

INVESTIGATION REPORT



Investigation Site	Nettleden
Investigation Date	18 th March 2011
Report By	Bill King
Team Members	Bill, Steph, Andy F, Elaine, Marion, Dee, Sarah, Nathan

Background

Just outside Nettleden there is a bridge which crosses a deep cutting, over a track called Roman Road. This bridge was part of a long track which ran from Water End up the valley past the village of Nettleden and Nettleden Lodge until it reached Little Gaddesden and Ringshall. It is reported that very few people can walk through Devil's Bridge in the dark or even over it when alone without a deep feeling of unease. It seems the area has a reputation for evil. A local legend claims the bridge was built as a way out of a dispute between rival landowners about land access.

Experiment

For this part of the investigation the team parked their cars in Frithsden then walked north along Roman Road heading towards the bridge. Fifty metres south-southwest of the bridge and deep in the cutting the team stopped. At this point the bridge was visible in bright torch light but without torches there was no sign of the bridge. Despite the fact that there was a full moon and the sky was clear the light did not penetrate the cutting in the area of the bridge due to the depth of the cutting and the trees above the cutting.

The team then took it on turns to walk, on at a time, down the track towards the bridge noting any feelings etc. as they went. Each team member passed under the bridge and once the other side they returned to the rest of the team at the start point. Some members used a torch to light their way as the track was very uneven and so dark that nothing could be seen, whilst others walked without torch light.

Below are the individual reports from each of the team members. The times are the start time, when the member left the group, and the end time, when they returned to the group. During this experiment things were noted by some of the team members who remained at the start and these notes are included below in italics.

Andy F: 21:10:09 to 21:12:30

When I walked down the lane I sensed nothing until I got to the bridge where I had a sensation of feeling uneasy under the bridge. This soon passed as I left the area.

Steph: 21:12:49 to 21:15:45

I walked down towards the bridge and was concentrating on where I was walking as it was very dark and a bit muddy and slippery. As soon as I walked under the bridge I felt someone approach me quickly at my right shoulder. The presence moved in close proximity to me until I reached the other side and felt like it was staring in to my face. I wanted to raise my right shoulder to my ear to try and shield the feeling of something in my personal space. I reached the other side and paused for a few seconds to look around before walking back under the bridge. It felt very dense and oppressive under the bridge and the atmosphere was thick and unpleasant.

21:15 During Steph's walk a loud thud is heard by some of the team members coming from the direction of the bridge. It sounded almost like someone tripping up but Steph said it wasn't her.

INVESTIGATION REPORT



Investigation Site

Nettleden

Investigation Date

18th March 2011

Dee: 21:16:55 to 21:20:23

We were told that as an experiment, each of us would be required to walk the 40 or so metres to the bottom of the cutting, under the bridge, then back again. We were to take note of our feelings and sensations as we did so. I had no idea at all what the purpose of the experiment was, but agreed to the task. According to Bill's watch, I set off at 21.16.

I took my voice recorder to record my thoughts and observations as I walked. I was feeling quite nervous about walking alone into a dark tunnel but steeled myself mentally. As I neared the tunnel entrance I became conscious of my heart pounding and my breathing becoming more rapid – classic signs of anxiety. I could not escape from the feeling that I was being watched from somewhere nearby.

As I entered the tunnel the atmosphere was noticeably different: it was (I transcribe my recording) "Very very very dark and very very cold in here; in fact, I can feel a really cold breeze." My chest felt a little bit tight but I managed to persevere to the other side of the tunnel. Once out, I stopped for some moments to look, listen and 'feel'. Then I re-entered the tunnel on my way back and stopped inside for a moment to 'reach out'. I sensed nothing in particular, just an overall feeling of discomfort.

A few yards up the hill on my return to the rest of the LPS members I got a very strong feeling of (quote from recording) "being watched from behind" and actually stopped and looked back down the hill towards the tunnel, but there was no person/animal there that I could see.

I touched base at 21.20, which means that the whole experience took just over 3 minutes. To me it seemed much longer!

21.17 Elaine gets the impression of a sheep's head and witchcraft.

21:19:48 A thud is heard by all of the team except Bill during Dee's walk. Dee said it was her. Due to the nature of the cutting, almost vertical high brick walls, any sound is conducted along the cutting and sounds louder than it normally would be. Thus a relatively quiet sound some way away sounds as if it came from a lot closer. This said the sound from Dee did sound as if she had made it but the sound heard during Steph's walk did not sound like she had made it and she was unaware that she had made any noise.

