

Investigation Report



Investigation Site	Winch house – Someries Castle
Investigation Date	24.05.2019
Report By	Andrew Fazekas
Team Members	Andy, Ocean, Connie, Ben, Maria,

Historical Background.

Winch Hill cottages which are now derelict cottages on the outskirts of London Luton Airport right on the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire border. The cottages and location are not widely known to the general public and it is believed that LPS may even be the first paranormal investigation team to have visited this location.

Winch Hill Farm Cottage is thought to be Winch Hill Farmhouse's guesthouse, which was built circa 1600 and renovated C19. Whilst Winch Hill Farmhouse, which achieved grade II listed status in 1988, is no-longer standing the guesthouse remains, although in a dilapidated state. Information of the farm's history is difficult to find. It has been reported as the probable site of a Romano-British building (Manshead Journals, 31 & 34). As of the 1911 census, farmer Henry William Ivory (b.1867 d.1931) and his family were in occupation of the farmhouse. At some point between 1931 and 1933, John Boyd Sharp (b.1886 d.1969) and his wife, Mary Robertson Sharp acquired the farm and remained in possession of it up to John's death.

Locals have reported hearing strange noises coming from the area of the burnt down farmhouse and refer to the old manor house at Winch Hill as the "Haunted House". A large fence still surrounds this area, but the building itself has long ago collapsed into a pile of rubble as a result of a fire and neglect.

Winch Cottage Investigation

The team made the short trip by car from the meeting place in Luton arriving at 2100 hours as it was still light and quickly took the opportunity to take photographs as Andy and Ben conducted a quick risk assessment due to the derelict state of the buildings. It was decided that it would be far too dangerous to conduct experiments within the building, so the decision was made for everyone's safety to stay outside and locate ourselves and equipment and the main entrance to the house.

Team members examine and photographically document the exterior and interior (via windows and entrances) of the building on arrival. The cottage is in a small forest grove well covered by established trees, and to the left of the doorway on the wall there is a no entry sign. Most of the floorboards have caved in along with some of the ceiling, there is an abundance of graffiti both inside and out. A wall is missing on the left side and all the windows are gone. Damp is evident on the ceiling and plants (mainly duckweed) are growing on the top floor, the staircase has collapsed. A noose is observed suspended from a wooden beam in the main entrance of the building. Around the back of the property is a structure made of corrugated metal, which looked like a makeshift shelter. There are no notable smells or off feelings upon arrival

The first experiment with the Ovilus 3 commenced and a video camera was placed facing the open front door and a window at the side of the building facing into the property. TOM was the first name to pop up on the Ovilus 3 followed by the following words in response to various members of the team. These words have been put into sentence as much as possible for this report but draw your own conclusions.

Uncle Tom tickle Teacher Pat, ours care loving life bible glance outside change factors assault disaster port reason possible fifteen down killed enough information here rewind metal video marker worm

Andy and Ocean spot a blue light anomaly move from left to right across the lower area of the entrance doorway. As the group discuss the anomaly Ovilus outputs 'port' 'video' 'wide' 'rewind'. Marie reports hearing a sound like a bicycle bell ringing, shortly afterwards Ovilus outputs the words 'teacher' and 'bike'. As Ovilus is passed to Marie it outputs 'Jesus', Marie asks 'Tom' if he is referring to her bag as it has Jesus written on it.

A cold spot is detected in front of Ocean from around knee to head height (Ocean is seated). The area below the knees and above head height feels notably warmer to the naked hand. Ben and Marie place their hands in the area and note the difference. Connie, who is seated on the ground slightly forward and to the left of Ocean, feels a coldness on their shoulders and upper back briefly. Marie observes a mist and appears to capture the phenomenon on camera. Several of the group pick up the smell of burning wood during the investigation, but this may be carried along on the breeze.

Ben sensed that TOM was possibly the former occupant of the cottage and seemed neither pleased or displeased that the team were there. Ben also sensed that TOM was just happy to be on his own and did not really want to contact us almost as if TOM was just going through the motions with us.

On the other side of the group one member had the name "David" whispered into his ear very loudly. A strange blue light was observed moving in a horizontal line cross the doorway entrance (a strange blue anomaly was also captured on the camera inside the hallway of the cottage). It would appear that "Tom" was neither happy or sad and just come to see what the group were doing as following a short period of interesting activity the area went flat and calm as so often happens on investigations.

