

TRUE GHOSTS AND GHOULS OF WINDSOR & ETON

Brian Langston

Meticulously researched by former Windsor police chief-turned-paranormal sleuth Brian Langston, *True Ghosts and Ghouls of Windsor & Eton* presents an unparalleled investigation into the myriad of macabre and spectral entities which have haunted Windsor & Eton for countless generations.

Spanning the centuries up to the present day, this supernatural guidebook chronicles over 200 true tales of hauntings, demon possession, witchcraft and wickedness, many making their first appearance in print.

Who was the monstrous 'Vampire' who plagued Georgian Windsor and craved human flesh?

Is Eton home to the only church in England to have been closed by the malevolent actions of the Devil?

What was the wolf-like beast seen emerging from the Thames twice by police officers during the late twentieth century?

What were the nocturnal horrors which caused terrified sentries to desert their post at Windsor Castle?

What was the 'Spring Heeled Jack' of Spital graveyard which preyed on Victorian ladies?

What gruesome fate befell the bloated corpse of Henry VIII and does his ghost still stalk Windsor Castle?

How did the neck bone of Charles I end up on a Doctor's dining table in May-fair?

Which famous Eton Schoolboy killed a bully with black magic and took his secret to the grave?

Did Queen Victoria secretly commune with the spirit of her beloved Albert and was it her ghost which terrified Castle workers during the 1930s?

Did the ghost of Herne the Hunter kill a 'Teddy boy' in the 1950s?

In this diabolical dossier, the author unearths the fascinating and spine-tingling occult history of Windsor and Eton. Mystery, bloodshed and fear are never far away in this chilling perambulation through the ancient streets of Britain's most haunted borough.

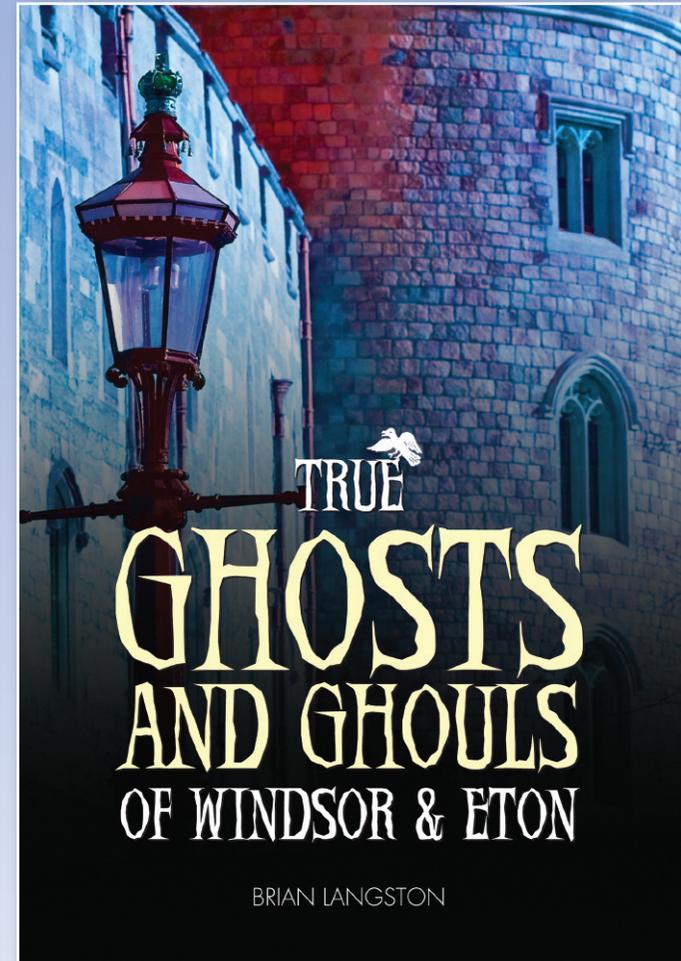
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ghost Club member and author Brian Langston is the former Assistant Chief Constable for Thames Valley Police. He lived and worked in Berkshire for over a quarter of a century and for many years was the police chief for Windsor & Eton. Since retirement he has drawn upon his extensive investigative experience to conduct research into mysteries and paranormal phenomena. He currently lives in the Languedoc region of Southern France with his wife Jenny and a large family of adopted cats, where he writes and compulsively haunts fleamarkets, adding to his collection of curious and macabre artefacts.

