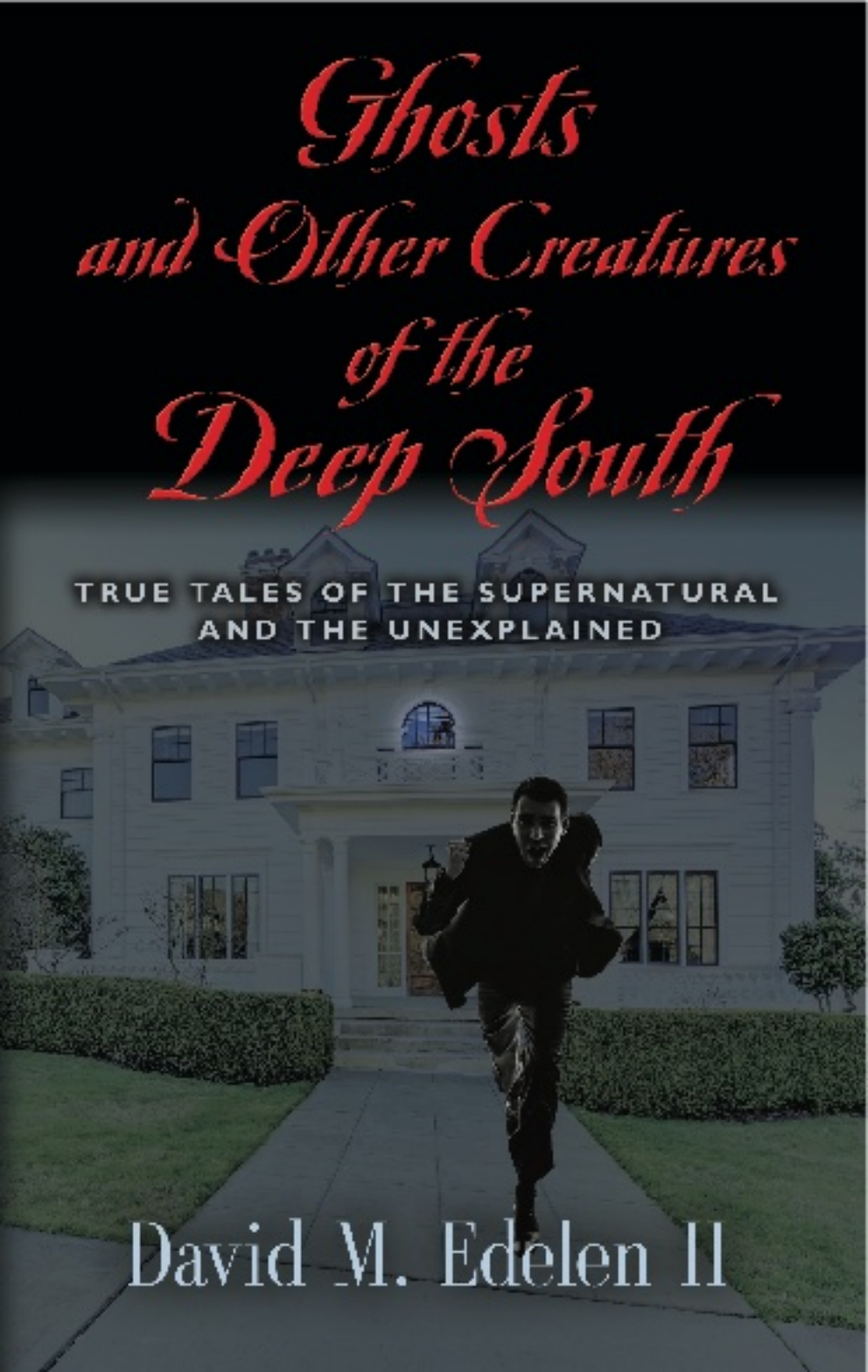
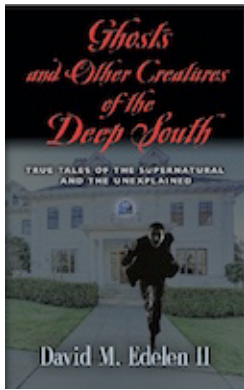


*Ghosts  
and Other Creatures  
of the  
Deep South*

TRUE TALES OF THE SUPERNATURAL  
AND THE UNEXPLAINED

A man in a dark jacket and pants is running away from a large, two-story white house at night. The house has a prominent front porch with columns and a central arched window. The man is running on a paved walkway that leads to the porch. The scene is dimly lit, with some light coming from the house's windows and a street lamp near the porch. The overall atmosphere is dark and mysterious.

