



REPORT

CONFEDERATE GHOST IN OLD TOWN

INVESTIGATION



*Albuquerque
New Mexico*

NM016

SOUTHWEST GHOST HUNTERS ASSOCIATION



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Forward

The word “investigation” is defined as
“a searching inquiry for ascertaining facts; detailed or careful examination.”

The key word here is “facts”. Do ghosts exist? No, it has not been proven.
Therefore are no facts to investigate.

What we do have is the testimony of the witnesses and this is where an investigational process will work. Investigations are often viewed as a skeptical activity because the main goal is trying to determine what the witness actually saw. Is it explainable or not? This is done through critical thinking and an event replication process developed by SGHA. This is an important concept because what defines a haunting or ghost sighting is “Multiple witnesses reporting unusual phenomena over a period of time”. If these phenomena can be explained, the witness reports are no longer validating paranormal activity as a cause and thus there is no ghost or haunting. Additionally historical research may be done in an attempt to validate facts.

It is important to understand that the goal of an investigation is not to find evidence of the paranormal but to attempt to identify any natural or manmade causes of the reported phenomena

Definition of Terms

Investigation Status: Unsolved investigations will have either an open or closed status. An investigation is given an “Open” status if:

The investigators were unable to replicate all of the witness events. Something significant remains that is still unsolved.

It is important to understand that an “open” investigation does not mean that the unsolved facts are paranormal in nature. It simply means that we have exhausted our resources and cannot solve the “open” items/events.

A “Closed” status indicates that there is insufficient data or confounding variables that prevents replication or identifying possible explanations. This often occurs when investigators do not have direct access to witnesses or some other environmental change have occurred that creates confounding variables.

Confidentiality Notice

Many of the witnesses interviewed have wished to remain anonymous in exchange for presenting their accounts of paranormal experiences. We honor that request and thus witnesses will often be identified by aliases. Any coincidence between aliases and actual persons is unintentional.

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Part 1: Location Information

Old Town Albuquerque, NM

San Felipe Street, north of the plaza.

Part 2: Location History:

For 36 days in 1862, Albuquerque became the Confederate capital of New Mexico. After a bloody battle, a portion of the Fourth Regiment of Texas Mounted Volunteers under the command of General H.H. Sibley failed to take Fort Craig, south of Socorro. In need of supplies, the exhausted troops pushed on to Albuquerque. Union soldiers, meanwhile, had moved everything possible from their Albuquerque post, burned everything remaining, and retreated north under Captain Herbert M. Enos.

The Confederates entered Albuquerque on March 7, held a ceremony to claim the village and New Mexico for the Confederacy, fired a 13-cannon salute and raised their flag on Old Town Plaza. Albuquerque was under its fourth flag in 156 years.

For two weeks, the rebels foraged for food in the Sandia Mountains and relaxed in the plaza. Rumor has it that Sibley commandeered the house belonging to merchant Franz Huning, now the Manzano Day School, southeast of the plaza. Then they marched north to engage the Union forces at Fort Union but ultimately met with disaster at Glorieta Pass. After their supply trains were burned in Apache Canyon, the Confederates fled back to Albuquerque.

On April 10 there was a minor skirmish when Confederate forces dug in near Franz Huning's mill, ironically named "La Glorieta," east of Old Town and exchanged artillery fire with Union forces at nearby Barelás.

After Union forces withdrew, Sibley decided to marshal his men and leave for El Paso. Their last actions were to see that the injured men left behind were provided for in the local makeshift hospital, and to bury eight 12-pound howitzers captured from Union forces in a corral northeast of the plaza. On April

12 the last of the Confederates left Albuquerque, and the town was once again in Union hands.

However, one Confederate soldier seems to have remained behind, in spirit anyway. Visitors and residents of Old Town Albuquerque have reported seeing an unusual specter of a Confederate soldier, sometimes on horseback, sometimes walking on foot, on San Miguel street north of the plaza.

Part3: Witnesses

This section identifies the witnesses to the reported activity.

