INVESTIGATION REPORT – Team 2

Investigation Site	**Chicksands Wood**
Investigation Date	2nd July 2010
Report By	Bill King
Team Members	Bill, Steph, Elaine, Sam

Background

In 1971 a motorist, who was driving through Chicksands Wood, was somewhat unnerved when he came face to face with a ghost. What made it doubly unnerving for the poor motorist was the fact that the apparition was mounted on a horse which he promptly rode straight through the man's car!

The wood lies, fairly literally, in the middle of nowhere and there are no macadamised roads going through it. Along the spine of the wood there is a reasonably wide track (Long Drive) made of compacted stones, which would certainly support a car, so on that basis it is possible that someone was driving down it, but how long have the stones been there? If the stones are recent (the track isn't as it appears on the 1892 map of the wood) then it would have been a dirt road.

Chicksands Wood lies just a few hundred metres from Northfield Farm, near which a phantom horse and rider has been seen. Just after Christmas 1969 a newsagent and his wife were delivering papers to Northfield Farm when they saw a small light approaching along the Haynes Church End to Clophill road (Great Lane). Believing it to be a cyclist, the driver dipped his headlights and slowed down, only to discover that it was actually a rider on horseback carrying a lantern. To avoid frightening the horse the driver stopped the car and turned off the lights. As the rider approached they could clearly see that the man was hooded like a monk. Without stopping, the horse and rider passed, literally, straight through the car, much to the surprise of the occupants.

They did not mention the event to anybody, but a year later a lady asked the newsagent if he had ever met a cloaked figure on horseback during his early morning deliveries. It transpired that the lady used to live at Northfield Cottage, at the start of the road to Northfield Farm, but had moved as the family were too upset by the ghost. Could the Great Lane and Chicksands Wood apparitions be the same ghost on the way to Chicksands Priory?

General

The night was a very mild one with very little breeze. The lack of breeze became very noticeable within the woods as the air was very warm and humid. There was a thin layer of cloud with frequent large breaks.

Equipment List

Bill	Digital SLR Camera: Pentax K2000 EMF Detector: Hutech Digital Infrared Thermometer: CHY 110 Notepad & pen, torch and watch
Steph	Digital Camera: Pentax K-m Notepad & pen, torch and watch
Elaine	Digital Camera: Kodak C913 Notepad & pen, torch and watch

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Initial Investigation

It was initially planned that we would park along Great Lane to the south-southwest of Northfield Cottage (near the entrance to Northfield Farm) then walk north-northeast along the road and up the hill to the north of Northfield Cottage. This would have covered most of the area where the figure on horseback could have been seen. We would then take a walk into Chicksands Wood (at the Pedley Wood end) to cover the other area where a figure on horseback has been seen.

As people were enjoying the evening outside the cottage we decided to change the order of the investigation and do the woods first then the road. We parked our cars at the end of the footpath where it meets a sharp corner in Great Lane south-southwest of the cottage (see the plan at the end of this document) and at 20:45 we followed the path towards the wood entering the wood at 20:56. Our path is marked by the → with the arrows showing the direction of travel. Once in the wood we walked up to the point marked by the green star (*) at which point we divided into two teams and went our separate ways.

When walking through the first part of Chicksands Wood, Steph gets an impression of being hit in the face with something hard.

Walk-Around

21:10 Where the team stop in Chicksands Wood to split into vigil teams, Steph takes a photograph down one of the paths and sees a small yellowish orange flash of light through the camera lens as she takes the photograph. The picture shows a red light anomaly in the area where she saw the flash. She then takes a second photograph and did not see anything anomalous and the picture shows nothing unusual.

Because of what Steph saw Team 2 decided to head along the path to the south-southeast to the point at which Steph had seen the orange flash.

21:14 Team 2 reach the area (*1) where Steph saw the light flash at 21:10. Investigating the area revealed nothing that could have caused the flash. The light could not have come from further down the path as the path bends to the right (the west) and the trees and bushes to the south-southeast were so dense that no light could have passed through them from beyond.