David M. Edelen II



*Some of these stories happened to the author David Middleton Edelen II and his family members. To the best of the author's knowledge, these true paranormal stories told to the author by friends and associates are purported to be true experiences of those people also. Some names and place names have been omitted to protect their privacy. The book begins with a story about an occurrence that happened to the author, and in which the author experienced a most hair raising and frightening experience. The rest are stories that happened to the author interspersed with the stories related to the author by others. These stories range from the first frightful episode to various types of experiences that happened to the author and his friends and associates. They range from out and out ghost stories to eerie sounds and smells, to things moving around in a seemingly empty room. Some are pertaining to strange, eerie, seemingly unnatural and/or unearthly animals and other creatures that can not be explained. The books ends up with a story wthat takes place within the author's home, which he and members of his immediate family have experienced there as of late...*

# **Ghosts and Other Creatures of the Deep South**

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# **Ghosts and Other Creatures of the Deep South**

True Tales of the Supernatural and the  
Unexplained!

David Middleton Edelen II

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Second Edition

## The Little People of Bear Creek Swamp!

This story is not about ghosts or spirits or any other supernatural disturbances or entities. It is about an evidently perfectly natural creature, or creatures, long able to remain hidden from prying human eyes and virtually unknown to most throughout the ages but to a few fortunate enough to have gotten a glimpse of them.

Throughout history there have been reported sightings of strange beings in the world: bigfoot, the snowman of the Himalayas, yeti, ghosts, spirits and goblins, werewolves, vampires, and of course the little people, leprechauns, elves, fairies, etc. The following episode is pertaining to the latter group, the little people. There have been sightings and chance meetings with these beings throughout history in many lands.

Little people, fairies, leprechauns, why does the thought of them fascinate so many of us? Is it some subliminal or subconscious knowledge or just mere interest? When the author was a child, even then having a fascination with the little people, while playing with a friend and siblings, they asked a Ouija board if there were indeed fairies and little people in the world. The little triangular game piece that you keep your fingertips on finally slid to “Yes”! Now whether or not it was the board or spirits that did that or the children playing the game doing it subconsciously, it went to “Yes.” The author remembers that he did not pull or push on it, but kept as light a touch on it as possible,

and felt it pull away. It did indeed feel like the thing was moving on its own volition.

As far as sightings go, most reported sightings have been made and/or seen in the British Isles for some reason, although they have been occasionally seen and reported here and there in about every corner of the world. The author recently read a very interesting book called *Fairies: Real Encounters with Little People*, by Janet Bord, a serious little book covering documented, reported sightings of fairies, elves, and little people throughout history up to the present. Janet Bord has also written many other books, such as *Ancient Mysteries of Britain*, *Atlas of Magical Britain*, *The Secret Country*, also by Janet and Colin Bord. This author has corresponded with Janet Bord and found her to be a very nice, interesting, and most courteous person. She was very interested in the story of the “Little People of Bear Creek Swamp.”

Anyway, America is no exception; Native Americans have tales and legends about little people that date way back. Indeed, on one of the documentary-type channels on TV a while back there was a documentary about them. In fact, one of the stories covered was the mummified remains of a little man about 12 to 18 inches tall that was found in a cave out in the southwestern U.S. somewhere. It was taken and photographed, X-Rayed, and had some other tests run on it, and was indeed proved to be that of some sort of little manlike creature, not a monkey, human fetus, baby, or anything like that. It was some sort of tiny man or person. It looked sort of misshapen, but X-Rays

showed that the poor thing's head had been caved in and its skull crushed by a blow from above.

