

Recreational math puzzles, particularly those that could be posed without the need for expensive diagrams, were popular in newspa-

pers and journals from the late 19th century. See how you get on with these puzzles in the 21st century.



◀ FLASHPOINT

*The bridge above will collapse in exactly 17 minutes. The four hikers must cross the bridge in that time in pitch darkness. They have only one flashlight between them, which is needed for each crossing.*

*A maximum of two people can cross the bridge at one time carrying the flashlight, which must be returned by hand after each crossing.*

*Each hiker walks at a different speed: One takes 1 minute to cross, another takes 2 minutes, and the others take 5 and 10 minutes respectively. Each pair crosses the bridge at the rate of the slower hiker's pace (so, for example, hiker 1 crossing with hiker 3 will cross the bridge in 5 minutes).*

*No tricks are allowed: The flashlight cannot be thrown back, no hiker is allowed to carry another, etc.*

*There are two possible solutions. Can you find either of them?*