

Mottisfont's Figure by the Ha-ha

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A Mottisfont landscape record preserves an unsettling family account: one brother saw a figure the other could not, and a later death gave the sighting an ominous meaning.

STATUS	A recorded story, with its history attached
CLASSIFICATION	STR
MATERIAL	Hampshire, England
DISPOSITION	PUBLIC / SOURCED STORY
CATEGORY	Strange Files
RECORD TYPE	Ghosts & hauntings
STORY HISTORY	Account preserved in a memoir published in 1964

THE ACCOUNT

The unsettling thing in this Mottisfont account is not what both witnesses saw. It is what only one of them saw. A National Trust landscape record refers to Richard Meinertzhagen's memoir, in which his brother Daniel reportedly noticed a figure that Richard himself could not see. Daniel died unexpectedly afterward. The story was connected with a local belief that the Mottisfont ghost appeared before a death in the household. A ha-ha, the sunken landscape boundary associated with the account, gives the incident an unusually precise setting without explaining the figure.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

The surviving reference is to *Diary of a Black Sheep*, published in 1964, cited by a later archaeological and historical landscape survey. That is a retrospective written account. The heritage entry does not provide independent confirmation of the apparition, an exact sighting date or a secure description identifying it as a monk.

WHY IT STAYS WITH US

The difference between the brothers' perceptions is the detail worth keeping. It leaves an uncomfortable question inside an ordinary shared place: how can two people occupy the same moment and remember its contents so differently?

WHERE THIS TELLING COMES FROM

MNA130923: Ha-ha at Mottisfont

National Trust Heritage Records

<https://heritagerecords.nationaltrust.org.uk/HBSMR/MonRecord.aspx?uid=MNA130923>

RETURN TO THE STORY

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Visit the record for its illustrations and further reading.

<https://u225x.com/record/STR-GHOST-007>