If the author remembers correctly due to Native American complaints about desecration, etc., it was put back in the cave and the cave was sealed up. What was the little creature? Or better yet, who was he, what sort of life had he led, what sort of people had he come from? Was he a rare deformity, an offspring of normal human parents? Or was he a member of a strange and lost race of tiny little people? Fascinating, utterly fascinating!

Now then, the sightings that this story deals with also took place in the U.S., in Prattville, Autauga County, Alabama, no less, and deals with two supposedly reported sightings out in the Bear Creek Swamp area.

The first sighting that the author remembers or ever heard about took place back in the late 1960s or early 1970s. The author well remembers the talk at that time. Now the author can't remember if it was in the newspaper or on TV, or both. When the author first heard of it, or heard the first of these two episodes, he was just a young buck, but remembers the talk well, the tale being common knowledge, although there are some that have never heard anything about any "Little People" out there and laugh at it. But there are some who know!

The story goes that an elderly couple had taken their garbage out to the "Dipsty-Dumpsters" that were at that time situated on Bear Creek Swamp road for country folk to get rid of their garbage. They were

located along the road, which passed through the swamp, and the dumpsters being close to or not far from an “overflowing well” (artesian well), just a ways down the dirt road near the swamp. The road is a dirt road that is two or three miles long that connects two highways, Highway 82 on one end and Highway 14 on the other. It winds through woods and old growth forests with huge beautiful trees all along the road, a couple of fields or pastures with just two or three houses out there, and of course part of this is a swamp called Bear Creek Swamp, it being filled with huge and beautiful Cypress trees.

Most of this dirt road remains in shade and shadows much of the time as it is bordered by huge old trees, especially in the swampy area where the trees are laden with Spanish moss as well. At night the author can think of no darker, more dismal place than that road. Indeed, the author having been left stranded in the middle of it by some tricky friends when they stopped the car and he got out for something back when they were all teenagers, the author had stood there until the taillights were gone and there was no sound, except that of nature. He could not see his hand in front of his face in that primeval darkness! At times the night was laden with the sounds of crickets, tree frogs, bull frogs, and other nocturnal creatures. But in a moment’s notice all would suddenly be so quiet even the silence was heavy, with an occasional sound of some stealthy movement, rustle, or plopping emanating from the depths of the woods and swamp. Indeed, there is no telling what might dwell in such a place! The whole thing from end



to end used to be rather primeval looking lined as it was with its old growth forests, fields, ponds, and swamps, but in recent days the paper company and/or the land owners have been clear-cutting the forests out there. How sad! So much of that area, with its natural thick forests, are just desolate, clear-cut ruins now thanks to the land owners and paper companies!

Near where these trash dumpsters were located there was (and still is) the little artesian well, just a simple little pipe poking up out of the ground with forever flowing water flowing out of it. Older folks call them overflowing wells, although a lot of folks know them as artesian wells. Those old wells, or pipes, continually flow with good, clear, clean, sweet tasting, cold water year around! With the dumpsters located there and the overflowing well not far from them it would indeed seem to be the perfect spot for various creatures and scavengers to congregate, a constant supply of fresh water and food scraps at all times there.

Around about right after daylight in the cool of the morning this elderly couple went there to throw their garbage away. They pulled up and parked their car and got out. Each grabbing a trash bag or two, and enjoying the cool of the morning, they walked up to the dumpsters and tossed their trash bags over into the dumpsters. According to them, at the moment that they tossed their trash bags over into the dumpsters, a bunch of little tiny people around 18" or maybe two feet tall that had evidently been hiding from them in the dumpsters suddenly jumped and climbed out of the dumpsters and went scampering off into the woods.

