

# Mystery light which brought fear to a quiet country village

**W**HEN 22-year-old Molly burst through the door of her parents' house at Ingham one foggy winter's evening in 1950, they thought she must have seen a ghost.

And so did she. Pale, breathless and shaking from head to toe, she told them how it had followed her as she rode her cycle from Brattleby to Cammeringham. And despite pedalling as fast as she could, it was never more than a dozen yards behind her, floating on a thick blanket of low-lying mist.

Above handlebar height, it was a crisp, clear moonlit night. By the time she reached the church at Cammeringham, it had vanished

by Mike Spencer

as quickly as it had appeared. With only the sound of her laboured breathing and the clank of the loose chainguard on her cycle, she struggled up the long incline between Cammeringham and Ingham, desperate to reach the safety of home.

Few people give a second thought to the sleepy village of Cammeringham and even fewer are aware that this short stretch of road, between Scamp-ton and Ingham, is the site of one of Lincolnshire's greatest mysteries - The Cammeringham Light.

Although there are many reliable sightings of this phenomenon, like

many country legends, little or no hard evidence exists.

It has been described in various ways; predominately a blue or yellow ball of intense light or fire about the size of a football.

A 1960s article by G. F. Garner describes how his uncle, while walking a pair of plough horses in the area at five o'clock one winter's morning, was confronted by a bright ball of light floating down the road toward him.

"It came so close, the horses reared up," he said. And he went on to describe how both he and his girlfriend saw it between Ingham and Stow, his dog "taking great exception to it, barking and growling".

In the dreadful winter of 1947, a young lady was returning home from a night out with her boyfriend. It was around 10pm as they turned off the road at Cammeringham toward her home at Cold Harbour - an isolated farm. She felt quite happy as they bounced along the single track lane in her boyfriend's Austin 7.

When they reached the farm, it was in total darkness apart from one brilliant yellow light shining through the hedge where she knew no light should be. The couple sat motionless as the light weaved in and out of the hedgerow before it sank to ground level and vanished.

William Gelder, a tinsmith from Sturton-by-Stow, saw it many times

as he travelled the district with his horse and dray. He described it as "dancing lights in fields and hedgerows".

Rene Thorpe - now 87 - remembers seeing it as a 10-year-old.

As far as I am aware, it hasn't been seen since the 1950s. Many people question its actual existence, possibly due to some of the more fanciful explanations.

The most likely explanation is a phenomenon called Will o'the Wisp or Jack o'Lantern - a ball of incandescent marsh gas which, with the draining of the low-lying land in the area during the 1950s and 1960s, may account for its non-appearance in recent years.





