



Illustration 1: Churchyard at Worton where apparition appeared.

GHOSTS AND STRANGE THINGS

There doesn't seem to be many tales from the villages of hauntings apart from the odd one or two.

A lady who lived at Poulshot was the organist at Christchurch, Worton. Every Sunday she would cycle to the church passing Mr. Simpson somewhere on her route who was cycling from Marston to Poulshot since he played the organ for the church there. One Sunday evening one of the parishioners commented to the lady about the sad news of Mr. Simpson's very recent death. The lady replied that it was impossible as she had just passed him on his bicycle as usual.

Another tale was in the early sixties when my brother had returned to the village on army leave. He had taken the Bodman's bus from Devizes (the railway station I think was still open then) and arrived back in the village early evening. The bus didn't venture to the Marston end of the village so my brother walked down past the church taking the path that led down over the weir down to Mill Road Cottages on the Worton/Marston border. As he passed the church he saw a lady tending a grave near to the gates of the church. As he approached the lady, he spoke saying good evening and a few steps further he stopped in his tracks. Something didn't feel right about what he had seen - he turned with no sign of the lady. He walked up to the grave she was tending and although he describes the

lady as having a bunch of flowers in her hands there were none on the grave. He later described the lady as wearing a brown over coat something like Jane Austen would have worn with a bonnet of the same period style. Whether this be a true story or not my brother was very pale when he arrived at the cottage and couldn't speak for several minutes.

The above story could be linked to this one. Dick Nutland while resident at The Grange during the 1960's glimpsed a shadow or form of a body in a long cloak standing in the driveway. The apparition disappeared whilst Dick was trying to position himself to get a better view.

Another strange tale from Dick was that a tramp approached him and Dick said he was on his way to Devizes. The man asked for a lift and Dick dropped the man off just outside the town. Before moving away from the car the man said "If ever a certain cottage in the village comes on the Market buy it because there is gold coins buried beneath the flagstone in the scullery". The cottage has been sold many times over Dick hasn't named the cottage but wonders often if the story is true and wonders more about how the "man of the road" knew of the property in the first place.

Local lads used to think that the way to the Plough Inn was haunted and one evening on their way back (not helped obviously by their beer drinking) saw what they thought was a ghost heading into the withbeds towards the river past the church. It was really a goat owned by villager Albert Ellis which had escaped its tether and had got entangled in a sheet from the clothes line it made its escape, sheet and all with its chain clanking behind it.