PLEIDIEN LEGACY".**

Over the past 20 years, Len has researched the Ancient Astronaut Theory from an entirely new angle. As a result of his detailed study he believes that ancient traditions point to an ET visit which occurred 5000 years ago. What seems to have happened at that time completely changed the course of World history.

### **Saturday 4th December 1999.**

Arthur Tomlinson

Arthur has researched the subject of UFO sightings here in die UK for many years now and has amassed a great amount of detail. Arthur will be presenting many impressive UFO cases, which also includes his work on the famous 'Ilkely Moor Entity case'.

### **Saturday 5th February 2000.**

Professor Arthur J. Ellison

#### **"Altered States of Consciousness".**

Arthur will be lecturing on his own first hand encounter into consciousness and 'altered states'. He will also be discussing his own Out Of Body Experiences and lucid dreams and will explain how any scientifically inclined person with a reasonable degree of persistence can learn how to access these states as well. Arthur will also mention his experiences of remote viewing in regards to the U.S. Star espionage programme. This, and much more, will be discussed on the day, a not to be missed event.

Please note : There is no London Lecture during January. Whilst it is not anticipated that meetings will have to be changed or cancelled without prior notice, the Association reserves the right to do so. The views expressed by lecturers are their own views, unless otherwise stated they do not reflect the views of BUFORA, its Council or officers.

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