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Accounts of Personal Phenomena
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A Child's Ghost

The Experience of Living in a Haunted House

In the mid 1970s, Christine, our young daughter Brigitte, and I moved to a 150-year-old farmhouse in the village of North Shrewsbury in Vermont's Green Mountains. It was a beautiful, historic house that coincidentally had been built in 1867 by a man named Moses LeFevre, who was buried in the cemetery near the house.



At the time, I was working as a reporter at the Rutland Daily Herald in the city of Rutland, 12 miles away. I'd been on an assignment for the paper when I learned of the house in Shrewsbury available for rent, along with the surrounding 250 acres. The house had been a parsonage for many years, but the current elderly minister and his wife decided they could no longer live in it, and the parishioners did not want the house to sit empty. The rent was only \$150 a month, and I wondered why such a great property would rent for so little. I soon found out.

The house was haunted. Saying an old house in New England is haunted is definitely a cliché, but our 16 months in that house left nothing to the imagination.

Brigitte was four years old, and Christine became pregnant after we moved into the old parsonage. From the outset, we heard small feet running in an upstairs bedroom and hallway. We were able to isolate most of the activity as coming from a small bedroom with a wood-plank door, which was held closed by an old-fashioned thumb latch.

I often made sure at night that the room's door was closed and firmly latched. And by morning the door would be open, which could only happen if the thumb latch had been pressed and the door pushed open.

Often, during daylight hours, we clearly heard a child's voice calling for "Momma." This happened so frequently we learned to not confuse the ghost child's voice with our own daughter's voice. The ghost voice was so audible that when my mother briefly visited us from Michigan, she too heard the calls for Mommy and mistook the voice for Brigitte being nearby. My mother was bewildered when she realized Brigitte was not in the kitchen with her and we explained the suspected origin of the child's voice.

A disturbing fact was that I worked at the Herald for much of the day and often well into the night, leaving Christine and Brigitte alone in the parsonage a dozen miles up the side of a mountain, with few other houses within walking distance.

Other manifestations we experienced of a darker nature included a deep chill that occurred spontaneously in various parts of the house. The cold in houses with ghosts is a singular sensation, in keeping with the phrase "bone chilling." Visitors told us several times they'd felt the cold envelop them from out of nowhere. Friends sometimes spoke of a distressing sense of discomfort when visiting the house.

A series of unusual events resulted in us learning more about the little girl haunting the parsonage. Back in Michigan, Christine's youngest sister Sally — still in high school — encountered a Spiritualist medium who described in some detail the Vermont house, which Sally had visited one time.

The medium went on to explain that a little girl living in the house many years ago had witnessed her mother drown in a body of water near the house, and the little girl herself died soon after of typhoid fever. The medium said the little girl's spirit was trapped in the house. During the period we lived in the house, there was a rushing creek visible from the front of the house, and years earlier there had been a sizable reservoir just across the road. (Photo below)



Our stay in the Shrewsbury parsonage did not end happily. Christine's pregnancy culminated with our baby being stillborn. That night, Brigitte narrowly escaped serious harm when her

clothing caught fire at the home of friends who were babysitting her while Christine and I were at the Rutland hospital. The night of the death, Christine witnessed a frightening apparition in her hospital room, perhaps a result of medication, perhaps not. And I went back to the parsonage alone to experience a night of unearthly noises that filled the house, not one of which will I ever forget.

Soon we were able to buy a small house and move to a nearby town. Some months later, the local church hired a young minister. He and his family were excited about moving into the old parsonage. And about a year after that, we learned the new minister's family had experienced the little girl's ghost, had tried to communicate with her, became frightened, and moved out of the house soon afterward.