

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:23,800

MUSIC

2

00:00:23,800 --> 00:00:28,280

Every year, hundreds of unidentified flying objects, UFOs,

3

00:00:28,280 --> 00:00:30,600

are reported over the British Isles.

4

00:00:30,600 --> 00:00:35,880

Most of them can be explained, but about one in ten defy the investigators.

5

00:00:35,880 --> 00:00:39,280

Witnesses make astonishing claims of their close encounters,

6

00:00:39,280 --> 00:00:41,880

of bizarre lights darting round the sky,

7

00:00:41,880 --> 00:00:44,520

communication with other forms of intelligence,

8

00:00:44,520 --> 00:00:47,680

even of being abducted by aliens.

9

00:00:47,680 --> 00:00:51,840

But none is more remarkable than the story we're going to tell tonight.

10

00:00:51,840 --> 00:00:54,760

It resulted in inquiries on both sides of the Atlantic

11

00:00:54,760 --> 00:00:56,600

and questions in Parliament.

12

00:00:56,600 --> 00:00:59,320

It involved senior American Air Force personnel

13

00:00:59,320 --> 00:01:02,480

and a former Chief of Staff at the Ministry of Defense.

14

00:01:02,480 --> 00:01:06,640

The witnesses and the evidence they gathered are impossible to ignore.

15

00:01:06,640 --> 00:01:10,840

This is the first time all those directly involved have told their story,

16

00:01:10,840 --> 00:01:13,320

and we've reconstructed what they describe.

17

00:01:13,320 --> 00:01:18,160

American airmen stationed in Britain tell of events that would change their lives.

18

00:01:18,160 --> 00:01:21,640

ROAR

19

00:01:21,640 --> 00:01:23,960

I came to Britain from a tour in the Pentagon,

20

00:01:23,960 --> 00:01:26,880

having previously served in the Far East and, of course, in Vietnam,

21

00:01:26,880 --> 00:01:31,120

like many other people, and I kind of expected it to be a somewhat of a quiet tour.

22

00:01:31,120 --> 00:01:33,120

ROAR

23

00:01:33,120 --> 00:01:35,120

I was at the height of the Cold War,

24

00:01:35,120 --> 00:01:39,280

but we weren't directly involved like the bases in Europe.

25

00:01:39,280 --> 00:01:42,040

ROAR

26

00:01:42,040 --> 00:01:44,480

It was very laid back, not much happened,

27

00:01:44,480 --> 00:01:48,520

and you never expected much to happen, especially at Christmas time.

28

00:01:48,520 --> 00:01:53,000

Bent waters and Woodbridge, twin military air bases in East Anglia.

29

00:01:53,040 --> 00:01:56,560

The three miles that divide them are filled by a Rendlesham Forest.

30

00:01:56,560 --> 00:01:59,440

ROAR

31

00:01:59,440 --> 00:02:03,800

Until last year, the bases were occupied by the 81st Tactical Fighter Wing

32

00:02:03,800 --> 00:02:05,880

of the United States Air Force.

33

00:02:05,880 --> 00:02:07,920

Although a normally uneventful assignment,

34

00:02:07,920 --> 00:02:11,160

they formed a strategic part of Western Europe's defenses.

35

00:02:11,160 --> 00:02:13,600

As such, they had top security status.

36

00:02:13,600 --> 00:02:16,520

Nothing could get in or out without being detected.

37

00:02:16,520 --> 00:02:18,320

ROAR

38

00:02:18,320 --> 00:02:20,880

An RAF radar station nearby.

39

00:02:20,960 --> 00:02:26,080

During the monitoring of a night-flying exercise, a strange object was picked up.

40

00:02:26,080 --> 00:02:29,360

We didn't have the faintest idea where it was.

41

00:02:29,360 --> 00:02:32,200

We checked through the air traffic agencies.

42

00:02:32,200 --> 00:02:34,800

There should have been nothing in that area at the time.

43

00:02:34,800 --> 00:02:36,800

Colin, have a look at this.

44

00:02:38,320 --> 00:02:42,000

It's just completely static. It's just hovering there.

45

00:02:42,000 --> 00:02:45,880

The only thing we could do was send the jet aircraft in to find out where it was.

46

00:02:45,880 --> 00:02:47,360

ROAR

47

00:02:47,360 --> 00:02:49,520

Bravo 60, Bravo 60.

48

00:02:49,520 --> 00:02:52,560

We have unidentified traffic in your area.

49

00:02:52,560 --> 00:02:56,560

Your new target is 270 degrees,

50

00:02:56,560 --> 00:03:01,320

range 10 miles, indicating 5,000 feet over.

51

00:03:01,320 --> 00:03:02,720

Thanks, Richard.

52

00:03:02,720 --> 00:03:03,720

Bye.

53

00:03:03,720 --> 00:03:06,720

ROAR

54

00:03:06,720 --> 00:03:08,840

They got to within about a quarter of a mile,

55

00:03:08,840 --> 00:03:12,000

and the pilots suddenly started reporting that they could see

56

00:03:12,000 --> 00:03:14,160

a very bright light in the sky in front of them.

57

00:03:14,160 --> 00:03:17,440

And it's extremely bright lights.

