

INVESTIGATION REPORT



Investigation Site	Chicksands Wood
Investigation Date	Friday 17 th April 2015
Report By	Bill King
Team Members	Bill, Steph, Andy F, Andy G, Jason, Paul

Background

The haunting of Chicksands Wood appears to have a very strong connection with the haunting on nearby Great Lane. Chronologically the Great Lane haunting was reported first when, just before Christmas 1969, a newsagent and his wife were delivering papers to Northfields Farm and encountered the ghost. They saw a light approaching along the road from the direction of Haynes Church End which at first they thought was a cyclist but it turned out to be a hooded figure on horseback carrying an old fashioned lamp. What made them decide it was a ghost was when the figure passed straight through their car. They were not the only people to see the ghost as a previous resident at Northfield Cottage (at the end of the drive to Northfield Farm) had eventually moved out because of the ghost.

The sighting in Chicksands Wood occurred in 1971 when a motorist driving through the wood came upon an apparition on horseback that, once again, rode through his car. There is no road through Chicksands Wood but up the centre of the wood runs Long Drive which now consists of compacted stones but did it in 1971? The track way, and in fact a lot of the paths in the modern wood, are visible on a map drawn up in 1892 and the wood is virtually identical in size and shape as it was in 1892.

If the sightings were of the same ghost then it is likely that it was heading towards Chicksands Priory, which was founded in 1150 by the Gilbertine Order. If it was heading to Chicksands Priory and was seen in Chicksands Wood then it would have had to have been north of a drainage channel which runs through the wood dividing it into two, Chicksands Wood to the northeast and Pedley Wood to the southwest. Assuming the figure was following a reasonable straight line then it must have been seen near where the two woods join, an area now occupied by a monument to Henry Robert, who was lost at sea in the collision of the steamer Comtesse de Flandres with the steamer Princess Henriette in 1889. This monument is at the southeast end of Long Drive which is a straight line from the north end of the wood at Appley Corner. The drive to Pedley Farm follows Long Drive until about 400 metres (0.25 miles) from the monument when the drive splits off to the right to follow a straight line to the farm. It is along this last section of the drive that the ghost was most likely seen as this crosses a straight line from Northfield to Chicksands.

Bill's Report

Pre-Investigation

On 10th April 2015 Bill, Steph, Dee and Sarah met up to take an early evening walk through Pedley Wood and Chicksands Wood. The actual LPS investigation of the area was scheduled for the following week but unfortunately Dee and Sarah could not make that date so Bill and Steph suggested this event.

We met up on a sharp bend on Great Lane just to the south-southeast of Northfield Cottage where a footpath to the wood starts. We followed the footpath to the southeast until we reached the Greensand Ridge Walk that runs along the northwest edge of the wood. We turned northeast and followed the path until we reached the entrance to the wood to the southeast of Northfields Farm. At this point a permissive path enters Pedley Wood. We followed this permissive path up the hill until we met the track which runs from Pedley Farm to Appley Corner at the northeast end of the wood (becoming Long Drive after a few hundred metres). We followed this new track until we reached a cross-ride that gave

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us access to the monument dedicated to the memory of Henry John Robert Osborn which lies to the east of the track. (As we walked along the permissive path Dee was drawn to another track that ran to the northeast which we earmarked to explore during the return journey.)

After exploring the monument we headed along the main firebreak that heads east in the direction of the Hill (the shooting area to the east of the wood). From there we turned north then west-northwest to return to the track that we were originally on (running along the spine of the woods). From there we returned to the track that Dee had been drawn to earlier in the evening. By the time we reached the start of the new track it was fully dark. We walked north-northwest along the track down the hill until we reached another track that would return us to the entrance to the wood and which lies close to the northwest edge of the wood. As we turned onto this new track I was about 3 metres behind the rest of the team and was just turning onto the new track when I clearly heard a male voice say 'Hello?' in my left ear. The sound came from my left (to the south) and sounded very close, within a few metres. It was very clear and unmistakable as the voice of a young adult male. As soon as I heard it I got intense cold shivers. Deep in the wood sound does not travel far and no sounds had been heard that would imply that other people were in the wood at the time. Enquiring of the other members as to whether they had heard it they all said no, even though some of the team were closer to what I thought was the origin of the sound than I was. We remained in the area for about fifteen minutes, during which I kept getting cold shivers, before we returned to the cars.

