

## Camarillo Library Wednesday Morning Group



## Miracles + Mysteries & Murders



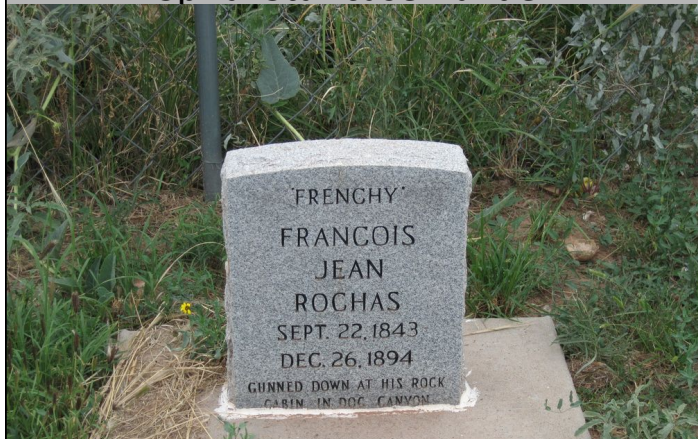
## Who built the Spiral Staircase??



## 100 Year History TIMELINE

- 1846-1848 Mexican American War
- 1852 Catholic Nuns arrive in Santa Fe by Santa Fe Trail
- 1853 Sisters open school for girls in Santa Fe
- 1857 Sisters purchase land for chapel
- 1859-1881 Billy the Kid
- 1867 Nov Apache Raid Fort Selden
- 1873 Construction of chapel starts
- 1878 Feb 28 Tunstall murdered starts Lincoln County War
- 1878 Chapel completed
- 1878 Aug 5 Dog Canyon Conflict
- 1880 Spiral staircase started
- 1880 16 April Mescalero Agency
- 1881 Spiral staircase completed
- 1885 Franciso Jean Rochas homestead established Dog Canyon
- 1887 Handrail for staircase added
- 1894 Dec 26 Franciso Jean Rochas murdered Dog Canyon
- 1912 Jan 6 New Mexico admitted to US as 47th State
- 1921-1923 Teapot Dome Scandal - Albert B Fall Secretary of Interior / rancher
- 1945 Jul 9 White Sands Missile Range Established to test German V2s
- 1945 Jul 16 First Atomic Bomb Test

## Grave of Francois Jean Rochas Spiral Staircase Builder



## Find a Grave Memorial



Photo added by Ben

### Francois Jean "Frenchy" Rochas

**BIRTH** 22 Sep 1843  
France

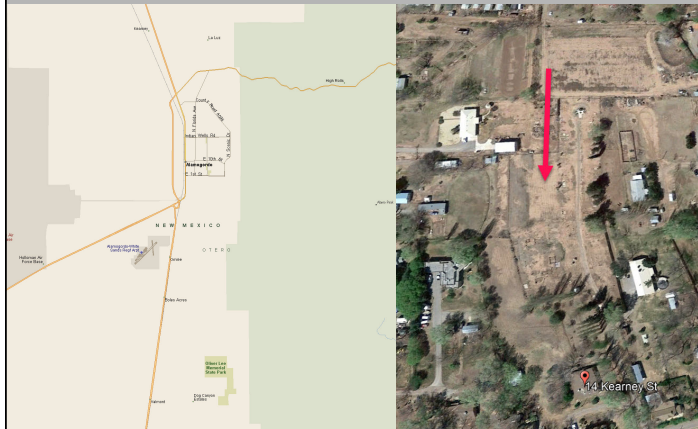
**DEATH** 26 Dec 1894 (aged 51)  
La Luz, Otero County, New Mexico, USA

**BURIAL** Our Lady of the Light Catholic Cemetery  
La Luz, Otero County, New Mexico, USA

**MEMORIAL ID** 8401944 · [View Source](#)

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## Grave Location



## Rochas Life Timeline

- 1867 Nov Apache Raid Fort Selden
- 1869 May Apache Raid San Augustine Pass
- 1873 Canadian Arrival
- 1878 Feb 28 Tunstall murdered starts Lincoln County War
- 1878 Aug 5 Dog Canyon Conflict
- 1880 Spiral staircase started Loretta Chapel
- 1880 16/17 April Mescalero Agency conflict
- 1881 Spiral staircase completed
- 1885 July Rochas in US Census Dona Ana County
- 1885 Francisco Jean Rochas homestead established Dog Canyon
- 1887 Handrail for staircase added
- 1894 Dec 26 Francisco Jean Rochas murdered Dog Canyon
- 1912 Jan 6 New Mexico admitted to US as 47th State