58

00:03:17,440 --> 00:03:20,320

It's moving away. Target is following us.

59

00:03:20,320 --> 00:03:21,800

Look at that thing go.

60

00:03:21,800 --> 00:03:24,600

Bravo 60, target is still in front of you.

61

00:03:24,600 --> 00:03:28,480

It's going straight up. Target going straight up. Over.

62

00:03:28,480 --> 00:03:30,600

It was stationary on the screen.

63

00:03:30,600 --> 00:03:35,040

And then, in seconds, it moved off at a fantastic rate of speed.

64

00:03:35,040 --> 00:03:40,640

Within a space of five minutes, it was reaching

65

00:03:40,640 --> 00:03:43,840

90,000 feet and higher.

66

00:03:43,840 --> 00:03:48,560

And we lost it off the top end of the radar scope.

67

00:03:48,560 --> 00:03:51,600

Target's accelerating too far. We can't keep up with it.

68

00:03:51,600 --> 00:03:53,040

We're disengaging.

69

00:03:53,040 --> 00:03:55,480

Radar operators were mystified.

70

00:03:55,480 --> 00:03:57,240

There's nothing we have in this day

71

00:03:57,240 --> 00:03:59,840

that can perform those kind of maneuvers.

72

00:03:59,840 --> 00:04:02,680

The pilots wouldn't be able to take it.

73

00:04:02,680 --> 00:04:05,200

You tell me what it was.

74

00:04:05,200 --> 00:04:07,840

Back on Woodbridge Base near the East Gate,

75

00:04:07,840 --> 00:04:11,240

Airman John Burroughs was on security patrol with a colleague.

76

00:04:11,240 --> 00:04:13,600

Stop the car.

77

00:04:13,640 --> 00:04:15,360

Look at that.

78

00:04:15,360 --> 00:04:17,720

Do you see that in the woods?

79

00:04:17,720 --> 00:04:20,240

There were strange lights out in the forest.

80

00:04:20,240 --> 00:04:22,640

To me, it almost looked like Christmas lights at first,

81

00:04:22,640 --> 00:04:24,320

a Christmas display.

82

00:04:24,320 --> 00:04:26,640

I'll open the gate.

83

00:04:26,640 --> 00:04:27,920

At that point, we looked at each other

84

00:04:27,920 --> 00:04:30,400

and we decided that we better go out and take a closer look

85

00:04:30,400 --> 00:04:32,760

because we weren't sure what we were dealing with.

86

00:04:35,560 --> 00:04:37,680

What we were looking at wasn't real.

87

00:04:37,680 --> 00:04:39,280

Those are no Christmas lights.

88

00:04:39,280 --> 00:04:41,360

Come on, let's get out of here.

89

00:04:41,400 --> 00:04:42,680

Airman Burroughs and his colleague

90

00:04:42,680 --> 00:04:44,160

raced back to the gatehouse,

91

00:04:44,160 --> 00:04:46,680

where he contacted the security controller.

92

00:04:55,480 --> 00:04:57,160

Hi, this is Burroughs here.

93

00:04:57,160 --> 00:04:59,920

I'm out at the East Gate.

94

00:04:59,920 --> 00:05:01,520

We've got a problem here.

95

00:05:01,520 --> 00:05:04,160

He had a lot of trouble believing what I was telling him

96

00:05:04,160 --> 00:05:05,720

because it was Christmas

97

00:05:05,720 --> 00:05:08,360

and I played a lot of jokes on him before.

98

00:05:08,360 --> 00:05:10,360

I'm serious. This is not a joke.

99

00:05:10,360 --> 00:05:13,360

There's something out there.

100

00:05:13,360 --> 00:05:15,560

Eventually persuaded by the Airman's tone,

101

00:05:15,560 --> 00:05:18,360

the controller contacted Sergeant Jim Peniston.

102

00:05:20,040 --> 00:05:22,120

Roger control, we're on our way over.

103

00:05:22,120 --> 00:05:23,920

We received a call from the control center

104

00:05:23,920 --> 00:05:25,560

to go on down to the East Gate

105

00:05:25,560 --> 00:05:27,760

and contact John Burroughs.

106

00:05:27,760 --> 00:05:30,600

And I asked him what was the nature of the problem down there

107

00:05:30,600 --> 00:05:32,960

and they said that they'd rather not tell me

108

00:05:32,960 --> 00:05:33,960

or they'd rather have me go down there

109

00:05:33,960 --> 00:05:36,280

and talk to the patrolman on scene.

110

00:05:36,280 --> 00:05:38,080

What is that?

111

00:05:38,200 --> 00:05:41,480

I don't know and I don't want to know.

112

00:05:41,480 --> 00:05:43,200

Did you hear an explosion, John?

113

00:05:43,200 --> 00:05:46,400

It didn't crash. It landed.

114

00:05:46,400 --> 00:05:48,840

The first thing that came to mind is the aircraft crash.

115

00:05:48,840 --> 00:05:53,400

I've had at least 30 or 40 crashes that I have been to

116

00:05:53,400 --> 00:05:55,560

at that point in time

117

00:05:55,560 --> 00:05:59,200

and that's definitely what I thought it was.