The team then decided to continue along the path to the southern edge of the woods. At 21:30 they reached the edge of the woods and Bill entered the field to the south then walked east-northeast along the edge to the wood, up the hill, to try to get a better view of Chicksands. Returning to the rest of the team he discussed where they should go next and it was agreed they would follow the wood edge to the east-northeast and re-enter the wood further down. This was a relevant area as the ghostly horse and rider were said to have been heading for Chicksands Priory so they would have had to have crossed the path the team were following.

21:37 When walking along the edge of the field outside the woods, Steph sees a blue/green shape by the trees where the path curves round to the right (before the opening to the field with the MOD stone marker). This is shown by the (*2).

By the time the team had reached the corner where Steph saw the shape (21:39) they had not passed any obvious access points into the wood. In fact the whole south edge of the wood seemed to consist of an impenetrable blackthorn hedge.

When the team reached the MOD marker to the south of the woods Bill and Steph set off across the field to try to find an access point whilst Elaine and Sam remained by the marker.

21:55 As Elaine was looking straight in front of her she saw the figure of a man pass the tree to her left.

22:00 While waiting for Bill and Steph to look for the entrance on the other side of the field Elaine and Sam both heard someone shouting "help".

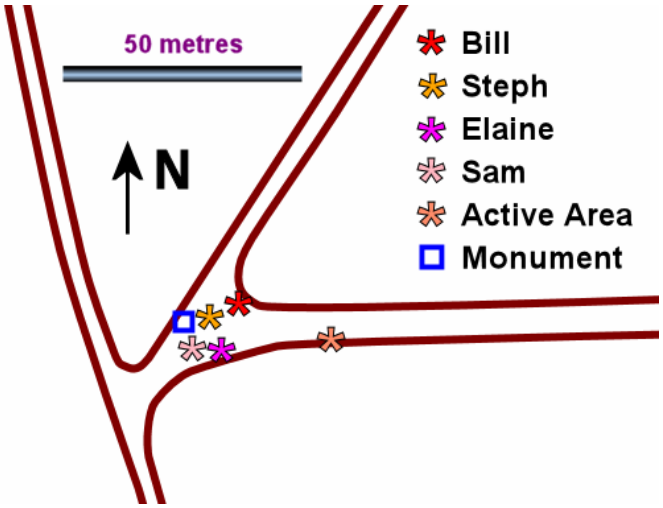
Eventually a path was found into the woods and the team followed what appeared to be a drainage ditch heading roughly north through the dense wood. At 22:16 they came across a relatively new boundary fence at the edge of the MOD area and followed this north until they came across one of the main rides through the wood heading west to the monument. At 22:22 the team, with great difficulty, crossed an area of barbed wire to enter the ride. It was only after reaching the ride that they discovered they had passed a clear path from the fence to the ride not four metres from where they had crossed the barbed wire.

22:30 Bill measures the temperature on the ride at +13.5ºC.

22:35 The team reach the monument and take the obligatory team photograph before starting a short vigil.

Vigil 1: Monument – 22:41 to 23:10

For the positions of the team members with respect to the monument see the plan on the right.



This area was a very quiet one with just faint, distant car sounds and occasional aircraft. There were also occasional animal noises including a muntjac barking. The air was very still and the night was a warm one. One thing that was noticeable about the woods was that there was very little bird noise, even before sunset.

22:45 Elaine gets the smell of honeysuckle.

22:50 Elaine hears the trees rustling this could have been an animal as there was no breeze.

22:51 Bill sees a dot of light through the trees to the southeast by east (on the south side of the main east to west ride that the team had just walked down). The dot was about 20 metres away in an area where the woods were very dense so it is unlikely that the light was coming from beyond the woods or even a nearby path.

22:58 Elaine sat facing Bill and Steph and saw two white figures running behind them.