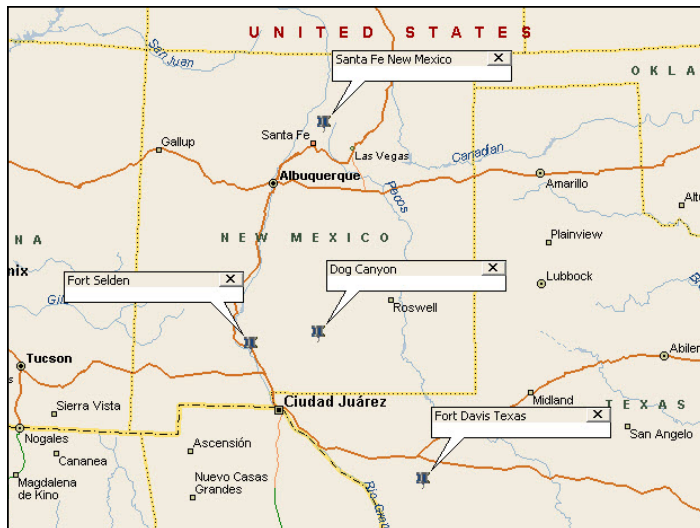
## Apache Conflicts 1860s-1880s



## Fort Selden







## Fort Selden Nov 1867

- 50 Apaches raided Fort Selden and took 13 Army horses and 30 mules
- Colored soldier cavalry detachment pursued
- Running battle killed 3 Indians captured 8 Indian ponies
- Recaptured all stock except for 6 head that were killed in pursuit
- Soldiers accidentally killed a Hispanic hay cutter

## San Augustine Pass New Mexico



## San Augustine Pass May 1869

- 2 May Apaches attacked a wagon train guarded by soldiers killing 2 and wounding 4
- Failed to capture wagons
- Soldiers reportedly killed 5 Indians and wounded 10
- 7 May three Cavalry were escorting a civilian thru pass.
- 40 Apaches attacked killing 2 of the Cavalry

### Dog Canyon August 5, 1878



### Dog Canyon August 5, 1878

- Cavalry was ordered to round up renegade Apache
- 52 Cavalry and 19 Navajo scouts headed for Guadalupe Mountains but found no Apache
- Returning found small party at mouth of Dog Canyon
- Skirmish killed three Apache and captured 22 horses

### Dog Canyon August 5, 1878

- Up canyon more Apaches were found
- Indians fired on cavalry and rolled rocks down from the 800 foot cliffs
- The troopers attempted to climb the cliffs in the August heat.
- Several men suffered heatstroke
- At nightfall they reached the top but Apache were gone

### Mescalero Agency

#### Tularosa New Mexico 16 April 1880

- 700 men of 6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry assembled to oversee surrender of 309 Apache
- Col Hatch intended to disarm the Apache
- Indian agent Samuel Russell warned Apache would not surrender if they were to disarm
- Army scouts killed two Indians that appeared to be raiding stock

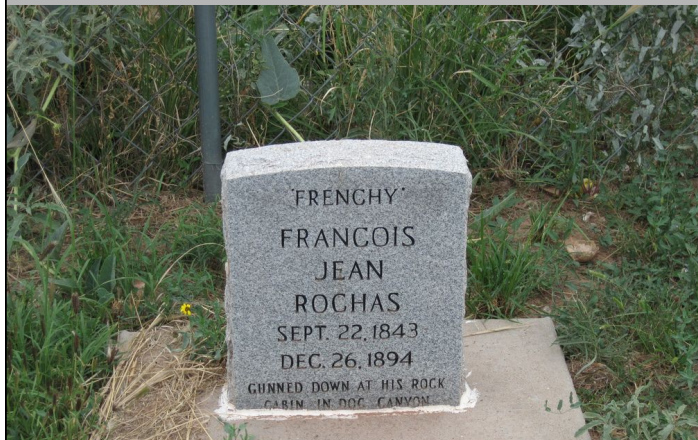
**Mescalero Agency  
Tularosa New Mexico 16 April 1880**