Startled and scared witless, the old couple ran to their car and took off for town. The whole episode had upset the couple so bad that one of them had to go to the hospital for a possible heart seizure or something. That story was all over town in those days. The author has wondered ever since then about that story, what's out there in the Bear Creek Swamp area, or if it's even true. But what follows next sort of verified it in the author's opinion. The second story occurred in more recent years. One day four or five years ago the author was riding around Prattville in his car with the radio playing. It was on a Montgomery radio station (Montgomery is 15 miles from Prattville). About that time the news came on and what they said instantly caught the attention of the author. For it verified in a way what he had always wondered about pertaining to the first story, whether or not there was anything to it. The news broadcaster told of a young 19-year-old college student that recently reported that, being home from school or something and while riding around, he had taken Bear Creek Swamp Road as a short cut over to the other highway. Many people go out of their way to take this route because of its quiet solitude and its shady beauty. When he rode through the area where the swamp and the fountain is (the dumpsters are long gone), he said he had seen a bunch of little people who were perhaps two feet tall at the most. The radio station said the young man had reported it to local law enforcement.

The author has ridden through Bear Creek Swamp many, many times during his life, especially since those

reported sightings, and even sat for some time out there, and has never seen anything, much to his disappointment naturally. But the author still believes there is something to it; that there is something out there, whether it is truly little people or some lost tribe of monkeys remains to be seen! Something has to be out there: With sightings many years apart by different people totally different in age, walks of life, etc., tells anyone with common sense that there is something out there!

The author recently went down to the Autauga County Sheriff's Dept and asked about it. There were three ladies working in the front desk/office area. He told them about the reported sightings and that he was researching them, and wanted to find the original reports to glean any more info they might hold from them. One or two, obviously tickled, tried to remain serious as they talked to him, saying they knew nothing about it, but the third lady openly rolled her eyes and laughed at the author. Columbus was laughed at too when he said the world was round!

An officer the author knew personally and who is an old friend, the author's wife's uncle in fact, came in while this was going on. When told of what the author wanted he laughed and jokingly said, "You ought not to be coming down here asking such ridiculous questions about such nonsense or else they're going to have to lock you up in their padded room." Ignoring all of that the author just laughed along with them.

Then one of the ladies said there was a young officer on duty that had grown up out there in the Bear

Creek/Autaugaville area. They finally called in a deputy that was from Autaugaville, a community out not too far from Bear Creek Swamp. He did not laugh at the author. In a serious way he informed the author, and the humorous ladies, that although he nor anyone he knew had ever seen anything out there, or even necessarily believed in them, that they also had all heard stories of little people out there all of their lives. He said that the stories date back as far as he knew at least to the turn of the century and probably back to Native Americans.

So at least we know that there are others that have heard of those little people in Bear Creek Swamp. That means that in order to have such stories that somewhere back in the years others must have seen them as well. What on earth are these little people? Are they actual tiny people? There are many legends around the world about such things, and Native Americans had theirs as well. Could they be real or possibly some strange, secretive, manlike little monkey or something? If there are indeed such little people, it would be so neat to make contact with them. But of course we all know that if they were found or contact was made it would then be a matter of time before their little world would be turned upside down by unscrupulous people who would exploit them, caring nothing for them or their right to live their lives as God and nature intended them to. Between the paper companies and land owners, much of those fine old forests have already been destroyed out there, and indeed over much of Alabama. That is a shame, as much of Alabama's old hardwood forests

have been destroyed and replaced by pine forests for the paper companies.

## Werewolf or Bigfoot?

The following strange and eerie story was related to the author several years ago after church one day by a friend and fellow church member that lives on a dirt road outside of Prattville, Alabama. The author has known him since school days, back in the late '60s and early '70s. He has become a regular church member and is a serious type of man, not given to lying to someone or stretching the truth. When he related this story to the author he was in deadly earnest and so was his wife! When asked about it a few years later he emphatically declared that the story was true, re-relating it to the author.

According to him, late one night he and his wife were relaxing in their living room watching TV or what have you. The moon was out and the yard and the surrounding woods were bathed in its silvery glow. Dead leaves and small debris were skitting across the yard in the wind, darting this way and that way, dancing around in the cool autumn breeze, followed by leaves drifting down from the trees and woods. The trees and other growth looked dark and ominous, the shadows and areas not bathed in moonlight standing out darkly in stark contrast in the moonlight.