118

00:05:59,200 --> 00:06:01,200

I'm going to contact control.

119

00:06:05,000 --> 00:06:07,600

Sergeant Peniston at the East Gate.

120

00:06:07,600 --> 00:06:11,040

I've got a possible aircraft down just beyond the perimeter.

121

00:06:11,040 --> 00:06:13,000

They notified me that they were tracking

122

00:06:13,000 --> 00:06:15,800

undidunified bogey about 15 minutes ago

123

00:06:15,800 --> 00:06:18,400

and they confirmed it with contact with Eastern radar

124

00:06:18,400 --> 00:06:20,400

and Heathrow in London.

125

00:06:20,400 --> 00:06:23,400

And at the approximate location, about five miles off,

126

00:06:23,400 --> 00:06:25,400

basically they lost contact with it.

127

00:06:27,120 --> 00:06:29,080

Well, they registered it. They don't know what it is either.

128

00:06:29,080 --> 00:06:31,040

So a plane or a want?

129

00:06:31,040 --> 00:06:31,960

It was Christmas time

130

00:06:31,960 --> 00:06:34,680

and there was no scheduled flying for that night.

131

00:06:34,680 --> 00:06:36,800

I'd heard rumors that it possibly could have been

132

00:06:36,800 --> 00:06:39,800

a British exercise with ships and planes out at sea.

133

00:06:39,800 --> 00:06:43,800

Whatever it was, Sergeant Peniston knew they had to go and find out.

134

00:06:43,800 --> 00:06:46,800

I got permission to proceed off base to investigate.

135

00:06:48,800 --> 00:06:50,320

Following military rules,

136

00:06:50,320 --> 00:06:53,320

the Americans had to leave their weapons behind.

137

00:06:53,320 --> 00:06:55,800

One part of me wanted to go ahead and go out there

138

00:06:55,800 --> 00:06:57,520

and figure out what we were dealing with

139

00:06:57,520 --> 00:06:59,520

and the other part of me was saying,

140

00:06:59,520 --> 00:07:00,800

no, you don't need to go out there.

141

00:07:00,800 --> 00:07:03,120

Just go ahead, stay back at the gate where it's safe

142

00:07:03,120 --> 00:07:06,320

and you don't have to worry about what's going on.

143

00:07:06,320 --> 00:07:09,320

The men went through the forest towards the lights.

144

00:07:09,320 --> 00:07:10,320

This is far as we go.

145

00:07:10,320 --> 00:07:12,320

It's not on foot now.

146

00:07:13,320 --> 00:07:15,320

I started to see a defined shape

147

00:07:15,320 --> 00:07:18,320

and at that point, when I realized it wasn't an aircraft crash,

148

00:07:18,320 --> 00:07:21,320

a fire or anything of that sort,

149

00:07:21,320 --> 00:07:25,320

the air was filled with electricity

150

00:07:25,320 --> 00:07:30,320

that could feel it on your skin as we approached the object.

151

00:07:32,320 --> 00:07:34,320

You felt like you were moving in slow motion.

152

00:07:34,320 --> 00:07:37,320

Your hair on the back of your head was standing up.

153

00:07:37,320 --> 00:07:40,320

You felt like you had very little control over your body.

154

00:07:40,320 --> 00:07:42,320

Then they saw it.

155

00:07:44,320 --> 00:07:47,320

I wish I had my weapon because I felt totally defenseless.

156

00:07:47,320 --> 00:07:49,320

It was about the size of a tank.

157

00:07:49,320 --> 00:07:51,320

It was triangular in shape.

158

00:07:51,320 --> 00:07:53,320

Underneath the craft was a high,

159

00:07:53,320 --> 00:07:56,320

intensely white light emulating out of it

160

00:07:56,320 --> 00:08:00,320

and it was bordered by red and blue light and alternating.

161

00:08:01,320 --> 00:08:03,320

When nothing happened,

162

00:08:03,320 --> 00:08:05,320

the men deciding the object wasn't hostile

163

00:08:05,320 --> 00:08:07,320

got up to take a closer look.

164

00:08:07,320 --> 00:08:10,320

On the upper left side of the craft was an inscription

165

00:08:10,320 --> 00:08:15,320

measured six inches high of symbols.

166

00:08:15,320 --> 00:08:18,320

They looked familiar but I couldn't ascertain why.

167

00:08:18,320 --> 00:08:21,320

The Americans watched for about 20 minutes.

168

00:08:21,320 --> 00:08:23,320

Slowly started moving back,

169

00:08:23,320 --> 00:08:25,320

weaving in around the trees.

170

00:08:25,320 --> 00:08:28,320

Got about 40 feet away, then it raised up into the air

171

00:08:28,320 --> 00:08:32,320

and it shot off as fast as you could blink.

172

00:08:32,320 --> 00:08:34,320

On their return to the air base,

173

00:08:34,320 --> 00:08:36,320

the men were called in by the officer in charge.

174

00:08:36,320 --> 00:08:38,320

Well, what happened out there last night?

175

00:08:38,320 --> 00:08:40,320

We know radar saw something.

