the PIONEER

Volume 5, No. 3: June 2018

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The Pioneer (bi-monthly) is now part of the recommended reading for the Spiritualists' National Union's education courses.

This history journal is presented using original researched material wherever possible. Articles and quotes are taken from original sources as they were published at the time and reproduced by optical character recognition (OCR), the conversion of scanned images of handwritten, typewritten or printed text into machine-encoded text. This means that grammar, old English, spelling mistakes, etc. are not usually changed. However, long paragraphs are sometimes split for easier reading; any errors or explanations needed are noted in footnotes.

Special thanks to Leslie Price and Charles Coulston for their work in sub-editing this issue

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All references to Psypioneer in this issue are archived at http://psypioneer.iapsop.com/

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VISIT TO THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

SNU President David Bruton, Arthur Findlay College tutor Janette (Jan) Marshall, and the editor of this journal were cheerfully welcomed by the Society for Psychical Research to their headquarters at Vernon Mews, London W14 0RL by SPR Secretary Peter Johnson, who has been the SPR's secretary since May 1999.

Peter introduced us to the former SPR President, Dr Richard Broughton, PhD, who is currently one of the Society's Vice-Presidents and Treasurer. Richard began his PhD in psychology at the University of Edinburgh, where he studied under Dr John Beloff in 1973; he also began his association with the SPR at this time.

We were further introduced to Claran Farrell BSc, GRSC. Claran was elected as a member of the SPR's Council in April 2017 and appointed as the Society's Data Protection Officer in November 2017.

After refreshments we enjoyed a guided tour and discussions on various topics relevant to our two organisations. An hour or so into our visit we were joined by the SPR President, Prof. John C. Poynton, MSc, PhD, OMS, who came from the Natural History Museum. John is a research associate of the Museum in London and a scientific fellow of the Zoological Society of London. John told us of his connections with South Africa, not just in zoology – he served on the council of the South African Society for Psychical Research. Later he joined the Council of the SPR, being Hon. Secretary from 1997 to his election as President in 2004 for three years. He was elected for a second term in 2016 to the present time.[1]



Left to right are SNU President David Bruton, SPR secretary Peter Johnson, SPR Data Protection Officer Claran Farrell, and Paul Gaunt

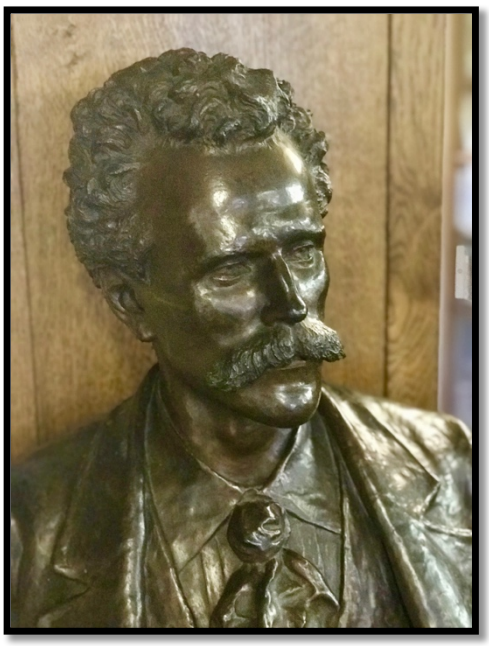
[1] For further information on the Society for Psychical Research visit its website: https://www.spr.ac.uk/home



SNU President David Bruton and SPR President Prof. John C. Poynton



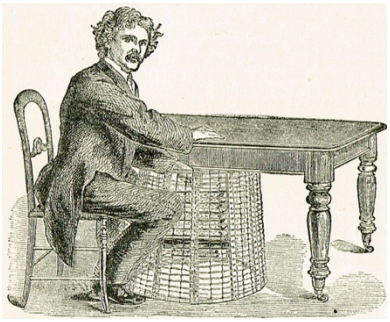
We are joined by the former SPR President, Dr Richard Broughton, and the present President, Prof. John C. Poynton





Arthur Findlay College tutor Janette (Jan) Marshall had been observing the glass dome which contains an accordion – giving a big clue as to who the bust is of, as seen in the previous photographs. This magnificent bust is of the early physical Scottish medium, Daniel Dunglas Home, who on April 9th 1855 came to stay at Cox's Hotel in Jermyn St., (Mayfair), London, where he began his British career.

I am referring to Daniel Home (pronounced *Hume)* undergoing experiments with William Crookes in 1871 with an accordion. Crookes had purchased a new one. Home had neither handled nor seen the instrument before the experiments. The accordion was placed in a cage and under a table; the illustration from Crookes' report clearly shows Home's position.[2] Home took the accordion between his thumb and middle finger at the *opposite end* to the instrument keys.



Shortly after the experiment began the researchers could see the accordion waving about in a curious manner; then sounds came from it and several notes were played in succession. The researchers could clearly view the phenomena; one actually going under the table reported that the accordion was expanding and contracting while Home's 'hand was quite still, his right hand on the top of the table.'