While thus chilling out and relaxing there came to their ears the tell tale sounds of some varmint, a stray dog or cat, or some other such pest, rooting through their trash can, which was on their porch outside the kitchen door. Naturally they thought that it more than

likely was a stray dog or cat, or a raccoon or possum or some other such natural animal. They figured it might even be a coyote, which Alabama is infested with now.

But what happened next scared them half to death and filled them with awe and wonder, proving that it was anything but natural! When they glanced through the kitchen at the outer kitchen door what they saw made them wonder! Through the window in the kitchen door they saw with growing wonder a creature of some sort that was built more or less like a giant dog or wolf. What they saw proved their suspicions of a dog alright, its hind quarters and rear legs being that of some sort of huge canine. But what struck them as so odd and eerie was the pure size of this “dog”! It was apparently standing up on its hind legs as it stood there and was bending down and leaning over to dig in their large trash can. It was almost the size of a man’s hips and legs as far as the height and more or less size of the creature goes. But it was definitely the rear hips and legs of a large canine of some sort, covered with rippling bands of muscles and sparse, course, ratty, matted hair. It was huge. The upper portion of the creature was hidden from their view out of sight behind the upper or side portion of the kitchen door’s window or frame around it.

Of course about this time they got up from the living room or den chairs and went into the kitchen, running up stomping the floor, as they approached the outer kitchen door to run this pest off. As they approached the door, watching through the door’s window, they stomped their feet again and hollered in

an effort to try and scare whatever it was off. It was then that the huge “dog” twisted its torso, and bending down peered in the window at them. What they saw made their hair stand on end and their blood freeze for an instant. For what stooped there peering in the window at them for a second or two was no a dog at all, but some sort of a horrible, totally evil looking creature as tall as a man or even taller, with a doggish, ape-like face, a large nose and snout full of teeth and fangs, big pointed ears with tufts of hair poking up from them, and with large, slanted yellow eyes that glowered at them. It seemed that those glowing yellow eyes were lit from within by some unholy glow.

They screamed and hollered at it and stomped their feet in an effort to scare it off. The creature, still standing upright, made a few steps around on the porch for a moment or two, still looking back at them with those horrible eyes. They could hear its claws scratching and clicking on the floor as it did so. Finally it turned and jumped off the porch, and looking back at them one last time, the creature then turned and loped across the yard and into the woods, still on its hind legs. They had watched intently with both fascination and horror as it had moved around on the porch, noticing with fear and consternation that it had some sort of strange foot that had what appeared to be only three big toes with big hooked claws on them. They stared spellbound as this abominable creature walked around and up and down the porch on its hind legs still, glowering at them through the window, then finally hopped off the porch and began to lope off.



When the author asked his friend and the friend's wife to describe it further, they said, "It looked almost like what you hear Sasquatches or werewolves look like, that to put it in a nutshell, it really looked almost exactly like one of the werewolves from the Stephen King movie, *The Howling*. They said that it had scared the wits out of them. What was even more strange and eerie was the fact that it stood around and walked around on its hind legs as agile as a man does, and then ran on its hind legs all the way across the yard, and as it entered the tree line or edge of the nearby woods, it was then that it finally dropped down to all fours and disappeared into the woods. The friend said that he has never felt comfortable going outside after dark since that night.

As the author drove home after hearing the tale, he could not help but chuckle at the thought of his friend getting home after dark from work or some other errand, and glancing to and fro keeping an eye on the surroundings, darting with a few quick, furtive steps into the house. The author well knows that wicked feeling that something is right behind you and might well be quick on your heels! It can be amusing, comical and downright funny to see someone else, a friend or family member, getting scared and jumpy, the heebie-jeebies. But when it happens to one's self, it is anything but amusing!

Again, there is no telling what sort of creatures live in the deep recesses of mountains and forests of this world! The strange and eerie creatures of this world have learned to keep out of the way of humans, only

coming out in times of need or desperation. Or when on the hunt!