176

00:08:40,320 --> 00:08:44,320

Now I want you to tell me in your words exactly what you saw.

177

00:08:44,320 --> 00:08:47,320

Well, sir, Burroughs was the first to see.

178

00:08:47,320 --> 00:08:49,320

As we were standing there reporting in,

179

00:08:49,320 --> 00:08:51,320

then it hit me and I realized,

180

00:08:51,320 --> 00:08:54,320

what in the world am I doing here standing in front of my lieutenant

181

00:08:54,320 --> 00:08:57,320

getting ready to explain this situation that I just observed.

182

00:08:57,320 --> 00:09:00,320

I thought, there goes the career, Jim.

183

00:09:00,320 --> 00:09:02,320

Had markings on the gate.

184

00:09:02,320 --> 00:09:05,320

Gentlemen, he says, I need to go over to the woods,

185

00:09:05,320 --> 00:09:08,320

he says, and take a look at the area in daylight

186

00:09:08,320 --> 00:09:10,320

to see if you can find any more physical evidence.

187

00:09:10,320 --> 00:09:12,320

Anything.

188

00:09:12,320 --> 00:09:15,320

We found branches on the ground.

189

00:09:15,320 --> 00:09:17,320

We found indentations in the ground.

190

00:09:17,320 --> 00:09:20,320

The local Suffolk police went out too.

191

00:09:20,320 --> 00:09:22,320

An officer found the indentations but reported

192

00:09:22,320 --> 00:09:25,320

they'd been caused by animals burrowing.

193

00:09:25,320 --> 00:09:28,320

I asked him why and he says because he's not going to put anything

194

00:09:28,320 --> 00:09:31,320

other than that in his report.

195

00:09:31,320 --> 00:09:33,320

We found that just totally absurd.

196

00:09:33,320 --> 00:09:38,320

The ground was frozen and it was just impossible for that to happen.

197

00:09:38,320 --> 00:09:43,320

Then the airmen remembered that the object they'd seen was triangular.

198

00:09:43,320 --> 00:09:45,320

They measured the distance between the indentations

199

00:09:45,320 --> 00:09:49,320

and discovered that they formed a perfect triangle.

200

00:09:49,320 --> 00:09:52,320

The activities soon came to the attention of the deputy base commander,

201

00:09:52,320 --> 00:09:55,320

Lieutenant Colonel Charles Holt.

202

00:09:55,320 --> 00:09:57,320

Well, it's the aliens I feel sorry for.

203

00:09:57,320 --> 00:10:00,320

I wouldn't want a close encounter of any kind with burrows.

204

00:10:00,320 --> 00:10:01,320

Who's been having close encounters?

205

00:10:01,320 --> 00:10:05,320

Sir, well, I guess you could say we were having a few Christmas festivities.

206

00:10:05,320 --> 00:10:07,320

Oh, yeah?

207

00:10:07,320 --> 00:10:11,320

Well, Burrows and Peniston said they were out chasing a UFO in the forest.

208

00:10:11,320 --> 00:10:12,320

Are you serious?

209

00:10:12,320 --> 00:10:13,320

Well, that's what they said.

210

00:10:13,320 --> 00:10:15,320

Has anybody confirmed it wasn't an aircraft?

211

00:10:15,320 --> 00:10:18,320

Nothing I know of.

212

00:10:18,320 --> 00:10:20,320

Whatever they saw, I want it in the log.

213

00:10:20,320 --> 00:10:21,320

Okay.

214

00:10:21,320 --> 00:10:23,320

I personally knew the individuals that have reported it.

215

00:10:23,320 --> 00:10:25,320

I knew there were very credible people.

216

00:10:25,320 --> 00:10:26,320

I was sure something had happened.

217

00:10:26,320 --> 00:10:27,320

It was obviously something.

218

00:10:27,320 --> 00:10:31,320

I certainly wasn't convinced it was a UFO, but I didn't know what it was.

219

00:10:31,320 --> 00:10:33,320

There was only one way to find out.

220

00:10:33,320 --> 00:10:37,320

Huge portable floodlights known as light holes were rigged in the forest,

221

00:10:37,320 --> 00:10:40,320

ready for anything which might appear the next night.

222

00:10:40,320 --> 00:10:44,320

But as darkness fell, the light holes began to malfunction.

223

00:10:44,320 --> 00:10:48,320

Lieutenant Colonel Holt was interrupted at a Christmas dinner.

224

00:10:48,320 --> 00:10:51,320

The duty flight attendant came in, and he was quite shaken,

225

00:10:51,320 --> 00:10:54,320

and insisted upon speaking myself and the base commander

226

00:10:54,320 --> 00:10:56,320

about a matter of utmost urgency.

227

00:10:56,320 --> 00:10:58,320

He said, it's back.

228

00:10:58,320 --> 00:11:00,320

And I said, what's back?

229

00:11:00,320 --> 00:11:03,320

And he said, the UFO is back.

230

00:11:03,320 --> 00:11:04,320

What's back?

231

00:11:04,320 --> 00:11:06,320

I assembled a small team of experts,

232

00:11:06,320 --> 00:11:11,320

and we set off in the forest really to debunk it.

