

# HAUNTED HOUSE IS SCOUT DISCOVERY

Thrilling Story Is Based on  
the Incident.

## SCENE LAID AT OTISCO

Assistant Scoutmaster of Fayetteville Troop Weaves Fascinating Tale About Incidents Connected With Troop's Recent Night Hike.

One of the first requirements in a scout leader is the ability to tell good stories around the camp fires. All scoutmasters and campmasters try with varying degrees of success to interest their boys in the hero tales of history and legend for the purpose of instilling in the youthful minds to imitate the deeds of the great men of past ages.

Many otherwise lonely evenings around the campfires in a scout camp have been livened by the narration of tales of particular interest to boys. Stories of local happenings in which the characters are known to the scouts vie with the historic and heroic tales of England, Germany and the Northland.

A story founded on facts connected with an exploration trip to the woods near Otisco lake, taken by boys of Troop No. 1, Fayetteville scouts, is told by Assistant Scoutmaster Stephen H. Porter of the troop. It is as follows:

Who will believe me when I say that on the shore of Otisco lake stands a haunted house?

Two weeks ago I scoffed at the idea myself, but I have since found and explored from top to bottom, an old mansion which I verily believe to be inhabited by spirits from the nether realm.

### House in Dense Woods.

It was while I was with a number of scouts on a cross-country hike a week ago that we stumbled upon the place, a large rambling house situated quite near the water, and surrounded by dense woods. Across the front of the mansion extends a long living room, back of which a narrow hall runs the length of the house. Five rooms open into the hall.

Behind the fireplace in the living room we discovered a small room which had no openings save a small window in one wall and a trap door in the ceiling. A number of rooms on the second floor open onto large verandas, no one of which can be seen from another, and on the verandas we found tiny rooms locked and bolted, just large enough for a man to stand up within.

After exploring the second story we looked for stairs to the third but could find none. Quite disappointed, we started to descend when my hand suddenly came in contact with a button on the railing and immediately a trap door opened and a gangplank descended from the third story to the second.

At that moment we heard wierd noises issuing from the lower part of the house and we hurried down to investigate. The sounds seemed to come from under the broad porch in front, so we all scrambled under the edge.

There we found a deep black pit. Two of the boys climbed down into it. When the second boy's head had disappeared below the edge of the pit we heard him cry out, "Give us the flash light. Where the—?" We heard no more, and while we waited horror stricken, an arm rose out of the depths of the pit, beckoned and disappeared.

The smaller boys turned and ran. Those of us who remained thought the vision to have been a trick and we intended to expose it if possible. Slipping over the edge of the hole we landed on a pile of stones. We felt our way around the walls and were soon surprised to see another mysterious door open before us. I went through alone and found myself in a narrow winding tunnel. I had proceeded only a few feet when I stumbled over a body and for a moment I was paralyzed with fear. Turning the form over I made out the features of one of the boys. At that moment something struck me on the back of the head and I fell unconscious to the floor.

### Other Boys Gagged.

When I came to my senses the body was gone. I raised myself painfully and staggered on until I came to the end of the tunnel. It opened at the end of a stone wall, some distance to the rear of the house. There at the entrance to the passage way lay the other boys, bound and gagged, and quite unconscious. I cut them loose and chaffed their limbs until they were revived.

We struck out through the woods as fast as our legs would carry us and reached camp just before midnight. There we found the other boys in a state of great excitement. They said that on reaching the camp they saw a light green skiff floating slowly down the lake. The boat appeared entirely empty and as they watched, colored lights shot upward from it and falling back danced upon the water, finally disappearing.

And so the tale ends, and if there be any incredulous person to scoff at it I can only say, "Let him go see for himself."