Investigation

For the main investigation the team met on Great Lane and followed the same route into the wood as the team had done on 10th April. Instead of following the permissive path up the hill it was decided to visit the area where I had heard 'Hello?' which is accessed along a track running northeast from the permissive path and just 50 metres from the entrance to the wood. This investigation area is shown on the map on the next page as the magenta star. The team soon reached the area and explored it for about 15 minutes. During this time I kept seeing either odd patches of light like mist or dark moving areas close to the edge of the path to the east.

From this first site the team followed the track that we had followed the week before that runs south-southeast up the hill to the permissive track that runs along the spine of the wood. Once on the path (marked by the yellow star) we remained there a short time as Andy G kept saying that he could see things along the path which ran south-southeast from the junction. As it is very likely that this path was the one where the original haunting took place (as it effectively runs from Clophill to Appley Corner at the northeast end of the wood and could be driven down even now) we chose to walk slowly northeast along the path until it reached Long Drive about 500 metres away. At the junction the team turned southwest along Long Drive heading for the Henry John Robert Osborn memorial. As the team walked to the memorial I was about 50 metres behind the rest of the team with Andy F about 10 metres in front of me. As I walked I looked behind me and distinctly saw the dark shape of a figure standing a metre or so from the edge of the wood on the wide and clear track, at the time I was in the area marked by the upper green star on the map. I looked away for a moment and when I looked back the figure had gone.

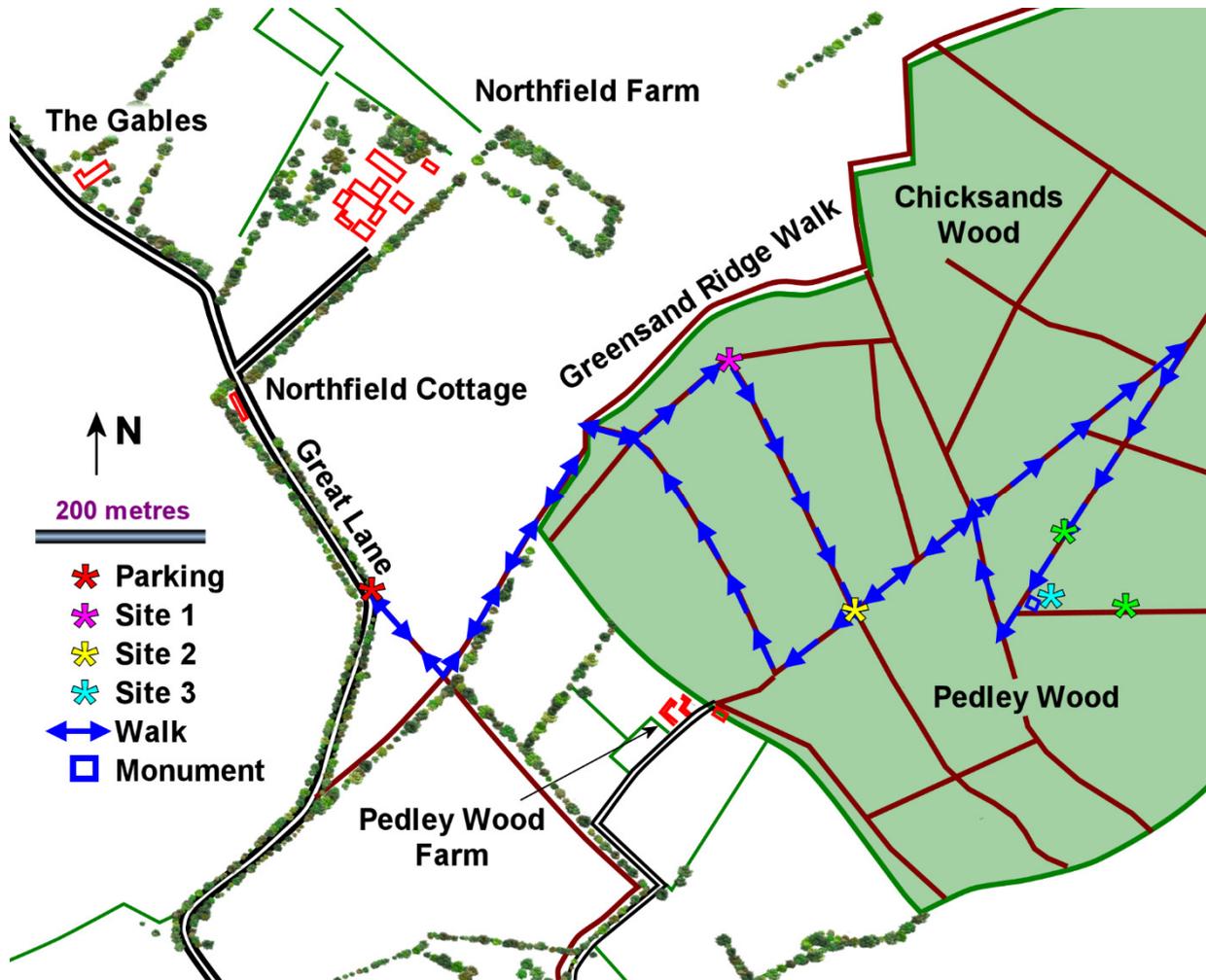
At the memorial Andy F suggested doing an Ovilus III session (in the area marked by the cyan star). I did not want to take part, so during the session I walked east along the wide grass ride that runs towards the shooting area at The Hill. I was about 100 metres from the memorial when I looked to my left (to the northeast) and saw a disk of light in the trees. The disk was about 1.5 metres above the ground and appeared to be about 20 metres away. The disk would have been about 15 centimetres in diameter and

