

Investigation Report		
Investigation Site	Hockcliffe 17 th Century Coaching house	
Investigation Date	12 th September 2026	
Report By	Andrew Fazkas	
Team Members	Ben, Andy, gareth, Jim, Lorraine, Paula	

Historical Background

The White Horse Inn, now known as the Old White Horse and White Horse Farm, stands on the eastern side of Watling Street in the area originally part of Chalgrave parish which was transferred to Hockcliffe in 1929. It has also been known as the White Horse Hotel and the White Horse Farmhouse. The White Horse was listed by the former Department of the Environment in 1952 as Grade II, of special interest. The listing describes it as dating from the late seventeenth century, of grey brick with red brick dressings and a clay tile roof. It has a projecting gabled wing to either end, the right hand wing has two sashes with glazing bars and the left hand wing has one. There is a right hand carriageway and a modern right hand round arched window. The property belonged to the Gilpin family from an early date, along with other inns in the village, and the writer Daniel Defoe [1659/60-1731] is believed to have been a frequent visitor [Soskin, *Hockcliffe and the Gilpin Family*].

On 16th October 1917 the White Horse Inn was put up for auction as part of the Hockcliffe Grange estate. The inn is described in the sale catalogue [AD3717] as in a good state of repair and possessing some very fine carving, one piece of which is attached to a bresummer showing a table between two figures with the date 1566 and scrolls at each end. The catalogue's claim that the hostelry dates back to the Tudor period is presumably based on this carving. The inn was sold as Lot 9 together with an associated farm of 147 acres 3 roods and 14 perches, shown in blue on the map below. The description of the inn itself was as follows:

"The accommodation comprises: Two Parlours, Office, Bar, Tap Room, Billiard Room, Kitchen, Larder, etc., and on the Floor above Six Good Bed Rooms, Bath Room, fitted with bath, lavatory basin, W.C., Box Room. The portion of the House on the other side of the gateway contains Two Large Rooms on Ground Floor, Four Bed Rooms and Box Room over. Good well with pump to cistern in roof for general purposes. Drainage to dumb well. The drinking water is obtained from a well on Lot 18 and access to same is reserved to the Purchaser of this Lot. On one side there is a useful Kitchen Garden with Flower Garden and Lawn, and on the opposite side another Lawn until recently used as a Bowling Green."

The homestead attached to the inn comprises a brick-built and corrugated roof wood barn and three-bay shed, a brick built and tiled range of three cow houses (for 15 cows), a three-bay open shed with manger (for 7 cows) and chaise house, a timber and thatched four-bay open shed, a brick and slate three-bay cart shed, a timber and corrugated range of corn barn, hen house, loose box and stabling for 4 horses. The inn was a Free House, let to William Charles Pickering at £39.10s per annum; the farm was also let to Mr Pickering together with Lots 10 and 11 (totalling 24 acres of meadow land) for £200 per annum.

The Rating and Valuation Act 1925 ordered every piece of land and building in the country to be assessed to determine the rates to be paid on it. Chalgrave was assessed in 1926. The White Horse Inn must have closed soon after its sale in 1917 as by this time it was no longer functioning as a public house and had been divided into two separate houses owned by W. Dolemore, one rented by Mrs E. Davis for 10 shillings and the other by G. Dolemore for 8 shillings [DV1/C15/30-31]. The first consisted of two reception rooms, a kitchen, scullery, and an "old billiard room", with six bedrooms and a bathroom and W.C. upstairs. The valuer describes it as a "fine old place but very bad as at present

used" with waste rooms and cesspool drainage. Outside there was a very small bay, a brick built old dairy now used as a coal cellar and a henhouse. The rateable value was reduced by 20% due to the age of the property. It was joined to the second property by a "nice" archway. This second house was apparently in rather better condition than the first, being described as in a very old house in good repair with a wood carving outside. Smaller than its counterpart, it had a reception room, a living room, a kitchen and three bedrooms. Another bedroom over the archway was not fit for use. Outside the property were a coal barn and an earth closet.

