

## Relics Revealed

The Survival Files — Case 15 — ESS = 246.8

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In 1914, as Violet Parent was recovering from a severe illness, her deceased mother appeared to her and told her she would find a gold coin above one of the doorways in her apartment. Her husband, Gregory, later reported: “We both considered this merely a dream, for our apartment had just been thoroughly cleaned. Nevertheless, we looked, and sure enough, over a door leading to the porch we found a ten-dollar gold piece.”

Now, the Parents were of very modest means. He was a grocery clerk and she a housewife. They lived in a “two-room apartment of threadbare aspect.” Thus they were most impressed by such a find, and so, understandably, they paid close attention to Violet's ensuing visions.

Shortly, she began to fall into trances in which other spirits spoke to her. Some of these spirits claimed to be missionaries who had spent much of their earthly lives trying to convert the natives of Mexico, Southern California, and Arizona to Christianity. Other spirits said they had been Indians who were the subjects of these conversion attempts. Mrs. Parent, an illiterate woman who had grown up in St. Louis, had no idea what they were talking about. But, she understood quite well when the spirits directed her to other caches of money buried or hidden here and there around their hometown of Redlands, California. Within 6 years, the Parents had found sufficient funds to purchase their first house and automobile.

The locations of the loot were only revealed to give the Parents the means to pursue the agenda of the missionaries. They told Violet that the natives had buried numerous crosses and other religious artifacts throughout the Southwest. The padres had decided to try and prove their continuing existence in the spirit world by directing people to the location of these crosses. This would be exactly what skeptics had been asking for since the first claim of Survival was made: the spirits would reveal information that no one living knew or could have known.

And reveal it they did, and not just once, or twice, or thrice, which ought to have been proof enough. Over a period of 10 years, the Parents were directed to more than 50 widely separated locations across a region 600-miles long by 300-miles wide. Once they arrived at the location specified they were directed to a particular hillside or streambed or other landmark and told what they should find buried there. Sometimes the search was fruitless; perhaps because someone had already discovered the treasures, perhaps due to heavy rains or earthquakes, or it could be that the Indians simply mis-remembered the location of a ceremony. But the quests were successful often enough to net more than 1,500 crosses and other sacred objects!

Yes, you read that right. Information that only people long dead could possibly know enabled living people to find real, solid, manmade items FIFTEEN HUNDRED times! All this in addition to hundreds of finds of gold, silver, and paper money crammed into tins and bottles, or wrapped in oilskins or decaying leather pouches that had been carefully buried by the denizens of the desert and never retrieved.

At first, the Parents did not own a car, so they had to rely on neighbors and friends to chauffeur their excursions. Typically, Violet would direct the group to the designated site (often hundreds of miles from their home) and then the others would dig in the ground, chop at cactus, or pry up boulders as necessary to reveal and retrieve the crosses. Violet, being somewhat delicate and very fearful of rattlesnakes, did little digging herself. Numerous affidavits exist,

signed by people who assisted on one or more of these expeditions, testifying that they found crosses precisely where the spirits predicted.

We know all of this because Gregory Parent kept detailed notes that ultimately filled 22 journals. He gave the dates and times of every excursion and he listed every item in every find. Most importantly for posterity, 5 years after his wife died, he wrote a letter to a man named Hamlin Garland.

Garland was a Pulitzer-prize winning author of over 50 books, mostly novels and biographies. Mr. Parent was likely attracted to him because his most recent book was an account of his personal experiences as an investigator for the American Society for Psychical Research. Garland was intrigued enough by what he read in the letter to visit Parent at his apartment and view his journals and several pictures of the crosses. Parent wanted Garland to write a book about the discovery of the crosses. Garland liked the idea, but being busy with other matters, he did not attempt to contact Parent again for almost 2 years, by which time Parent had died.

It took several months, but Garland managed to track down and obtain the entire collection of crosses along with Gregory Parent's journals and papers. The names of many people who had assisted the Parents in their searches were listed in the papers and Garland was able to locate fifteen of them — all of whom confirmed Parent's reports. As an example, in one interview a woman told Garland: "I myself picked up two containers for her — one from the sand on the seashore and one from the bed of a stream. To say that Violet had 'planted' these gold pieces and these wads of bills is absurd. She never had coins to plant, and furthermore, the rusted and rotted condition of these containers proved their long situation in the ground."

From these interviews and papers, Garland learned enough of the Parent's story to begin work on a book. From that book, appropriately titled and published in 1939, the facts and quotes given here are derived.

### Discussion

An analysis of this case, and more details, may be found on pages 98-107 of [The Survival Files](#).

### ESS Score

The CS rating is "p" CS = 172.

Witness Reliability rating is "k" (64 pts) plus a bonus (5 pts) for the artifacts a bonus (5 pts) for multiple interviewees, WR = 74.

The Character/Complexity of Information rating is "n" plus a bonus for quantity and age. IC = 0.8.

Total ESS Score:  $172 + 74 + .8 = 246.8$

### For Further Information

See [The Mystery of the Buried Crosses](#) , by Hamlin Garland, 1939.

END CASE 15

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