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salmon coloured. The colour was uniform across the entire disk implying that the disk was flat and not spherical. When I saw it I was looking straight at it and it remained in place for several seconds and was accompanied by cold-shivers and, I will admit, it rather freaked me out, which was a first. The area where this occurred is marked by the lower green star. This was the last thing that I experienced during the night.

Steph's Report

General

21:15 Walking to the wood along the footpath, Steph mentions to Andy G that the ambience is very different to last week when she was here with other members. It feels oppressive. As Steph reaches the entrance to the wood she sees a flash of dull bluish light to the left of the path into the wood.

Pedley Wood

21:19 The team entered the wood and walked along the path to the left. About halfway down, Steph notes Andy G's EMF has spiked at 0.5.

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21:53 The team stop at a crossroads of paths in the wood. Steph looks down one of the paths (towards the farm) and sees a black shape move across the far end of the path from right to left.

As Steph continues to look down the path, she sees what looks like a number of dark shapes moving back and forth along the path.

22:04 Still at the crossroad of the paths, Steph is standing talking to Bill who is on her left and Andy F on her right. As Bill walks away to her left, she think another member is passing his right side but there is no one there.

22:07 Walking up the path towards Pedley Farm, Steph sees a red flash of light up in the treeline.

Andy G's Report

During the walk along the foot path that runs parallel to the wood I felt very nervous and uncomfortable. As we approached the entrance I had an overwhelming feeling of dread and really did not want to go in. This may have been due to the overhead cables but the feelings were very strong. As we walked up the footpath there was a feeling of someone following us and my EMF detector spiked twice at a 0.8. The first point we stopped at (Site 1 on the map) had a very heavy feeling and there seemed to be small lights dancing around us. After a few minutes we moved off with nothing else happening.

At the top of the ridge we stopped again at a cross roads (Site 2 on the map). Here again we felt as though something was moving around. Again after a little while we moved off with nothing else happening. We followed the path that led us towards the Chicksands base. The closer we got the more of a heavy depressing feeling I got and was very uncomfortable. We then followed the path back towards the monument. From this point on nothing else really happened apart from a few words from Andy F's Ovilus III.

In conclusion the woods have a very odd feeling but nothing definite could be found

Andy F's Report

General

Ambient sounds - Cars in the distance.

Equipment List

Digital Camcorder: Sony DCR-SR75E
Digital Voice Recorder: Olympus WS-560M
Olivus III
EMF meter: K-II
Digital Infrared Thermometer: IR-102
Notepad & pen, torch and watch

Vigil 1: Clearing in the woods.

The team were stood around just doing a quiet vigil. Behind the team was an open pathway that led up to another area of the woods. During this vigil Andy F sensed a girl and boy around the age of ten in Victorian clothes running down the path towards the position of the team. It was not in a spiritual sense but more past tense.

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Vigil 2: Second clearing in the woods

Andy F did not get anything at this location.

Vigil 3: Monument – 22:25 to 22:55

At the monument most of the team elected to try an experiment using the Ovilus III to see if anything could be picked up.

Ovilus III transcript is as follows:

Ovilus III starts with the word *See*.