In 1933 the White Horse was converted to a boarding school; it was then used as a Tommy Gun range during the Second World War. It has now again been divided into two separate properties. The larger of these was put up for sale in 2007 with a guide price of £575,000 [Z449/2/2]. It still had several original features including exposed beams, fireplaces, latch and brace doors, and quarry tiled floors. The accommodation comprised:

- Cellar: 25 feet by 10 feet 10 inches;
- Ground floor: workshop (17 feet 7 inches by 14 feet 11 inches); kitchen/breakfast room (17 feet 1 inches by 14 feet 7 inches); utility room (9 feet 6 inches by 7 feet); study (12 feet 6 inches by 11 feet 11 inches); sitting/dining room (27 feet 6 inches by 16 feet 9 inches); annexe kitchen breakfast room (17 feet 3 inches by 10 feet 6 inches); annexe sitting room (16 feet 10 inches by 9 feet 9 inches); annexe dining room (27 feet 2 inches by 7 feet 1 inch);
- First floor: storage room (17 feet 7 inches by 14 feet 11 inches); storage room (17 feet 7 inches by 15 feet); bathroom; shower room; five bedrooms;
- Outside: coal barn and workshop (14 feet 6 inches by 17 feet) with store rooms over (15 feet by 13 feet 3 inches and 14 feet 9 inches by 10 feet 6 inches) adjoining house

in the following year the smaller property was also for sale with an asking price of £279,995 [Z449/2/2]. This property contained:

- Ground floor: entrance hall; lounge; kitchen/diner;
- First floor: three bedrooms (one en-suite); bathroom.

References:

- Z1130/60/10: Postcard of Hertfordshire Hounds in front of White Horse, c.1906
- AD3717: Sale catalogue, 1917
- DV1/C15/30-31: Valuation book for Chalgrave, 1926;
- Z449/2/1-2: Sale catalogues, 2007-2008
- *Hockliffe and the Gilpin Family* (D. G. Soskin)

List of Licensees: note that this is not a complete list; entries in italics refer to licensees where either beginning or end, or both, dates are not known:

1828: *Thomas Read*;
1839: *Christopher Walker*;
1847-1869: *John Heckford (and post office)*;
1876: *John Green (also postmaster)*;
1917: *William Charles Pickering*.

Link

<https://bedsarchives.bedford.gov.uk/CommunityHistories/Hockliffe/TheWhiteHorseInnHockliffe.aspx>

20:30 Investigation begins

20:33 Paula and Ben investigated the kid's bedroom

Catballs were placed around the room in the dolls and teddies plus one of the largest rocking horse. K2 meters we used and spirit talker app.

The investigation had barely started when the catball on the rocking horse activated

20:24 plus two K2's flashed together.

Spirit Talker – Michael

20:25 Spirit Talker – Done

Paula is sat on the bed, and Ben is on the sofa and then operates the music box. Immediately the Spirit Talker – excellent and k2 flashes.

Paula and Ben discussed the child or grandchild that was known to have had an imaginary friend and the catball on the rocking hall activated.

20:28 Spirit Talker – Sit and talk

20:29 Spirit Talker – am I dead?

20:30 Spirit Talker – Shush

20:31 Spirit Talker – Medieval

20:33 Spirit Talker – relative

20:35 Spirit Talker – You are strong

20:36 Spirit Talker – Collapse

20:37 Spirit Talker – I was cremated

20:39 Spirit Talker – Do you feel me?

20:40 Spirit Talker – Sara

20:41 Spirit Talker – Cain

Paula starts to feel cold despite the room temperature being 21.5 degrees. Ben does some filming with the infra-red light on and thinks he sees some slow-moving orbs.

20:43 Spirit Talker –Four, then Misery, I was hung, break, eight, A girl was killed.

Then Paula and Ben hear a thud as a catball hits the floor. At the same time, the ball on the rocking horse also flashes.

The ball seems to have been thrown to the right, uphill. They returned the ball to the chair, wedged between 2 dolls to see how it would fall naturally and it was established that it would only drop down further into the dolls outfits that were on the little chair. If we pulled the ball out and rolled it down the front of one of their dresses, it hit the floor and then rolled to the left and hit a wooden unit because the floor was so uneven. Ben and Paula were unable to explain how the catball could jump to the right, uphill and stop in front of the little white cot. We said it was amazing and thank you for throwing the ball.

20:50 Spirit Talker – Amazing (said immediately)

Thank you and then the catball on the rocking horse flashes again

We are unable to debunk the ball movement and sit back down again.

20:55 Spirit Talker – I'm learning to use this

Ben says I wish I'd caught that on video, and the cat ball flashes again.

Ben then explains the cat ball movement to Jim who is outside in the corridor. Jim says he and Lorraine heard the thud as the ball hit the floor.

20:58 Spirit Talker – Wanker, [Marjorie, stupid, excellent, I am Damien

Both k2s flash

21:04 Spirit Talker – concentrate

Then we finish investigating the bedroom

20:25 Andy and Gareth in the medieval bedroom – Sound recorders – Spirit talker app – Olivus 3 – Tri field TF1 meter

20:30 Silent Vigil begins

20:37 Spirit talker session begins with the following words.