233

00:11:11,320 --> 00:11:14,320

About 30 men followed the lights into the forest,

234

00:11:14,320 --> 00:11:17,320

armed with special equipment, including a night vision scope,

235

00:11:17,320 --> 00:11:20,320

Geiger counter, and a tape recorder.

236

00:11:20,320 --> 00:11:22,320

Right, this way.

237

00:11:22,320 --> 00:11:24,320

I'm certainly glad we made the tape,

238

00:11:24,320 --> 00:11:25,320

because if we hadn't made the tape,

239

00:11:25,320 --> 00:11:28,320

even I would have trouble believing what happened that night.

240

00:11:28,320 --> 00:11:30,320

But would anyone else believe it?

241

00:11:30,320 --> 00:11:32,320

Right, this way.

242

00:11:36,320 --> 00:11:39,320

It appears that he may be moving a little bit this way.

243

00:11:39,320 --> 00:11:40,320

It's brighter than it has been.

244

00:11:40,320 --> 00:11:42,320

It's coming this way.

245

00:11:42,320 --> 00:11:44,320

It is definitely coming this way.

246

00:11:48,320 --> 00:11:50,320

I knew there was something there.

247

00:11:50,320 --> 00:11:52,320

There had to be something there.

248

00:11:52,320 --> 00:11:55,320

But I also was firmly convinced there was a logical explanation

249

00:11:55,320 --> 00:11:57,320

for what was going on.

250

00:11:57,320 --> 00:11:59,320

Portable floodlights, known as light holes,

251

00:11:59,320 --> 00:12:03,320

positioned in the forest, mysteriously refused to work.

252

00:12:03,320 --> 00:12:05,320

It's very unusual to have a problem with the light all.

253

00:12:05,320 --> 00:12:07,320

That night, the light all wouldn't work,

254

00:12:07,320 --> 00:12:09,320

even when they swapped that and got other ones from the base.

255

00:12:09,320 --> 00:12:11,320

In addition, we had problems with our radios.

256

00:12:11,320 --> 00:12:14,320

All three frequencies we were using were intermittent,

257

00:12:14,320 --> 00:12:16,320

and did not work properly that night.

258

00:12:16,320 --> 00:12:18,320

But other equipment was working,

259

00:12:18,320 --> 00:12:22,320

a night vision scope, a Geiger counter, and a tape recorder.

260

00:12:22,320 --> 00:12:25,320

The sound in this reconstruction is taken from the actual tape

261

00:12:25,320 --> 00:12:28,320

they claim to have recorded that night.

262

00:12:28,320 --> 00:12:30,320

There was no doubt about it.

263

00:12:30,320 --> 00:12:32,320

There was some type of strange flash in the red light of here.

264

00:12:32,320 --> 00:12:33,320

It's yellow.

265

00:12:33,320 --> 00:12:35,320

I saw a yellow tint in it, too.

266

00:12:35,320 --> 00:12:37,320

Weird.

267

00:12:37,320 --> 00:12:39,320

It appears that he may be moving a little bit this way.

268

00:12:39,320 --> 00:12:41,320

It's brighter than it has been.

269

00:12:41,320 --> 00:12:43,320

It's coming this way.

270

00:12:43,320 --> 00:12:45,320

It is definitely coming this way.

271

00:12:45,320 --> 00:12:48,320

It pulsed as though it were an eye winking at you.

272

00:12:48,320 --> 00:12:52,320

And around the edges, it appeared to have molten metal dripping off it,

273

00:12:52,320 --> 00:12:54,320

just like falling to the ground.

274

00:12:54,320 --> 00:12:56,320

But I didn't see any evidence of anything on the ground.

275

00:12:56,320 --> 00:12:58,320

I just couldn't believe what I was saying.

276

00:12:58,320 --> 00:13:00,320

None of us could.

277

00:13:00,320 --> 00:13:03,320

Here I am a senior official that routinely denies this sort of thing

278

00:13:03,320 --> 00:13:05,320

and diligently works to debunk them,

279

00:13:05,320 --> 00:13:08,320

and I'm involved in the middle of something that I can't explain.

280

00:13:08,320 --> 00:13:13,320

The Geiger counter was measuring levels 25 times normal background radiation.

281

00:13:13,320 --> 00:13:15,320

It jumped up to 7 tenths.

282

00:13:15,320 --> 00:13:17,320

7 tenths right there in the center?

283

00:13:17,320 --> 00:13:18,320

Uh-huh.

284

00:13:18,320 --> 00:13:20,320

We're getting very positive readings.

285

00:13:20,320 --> 00:13:22,320

You're getting readings on the tree you're taking samples from?

286

00:13:22,320 --> 00:13:24,320

We're clicks, max.

287

00:13:24,320 --> 00:13:25,320

That's the strongest point on the tree?

288

00:13:25,320 --> 00:13:26,320

Yes, sir.

289

00:13:26,320 --> 00:13:29,320

The night vision scope showed strange readings, too.

290

00:13:29,320 --> 00:13:32,320

We're picking up each reflection off the trees.

