



The House in the Picture
and **Abbot Thomas' Treasure**

M. R. James



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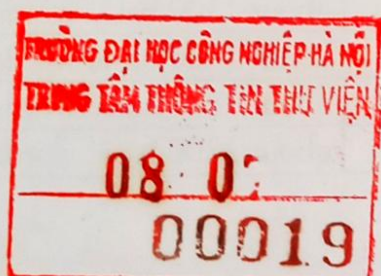
MACMILLAN READERS

BEGINNER LEVEL

M. R. JAMES

The House in the Picture *and* Abbot Thomas' Treasure

Retold by F. H. Cornish



MACMILLAN

Founding Editor: John Milne

The Macmillan Readers provide a choice of enjoyable reading materials for learners of English. The series is published at six levels – Starter, Beginner, Elementary, Pre-intermediate, Intermediate and Upper.

Level control

Information, structure and vocabulary are controlled to suit the students' ability at each level.

The number of words at each level:

Starter	about 300 basic words
Beginner	about 600 basic words
Elementary	about 1100 basic words
Pre-intermediate	about 1400 basic words
Intermediate	about 1600 basic words
Upper	about 2200 basic words

Vocabulary

Some difficult words and phrases in this book are important for understanding the story. Some of these words are explained in the story and some are shown in the pictures. From Pre-intermediate level upwards, words are marked with a number like this: ...³. These words are explained in the Glossary at the end of the book.

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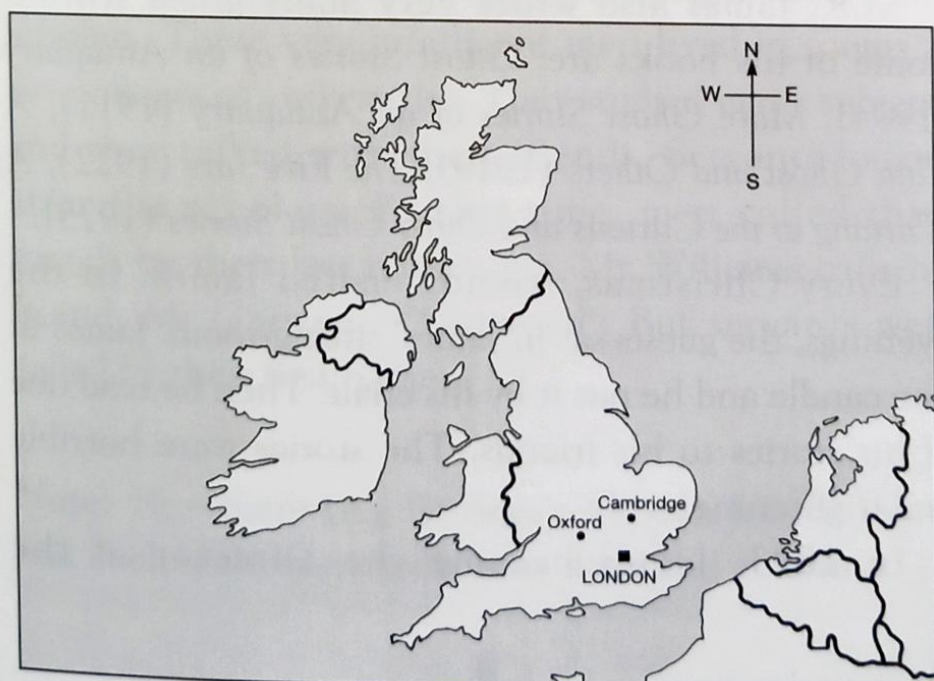
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A Note About the Author



M.R. James (Montague Rhodes James) was born on 1st August 1862. His family lived in a small village in Suffolk, in the eastern part of England. James' father worked in a church. He was a clergyman. M.R. James had two brothers and one sister.

M.R. James was very clever. From 1876 to 1882, he was a pupil at Eton. This is a famous school for boys. In 1882, James studied at King's College in Cambridge University.

M.R. James was interested in languages, religion, science and literature. He wrote about architecture. He studied the Bible. He wrote books about many things.

M.R. James also wrote very many ghost stories. Some of his books are: *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary* (1904), *More Ghost Stories of an Antiquary* (1911), *A Thin Ghost and Others* (1919), *The Five Jars* (1922), *A Warning to the Curious and Other Ghost Stories* (1925).

Every Christmas, friends visited James. In the evenings, the guests sat in James' sitting-room. James lit one candle and he put it by his chair. Then he read one of his stories to his friends. The stories were horrible and frightening!

In 1893, James became the Director of the

Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. From 1913, James was Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University. He worked very hard. Everybody liked him. In 1918 James became Provost of Eton. He loved his job at this school. M.R. James died on 12th June 1936. He was 74 years old.

A Note About These Stories

Times: 1895 and 1859.

Places: Oxford and other places in England.

These two stories were first published in 1904. They were in a book called *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary*. The first story, *The House in the Picture*, was called 'The Mezzotint'. The second story, *Abbot Thomas' Treasure*, was called 'The Treasure of Abbot Thomas'.

In the 1800s, the money in Britain was pounds (£), shillings (s) and pence (d). £1.1s.0d = 105p today.

M.R. James often wrote stories about gentlemen and scholars. These very intelligent men lived in rooms at the colleges of universities. They studied many subjects and they talked with their friends. Servants looked after the scholars. At this time, men called their friends by their last names, e.g. Mr Williams calls his friend, Mr Garwood, 'Garwood'. But servants were called by their first names.

Note: St = Saint (e.g. St Bega's Abbey). Job, St John and Zechariah, say: dʒeʊb, sənt 'dʒɒn and zekə'rɪə.

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