

Book review in February 2004 issue of

THE OBSERVATORY

A REVIEW OF ASTRONOMY

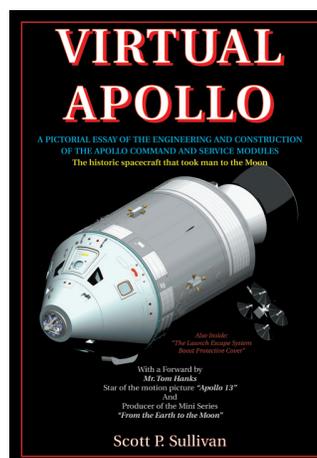
University of London Observatory

Virtual Apollo, by S. P. Sullivan (Apogee Books, through Gazelle, Lancaster), 2003. Pp. 128, 25.5 x 17.5 cm. Price £14.95 (paperback; ISBN 1 896 52294 7).

It is well known that man went to the Moon with the aid of primitive computers. Less well explored is the corollary of that fact, namely that Apollo was designed by draughtsmen using classical pencil and paper, long before modern computer-aided design (CAD). Scott Sullivan has brought Apollo to life in the CAD era by generating solid models from those original drawings. The result is a remarkable little book that restores the Apollo command and service modules to three dimensions. The book is full of fascinating detail: archive photos accompany the models along with the sort of gee-whiz fact that used to litter accounts of the Apollo programme. If you are interested to find out, among much else, that the Project Manager for North American, the company that built the command module, was called Stormy Storms Jr., then this is the book for you. If you are the kind of person who needs to know that when the command module re-entered the atmosphere it generated enough energy to light the city of Los Angeles for 104 seconds - then you may truly find solace here. -
GEORGE FRASER.



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