

Some ghostly anecdotes

Mystery at Bridge

On Sunday February 14, I was driving home from Whitstable, the evening was dark and I passed through the village of Bridge at approximately 7 pm. I had commenced the run up the hill leading from the village to Dover, when a dark shape, which I took to be a van without lights, crossed the road from my left to the right about 20 yards ahead, moving quite slowly. It did not turn down the hill towards Bridge, neither did it go up the hill, but seemed to disappear into the churchyard. I thought that perhaps I had imagined the apparition, but my friend sitting in the front passenger seat remarked: 'He had no lights nor was there any noise.' We were both very puzzled by the incident, and were convinced that we had seen something unnatural, although we were unaware of any previous reports of this type of encounter. We have since mentioned it to friends and two of them have stated that this has been reported as being sighted before.

Our wives were in the back seat, and being busy talking noticed nothing unusual and were inclined to treat our statements as a leg pull. The only drink we had was tea, and I assure you we were not joking. I have since passed through Bridge at night and have carefully noted that it could not have been a shadow.

This statement can be confirmed with my friend, Mr F Pursey, of 7 Pilgrims way, Dover. If you are aware of any history likely to be connected with this, if in book form, I should be much obliged to know the author and title of same

CH Watson, 47 Stanhope Road, Dover

It was with much interest I read Mr Watson's letter, 'Mystery at Bridge', in your paper of February 26. When I lived in Bridge 15 years ago my sister, brother-in-law and I heard on more than one occasion unexplained footsteps and saw a ghost in our house (500 years old). Also my sister and brother-in-law had a similar experience to Mr Watson while they were walking along Patricbourne Road one evening.

I have always understood that Bridge and, indeed, many parts of Kent are haunted.

BA Taylor, London SE 27

Haunted Bridge

If one believes in ghosts it is easy to agree with the correspondent who said recently, 'It has always been understood that Bridge and, indeed, Kent are haunted.' And it may very well be that the ghosts are those of men killed during that desperate last stand at Old England's Hole. They could as well be the shades of some of those killed, or executed, in more recent times: Black Robin, the highwayman whose only memorial is the public house at Kingston; the private soldier killed by a limber outside Bridge Church during the Napoleonic wars; or even the jockey, 'Joe', who broke his neck one day during the races on Barham Downs, not far from the changing room which used to be where Highland Court now stands.

Or could it have been the ghost of the horse whose 'ferruginous remains were found within the oppidum (of Old England's Hole) by some boys' in 1862?

One reader tells me that 'the other Bridge Hill' also had its apparition. During the War-to-end-Wars there was a camp at the top of the hill 'on the right going to Canterbury' and one night a sentry not only saw 'something' but challenged it three times and then turned out the guard. He couldn't fire as the guard mounted with unloaded rifles!

This reader believes the troops in camp at the time were the Kent Cyclists. Perhaps some veteran with a long memory can confirm the story, or even explain it.

(No year recorded for these - L Shirley's scrapbook, now with Williamson Archive)