

ENQUIRER reporter's night of terror in a haunted inn

Face-to-face with a ghost



CREEPY tavern was built in the 1700s.

I was paralyzed with fear... my heart stopped

By SYLVIA HUBBARD

I spent a terrifying sleepless night in one of America's most haunted buildings — and I saw the ghost of a woman who was murdered there 200 years ago!

It was the most bone-chilling assignment I've ever had as a reporter. Just thinking about it still sends shivers up my spine.

The building is King's Tavern in Natchez, Miss. Its only guest suite is on the third floor and after the restaurant closes, people who stay there are left all alone — with, of course, the resident ghost.

I was skeptical about the ghost. And when I heard that a former owner had once claimed, "People check in, but they never stay to check out," I knew that my husband Robert and I would have to stay there.

When we walked into the forbidding brick building on a warm afternoon, I laughed inside and told myself, "There's nothing to fear."

But minutes later my heart was in my throat as the current owner Yvonne Scott told me about the tavern's ghost, a beautiful young woman named Madeline.

Legend says that Madeline was a mistress to the tavern's namesake Richard King in the late 1700s — until she was murdered by his jealous wife.

During the 1930s, a woman's skeleton was found sealed in a brick fireplace — with a jeweled dagger in her chest!

As Yvonne kept me spellbound, Robert tried to photograph a painting of Madeline on the wall. But suddenly the impossible happened — each time he got ready to snap a photo, Madeline's portrait began swinging back and forth.

Finally, after several tries, he put the painting down on a bar so it wouldn't move.

A few minutes later, as Robert took a picture of me standing in the tavern, a chain hanging near me began swinging slowly back and forth.

I figured my eyes were playing tricks on me.

"This can't be happening," I thought. Just then, the chain changed its direction and started swinging in a slow circle.

Trying to lighten the mood, I joked "O.K., Madeline,

Swinging chains and a shadowy figure sent chills up my spine



CHAIN ON WALL began to swing back and forth slowly as owner and ENQUIRER reporter watched.

can you make it swing in a straight line?"

A chill ran up my spine and my knees weakened as the chain immediately began to swing back and forth!

I sat alone at a table to regain my strength.

Suddenly, the table began to vibrate. I nearly jumped out of my skin! Later when the restaurant closed,



REPORTER Sylvia Hubbard on stairway at inn. Painting (above left) is of Madeline, the ghost of a mistress reportedly murdered by a jealous wife.

Robert and I were shown to the guest suite. After everyone was gone and the place locked up, Robert took some pictures of the bedroom.

While he was working, I stepped outside the room to the third floor landing and closed the door.

Suddenly, 10 feet ahead of me I saw the most frightening sight of my life — a ghostly shadow on the far wall. It was a slender woman who stood defiantly with her hands on her hips.

My heart stopped!

There was no light behind me to cast a shadow and my hands weren't on my hips, so I knew it couldn't be my shadow.

As I stared at the apparition, I was paralyzed with fear. "It's Madeline's ghost," I thought. "She doesn't want me here!"

I tried to say something, but couldn't. Then as suddenly as she'd appeared, she was gone.

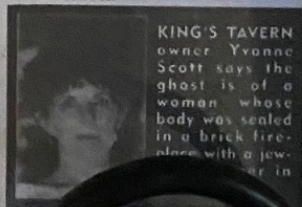
After that, I thought about just running out of there and never

coming back again. To heck with the assignment.

But something inside of me stubbornly refused to quit.

Madeline must have realized she wasn't going to send me packing, so the rest of the night — while Robert and I stayed wide awake — there wasn't a single supernatural incident.

Oh sure, there were plenty of squeaks, rattles and rapping noises. But that's natural in an old building. Isn't it?



KING'S TAVERN owner Yvonne Scott says the ghost is of a woman whose body was sealed in a brick fireplace with a jeweled dagger in

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