

PERSONAL VOYAGES (#1)

Robert Rosamond

The Churchyard Sphere

One of the first cases I looked into as a newly accredited investigator with BUFORA involved a series of photographs taken by a retired police officer whom we'll call Mr. Smith. He had been out on a photo shoot with the intention of using the early morning sunlight to its best effect and as such had taken a series of digital photographs featuring an old Norman church. The photographs had been taken from the boundary of the churchyard, and showed an area of lawn in the foreground flanked by various trees and bushes leading up to the church behind which could be seen a range of hills. Upon examining the photographs later that day he was somewhat surprised to discover that an unaccountable sphere of some kind was clearly visible in the sky to the left of the church tower in one particular photograph. Curious as to what the object might be, Mr. Smith re-examined the other images for signs of it but without success. This he found somewhat curious as upon checking the available photographic data accompanying each image, he found that only a few seconds actually separated the previous and subsequent photographs, so logically the object should have shown up in at least one if not both images.

Pondering over the object and trying to come up with a rational explanation over the course of the following day or so, Mr. Smith ultimately found himself leaning towards the possibility that he may have unwittingly photographed a 'UFO' and as a result decided that it might be best to contact a group or an organisation that dealt with such things.

Upon eventually receiving copies of the photographs via an Email

attachment along with a report of everything he could recall at the time, it was quite obvious upon an initial evaluation of the images that had they had all been taken from the same spot but nonetheless contained enough subtle variations between each shot to suggest that Mr. Smith had certainly been conducting a photographic exercise as stated rather than simply taking snap shots. The object itself appeared -on face value at least- to be spherical in shape and dark grey in colour, whilst both distance and height created the visual notion of its passing somewhere behind the church itself and in front of the hills beyond, and perhaps being anywhere between 1000 to 1500 feet in the air.

My first task was to examine the primary photograph carefully for tell-tale signs of enhancement or tampering, and upon finding no such evidence I had to assume that whatever Mr. Smith had unwittingly captured, it did seem to be a genuine part of the scene. I then examined the other photographs for any sign of the object, particularly those taken immediately before and after the primary picture. Despite the accompanying photograph specs indicating that around 10 seconds had elapsed between all three shots, Mr. Smith was correct in stating that no other sign of the object could be found. This consequently implied that the object would only have been visible for a couple of seconds at the very most and as a result had either appeared and disappeared more or less instantly, or had basically passed through the scene at a phenomenal rate of speed! The consistent quality of each photograph proved to be good enough that I could magnify on the computer on the computer any particular part of each to a very high degree before resolution began to deteriorate. As a result of this added bonus the object revealed a surprisingly clear outline with very little loss of definition under enlargement, and as a result revealed the fact that it wasn't completely spherical, as a curious flat spot-or depression- near the

top left hand edge of its rim (corresponding to a 10 o'clock position) could clearly be seen. Whilst enlarged it also struck me that the surface of the object didn't appear to be reflecting sunlight at any point, and that for something possibly passing across the sky at breathtaking speed, it apparently wasn't fast enough to out-pace the camera's chosen shutter speed at the time.

It was time to take stock of the evidence thus far:

- The object wasn't completely spherical.
- The object wasn't reflecting sunlight which, given its apparent position and the conditions at the time, it should have been if it had been comprised of any surface coating other than a hi-tech light absorbing paint.
- Accompanying image data suggested that the object had appeared and disappeared within a second or two yet magnification revealed a remarkable degree of clarity for something potentially moving far faster than the camera's elected shutter speed at the time should have been able to 'freeze' in such a way.
- Irrespective of the above points, no evidence for post-photographic tomfoolery could be found within the image, so whatever the object was, it was certainly real and as a consequence most definitely there at the time.

My observation concerning an apparent lack of reflection upon the object's surface took me back for a closer look and eventually revealed that rather than becoming lighter towards the top as you might expect on a bright and sunny day, our mysterious object seemed to display the exact reverse by becoming slightly darker towards the top instead! At this point in time I wasn't happy with what I'd found because the visual evidence was throwing up clues that didn't correspond to the circumstances and situation of the

event itself, and as a result my instincts had found a bone to chew upon. I came back to the photograph during the course of evening number three, however, more or less resigned to the fact that despite this instinct I was no doubt going to have to initiate a series of long and protracted enquiries that would probably, if not definitely in fact, draw a damned blank. In such a negative frame of mind I put the offending image on screen once again and proceeded to roam around it enlarging various things at random. During the course of this vaguely meaningful exercise I scanned the line of trees running along the right hand side of the churchyard foreground, particularly near the tops of each in the forlorn hope that I might have missed the object as it transitioned from left to right or right to left of the scene and had been otherwise partially obscured by the foliage.

During the course of this procedure I became aware of the fact that most of the trees seemed to be fruiting with some kind of berry. They weren't immediately obvious unless you first took the effort to enlarge those areas where daylight played through the leaves and highlighted them. I thereafter make a purposeful effort to look for them amongst the leaves and in doing so noted that their overall shape seemed not dissimilar to our UFO...and that upon closer analysis they shared a suspiciously similar colour tone within the photograph.

I pondered upon this point for a while, then giving vent to my instinct, dashed off a swift Email to Mr. Smith simply asking him to return to the exact location where he had set his camera up and take a look at the ground in the immediate vicinity. I asked him to report back to me as soon as possible thereafter. The following evening I received a reply containing an attached photograph showing a twenty pence coin placed beside three slightly larger berries that he'd found amongst a number scattered over the

ground where he'd set his camera up. All three were more or less spherical in shape, apart that is from a distinct flat spot where the stalk had been attached. Mr. Smith had unwittingly photographed a berry falling from a tree above his location....nothing more nor less bizarre than that, but the journey through his apparent "sighting" was both interesting and revealing, and as a result firmly established, or perhaps reinforced, a few salient facts in my mind concerning ufological photographic evidence.

The next significant development in my greater ufological awareness concerned a phone call one evening at around 8.30 pm from somebody who proceeded to inform me that he was an alien who'd been on this planet far too long and now wanted to get back home...

....But that's another story. Watch this space.....

Robert Rosamond, November 2009
