

History of The Watseka Wonder, a Possession or a Spiritual Miracle?

From 6 months to her untimely death at the young age of 18, Mary Roff exhibited signs of trances and speaking with the spiritual realm. Mary was placed in an asylum in the summer of 1865. Her life had been at times sheer terror physically, mentally and spiritually. She would go into clairvoyant trances and speak with unseen spirits. She began to harm herself by cutting her arms and placing leeches on her temples to rid herself of the pain. Regrettably her Mother and Father had to admit her to an asylum and forever have to live with the pain of losing their daughter.

Fast forward to 1877, a young lady by the name of Lurancy Vennum was 14 years old from the same town in Watseka, Illinois. She began to manifest similar clairvoyant trances and claimed to communicate with the spirit world, similarly to Mary Roff. Lurancy would be asleep for days after some of these episodes of communicating with the spirit realm. It was recommended that Lurancy should be sent away to an insane asylum. However in the winter of 1878 Asa Roff, father of Mary Roff and a devoted believer in spiritualism, heard of the story of Lurancy and recognized the similarities between her story and that of his daughter, Mary Roff. Asa met with the Vennum family and convinced them not to send Lurancy to an asylum.

Asa called for the spiritualist physician, Dr.E. Winchester Stevens to examine Lurancy. Dr.Stevens a hypnotist placed Lurancy in a trance to help figure out what spirits if any dwelled in Lurancy. Lurancy then became possessed by the spirit of a young girl identifying herself as Mary Roff, the lost daughter of Asa Roff. The spirit of Mary Roff who inhabited the body began to recognize people that she knew in her prior life. She knew names and nicknames of family members that Lurancy would have no knowledge of. Through the permission of the Vennum family, Asa Roff invited Lurancy to live with them at The Roff Home, while the spirit of Mary Roff inhabited her body.

The Spirit of Mary Roff told everyone that Lurancy was in Heaven with angels for healing and would return to her body when she was healed. For over 100 days the spirit of Mary Roff lived in the body of Lurancy Vennum. On May 7th Mary Roff in the body of Lurancy Vennum announced that Lurancy's soul was returning to her body on May 22nd. Lurancy soon returned to her body. Lurancy lived a long life after the Spiritual Healing and never spoke a word of the incident.

Asa Roff, a devoted spiritualist conducted many seances in the home and ghost hunters have caught evidence of possible lingering spirits that still reside or come through the Roff House.

On October 26th, Graveside Paranormal will be hosting a seance and eventful day at the Roff House for the public to join and be part of the experience. Follow Graveside Paranormal on [Facebook](#) to keep up with further details and available tickets.