## The Cotton Mill Lady and the Maintenance Man!

The story of the “Cotton Mill Lady” or ghost is well known around Prattville, Alabama, and has been told, retold, and talked about beau coup times for generations, and has even been mentioned in a few newspaper and magazine articles and books. This is not an attempt to retell those stories, but is the personal story as told to the author by a former cotton mill maintenance man. But to those who may not be familiar with the stories of the Cotton Mill Lady, the author will make an attempt to familiarize them with it:

The old cotton mill was built by Prattville’s founder, Daniel Pratt, back before the War for Southern Independence, and sat along Court Street ending beside Autauga Creek where the sharp curve is where Court Street turns into Main Street, and across the creek from Daniel Pratt’s gin mill or gin shops. It was an impressive old building, or group of buildings, that were several stories high. The buildings, which were brick structures lying in a row end to end with several yards separating them, were connected by covered, enclosed, wood- frame walkways, and there were elevators in the buildings also. On each building there was a massive tower, almost sort of like a bell tower, widow’s walk, observatory, steeple, or something of that nature. During the daytime they were the haunts of pigeons, sparrows and other birds, but during the nighttime they and indeed the whole building structures

themselves had an altogether eerie appearance to them. It was said that occasionally a passerby could sometimes catch a glimpse of the ghostly “lady” as she wafted through one of the towers or by a window, or stood peering from the tower windows and apertures, or was seen drifting by one of the windows.

When the author was a young fellow in the Boy Scouts back in the late '60s, in “Troop 25” under Mr. Jered White (the county engineer), their meeting place, which was upstairs in another one of Prattville’s old buildings, was directly across the street from the cotton mill. Unfortunately it and the cotton mill no longer stands, the former being torn down to make room for something else and the latter being burned to the ground in 2002 because of errant teenagers in their playing around in it. It is a shame the ghostly lady did not make an appearance and thereby run them out of the building, preventing its destruction and loss to the community of a fine old historical structure.

But whenever the author and his fellow Scouts would take a break during their meetings and come down to the sidewalk, the chit- chatting would invariably turn to the cotton mill and its ghost! The author always heard several scenarios about that haunted old cotton mill. One was that a lady had her head torn off by one of the elevators years ago, and she is still looking for it. Another was that she had come bringing her son a lunch basket and had stepped into what she thought was the elevator, but the old door was open, and the elevator either above or below her, she had fallen into the open shaft. The other story was that a

fellow was killed by the elevator and his mom died of grief and her spirit is still looking for, or waiting for, her son, etc., etc. Either way, the troubled spirit of a lady supposedly haunted the buildings, during day and night, seen by many over the years, both employees and passersby. Many reported seeing her drifting silently down through the buildings, along the rows of machines, or riding the elevators in search of something. At times she supposedly frequented the towers. Many people reported seeing her ghostly face peering from a window in the building, gliding past it in the dark of the night, or peering from one of the tower apertures. The following account is of a face to face encounter with the “Lady” and an employee of the mill:

Once upon a time during a chance encounter with a fellow and the subsequent conversation the author learned that the fellow had at one time been a cotton mill maintenance man several years ago. His interest immediately perked, the author asked the man if he knew anything about the cotton mill ghost. While the author can't quite remember what the man said as to the origin of the ghost or the correct story about it, he does remember without a doubt how the man told how he knew all about the stories and in fact he had met the cotton mill ghost lady himself in a horrifying face to face encounter. When asked he said that he had come face to face with the ghostly specter when it had materialized out of thin air in a closed elevator...with him in it when she materialized! Of course the author, himself, brimming with excitement and anticipation, asked the man to tell his story. The fellow said that he

had heard all the stories and had spoken to several people and other employees that had seen the lady drifting by or down the building through the rows of yarn machinery, flitting through a darkened doorway, floating up stairs, into elevators, or simply standing at a window over the years. But none had the face to face experience he had had!

