



Gen. Braxton Bragg and Two Texas Ghost Stories

Norman Dasinger, Jr., August 7, 2020

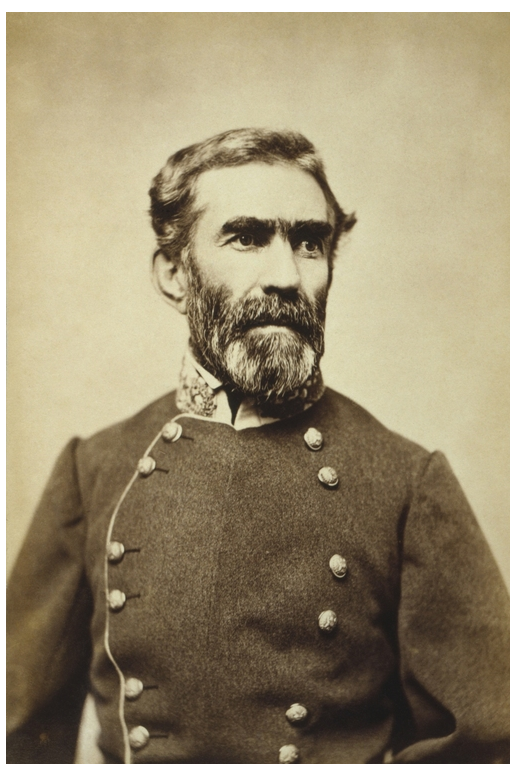
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Braxton Bragg grew up in North Carolina. The rumor was that his mother was in prison for killing a free Black man, and she gave birth to him there.

Young Braxton was a smart boy. He managed to get to the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, and he graduated fifth in the 1837 class. He served bravely in the Mexican War and returned to his hometown a hero receiving cheers from the very people that had maligned him for his family history while growing up

Soon, he met the daughter of a rich Louisiana sugar cane plantation owner, Eliza Ellis. They were married, and Bragg decided to leave the army. He resigned and moved to Thibodaux and bought a 1,600-acre sugar cane plantation of his own. He used his superior talents of organization to make the endeavor profitable

When Louisiana seceded from the United States, Bragg was made a brigadier general in the new Confederate States Army and commanded the Department of West Florida headquartered in Pensacola. Following the battle of Shiloh, he was made a full general and given command of the Army of Tennessee. He led a campaign into Kentucky, and his soldiers fought at the battles of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and Chickamauga, Georgia. By December 1863, Bragg was removed from army command and given an advisory role in Richmond's War Department.



Braxton Bragg

On May 9, 1865, Bragg was captured near Monticello, Georgia, and upon his release he moved into his brother's house in Lowndesboro, Alabama. His plantation in Louisiana was gone—having been made into a Freedmen's Bureau Colony. He tried to be an insurance salesman and pondered the offer to join the Egyptian Army in 1870. Finally, in 1871, he took a job as the head engineer for Alabama's Port Authority in Mobile. He grew tired of the bureaucracy of state government and took a job with the Gulf, Colorado and Sante Fe Railroad in Texas in 1874. Ultimately he was made chief inspector of all railroads in Texas.

On September 27, 1876, he was walking down a street with a friend in Galveston when he collapsed from a massive heart attack and was dead within minutes.

There is a long-time legend that on the very spot he collapsed and on the anniversary of his death, a golden orb of light hangs over the ground. The locals call it "Bragg's Light."

Also, to honor the man, the railroad company he worked for named a new town after him in 1901, called Bragg. Today, that former rail line is now a desolate county road and folks periodically see a moving light that appears at different locations along the former rail line. This phenomenon, near Saratoga, Texas, is called the "Bragg Road Ghost Light" and has become a popular tourist attraction in Hardin County.

The legend of Confederate General Bragg lives today among the Ghost Stories of Texas.



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