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Above: Peascod Street, Windsor c. 1914. ©Royal Windsor Website
 Right: Malleus Maleficarum – (The Hammer of Witches) used as the handbook for the persecution of witches. Wikimedia Commons



The East Terrace of Windsor Castle – the scene of numerous ghostly sightings c. 1895. Wikimedia Commons

Example of a double-page spread.

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Queen Victoria and Prince Albert 1854.
Wikimedia Commons

aspect of her life including state affairs. This has led to speculation that Brown was indeed regularly channelling the spirit of the dead Prince and explains why the couple became so inseparable that she was mockingly referred to as 'Mrs Brown.'

It is believed that Victoria, a life-long diarist kept a private journal of the séances which were destroyed after her death along with her intimate letters to her 'Darling Brown.' It has been claimed that King George VI once found a record of a séance which had been overlooked at the back of a drawer but this has been officially denied.

It is however known that after her death, Victoria's personal doctor, Sir James Reid, had to intervene in a case of blackmail, involving a cache of 300 'most compromising' letters she had written to her estate manager at Balmoral, Dr Profeit, in which she reportedly discussed her interest in communicating with the other world through Brown. Sir James purchased the letters on behalf of her son Edward VII, who destroyed them.

Further evidence may have existed in the affectionate memoir Victoria wrote about John Brown after his death in 1883. Her senior cousins however, refused to let her publish it, fearing that it would further damage her reputation, and had it destroyed, together with Brown's own diaries.

It would seem that any proof of Victoria's communication with the ghost of Prince Albert has gone with her to the grave.

Chapter 3
WHO GOES THERE ?

THERE ARE STORIES stretching back centuries of Royal guards being terrified by nocturnal visitations. Ghostly apparitions have often been cited as the reasons for people fleeing the Castle in the middle of the night although usually these were maids and servants rather than soldiers. One unusual case concerns Private James Richardson who mysteriously disappeared overnight whilst on sentry duty, leaving his rifle and uniform behind him.

At 11pm on Wednesday 25 August 1869 the Grenadier Guard commander was doing his usual rounds checking on the sentries posted around Windsor Castle. On the North Terrace he expected to see Private Richardson who had taken up his duty outside the Royal apartments just two hours before, but he was nowhere to be found. Fearing something untoward had happened to him, the alarm was raised and a full search was conducted which discovered his rifle and uniform in a heap where he was last seen.

His surprising disappearance led to speculation amongst some of his colleagues that he had been spirited away by ghosts. Stories were rife in the regiment of the phantoms which haunted the Castle and the night time postings on the eerie terraces around the Royal apartments were dreaded by many.

Nowadays, conspiracy theorists would have labelled this a case of alien abduction but 150 years ago, the phantom of Herne the Hunter was blamed for taking another soul for his 'wild ride'.

The Grenadier Guards were however more circumspect and treated this as a case of desertion. This was a serious military crime, particularly for a guard of the Royal Family and could be punishable by death. His colleagues were not aware of anything that would have precipitated this sudden drastic step and were baffled that he managed to leave the Castle grounds without being seen by other sentries posted in and around the grounds. His only means of escape was to make his way down The Hundred Steps from the North Terrace and into the Home Park. This desertion was unusual and caused quite a stir within the regiment and gave rise to widespread speculation in the local media about its cause.

Private Richardson was apprehended a fortnight later in London. He never gave any explanation for his unprecedented disappearance and took his punishment without complaint and expressed relief that he no longer had to guard the Castle. He was sentenced to 168 days imprisonment and branded



Above: Queen 'Bloody' Mary Tudor by Hans Holbein. Wikimedia Commons

Left: Market Cross House, Windsor High Street haunted by an Edwardian lady. Wikimedia Commons