

BIRD IMPRINTS...

Three examples have recently come to light of imprints left by birds that, although they probably are unrelated to the Shroud's image, have a certain parallel curiosity-value. The first example, brought to the editor's attention by talented artist Jeanne Walpole of Bradford-on-Avon, Wilts, was created some years ago by a pigeon which left a curious imprint of itself on Jeanne's window. The phenomenon seemed so curious that Jeanne's husband photographed it before it became effaced. Now BSTS member Lynn Picknett has sent in two further examples of the same phenomenon reported in volume no. 63 of the *Fortean Times*. Both these latter involve barn-owls.

Occurring early this year, the first example was left 25 feet from the ground on the blue plate glass wall of Secured Home Loans, near Solihull, W. Midlands.

According to company clerk Jean Roddy 'It looked as if someone had etched the owl onto the window,' every detail, from eye sockets to individual tail feathers being visible. In this instance the bird appears to have died from the impact, for according to Roddy 'We found the body on the ground, half eaten by a fox which our security officers have spotted roaming around the area,' Examining this image, which lasted two months before being erased by window-cleaners, Prof. John Currey of York University's Dept of Biology noted the owl's right bastard feather to be raised. He commented: 'It obviously saw the building at the last moment, put down its tail feathers, and was forming a kind of parachute of itself in an effort to slow down. It crammed on the brakes just before impact, which is why the whole bird is outlined...'

Dating from 1986, the second example was found, as in Jeanne Walpole's case, simply left on a window, that of a first-floor bedroom at Southfield Farm, Backwell, near Bristol. In this instance there was no sign of any dead or injured bird. The house-owner, Mrs Barbara Ehlers, commented that she thought the imprint to have been created by dust from the bird's feathers. This latter would accord well with some electrostatic process, akin to that used in photocopying, having been involved. And that in turn corresponds to some theories of how the Shroud image was formed...