- Indian agent Samuel Russell was irate
- Russell had authorized them to drive in the stray stock.
- Disarming the Apache caused a fight that killed 14 Indians. Apaches ran away.
- Most were rounded up, but 30 headed south

**Dog Canyon  
17 April 1880**

- Apaches that fled found in Dog Canyon next day
- Maj Morrow men killed 3 Apaches and captured 20 horses
- Mescalero Apaches were confined to Indian Reservation ending the conflicts in the area.

**Grave of Francois Jean Rochas**



**Francois Jean Rochas**

- Who was Francois Jean Rochas
- When did he immigrate?
- What do we know of him in New Mexico?
- Murder mystery?

## Arrival?

### Francis Rochas in the Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865-1935

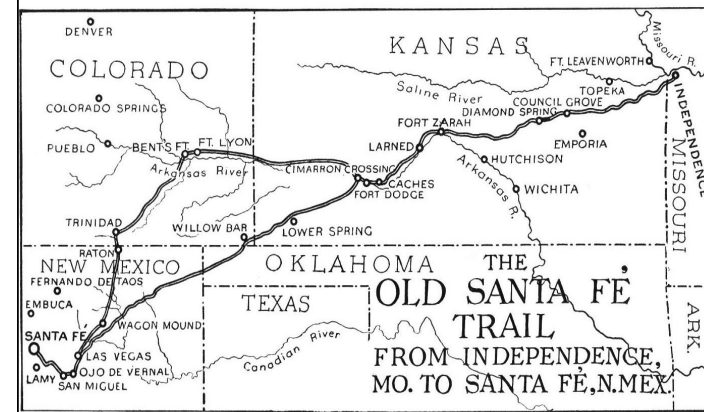


[Add alternate information](#)

[Report issue](#)

Name:	Francis Rochas
Gender:	Male
Arrival Age:	30
Birth Year:	abt 1843
Departure Port:	Liverpool, England; Londonderry, Ireland
Arrival Date:	29 Sep 1873
Arrival Port:	Quebec, Quebec, Canada
Vessel:	Polynesian

## Santa Fe Trail 1792-1880



## ARRIVAL

- 14 Sep 1880 there is a Rochas no given name on manifest of SS St Laurent a commercial cargo ship. Sailed from Le Harve France
- The Loretto Chapel stained glass windows were made in France 1874 and shipped to New Mexico
- Stain glass window installed Nov 1877
- French sources believe the stairway was made in France and shipped to New Mexico for assembly.
- Did Rochas return to France for the stairs?

## 1885 US Territorial Census Data

Page No. 21

Superior's Dist. No. 4

Enumeration Dist. No. 4

SCHEDULE I—Inhabitants in Cherokee in the County of Pope, State of Ark.

enumerated by me on the 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> days of June, 1885.

J. P. Rochas

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Color	Mar.	Prof.	Value	Real	Per.	Value	Real	Per.	Value	Real	Per.
7171	John	M	21	W	1										
7172	John	M	21	W	1										
7173	John	M	21	W	1										
7174	John	M	21	W	1										
7175	John	M	21	W	1										
7176	John	M	21	W	1										
7177	John	M	21	W	1										
7178	John	M	21	W	1										
7179	John	M	21	W	1										



1885 Rochas Homesteads  
Dog Canyon



Dog Canyon



Rochas Rock Cabin  
Dog Canyon





## Homestead

- Small water stream down canyon
- Rochas built rock fences to control cattle
- Tax records indicate he had 400 head of cattle