291

00:13:32,320 --> 00:13:34,320

Working directly overhead,

292

00:13:34,320 --> 00:13:36,320

one can see an opening in the trees,

293

00:13:36,320 --> 00:13:40,320

plus some freshly broken pine branches underground underneath.

294

00:13:40,320 --> 00:13:43,320

Looks like someone came off about 15 to 20 feet up.

295

00:13:43,320 --> 00:13:46,320

The men stayed in pursuit through the woods for six hours.

296

00:13:46,320 --> 00:13:48,320

The object suddenly exploded,

297

00:13:48,320 --> 00:13:50,320

a silent explosion,

298

00:13:50,320 --> 00:13:53,320

and broke into three to five white objects and rapidly disappeared.

299

00:13:53,320 --> 00:13:54,320

A mile away,

300

00:13:54,320 --> 00:13:57,320

Elman John Burroughs was with the broken down light holds.

301

00:13:57,320 --> 00:13:59,320

All of a sudden, out of the distance,

302

00:13:59,320 --> 00:14:02,320

a blue light streaked past us.

303

00:14:02,320 --> 00:14:05,320

Passing the light off, they came on.

304

00:14:05,320 --> 00:14:07,320

They passed through the open window on the truck,

305

00:14:07,320 --> 00:14:11,320

going off into the distance, and the light all went out.

306

00:14:11,320 --> 00:14:13,320

As we moved out of the forest,

307

00:14:13,320 --> 00:14:15,320

we noticed three objects in the sky.

308

00:14:15,320 --> 00:14:17,320

The objects in the sky were moving about.

309

00:14:17,320 --> 00:14:20,320

Sharp, angular movements, very high speed.

310

00:14:20,320 --> 00:14:21,320

This is it.

311

00:14:21,320 --> 00:14:23,320

It's looking for something.

312

00:14:23,320 --> 00:14:25,320

I kept getting on the radio and calling the command post.

313

00:14:25,320 --> 00:14:27,320

Thunder, this is Stopper.

314

00:14:27,320 --> 00:14:29,320

Call Radar and ask them what they've got.

315

00:14:29,320 --> 00:14:30,320

30 to go.

316

00:14:30,320 --> 00:14:33,320

I wanted to know if they were finding anything on the radar scope.

317

00:14:33,320 --> 00:14:36,320

One of the objects in the sky was sending down beams,

318

00:14:36,320 --> 00:14:38,320

beams of light, beams of energy.

319

00:14:38,320 --> 00:14:39,320

I'm not sure what they were.

320

00:14:39,320 --> 00:14:41,320

But at the same time I could hear on the radio,

321

00:14:41,320 --> 00:14:44,320

voices talking about the beams coming down on the base.

322

00:14:44,320 --> 00:14:47,320

Then the beam shone straight at them.

323

00:14:47,320 --> 00:14:51,320

At this stage, my skepticism was that the light was not there.

324

00:14:51,320 --> 00:14:53,320

The light was not there.

325

00:14:53,320 --> 00:14:55,320

The light was not there.

326

00:14:55,320 --> 00:14:57,320

The light was not there.

327

00:14:58,320 --> 00:15:02,320

At this stage, my skepticism had definitely disappeared.

328

00:15:02,320 --> 00:15:04,320

I was really in awe.

329

00:15:04,320 --> 00:15:07,320

Almost as rapidly as it appeared, it went.

330

00:15:09,320 --> 00:15:11,320

An extraordinary story.

331

00:15:11,320 --> 00:15:13,320

But what could be behind it?

332

00:15:13,320 --> 00:15:15,320

Some of what the airman saw can be explained,

333

00:15:15,320 --> 00:15:18,320

astronomers say, by a rare coincidence of events

334

00:15:18,320 --> 00:15:20,320

in the sky that night.

335

00:15:21,320 --> 00:15:26,320

One of these was the re-entry of a Russian rocket.

336

00:15:26,320 --> 00:15:29,320

This came in and burnt up in the Earth's atmosphere.

337

00:15:29,320 --> 00:15:32,320

It was seen by thousands of eyewitnesses

338

00:15:32,320 --> 00:15:34,320

all over South-Eastern England.

339

00:15:34,320 --> 00:15:37,320

And the second was a brilliant natural fireball,

340

00:15:37,320 --> 00:15:41,320

a piece of interplanetary rock burning up in the atmosphere.

341

00:15:41,320 --> 00:15:44,320

Another astronomer thinks further confusion was caused

342

00:15:44,320 --> 00:15:47,320

by a third factor, a lighthouse on the nearby coast.

343

00:15:47,320 --> 00:15:50,320

Although it's six miles away, it only looks as though

344

00:15:50,320 --> 00:15:52,320

it's a few hundred yards away in between the trees.

345

00:15:52,320 --> 00:15:54,320

And as the airman moved around,

346

00:15:54,320 --> 00:15:56,320

the lighthouse beam, too, would have appeared to move

347

00:15:56,320 --> 00:15:58,320

in between the trees and retreated in front of them

348

00:15:58,320 --> 00:16:01,320

as they moved forward, which is exactly the way they described it.

349

00:16:02,320 --> 00:16:04,320

That theory was backed up when the tape was played

350

00:16:04,320 --> 00:16:06,320

against the flashing of the lighthouse.