Name	Sex	Connection with reported incident	Interviewed
Joe Garcia*, City Employee	Male	Witness	10/20/2002
Scott * Civil War Reenactor	Male	Witness	7/7/2003
Mary* (Scott's wife)	Female	Witness	7/7/2003
Rick (last name withheld)	Male	Witness	2/15/2005

*Witnesses given aliases are noted by a **

Joe's Account

It was around midnight when I turned north onto San Miguel street. I was in a hurry to finish the job and get home when I noticed a figure on horseback in the street ahead of me.

I was heading straight for him, yet he didn't make eye contact. The soldier and horse didn't flinch or glance in the direction of the vehicle. It was as if the vehicle didn't exist.

Surely, humans would, out of curiosity and caution, look to see if the vehicle was going to stop. The Confederate soldier just stayed put, sitting calmly on his horse looking downwards. I assumed that this guy must have been dead drunk

because of his lack of caution. He was dressed in gray, his face was almost concealed in his long salt and pepper beard as his head was bent forward.



I hit the brakes and brought the street cleaner to a stop just before I reached him. The horse and rider were directly broad side to me and because of their position in the middle of the road; there was not enough room to go around them on either side. This really annoyed me. I started honking the vehicles horn at him, but the rider refused to move. He seemed totally oblivious to my presence.

Finally, I backed up, disengaged the street cleaner and drove up onto the west curb. I slowly went around him, glaring at this crazy moron until I was past him and could drive off the curb again. I then tried to re-engage the street cleaner. The gears made a grinding sound and would not engage, despite how much effort I put into it. I went from being just annoyed to being really angry. After all, if it wouldn't have been for this drunken civil war re-enactor guy blocking my path and being a traffic nuisance, I would have already been off this street and almost finished.

In a burst of anger, I opened the door and stomped around to have a few "words" with guy but when I came around the rear of the vehicle my anger turned into shock. There was no one there. No re-enactor, no horse, nobody. I quickly looked around the area and listened for any sounds of the horse moving through the silent empty streets. There was nothing. That was when I put two and two together.

Now I can understand if the rider was so drunk that he didn't notice me but what about the horse. When I was honking my horn, the horse didn't react either. Surely the loud horn would have startled the horse or at least caused some reaction but it didn't. The horse just stood there, oblivious to the world just like its rider.

Scott's Account

My wife and I had just finished eating at a fondue restaurant north of Old Town and we were walking south down San Miguel street to the parking lot where we had left our car earlier in the day. We were walking down San Felipe Street when I noticed a Confederate reenactor walking the other way across the street. What particularly caught my attention was the Whitworth rifle he was carrying. Being a Civil War reenactor myself, I was curious about where he had gotten it.

I made a remark to my wife about this who simply suggested that I ask him about it. So I crossed the street and began running after him. Just before I caught up to him, he turned to the right into a section of shops. When I came around the corner, he was gone. I was only about 6 or 7 seconds behind him, yet there was no sign of where he had gone. All of the shops were closed and I would have heard a door opening or seen something to indicate where he had gone.

Had I just seen a ghost?"

Rick's Account

While visiting Old Town, Rick heard the sounds of a horse following him while walking back to his car. He stated that he could hear the horse but was not able to see actually see it. He also noted that the sound seemed to change in direction as if the horse was coming at him from different directions.

Part 4: Reported Phenomena (General)

The reported phenomenon consists of an apparition that wears a long gray coat riding on horseback. The sounds of the phantom horse are reported to be heard as well.

Part 5: Historical Inaccuracies

The plaque on the gazebo in Old Town that indicates that eight Confederate Soldiers were buried there is incorrect. The State Archeology Department confirms that there were no Confederate troops buried in Albuquerque during the war.

During the Civil War, the Texas Mounted Volunteers attempted to conquer New Mexico for the Confederacy. The historical record shows the Texans fought with a fair amount of fire power with several batteries of artillery. On Feb. 21, 1862, these artillery units inflicted great damage to the Union soldiers at Valverde, including the capture of McRae's Union Battery. This gave the Texans an additional five guns: three 6-pounders and two 12-pound howitzers. Gen. Sibley made the decision to abandon about half of his artillery in Albuquerque to lighten their load and to use the carriages for hauling the few supplies they had left.