## Ambushed and Wounded

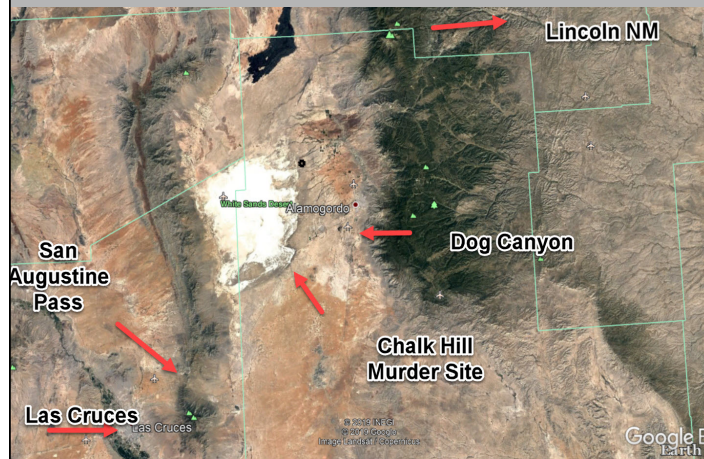
- In 1886 Rochas swore out a warrant for an employee Morrison for horse thief.
- Morrison was arrested and released
- Morrison later ambushed Rochas working on his rock fence and wounded Rochas twice.
- Rochas reached his rock cabin and barred the door
- That night Morrison broke down the door and Rochas fired and wounded him. He escaped and was captured. Sent to Territorial Prison for 3 years
- Rochas survived this incident.

## Oliver Lee

- In 1893 Oliver Lee started a large ranch next to Rochas.
- Oliver Lee over the years had multiple run ins with the law.
- Feb 1 1896 Colonel Fountain and son left La Luz. Passed the mail carrier in route but was never seen again.
- Two days later the buckboard spattered with blood was found 12 miles southeast. Oliver Lee was one suspect

The screenshot displays three genealogy profiles from a website. The top profile is for **Albert Jennings Fountain - Lawyer, Civil War Sgt/ Union/ Indian Fighter, Politician, Murdered**, with birth information: 23 OCTOBER 1838 • Staten Island, Richmond, New York, United States and death information: 1 FEB 1896 • White Sands Desert, Dona Ana, New Mexico Territory, USA. The middle profile is for **Henry Jennings Fountain**, with birth information: CIRCA 1888 • Las Cruces, Dona Ana, New Mexico and death information: 1896 • New Mexico. The bottom profile is for **Oliver Milton Lee - Trail Driver, Deputy US Marshal, Rancher, Possible killer of Albert Jennings Fountain and son, Henry**, with birth information: 08 NOV 1865 • Buffalo Gap, Taylor, Texas, United States and death information: 15 DEC 1941 • Alamo, Otero, New Mexico, USA. Each profile includes a small portrait photo and navigation links like 'Broken Branches', 'Tree Search', and 'GoretoXas'.

### Col Fountain Murders 1 Feb 1896



### Col Fountain Murder Case

- Traveled to Lincoln to press charges against Oliver Lee for unlawful rebranding cattle
- 32 indictments were issued
- Fountain told to drop charges or he would not reach home alive
- Murdered near White Sands
- Bodies never found

### Pat Garrett

- Attempted to arrest Oliver Lee
- Gun fire killed a deputy
- Oliver Lee would not surrender to Garrett
- Garrett had publicly threaten to kill Oliver
- Murder trial moved to Hillsboro NM
- Oliver Lee tried and acquitted.

### History Detective Resolves Mystery

- Three letters found in Rochas cabin after his death had clues
- Written in French dated 23 Dec 1894
- One to a brother another to a sister
- A letter was to Quintos Monier the contractor that built Chapel in Sante Fe
- News of Rochas death noted in newspaper by Monier
- Jan 1895 newspaper article stated Rochas had built the spiral staircase

## Daily New Mexican Newspaper

5 Jan 1895

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...turner action by the court. Messrs.  
Childers & Dobson represent the Postal  
company and Catron & Speiss the West-  
ern Union.

A letter from Las Cruces to Mr. Quin-  
tus Monier, of date yesterday, states that  
Frank Rochas was found dead at his  
ranch house near La Luz, a few days ago.  
His friends believe that he was assassi-  
nated, as previous attempts have been  
made. He was a Frenchman, and was  
favorably known in Santa Fe as an ex-  
pert worker in wood. He build the  
handsome stair-case in the Loretto  
chapel and at St. Vincent sanitarium.

**Don't Tobacco Spit or Smoke Your  
Life Away.**

Is the truthful, startling title of a book  
about No-To-Bac, the harmless, guaranteed  
tobacco habit cure that braces up nicot-  
inized nerves, eliminates the nicotine

• Questions??

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