21:54 End of Winch Cottage investigation

Somerles Castle Investigation

Historical Background

Sir John Wenlock purchased Somerles estate, named after its previous owner William de Somerles, around 1430 and he commissioned the building of Somerles Castle around 1444. Interestingly, the building is not a castle, it is a fortified manor house and was one of the first brick buildings constructed in England. The building was never completed and was partly demolished in the 18th century leaving only the remains of the gatehouse, which incorporates the lodge and chapel.

It is said Wenlock, a soldier, local MP, diplomat, and High Sheriff of Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire, was a 'turn coat' and did not die on the battlefield of Tewkesbury, rather he faked his own death. Allegedly, Wenlock's spirit is said to frequent the gatehouse and an unfriendly presence has been sensed by the staircase.

22:15 Investigation begins

Team members examine and photographically document the ruins on arrival. Ocean is immediately drawn to two areas, the northeast corner of the chapel and the gatehouse staircase. She senses unpleasantness in the latter area and just a sense of being drawn to the former. Connie walks around the entire building, at the back near the gatehouse staircase she senses an off feeling. It is noted that the ruins are in fair condition considering passage of time.

Following the set-up of equipment, the group sits inside the chapel's bottom left corner. Ovilus Three is deployed and Andy attempts to connect with the spirit world. The output of Ovilus does not appear to make any clear connection with questions asked. However, Marie, Ben and Connie hear an intermittent dripping noise coming from the bottom right corner of the chapel. On investigation no cause is found, conditions are dry and fair.

Whilst Andy attempts to contact Sir Wenlock, Ocean, who is seated, experiences an intense pressure on her back upper body, as though someone is pushing her. She also senses a strong presence within the area. Connie and several other group members detect the smell of burning wood within the chapel. Connie later detects the smell of wood pulp whilst standing in the top left corner of the chapel.

Ocean carries out a solo vigil up by the gatehouse staircase where she had earlier picked up an unpleasant presence. The sense of an unfriendly presence intensifies during this period but when the rest of the group join her and despite efforts to engage the presence, it retreats. Connie briefly sees a pale skin coloured mass with some human form to it (these being the only definable features) within the lodge area but it quickly moves out of line of sight. Ben investigates the sighting but nothing or no-one is found.

The team, with the exception of Ocean, retreats back to the chapel area and on their way, Connie briefly observes two white orbs vertical to each other at the lodge doorway, the bottom orb is smaller than the top one. Ocean stays by the staircase alone for a second period, and reports feeling cold and drained when Connie collects her for regrouping and that the presence once again felt stronger when she is left alone with it.

Outside of one of the chapel's window Ben and Connie witness a strange string of lights crossing the sky. Upon further investigation, the sighting turns out to be one of SpaceX's constellation satellites. Ben observes several light anomalies near his shoulder between himself and Andy.

The sound of what sounded like church bells was heard but this was put down to the sound of the town hall in Luton and although five miles away it could be a possible cause. Scents like burnt wood were again smelt as on previous investigations that came and went before the investigation finished at midnight due to the intense cold as the area is open to the weather.

Summary

The sceptical mind may explain away some of the findings reported by positing suggestibility and priming – the cold spot, apophenia (making connections/meaning between unrelated things) – Olivus output, and pareidolia (the interpretation of a vague stimulus into something known) – the pale figure comprised of some human form.

However some of the teams findings are not so easy to explain Such as the blue light anomaly observed at exactly the same time by two investigators, followed by Olivus output ‘port’ ‘video’ ‘wide’ ‘rewind’ and the later discovery that the anomaly had been caught on camera. The very strong signal recorded whilst one investigator experienced paraesthesia. The fact that one investigator, who had no knowledge of the existence or history of Someries Castle prior to the investigation, immediately detected an unpleasant presence by the staircase of the gatehouse - a similar presence has reportedly been detected by others in this area in the past. Finally, multiple orbs independently observed by several investigators at Someries Castle.

Overall Winch Hill Farm Cottage proved more active than Someries Castle for the group. Given the findings of the current investigation and previous investigations of Someries Castle, both places are worthy of further examination.