Team ask some general questions with no response then team ask if “we are communicating with another spirit?”

Ovilus III responds straight away with the word *Factors*.

Team ask “Have you been seen carrying a light?”

Ovilus III – *Soldiers*.

Team ask more questions about soldiers with no response then team ask jokingly if they are chocolate soldiers.

Ovilus III responds with the word *Down*.

Team asks if spirit can use team energies to move the light at the top of the Ovilus III and the light then moves down a notch.

Ovilus III then comes up with *Dog*.

Team then ask questions about a dog

Ovilus III then says *Hi*.

Team then say ‘hello’ and start asking for the spirit to come forward with a name?

Ovilus III – *Harriett*.

Team respond with “Hello Harriett”.

Ovilus III – *Travel*

Team ask if Harriett travelled.

Ovilus III – *Stomach*

Post-Investigation

Regarding the words given by Ovilus III.

I have tried to put the words into a sentence as best as is possible

Hi Harriett

See soldiers travel down

Factor Dog Stomach

Strange fact – there is a condition known to dogs as dog stomach.

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Jason (Jay)

Weather Conditions

Light cloud cover, light breeze occasionally building up.

Investigation

20:56 Having met at the rendezvous point on Great Lane, we set out on the public footpath towards the woods. The path leads to a bridge over a stream, but rather than cross the bridge we turned left and followed a different path at the edge of the field alongside the stream, to take us to the northwest corner of Pedley Wood.

At this point we became aware of a vehicle on the road which had stopped by Bill and Steph's car. Andy and Bill went back to the road to find out what was going on. It transpired that the farmer was concerned at the number of cars parked along the road by his farm and had taken down the number plates of our vehicles. This incident made me apprehensive during most of the investigation (would my car be okay when I got back to it?).

21:15 (Approximate time) Andy G noted an EMF spike along the path in the woods at the foot of the hill, by the stream. Mobile phones were double-checked and I put mine into flight mode as I still needed it to check the time. The EMF spike was unaffected by proximity to anyone's mobile phones and so was not caused by them.

We stopped at the junction of a path that ran southwards up the hill and stood in silence. After a while a pick-up truck (the same vehicle as before?) descended the field on the other side of the stream. The occupants were, I think, shooting rabbits and we were actually on private land. We therefore climbed the hill to where a public footpath crossed the wood along the ridge of the hill.

21:46 We reached the crossroads where the private road/path we had climbed crosses the public footpath. Again, we stood in silence. It was here that I confessed to not liking the atmosphere in the woods. Is there a negative atmosphere in those woods or had my uneasiness about the car and the rabbit hunters got the better of me? A number of people thought they could see little lights appearing and fading further along the private road/path. I thought I could see a slight glow in the distance along the public footpath – it later turned out that what I could see was indeed the glow from a farm house that was just out of sight from where we were standing at that moment.

22:22 Having made our way along the public footpath (in the opposite direction to the glow) we reached a concrete ruin with the remains of a tin shelter which we nosed about out of curiosity. A dog leg just past this leads further up the hill to an obelisk.

I attempted to record the time upon arrival at the obelisk but must have pressed the wrong button, for it didn't record.

The obelisk is a monument erected to the memory of a Victorian man. The inscription on the following page is recorded at the base:

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IN MEMORY OF HENRY JOHN ROBERT OSBORN ESQ.

WHO PERISHED IN A COLLISION IN THE ENGLISH CHANNEL 23 MARCH 1889.

ERECTED BY MANY FRIENDS IN TOKEN OF SINCERE REGRET FOR THE LOSS

OF A GOOD NEIGHBOUR AND TRUE SPORTSMAN

Andy F conducted an Ovilus III session, during which the words *See, Factors, Soldiers, Down, High, Harriet, Travel* and *Stomach* were returned. The obvious temptation is to make connections between these words that simply do not exist, although it was interesting that 'Harriet' was returned in direct response to a request for a name. However, surely the word 'name' causes the software within the device to return a word that is saved within its database as a name? At the end of the day, the Ovilus III is just a toy.

23:05 Andy's Ovilus III session concluded and we made our way back through the wood and field towards the cars.

Conclusion

I did not enjoy this investigation but I feel my sense of unease was more a result of concerns about the safety of the cars, and indeed our own safety, at the beginning of the investigation than anything of a paranormal nature. Andy G's EMF spike was the only incident I thought worthy of note, as there seemed to be no obvious natural cause.