



Hash 179 - The Coldharbour, Blunsdon - 14th November 2004

It's years since I've been to the Coldharbour - probably not since 1983. We used to nip out for a lunchtime pint when I worked at Bluebird Toys and it was 3 men and a dog rather than the multinational it soon grew into. I remember sitting in the car outside, listening to the radio and waiting for the luncheon interval as Bob Willis was running through the Aussies at Headingley. Ah, happy days. Cold Harbour by the way - for all you budding Magnus Pikes - has nowt to do with ships, but comes from Middle English *here* (2 syllables) meaning 'army' - as in Hereward - and *beorg* meaning 'protection' and thus 'camp'; the 'cold' bit you can probably work out for yourselves. Hence the pub sign of the Roman soldier anxiously searching for small round brass objects.

Talking of Middle England, Katrina and I wound up in what seemed like Middle Earth as we were diverted off the Marlborough-Swindon road by a traffic accident, and left to find our own way cross-country to the M4. All good practice for the Hash, since we turned up late even by my abysmal standards. Compounding our error by running down a beckoning but flour-less footpath for 5 minutes, it was gone 11.30 by the time we picked up the right trail. We soon met Keith² however, who only slightly confused us by advising us *not* to do a circle round the hill-fort, but to turn right by the graveyard. Well, we came to a church fairly well littered with graves, but right turn? Well, -ish. The conversation went like this:

Me: Do you want to take the short-cut, or shall we do the long run as laid?

K: I'm knackered/have a stitch/not feeling too good. Can we do the short-cut?

Me (huffily): But I *never* do the short-cut!

K: Alright, have it your way, we'll do the long run.

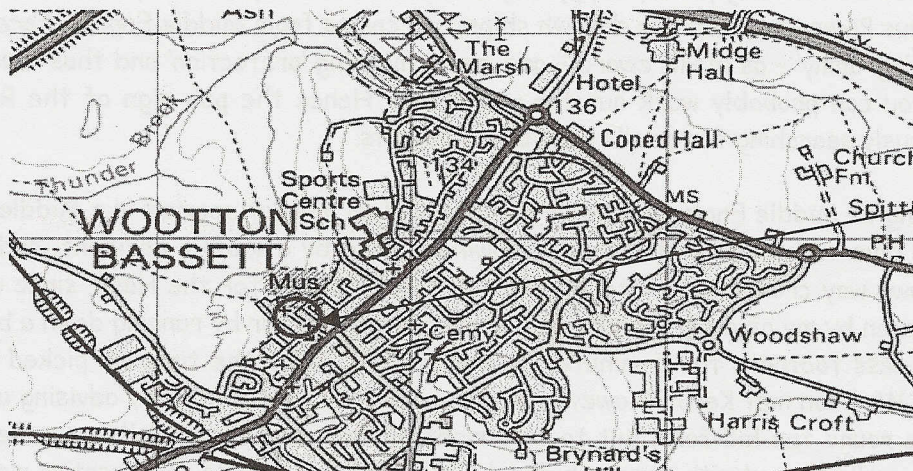
Me (huffily): No, no, have it *your* way, we'll take the short cut.

K (long-sufferingly): No, we'll do what you want to do, as always.

So I turned back looking for the short-cut, whilst Katrina went on the long run - neither of us doing what we actually wanted to. It's called the Abilene Paradox, for those interested in management theory (see me if you want an explanation). In the end it turned out that neither of us was right, since there was a *graveyard* further on, past the *churchyard*. After we'd kissed and made up (aaarrgh, sweet or what), we found the trail - and a huge great field full of gun emplacements and more arrows than on a comic-book convict's clothes, all seeming to point in opposite directions. I got dizzy going round in circles, but Katrina had her thinking head on, and once she had sorted out left from right - which can take some time - we resumed the correct trail.

It all gets a bit confused from then on. We came to a road I think, entirely innocent of flour, and maybe it was just after there that we came across the walkers - who seemed very surprised to see us - and we wound up galloping down a pretty wooded path; and Keith2 and his mate, who pointed us into another flour-free field, which we stumbled around for a bit until K2 helpfully showed us the exit. I had stupidly rather assumed that we were close to home, but we maintained the death motif by running past the crematorium, at which point Katrina puffed that we were still effing miles away. A very pleasant common, which had a small lake for those wishing to be buried at sea, then bugger me if we didn't pass the walkers *again*! After that we hit another road, turned left by the embalmers, and found ourselves back at the pub - which had changed considerably since I was last there (not that morning, obviously), and turned into a hotel.

A light dusting of talc in the sore chapped places, a dab of 4711 behind the ears, and we went in for a welcome beer. The runners were also very surprised to see us - our fragrant lady GOM almost spilt her hot water with the shock - and the long-lost Paul had left hours before. Despite the improvements, the beer was still OK - and they were still serving when the walkers arrived. K2 was justifiably praised for laying yet another beautiful trail in countryside I thought I knew but didn't - and in glorious sunshine too. Many thanks K2.



Second Coming Hash Runs

180 - 28th Nov - The Lamb Inn, Marlborough - Laura

181 - 12th Dec - The 5 Bells, Wootton Bassett - Iain

182 - 26th Dec - The Buggers Arms - GOM & Dave **[FANCY DRESS!]**

183 - 9th Jan - The Other Buggers Arms - Mike

184 - 23rd Jan - The Cross Keys, Upper Chute - Jeremy

If you want to have a bash at a Hash, or find out where the Bugger's Arms is please ring GOMargaret on 01793 703744, or the late Keith Mitchell on 01672 511530 - email keith@pallettfs.co.uk - website <http://kvhash.mysite.freemove.com>