



Investigation Summary Report

Nottoway Plantation White Castle, LA



HISTORY

NOTE: Due to the fact that Nottoway Plantation is a working Bed & Breakfast, we were not granted access to the entire home because of booked guest. The areas that were investigated included, main hallways & gathering spaces, bedrooms that were occupied by Louisiana Spirits investigators, kitchen, dining area, and complete exterior grounds including on-site cemetery.

DATE: October 2, 2009

PARTICIPANTS: Jennifer Broussard, Elissa Lehnhardt, Charles Gardner, Martin Delatte, Fred Stallings, Brandon Thomas, Steve Coleman, Bess Maxwell, & Kirk Cormier

BACKGROUND: (A complete history of the home and family can be found at www.nottoway.com) Nottoway was completed in 1859 for John Hampden Randolph and his wife, Emily Jane Liddell Randolph, and it was home to their eleven children. The mansion boasts

53,000 square feet, and originally sat on 400 acres of highland and 620 acres of swamp. It was designed by renowned architect Henry Howard of New Orleans in Greek revival and Italianate style.

Randolph made it clear from the outset that no expense would be spared in the construction. Construction of Nottoway was completed in 1859 at an estimated \$80,000. Nottoway has 64 rooms in its three floors, six interior staircases, three modern bathrooms, 22 massive square columns, 165 doors and 200 windows. Designed in the Greek revival and Italianate style for which Howard was renowned, it features 15 1/2 foot high ceilings and 11 foot doors. It's most unique room is a semi-circular white ballroom with Corinthian columns and hand-cast archways. The grounds of Nottoway were occupied by both Union and Confederate troops during the Civil War, and the castle was fired upon several times by Northern gunboats. Nottoway was actually saved from one attack by a young Northern officer on board a gunboat. He had been graciously entertained at the plantation's garden parties and balls prior to the war, and recognized the castle from the Mississippi River. He called for a cease-fire, sparing the home from damage in that battle. But, the plantation grounds were not immune to shelling and cannons during the war. By 1863, Mrs. Randolph had to give the Oath of Loyalty to the Union in order to keep Nottoway.

When Mr. Randolph died in 1883, he left everything to his wife, Emily Jane. But, by 1889, Emily was 71 years old and she decided it was time to give up her beloved home. Nottoway was sold to V.B. Dugas and Desire' P. Landry for \$50,000. She divided the sum equally along the surviving children and herself. It is said that on the last day in her cherished castle, Mrs. Randolph, clad in black, mournfully walked around the empty castle, personally closing the shutters on each of the elegant windows. She died in 1904 at the home of her son, John Jr., in nearby Baton Rouge. The Randolph's were laid to rest at the Blythewood cemetery, along with other relatives, but the family remains were lovingly returned to a private cemetery on the grounds of Nottoway in 2003.

EQUIPMENT: Digital infrared cameras and two DVR systems, digital still cameras, EMF meters including Tri-Fields, various digital audio recorders, and FLIR Thermal Camera.

INVESTIGATION

The Investigation started at approximately 9:30 PM. The group broke into teams of 2 and 3. We covered every floor and the grounds including the cemetery. We rotated positions every 45 minutes to an hour. The investigation ended about 3:30 in the morning.

EMF readings were normal during the investigation. At the times and places checked, no anomalous hot/cold spots were detected. No evidence was gathered with video or still photography.

Spontaneous Events: 1) During a break Jennifer and Charles were walking from the main house to the front office. About half way they heard a very distinct bell ring come from the front gate area of the property. They both immediately changed their direction and walked towards the sound. After investigating the area and searching for a source no explanation could be found for the ringing bell. Unfortunately no recorders were running at this time to catch the sound.

2) After the investigation ended several investigators stayed the night on site. Brandon is the only investigator to have an experience. He was lying in bed and around 5 in the morning, the area

around the bed became freezing cold. The room itself was hot. He got up and walked around the room and sure enough, it was still very hot in there. He went and laid down in the bed again it was still extremely cold. All of the air around it was cold. Also, throughout the time he was sleeping in the bed, he felt like something was messing with him. He could not find any explanation to the temperature change or the feeling of there being another presence in the room.

Electronic Voice Phenomenon: One anomalous voice recordings was gathered during the investigation.

1. The one EVP was captured by Fred Stallings. He was staying the night in the Overseer's Cottage after the investigation ended. He was awakened by a door slam, which happened to be the security guard doing a walk through, and immediately turned on his camera to start recording. After the discovery of the original door noise he turned off the camera and went back to sleep. During evidence review he discovered the anomalous EVP. It can be found below.

We would like to thank Nottoway Plantation for allowing Louisiana Spirits to be their guests, and for allowing us to conduct this investigation.

