

HAUNTED CANADA II

FRIGHTENING TRUE TALES

JOEL A.
SUTHERLAND

Illustrations by
Steven P. Hughes

Scholastic Canada Ltd.
Toronto New York London Auckland Sydney
Mexico City New Delhi Hong Kong Buenos Aires

Scholastic Canada Ltd.

604 King Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5V 1E1, Canada

Scholastic Inc.

557 Broadway, New York, NY 10012, USA

Scholastic Australia Pty Limited

PO Box 579, Gosford, NSW 2250, Australia

Scholastic New Zealand Limited

Private Bag 94407, Botany, Manukau 2163, New Zealand

Scholastic Children's Books

Euston House, 24 Eversholt Street, London NW1 1DB, UK

www.scholastic.ca

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Title: Haunted Canada 11 : frightening true tales / Joel A. Sutherland ;
illustrations by Steven P. Hughes.

Other titles: Haunted Canada eleven

Names: Sutherland, Joel A., 1980- author. | Hughes, Steven P., 1989- illustrator.

Identifiers: Canadiana (print) 20210271612 | Canadiana (ebook) 20210271779 |

ISBN 9781443187534 (softcover) | ISBN 9781443187527 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Ghosts—Canada—Juvenile literature. |

LCSH: Haunted places—Canada—Juvenile literature.

Classification: LCC BF1472.C3 S988 2022 | DDC j133.10971—dc23

Cover photos ©: Matthew Troke/Shutterstock; Joe Prachatree/Shutterstock.

Illustrations by Steven P. Hughes.

Text copyright © 2022 by Joel A. Sutherland.

Illustrations copyright © 2022 by Scholastic Canada Ltd.

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording, or otherwise, without written permission of the publisher, Scholastic Canada Ltd., 604 King Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5V 1E1, Canada. In the case of photocopying or other reprographic copying, a licence must be obtained from

Access Copyright (Canadian Copyright Licensing Agency),

www.accesscopyright.ca or 1-800-893-5777.

6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in Canada 119

22 23 24 25 26





THE TALL MAN

North Wiltshire, Prince Edward Island

“It’s superstition,” the townsfolk said with laughter. “Nothing but a bunch of nonsense.” The Irish immigrants who had built their family log cabin in North Wiltshire, about twenty-two kilometres west of Charlottetown, must have been mistaken. There was no way the home was haunted.

But the family claimed to hear disturbing things coming from one particular bedroom every night. Footsteps, and dragging, scraping, crashing sounds. No one dared sleep in that room. In fact the family opened the door as infrequently as possible. But after each noisy, restless night, they’d discover that something had moved all of the room’s furniture and strewn objects about the small space.

This went on every night for years and the family grew increasingly tired — both from their lack of sleep and from being laughed at. So they offered their skeptical neighbours a challenge: Don't believe us? Then spend a night.

When push came to shove, only two people were brave enough to accept. They spent the evening talking before going to bed a little past 11 p.m., assuming they'd have a lovely, uninterrupted sleep, thereby confirming that the room in the log cabin wasn't haunted. They turned out the lights and laid down in bed. Before they fell asleep, things began to happen.

The sheets were yanked off the bed, leaving them exposed and feeling vulnerable. A couple of chairs slid noisily across the floor. Then their bed began spinning in circles as quickly as a playground merry-go-round. As soon as they could, they leapt out of the rotating bed, got dressed, and ran out of the house, convinced that superstition had played no part in the family's claims that their house was haunted.

The family couldn't stand living in the house they'd built anymore. They moved out. It didn't take long for the new owners to discover that the house they had purchased was haunted. They experienced all the same disturbances in the bedroom, and Bill, the father of the family, caught sight of the ghost that had before remained unseen. He was tall, lean and haggard, and when he smiled there wasn't a tooth to be seen in his mouth. Bill and his family remained for the time being, but like the first family before them, they seldom ventured into the room and no one ever slept in there.

One night when Bill was home alone, an old friend came for a visit. With a small knot in his stomach, Bill gave up his bedroom for his friend and retired to the haunted room. He was a little hesitant but not outright afraid. After all, the ghost had never hurt him before, and Bill didn't think the tall man ever would.

Bill soon found out how wrong he was. He closed the door, laid down, and blew out the candle on the bedside table. The room was plunged into a darkness so absolute he could hardly see his hand before his face. Before he fell asleep, someone yanked his blankets. He gripped them tightly and fought back as best as he could but, despite being very strong, he was overpowered. The blankets were stripped clean off the bed and tossed somewhere into the darkness. Bill sat up, struck a match, and lit the candle. Someone blew it out with a cold, icy breath. Bill lit it a second and a third time, both times with the same result.

Bill sat statue-still in bed, shivering against the chill of the night, giving his eyes time to adjust to the darkness on their own. After some time he spied the blankets balled up in the corner of the room. Although he didn't love the thought of jumping out of bed and racing through the room while the ghost was hiding somewhere in the shadows, he also didn't want to freeze to death. If he ran fast enough, perhaps he could outrun the ghost.

As soon as his feet touched the ground the ghost attacked him. The tall, gangly spirit lifted Bill up into the air and threw him onto the bed as if he were nothing but a ragdoll. Before Bill had time to act or even think, the

ghost pounced on him. Bill struggled to breathe. He felt like he was being crushed. He fought back, but not for long. The ghost grabbed Bill's neck with his long, bony fingers and squeezed. Stars exploded before Bill's eyes, his heart pounded in his ears, and everything faded to black as he lost consciousness.

Although he had come close enough to death to reach out and touch it, the townsfolk found him wandering around town early the next morning. He was naked and wrapped in one of the blankets — the ghost had apparently stolen his clothing some time after the attack. Tears ran freely out of Bill's eyes as he uttered nonsense and sobbed. Whenever anyone approached to help he flinched and ran away whimpering.

Eventually he was able to share the story of what had happened to him that night, but neither friends nor family were able to convince Bill to enter the old log home again. He wandered across the island until he was never seen again. Some say he purposefully walked into a mill pond until he was completely submerged, and he never walked back out. But whatever came of poor Bill, his family couldn't continue living in the log cabin. They set it on fire and watched as it burned to the ground, hopeful the flames would also consume the tall ghost who had robbed them of their husband and father.