



**ROYAL
DE LUXE** NANTES

Liverpool
July 2014

Letter n°1

Diary

Monday 17th April 1914

My name is John McCulloch.

I am 14 years old and I live with my grandfather in Heysham, Lancashire. It is a small village with 500 inhabitants about 60 miles from Liverpool.

My grandfather is a competent astronomer and is recognised as such by the United Kingdom's Academy of New Sciences.

One night he woke me, his face drenched in sweat and his eyes trembling with excitement.

"John, come and see, quick, there's something in the sky! "
I sleepily followed him to the porch where a wide array of telescopes was set out.
"Don't touch anything! Look into this one."

I placed my eye a few millimetres away from the lens, hands behind my back, taking care to follow the countless instructions he had given me, and saw a small black stain pinned to the sky.

It seemed curved, not round like a planet.
It looked like a kind of island, or a mountain lit up by the stars.
It seemed quite close to the earth.

“What is it Grandfather? It doesn’t look like much...”

“Well,” he said, sitting down on a small wooden chair, “you’re not going to believe me.”

He paused to light his pipe and gently plunged his sad and distant eyes into mine. “It’s a beauty spot !

A beauty spot on the universe:

Neither a star nor a planet nor a meteor, just an immovable beauty spot... It hasn’t moved for 4 hours.”

I was dumbstruck by my grandfather’s face. Both dreamy and lost.

“That’s not all though...look into the other 3 telescopes...”

Obediently, I did as I was told and discovered 3 other beauty spots of different shapes, equally immovable despite the slow movement of the rest of the universe.

“It’s amazing! Beauty spots on the universe...”

“Yes my boy, it is, but it’s not a good sign. A miracle or an emergency. I don’t know...”

I watched his head bow towards the ground.

A few moments later he unfurled a map of Liverpool and the surrounding areas.

He circled 4 villages with a pencil that had the same coordinates as the spots observed in the sky.

“Look, if you copy these 4 points, they seem identical to those on the map.”

Once again I admired the depth of his knowledge.

“If you join up the dots with this ruler, they all point to Liverpool...”

I noted that he was indeed right.

“But now,” he said (his thin hair gently ruffled by the morning breeze) “give me your right arm and watch carefully.”

He gently pulled up the sleeve of my pyjamas to the elbow.

“What do you see?”

As my gaze fell to my forearm, I discovered 4 beauty spots on my skin in exactly the same position as those that were pinned to the sky.

I trembled at this unexpected discovery and fear struck me into silence.

“My boy, it could be a horror or a miracle, but you must go to Liverpool. Something is going to happen there.”

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