20:38 They will harm you

20:43 He will torment you

20:50 Experiment

Times not recorded from here on as using both Olivus and spirit talker

St (Spirit talker) – Madam

Olivus – light -automatic -haste -eat -misery -spring – worm-

St – Denise

Oli – century

St – take a right – Francis

Oli – tense

St – Monk (in response to request for a surname)

Oli – talking – D – Travel –

Andy -Did you die in this room?

Oli – Almost

Andy was you very ill?

Oli – Oui (French) – loft -bet

St – Floorboards

Oli – wide – wave

SP – Grim

Oli – Projection – any

St - don't follow the voices

Oli – Highway

St – Hatred

Andy what do you have a hatred of?

Oli – Limp

St – Shapeshifter – who is speaking?

Oli – Paranormal – sent

St – my name

21:00 Oli – Compound – night – Lense (clock chimes in the room – team find a clock on the cupboard

St – I'm walking around

Oli - expect

Other team voices heard in the corridor outside the bedroom door

St - you are kind

Oli – Order

St – What's your name?

Session ends.

20:21 – 21:07 Investigation Location 1 – 1st floor corridor by the bedrooms. Present - Jim and Lorraine Equipment used – Motion light, EMF meter and audio recorder, IR camera

Jim and Lorraine getting nothing in the corridor. Very quiet and calm, so at 21:00 hours go into the master bedroom. Nothing captured, audio, video or photographic.

21:14 – 21:58 Location 2 – Cellar Present – Jim and Ben Equipment used – Cat ball, Audio recorder, EMF meters, Cat Balls, Motion sensor IR camera, IR camera

Jim and Ben start with a silent vigil. 21:17 - motion ball to the right of ben activates. No one knocks the table that it is sat on. (Of note, Bens nudges the table later on and no cat balls illuminate)

21:21 - Jim feels that he has a weight pushing down on the side of his shoulders. Jim is sitting at the table facing the stairs. Feels a more oppressive feeling in the cellar than anywhere else in the house.

21:28 - Jim asks "How do you feel about someone being in your pub that doesn't drink? Does it bother you?" A cat ball next to Jim activates straight after, appears to be in response to Jims question.

21:55 - Cat ball by Ben activates. Further questions are asked but no further activations occur.

22:37 – 23:14 hours Location 3 – Toy Room above the Blacksmiths Forge. Present – Jim, Andy, Ben, Lorraine, Paula, Gareth Equipment used – Audio recorder, EMF meters, IR camera, motion sensor light 4

Motion ball activates behind Paula who is sitting on the raised floor of the toy room. Paula thought she heard a creak to her left prior to the activation. 22:54 - as Jim is moving his audio device around, he picks up a clear EVP "Here you got me" Jim is sat at the back of the Toy Room where all the dolls are placed. Only Paula is close by in front of him. Everyone else is sat at the front of the Toy Room by the stairs up to it.

23:18 – 23:48 hours Location 4 – The Blacksmith Forge Present – Jim, Andy, Ben, Lorraine, Paula, Gareth Equipment used – Audio recorder, EMF meters, IR camera 23:18 – 23:48 hours

Ben sets his music box to see if it affects the atmosphere

23:23 - Andy starts the SB7 on Jim hears nothing but radio chatter on AM and White noise on FM.

23:35 - Andy turns SB7 off

23:48 - End Vigil

23:52 – 00: hours Location 5 – The Tea Room Present – Jim, Andy, Ben, Lorraine, Paula, Gareth Equipment used – Audio recorder, EMF meters, IR camera 23:52 – 00: hours

23:55 - Cat ball activates infant of Paula on a table.

00:04 - SB7 session.

00:07 - Jim asks, "Do you know that you're dead?" Voice heard through SB7 "Thank you" Did you live here?" Voice through SB7 "I did"

00:09 - Jim asks, "How old are you" Voice through SB7 "Eight"

00:16 – End of vigil

Post Investigation

The first word that the spirit talker generated was Michael.

The day after the investigation Paula looked up the history of the building including the BBC News article about the place which mentioned that previous investigators believe a priest called Michael was hidden in the priest hole which used to be in one of the bedrooms.

Paula looked up the word Thurifer which Andy got from the Oli and it's an alter server or acolyte who carries and swings the thurible (a metal censer used to burn incense) during a religious service.

The word cesium that came out when we were in the Forge is a soft silvery gold chemical element.