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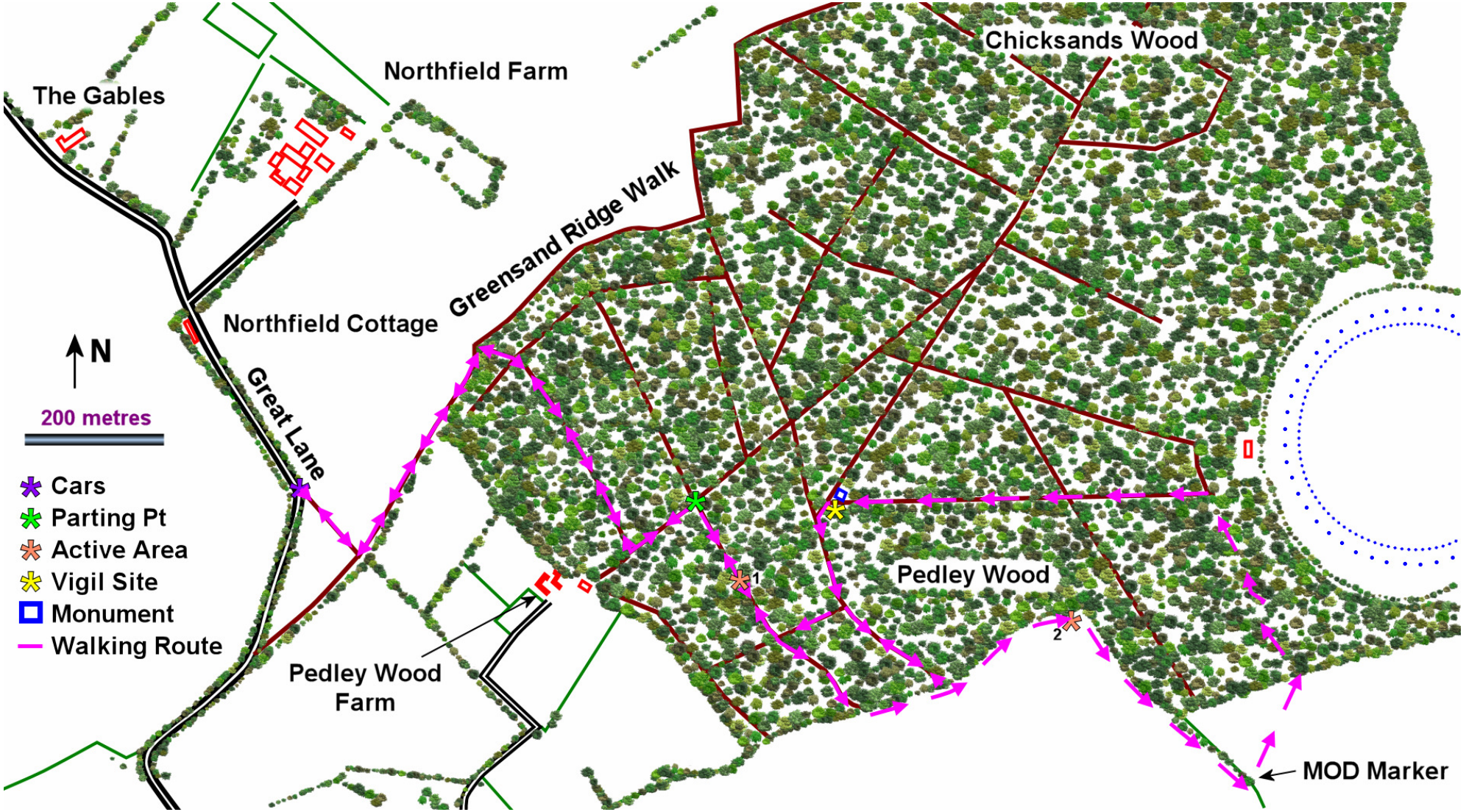
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