

ANGELS OF MONS

At the battlefield of Mons in 1914, angels led by St George of England supposedly appeared to the British soldiers and rained arrows into to the enemy to supernaturally ensure defeat. In the Arch Whitehouse book, only a single angel is mentioned however. He however states it was only a legend. This account says the Colstream Guards were retreating from Mons and in danger of becoming butchered when a female Angel led them to a safe place of refuge.

In the writings of James Wentworth days, the story gets window dressing and instead of an angel there is a group of angels and with wings to boot.

The story was invented by Walter Machen in 1914, a month after it allegedly happened.

It was published in London's Evening News, 29 September 1914. It never mentioned Mons at all. Set in Flanders, the story says that St George was called on for help by the soldiers in battle and angels appeared to help them. The angels were archers and fired arrows at the German enemy leaving many of them dead but without any wounds visible. Machen was asked by occultists if there was any truth in the story and he said it was imaginary. That did not stop it become a legend that was quoted by many eccentrics and desperate religionists as evidence of the supernatural.

The story became popular to the extent that some soldiers said they saw the vision. It is easy to say you had a marvellous experience when everybody wants you to testify that you did. As Machen made no secret of the fact that the story was untrue, believers decided to fabricate some evidence that it was untrue. A young nurse called Phyllis Campbell claimed that she had spoken to eyewitnesses. She said that soldiers informed her that they had seen St George of England and St Joan of Arc and the Archangel Michael at Mons. She went as far as to claim that she had a letter written by a Russian Princess that declared that St Michael had been appearing during battles on the Russian Front. Private Cleaver who stated that he saw the angels at Mons had been in England at the time. He lied about being at Mons during the visions.

Machen wrote, "It's been claimed that "everybody" who fought from Mons to Ypres saw the apparitions. If that be so, it's odd that nobody has come forward to testify at first hand to the most amazing event of his life. many men have been back on leave from the Front, we have many wounded in hospital, many soldiers have written home. And they have all combined, this great host, to keep silence about the most wonderful of occurrences, the most aspiring assurance, the surest omen of victory" (page 16, Strange to Relate, Melvin Harris, Granada Publishing, London, 1978).

Machen confessed to the hoax but he was widely disbelieved by people who wanted the story to be true. Undoubtedly, some would have hallucinated angels for they were desperate for celestial aid and were feverish and hysterical. They didn't all see the same thing which causes problems for believers. The French saw the archangel Michael and the British saw St George who was never an angel. This legendary Saint George was a myth, when he slew dragons! The Bible never says that Michael is a warrior angel but in Christian mythology he is depicted wearing armour and thrusting Satan down to Hell with his spear. There is something amiss when people see visions conditioned by myths – it is suggestive of imagination or hallucination. One man spoke to the Evening News about seeing a light and seeing three shapes in it. Most of us can see shapes in anything. When the man saw three shapes with the large shape in the middle seeming to have wings it makes the whole thing spurious. The vision would sound better if the three had wings. It seems just to be shapes he imagined in the light. Would we believe the visions more readily if they testified of centaurs and unicorns appearing?

Apparitions in the sky remind us of the fake apparition of the Virgin Mary in the sky at Pontmain in France to four children on 17 January 1871. Catholic Voice, page 24, 15 August 2010, states that they said the Virgin had golden hair. The real Virgin would not be blonde! However, the Church recognised the apparition as true and a real miracle.

In the 1840s, several Shakers - perhaps forty of them - reported visions of angels and books and rolls and prophecies from Heaven geared towards the production of the true word of God, The Holy, Sacred and Divine Roll and Book. The book testified that Ann Lee was the female incarnation of Christ and predicted that it would be known all over the world. These errors show that there was no supernatural origin. The visions had remarkable consistency and there were testimonies signed. Eight women signed one testimony. But nevertheless they could not have happened at least supernaturally. For instance, the condemnation of marriage and the advocating of celibacy are not things that any God or Devil would command. God put reproductive organs on us and all previous revelations supported by angels and resurrected Saviours in the world approve marriage. The Devil would not like a celibate Church serving him. The more babies the more disciples of error the Devil gets. The Shakers insisted on the importance of visions and many would have developed the power to have them. But at least we are sure that when they were wrong we should not trust the angels of Mons tales or Jesus' apostles or Joseph Smith's eleven witnesses to the Book of Mormon.