Elaine: 21:20:52 to 21:23:38

While walking under the bridge I heard a moaning noise to my left.

Marion: 21:24:10 to 21:29:15

Stephen my guide is with me.

As I approached the bridge I felt I was being watched. I also felt a strong male presence coming from the whole area underneath the bridge. It looked absolutely black, which it shouldn't have done as there is light on the other side which can be clearly seen from a way back up the road. I am using a walking stick tonight as the rain has made the ground a bit slippery.

As I walked towards the bridge I was calling out to any spirits there asking if they would kindly come and speak to me or talk into the red light of my voice recorder. I immediately heard a man's voice say 'poor lady' in a sympathetic voice. I know this was in reference to my use of the walking stick. I let this man know I was no threat to him, that I wasn't frightened of him and he shouldn't be frightened of me. I walked under the bridge and back through. He followed me out from under the bridge and part way (three to four metres) up the track. I actually found this comforting and caring and thanked him for walking with me. I also told him I would come back and talk to him.

INVESTIGATION REPORT



Investigation Site

Nettleden

Investigation Date

18th March 2011

I walked back to the group and got the name *Robert*.

21:28 *A pale patch of light is seen by Bill on the east wall of the cutting. This was a little way in front of Marion as she returned up the cutting and at the time she was not seen to be using any sort of light. A Bill noted the light it seemed to skip forward and get smaller.*

Nathan: 21:29:40 to 21:34:14

I set off on my individual walk to the bridge and note that it is quite slippery along the track in places with stones loosely scattered under foot along the way. Very little wind and is fairly dark with the walls each side of the narrow path towering high above making any noise quite amplified.

21:32 I hear a trickling water sound while walking through under the bridge, no unusual smells or other noises detected. Plant growth is evident draping down from the roof entrance to the bridge structure.

21:33 I leave the bridge to return back up the path to the group. I did not feel any discomfort from having been under the bridge.

Sarah: 21:35:14 to 21:37:00

I had decided that I would not walk to the bridge and through it on my own. However, as everyone had undertaken their lone vigil, and Bill was about to be the last, I changed my mind.

I still don't know why I did change my mind, whether it was a case of everyone else had gone through it and had come back alive, or I just told myself I'm here to investigate, get on with it! I felt very nervous, but I surged off into the dark.

My first thoughts were of telling myself to calm down, you can do it etc. Then as I could see a bit more due to the moonlight, I looked further into the bridge. I could see out the other side, and it wasn't far. However, nearing the mouth, I heard lots of ticks and taps to my left about half way up the ivy clad wall. I looked and saw nothing. This immediately put me on an even higher state of alert and as I reached the concrete base of the bridge I could hear whispering and voices. I also heard a thud which I'm not sure was from the bridge or the path. My notes taken say I had a whoosh of fear. This was enough to send me straight back up the path to the group, I could not enter the bridge. Needless to say I was the quickest.

Now I know what I heard could be written off as animals in the ivy, and maybe people were around the bridge or residents in their cottages, but we heard no other sounds as we were waiting further up the path, and we were quiet. I could have imagined them, seeing as I was very nervous already, but I really don't think I did, and I speak now from experience. I am looking forward to finding out what the actual haunting is.

Bill: 21:38:35 to 21:42:20

During the walk I did not experience anything out of the ordinary. My emf meter was on during the walk but it never beeped (detected level never rose above 2mG).

During the walk I noted the local temperature, the results of which are shown below.

21:38 Just before the start of the walk the temperature near the team was between 0 and +1°C.

21:39 Just over half way to the bridge the temperature was between 0 and +1°C.

21:40 Just before the bridge the temperature was between -1 and -0.5°C.

INVESTIGATION REPORT



Investigation Site

Nettleden

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18th March 2011

Under the bridge the temperature was between +1.5 and +2°C.

Just after the bridge the temperature was between -2 and -0.5°C.

21:40:10 I start the return journey.

21:38 *Elaine hears someone moving behind her, when she looked around there was no-one there.*

21:39 *While standing with the group waiting for everyone to do their walk Marion heard a noise further up the track near the field gate which sounded like a low whistle.*

21:40 *Elaine hears "OOH" from behind her.*