351

00:16:06,320 --> 00:16:10,320

Right on misposition here, straight ahead in between the tree.

352

00:16:10,320 --> 00:16:12,320

There it is again.

353

00:16:12,320 --> 00:16:14,320

Watch.

354

00:16:14,320 --> 00:16:16,320

Straight ahead off my flash, like this.

355

00:16:16,320 --> 00:16:18,320

There it is. I see it, too.

356

00:16:18,320 --> 00:16:20,320

The two matched, but the Americans were well aware of the lighthouse

357

00:16:20,320 --> 00:16:22,320

and say that wasn't what they saw.

358

00:16:22,320 --> 00:16:24,320

A lighthouse doesn't move through the forest.

359

00:16:24,320 --> 00:16:27,320

A lighthouse doesn't go up and down, doesn't explode,

360

00:16:27,320 --> 00:16:30,320

doesn't change shape, size, doesn't send down beams of light

361

00:16:30,320 --> 00:16:32,320

from the sky.

362

00:16:32,320 --> 00:16:35,320

The Rendlesham Forest encounters became the talk of the airbase.

363

00:16:35,320 --> 00:16:38,320

Lieutenant Colonel Holt knew he had to act.

364

00:16:38,320 --> 00:16:40,320

I really didn't know quite how to handle it.

365

00:16:40,320 --> 00:16:42,320

I reported it to my superior, and I was quite concerned,

366

00:16:42,320 --> 00:16:44,320

to be honest with you, what his reaction would be.

367

00:16:44,320 --> 00:16:46,320

But he was very supportive.

368

00:16:47,320 --> 00:16:50,320

He was told to write a memo to the British Ministry of Defence.

369

00:16:51,320 --> 00:16:54,320

Including the underside.

370

00:16:54,320 --> 00:16:56,320

I sent the memo, but I never heard.

371

00:16:56,320 --> 00:16:59,320

I kept checking and asking, but I never got a response.

372

00:16:59,320 --> 00:17:03,320

But other Ammons say secret investigations were taking place.

373

00:17:06,320 --> 00:17:09,320

After the incident happened, there seemed to be

374

00:17:09,320 --> 00:17:12,320

some strange activity going on in the base.

375

00:17:12,320 --> 00:17:15,320

I'm really not sure what it was, but it wasn't normal activity.

376

00:17:15,320 --> 00:17:19,320

At that time, we noticed that there was many unscheduled flights coming in.

377

00:17:19,320 --> 00:17:22,320

They told me that I was supposed to keep it quiet

378

00:17:22,320 --> 00:17:25,320

and not to take the issue any farther.

379

00:17:25,320 --> 00:17:28,320

According to a former US military intelligence officer,

380

00:17:28,320 --> 00:17:30,320

the flights were ordered by his colleagues.

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00:17:31,320 --> 00:17:35,320

There's a total blackout of any information leaving the base.

382

00:17:35,320 --> 00:17:39,320

Even the senior officials on the base were not told

383

00:17:39,320 --> 00:17:42,320

about these flights coming in and leaving.

384

00:17:42,320 --> 00:17:46,320

These flights contained teams of specialists.

385

00:17:46,320 --> 00:17:50,320

They were together specific data in their fields of expertise.

386

00:17:50,320 --> 00:17:54,320

All of that information then was to be sent to Washington, D.C.

387

00:17:54,320 --> 00:17:57,320

where it would be assessed and accumulated

388

00:17:57,320 --> 00:18:00,320

in a finalized, highly classified report.

389

00:18:00,320 --> 00:18:03,320

Whatever conclusions may have been reached,

390

00:18:03,320 --> 00:18:05,320

Lieutenant Colonel Holt wasn't told.

391

00:18:05,320 --> 00:18:07,320

He's mystified as to why, as a senior officer,

392

00:18:07,320 --> 00:18:10,320

his report never even received a reply.

393

00:18:10,320 --> 00:18:13,320

To this day, I'm very puzzled why nobody ever came back

394

00:18:13,320 --> 00:18:15,320

and asked for additional information, asked questions,

395

00:18:15,320 --> 00:18:18,320

or even interviewed me. It doesn't really add up.

396

00:18:19,320 --> 00:18:21,320

But news of the sightings began to leak out.

397

00:18:21,320 --> 00:18:25,320

Local investigators began to take matters into their own hands.

398

00:18:26,320 --> 00:18:29,320

We asked the local people if they'd heard anything and seen anything.

399

00:18:29,320 --> 00:18:34,320

And most of the local people said that they'd seen the lights over the forest.

400

00:18:35,320 --> 00:18:38,320

A few days later, though, they seemed less forthcoming.

401

00:18:39,320 --> 00:18:41,320

They'd all been told to keep quiet.

402

00:18:41,320 --> 00:18:45,320

And two of the local people who lived near the air base

403

00:18:45,320 --> 00:18:49,320

told us originally what they'd seen from their bedroom window.

404

00:18:49,320 --> 00:18:52,320

And then when we went back, they'd got M.O.D.,

405

00:18:52,320 --> 00:18:56,320

property, private, keep out, and they'd got barriers around the house.