Late Friday night, April 11, the Texans dug a hole in a corral northeast of the Albuquerque Plaza, and secretly buried eight cannons of Reily's and Wood's artilleries. This was to ensure the discarded cannons would not fall into Union hands. The following morning, they began their trek to San Antonio, Texas, with the four 6-pound guns of Teel's Light Artillery and the five cannons of the captured McRae's Battery, now Capt. Sayers Valverde Battery. The Texans ran into the Union forces at Peralta. Teel's 6-pounders, and a couple of the Valverde cannons, were used against Canby's men in the day-long skirmish.

After leaving the La Jencia, the Texans marched across the plains and camped at Ojo Del Pueblo, near present day Magdalena. Hauling the artillery along the route of the sandy and mountainous retreat was becoming cumbersome, as expressed by Peticolas: "Sunday, 20 April 1862. Some talk of spiking the artillery and leaving it; 2nd Regt. And Green has gotten tired in one day of helping their battery along, but it was not done. Scurry undertakes to take them through and will not consent to leave behind us the only trophies we have been able to keep of our victories."

From this diary entry, it was clear that the McRae cannons, the "trophyes," were with Scurry's command (Peticolas' regiment) and Teel's Battery assigned to Lt. Col. Green. This also seemingly proves that none of McRae's five cannons were buried in Albuquerque, as some historians believe.



From Ojo Del Pueblo (Magdalena), the Texans marched along the western edge of the Magdalena Mountains to Texas Springs, then south along the San Mateos, roughly following what is now N.M. 107. On April 21, Peticolas wrote: " ... passed in sight of Ft. Craig ... Climbed a high steep hill, dragging up

the 8 heavy guns ... " Historians have struggled with this entry for years. If the Texans had nine cannons on April 19, what happened to one of them by April 21?

The answer is not relevant for this report but the historical record clearly shows that there are not any other cannons buried in Albuquerque.

Finally it should be noted that there were no casualties during the Battle of Albuquerque.

These historical facts debunk the "purpose" of the haunting in Old Town. There is simply no reason for a ghost to be haunting that area.

Part 6: Hypotheses

Review of Joe's Sighting:

Police records from this time show an arrest of an intoxicated man riding a horse on Central and Rio Grande blvd at 2:30am. This was 15 minutes after the sighting by the city employee.

We also timed exactly how long it would have taken for a city employee to move the street cleaner to move as it was described. The maneuver took 25

seconds which is more than enough time for the horse and its rider to wander away onto Church Street.

Review of Scott's Sighting:

This was actually another Confederate reenactor. The Sons of Confederate Veterans and other groups were demonstrating Confederate and Union camp life that day. Artillery and marching demonstrations as well as reenactments of the historic battles in New Mexico were at the museum on this date.

"Six seconds" is more than enough time for the Confederate Re enactor to have reached the back gate at a "brisk stride". We eventually found the reenactor himself and asked him about that night. He told us that he had been a restaurant when some of the people there starting making disparaging comments about his uniform.

"They were calling me a racist and all sorts of other things", he told us. "For awhile I was worried that a fight might break out".

After he had finished his meal, he was on his way back to the camp when he noticed someone running after him. Thinking it was one of the people from the restaurant looking for a fight, he ran as soon as he got around the corner. The museum gate in this area was open allowing him to reach the camp safely.

Review of Rick's Encounter:

The sound of the horse was replicated in 2005. After a rain storm, water dripping into a gutter on Church Street creates the sound of a horse's hoofs. The sound directional change is caused by the echo and the listener's position in Old Town. We were able to hear the rain dripping down the gutter as far away as the plaza when traffic noise from Rio Grande Blvd was minimal.

Other Observations:

Interviews with Old town residents reveal that there have been no sightings of this ghost by the locals. It would seem that if there was a ghost riding around, one of them surely would have noticed.

Part 7: Conclusion

This ghost has been completely debunked. All of the witness sightings have been replicated and the history itself does not support the story.

Part 8: Photographs