The man was making his rounds one day, after everyone else had gone for the day, making sure all was well before he left. Or perhaps it was on a Sunday when he had to come in and fix something. But he said hardly anyone was there. He had stepped into one of the old elevators to go down and leave. When the elevator had opened he had casually glanced within as most of us do when stepping onto an elevator, noting of course that it was empty, and then had stepped in, pushed the button to go to another floor. He stood patiently facing the door without another thought. While standing there in that old slow, rickety elevator, he suddenly got a chill up his spine, as if someone had suddenly opened a deepfreeze behind him. It suddenly dawned upon him that he felt a presence other than his own, a presence that had not been there a moment before. Without looking he knew, possibly from some hidden sense or instinct, that someone was standing behind him. With his skin crawling and the hair on the nape of his neck standing on end, he realized, since there had been no one in the elevator when he had stepped into it, that it could only be one person or being: The Cotton Mill Lady!

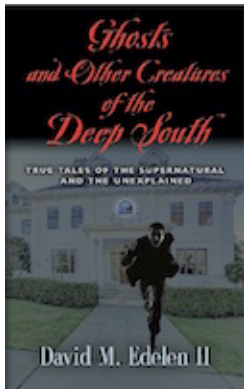
Mastering his fear and wits at the thought of her suddenly appearing in the closed elevator with him in it (and wondering why on earth it had to be him), he turned and looked over his shoulder. What he saw at first made his blood freeze and heart almost stop. At sight of what he saw he might very well have become “unhinged” if he had not gotten control of his fears. Lo and behold, standing not a foot behind him, and staring him straight in the eye, was the lady of the cotton mill! The cotton mill ghost herself! Most normal people would have become unglued right then and would have vacated their wits and senses about that time. But he, the master of his, having gained control of himself, partly for nothing else to do or say, simply said, “Well hello there!” The specter did not say a thing other than a quick hum or moan, and for all practical purposes, did not seem to notice or see him. For it was then that the man realized that she was not looking at him, staring him in the eye as he had at first thought, but it was almost like she was looking through him, or past him, like at some distant point.

He looked at her for a moment longer, and noticed that she was a typical woman, with her hair sort of done up but stringy and bedraggled, and her clothing was sort of older looking and nondescript. She was staring straight ahead with great, hollow, haunted, searching eyes with almost a questioning look in them. It was as if she was searching for something far ahead or on a distant plane or in a distant realm. He felt a moment of pity as he beheld those hollow, haunted orbs, with their melancholy and distant gaze and their innate sadness

and pain. But the elevator opened about that time and you can rest assured he all but ran as he scurried off of that elevator. He turned in time to see her sort of drift from the elevator and on up through the building and finally disappear through some dark doorway. His senses thoroughly shaken, the man decided to call it a day and go on home, rather hurriedly we might very well suppose!

So it appears the poor ol' soul that haunts (or haunted) the old cotton mill was really harmless, meaning no harm to anyone. She was simply a poor, dismal soul, lost in the pain and anguish of her own lost life or that of her loved one, spending eternity searching. One may wonder what does a lonely spirit like her that haunts a certain building or home do after that structure has burned to the ground or has otherwise been destroyed? Will she now be seen sooner or later drifting around in the new park or other structure that is being contemplated on being built on that spot? Perhaps we will see! But perhaps she can finally rest in God's bosom.





*Some of these stories happened to the author David Middleton Edelen II and his family members. To the best of the author's knowledge, these true paranormal stories told to the author by friends and associates are purported to be true experiences of those people also. Some names and place names have been omitted to protect their privacy. The book begins with a story about an occurrence that happened to the author, and in which the author experienced a most hair raising and frightening experience. The rest are stories that happened to the author interspersed with the stories related to the author by others. These stories range from the first frightful episode to various types of experiences that happened to the author and his friends and associates. They range from out and out ghost stories to eerie sounds and smells, to things moving around in a seemingly empty room. Some are pertaining to strange, eerie, seemingly unnatural and/or unearthly animals and other creatures that can not be explained. The books ends up with a story wthat takes place within the author's home, which he and members of his immediate family have experienced there as of late...*

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