406

00:18:58,320 --> 00:19:01,320

The local investigators managed to get a copy from the U.S. government

407

00:19:01,320 --> 00:19:03,320

of the Deputy Commander's memo.

408

00:19:03,320 --> 00:19:06,320

In Britain, it prompted a question in Parliament.

409

00:19:07,320 --> 00:19:10,320

I have seen the memorandum to which my honorable friend refers.

410

00:19:11,320 --> 00:19:14,320

I'm ready to give information about any such reported sightings

411

00:19:14,320 --> 00:19:17,320

that are found to be a matter of concern from a defense standpoint.

412

00:19:17,320 --> 00:19:19,320

But there have been none to date.

413

00:19:23,320 --> 00:19:25,320

The case intrigued Lord Hill Norton,

414

00:19:25,320 --> 00:19:28,320

a former chief of staff at the Ministry of Defense.

415

00:19:30,320 --> 00:19:33,320

One can't help feeling that something is being concealed.

416

00:19:33,320 --> 00:19:37,320

Either the Americans and indeed the deputy base commander

417

00:19:37,320 --> 00:19:42,320

were hallucinating, or they believed that something had landed there

418

00:19:42,320 --> 00:19:45,320

and they had taken photographs and records of it.

419

00:19:45,320 --> 00:19:50,320

And in either event, it must be of interest to the defense of the United Kingdom.

420

00:19:50,320 --> 00:19:54,320

Sergeant Jim Peniston is not only convinced by what he saw then.

421

00:19:54,320 --> 00:19:58,320

A cover-up could explain what he says happened after he left the U.S. Air Force.

422

00:19:58,320 --> 00:20:01,320

As time went by, a year or two,

423

00:20:01,320 --> 00:20:06,320

I had noticed that my mail was being tampered with, opened and resealed.

424

00:20:06,320 --> 00:20:12,320

And we also got to the one point where we found a listening device within my home.

425

00:20:13,320 --> 00:20:16,320

Soon after the stories surrounding the Suffolk Air Base's surface,

426

00:20:16,320 --> 00:20:19,320

a large swathe of Rendlesham Forest was cut down,

427

00:20:19,320 --> 00:20:23,320

locals believed because of the radiation left behind.

428

00:20:25,320 --> 00:20:28,320

When we asked why the trees were cleared so quickly,

429

00:20:28,320 --> 00:20:31,320

we were told because of the traces that were left on them.

430

00:20:32,320 --> 00:20:36,320

And we tried to find out who had taken the trees away.

431

00:20:36,320 --> 00:20:39,320

We were told that they were just taken.

432

00:20:42,320 --> 00:20:44,320

The air bases have gone too.

433

00:20:44,320 --> 00:20:47,320

With the end of the Cold War, the Americans left.

434

00:20:47,320 --> 00:20:50,320

But the mystery won't go away.

435

00:20:51,320 --> 00:20:55,320

The ministry had doggedly denied that anything untoward occurred there,

436

00:20:55,320 --> 00:20:57,320

and I simply don't believe it.

437

00:20:57,320 --> 00:21:03,320

Therefore, somebody, I don't know who it is, is sitting on information which by now should be public.

438

00:21:03,320 --> 00:21:06,320

If a secret report is in Washington, what could it contain?

439

00:21:06,320 --> 00:21:09,320

The former intelligence officer claims he knows.

440

00:21:09,320 --> 00:21:16,320

That finalized report concluded that real objects were seen,

441

00:21:16,320 --> 00:21:22,320

that these objects were a result of a highly evolved advanced technology.

442

00:21:22,320 --> 00:21:27,320

The technology was so advanced that we cannot to this day replicate it.

443

00:21:27,320 --> 00:21:30,320

That there was an intelligence involved,

444

00:21:30,320 --> 00:21:34,320

and that that intelligence did not originate on Earth.

445

00:21:36,320 --> 00:21:40,320

And according to the radar operator who first saw an object,

446

00:21:40,320 --> 00:21:43,320

it's far from being the only UFO incident.

447

00:21:44,320 --> 00:21:49,320

These things are being picked up by radar operators throughout the whole world,

448

00:21:49,320 --> 00:21:51,320

not just in Britain.

449

00:21:51,320 --> 00:21:53,320

And we're not told what they are,

450

00:21:53,320 --> 00:21:56,320

and we're not expected to ask questions about what they are.

451

00:21:58,320 --> 00:22:03,320

The Ministry of Defence admits they have more than 8,000 cases of UFOs on file.

452

00:22:03,320 --> 00:22:06,320

As for Lieutenant Colonel Charles Holt,

453

00:22:06,320 --> 00:22:09,320

although he never heard any more about his UFO report,

454

00:22:09,320 --> 00:22:12,320

it didn't as he feared damage his career.

455

00:22:12,320 --> 00:22:17,320

Soon afterwards, he was promoted from deputy commander to commander of the air base.

456

00:22:17,320 --> 00:22:22,320

Rather strange, you might think, if he'd been suspected of not telling the truth.

457

00:22:22,320 --> 00:22:26,320

We're going under cover now, but see you again soon. Good night.

458

00:22:47,320 --> 00:22:54,320

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