



Paranormal Phenomenon: Ghosts, Spirits & Hauntings



Episode 6: Ghosts & Spirits - Poltergeists

Ghosts & Spirits

Types of

Poltergeists

- the word 'poltergeist' comes from German, meaning "noisy ghost" or "noisy spirit".
- They tend to manifest themselves in the form of **physical disturbances** such as **moving objects** and producing loud noises.
- They are also known to be capable of **scratching, hitting, biting, pushing, or tripping people**.



TOP 3 CASES of Poltergeists

Though there have been countless **poltergeist** cases documented and recorded over the past centuries, here are some of the most notable ones:

1. THE BELL WITCH OF TENNESSEE

The John Bell family of Red River, Tennessee (USA) endured a sustained spiritual haunting with lots of paranormal events and distinct poltergeist activity during the years between 1817 and 1821. John Bell had acquired a lot of land in the area and became a successful farmer, raising five children with his wife. Due to the remoteness of the case, it is difficult to tell which spirit(s) or entity was tormenting the family. Some allege that the so-called witch (spirit) was that of a woman named Kate who had it in for John Bell; but it could also have involved that of a inhuman (demonic) spirit – due to the aggressive nature of the events.



An illustration of the **Bell home**, From the novel by M. V. Ingram, "The Authenticated History of the Bell Witch" published in 1894.

1. THE BELL WITCH OF TENNESSEE (CONT'D)

Betsy (Elizabeth) Bell, the youngest daughter, fell victim to the poltergeist entity. She experienced brutal physical encounters with the invisible entity which included having her hair pulled, getting pinched and slapped – to the point that her face and arms became covered with welts and bruises along with hand prints on her face and body. Though the disturbances against Betsy eventually waned, the entity continued its disdain towards John Bell whose health had at that point deteriorated greatly.

1. THE BELL WITCH OF TENNESSEE (CONT'D)

The malicious entity also offered slaps to the now ailing John Bell even taking off his shoes when he tried to walk. John Bell died on the morning of December 20, 1820. Oddly, after his death, his family found a vial of **strange black liquid** in the cupboard. His son, John Jr., tested a few drops of it on a cat's tongue, killing it almost instantly; he then tossed the mysterious vial of black liquid into the fireplace. It burst into a bright blue flame and shot up the chimney.



The death of
John Bell.
Illustration first
published in 1894

TOP 3 CASES of Poltergeists

2. THE ENFIELD POLTERGEIST

This is perhaps one of the most documented and witnessed cases in this category. The single mother Peggy Hodgson and her two girls and two boys began experiencing poltergeist-like phenomena in August of 1977. Knocking sounds, furniture including chairs moving on their own, doors and drawers opening of their own accord, marbles and toy Lego blocks flying across rooms, and many similar disturbances occurred in their house.

In December of that year, Janet – who was 11 at the time – started to emit a male voice from an entity. When questioned by a professional, the entity producing the voice identified itself as Joe Wilkins who claimed he was a previous occupant of the house.

2. THE ENFIELD POLTERGEIST (CONT'D)

After verification, it was confirmed that Mr. Wilkins had indeed died in the house – a fact that was unknown to Janet at the time. Many recordings of these communications were taken and meticulously analyzed to make sure there was no fakery. In fact, paranormal investigators from the **Society for Psychical Research** thoroughly documented the paranormal events that occurred in the Hodgson's home in the London Borough of Enfield. Witnesses to these events also included neighbors, police constables, reporters, technicians, and others – most of whom have experienced and corroborated the strange happenings.

2. THE ENFIELD POLTERGEIST (CONT'D)

The young Janet was the main person targeted. She later recounted that she was nearly strangled by a curtain that wound itself around her neck. She also reported being levitated (as was her sister) and brusquely deposited at different times. Once such levitation was witnessed by a physicist named David Robertson. This same gentleman also reported the teleportation of a large cushion which made its way to the roof of the house as well as being struck in the head by a flying plate. Events stopped in 1978.



Janet Hodgson and her sister Margaret in their bedroom where most of the paranormal activity took place. This photo shows Janet levitating; it was captured by a motor-driven camera with flash placed in the bedroom.

TOP 3 CASES of Poltergeists

3. MANCHESTER POLTERGEIST CAUGHT ON CCTV

On Nov. 1, 2012 in an office in Castlefield House on Liverpool Road, Manchester (U.K.) a surveillance camera caught the **movement of office furniture and other physical disturbances** during the early morning hours when workers were absent.

Let's watch...