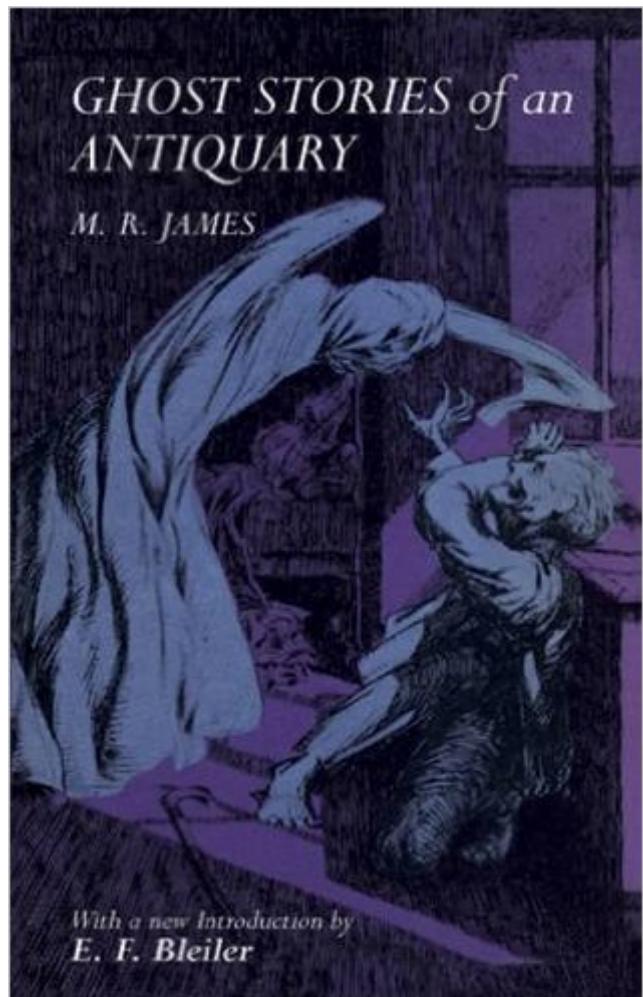


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Ghost Stories Of An Antiquary



Synopsis

In the twentieth-century literature of the supernatural, the single most important book, in the opinion of most scholars and enthusiasts, is *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary*, by Montague Rhodes James. First printed in 1904, it is the landmark book that established the modern horror story. It has been reprinted more times than any other book in this field, and it contains several of the best ghost stories in the English language. The antiquary here is M. R. James, Provost of Eton, one of the most formidable scholars that England has ever produced, who has drawn upon an unmatched knowledge of the hidden byways of the past to form a series of inimitable stories. Among them are such favorites as "Number Thirteen," "Canon Alberic's Scrap-book," and "Oh, Whistle, and I'll Come to You, My Lad." Common to all of them is the breath of "the evil that dieth not but lieth in wait." This edition reprints for the first time in recent years the four original illustrations that James McBride prepared while James was working on this, his first collection.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The ghost stories of M.R. James (MRJ) are widely considered to be the best supernatural literature ever written. "*Ghost Stories of an Antiquary*" was his first collection of short stories to be published (Arnold 1904) and is a fine introduction to this chilling, scholarly author. However, you might want to spend a bit more money and buy the "*The Penguin Complete Ghost Stories of M.R. James*." If you completely succumb to the refined but potent horror of this author's writings, only "*A Pleasing Terror*" (Ash Tree Press 2001) will then do. This book contains all of MRJ's supernatural literature, including story fragments that were never completed, biographies, bibliographies, commentary, and

his fantasy novelette, "The Five Jars." "Ghost Stories of an Antiquary" consists of the following stories: "Canon Alberic's Scrap-book"--The original title for this story was 'A Curious Book,' and it is one of 'the' classical MRJ invocations of a scholar who unwittingly opens the wrong book and pays horribly for his misadventure. This story and the following "Lost Hearts" were originally read aloud at an 1897 meeting of the Cambridge Chitchat Society, a literary gathering which met for "the promotion of rational conversation." "Lost Hearts"--This story is unusual for MRJ in that the ghosts participate in an actual physical assault on the villain who had murdered them. It is narrated in the third person by a little boy who is orphaned and goes to live with his elderly cousin at Aswarby Hall (an actual estate in Lincolnshire, now largely demolished). Slowly he begins to realize that there were two other children who had lived with his cousin before him.

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