For many years it was not generally realised that this was a common demonstration by Home; please see Psypioneer, Vol. 10, No. May 2014: "The Accordion Playing of D. D. Home – Herbert Thurston, S. J.":

> "… one would be led to suppose that the accordion phenomena had only been produced in the séances with Sir W. Crookes in 1871. In point of fact they were constantly exhibited by Home during a period of nearly twenty years, and they have been described in detail …"

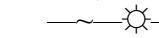
Thanks are due to Janette (Jan) Marshall for the excellent photographs supplied.

[2] "Researches in The Phenomena of Spiritualism" by Sir William Crookes, published by James Burns, 1874. This is available on-line as a free PDF download.

Harry Edwards draws attention to what he considered the myths to be avoided in healing: "… 'blowing' healing into a patient, and the holding out of cupped hands to receive a 'spirit lotion' to be rubbed into the patient". The article is taken from a quarterly journal, "The Direct Voice", No. 2, Winter 1958. It appears to have been published by the old 'London District Council', and 'Spiritualist College', Doughty St, Holborn under the editorship of W. J. Haylock-Eyre. Another article from this publication is elsewhere in this issue, by the healer Gordon Turner:

HEALING MEDIUMSHIP

by Harry Edwards



It is a common desire with many people to develop the gifts of the spirit. As a rule this development entails a lengthy period of preparation and it is not everyone who is able to become a highly sensitive clairvoyant, clairaudient, or physical medium. It seems far easier to become a healer, yet it is true to say, that a healer needs to acquire the same degree of attunement with the spirit people as with other forms of mediumship. There is no short cut.

No one can become a good healing instrument just by imitating the techniques he has seen other healers adopt, this may easily hamper the effort rather than assist it. There must exist within the personality of the healer a deep inner yearning, born of love and compassion, to heal those who suffer. This is the basic spiritual quality for healing mediumship. Possessing this, all the beginner needs is the developing of the art of attunement with the unseen helpers.

The art of attunement can be attained in the developing circle and through private meditation. It involves the surrender of the conscious mind to the ascendancy of the inner spirit-self. There is no rigid dividing line that separates the self-conscious from affinity with spirit. It is a gentle merging process, and is two-way, for not only is the beginner seeking attunement with the guide but the guide is seeking this too. As attunement comes, the guide is able to receive, through the healer's mind, the detail of the healing need, and is then able to make his diagnosis and direct the remedial influences.

The healer has to learn that he of himself, does *not* heal. The healing comes *through* him and is not *of* him. Neither his mind, or his body, or any action of his hands or other physical technique, possesses any healing virtue. For the reason that the healing influences come from a spirit source, the healer is only a channel through which it can flow. There often arises a human desire, not to be content with the passive part the healer plays, he wants to take a more tangible part in the healing, he wants to 'do something', and from this desire all manner of techniques have arisen. The most common being the 'healing passes', a natural consequence of the healer's desire to see the pain and disease taken away. There is no healing value in these movements of the hands, or in the follow-on of 'throwing off' the disease by a flick of the hands. The hands cannot take hold of disease and it is too subtle a condition to be 'thrown away' like discarding an object.

Understanding this, it is good to allow the hands sub-consciously to express the healing intention. It is not wise to impose a mental barrier by refusing this. Do not underestimate the psychological good that can arise from the patient sensing the soothing fingers to calm nerve angers, such as with headache. Two other techniques should be avoided; the practice of 'blowing' healing into a patient, and the holding out

of cupped hands to receive a ‘spirit lotion’ to be rubbed into the patient, it is obvious they cannot possess any healing value, except to express intention.

The actual time the spirit guides take to give healing may be very short indeed, there is no need for the healer to extend this through his mind into a protracted affair.

After the short period of time used in ‘blending’ with the patient in a state of attunement, there is no harm in ascertaining the extent of the help that has been given, such as seeing how much an arthritic joint has been loosened, but, if a full healing has not taken place, do not go on seeking additional movement by one’s self. Most healings are progressive, oft-times gradual, and if the betterment is but a little, then this should be accepted thankfully and with contentment until the next time.

Absent Healing

A further thought in support of my claim that healing is one of simplicity, and the physical body of the healer plays no part in it, is seen with the many healings that take place through Absent Healing, when the healer does not even see the patient. Experience counts with healing as in all other things, and with practice attunement becomes a ‘second nature ‘. The human instrument is better used by the guides, and his intuitive faculties increase to enable him to receive the diagnosis.

There is only one final way for a beginner to assure himself of his gift of healing and that is to put it to the test. Engage in the act of healing whenever opportunity comes, without limiting in the mind the extent of the good which may come; follow intuitive impressions that are received, for there is no one way to heal, nor any rules to follow. Each healer possesses his own individuality and the guides have theirs too. My pamphlet ‘*The New Way in Spiritual Healing*’ will be gladly sent freely on request to: The Sanctuary, Shere, Guildford, Surrey.



Bust of Henry (Harry) James Edwards
1893-1976

HUNTER SELKIRK

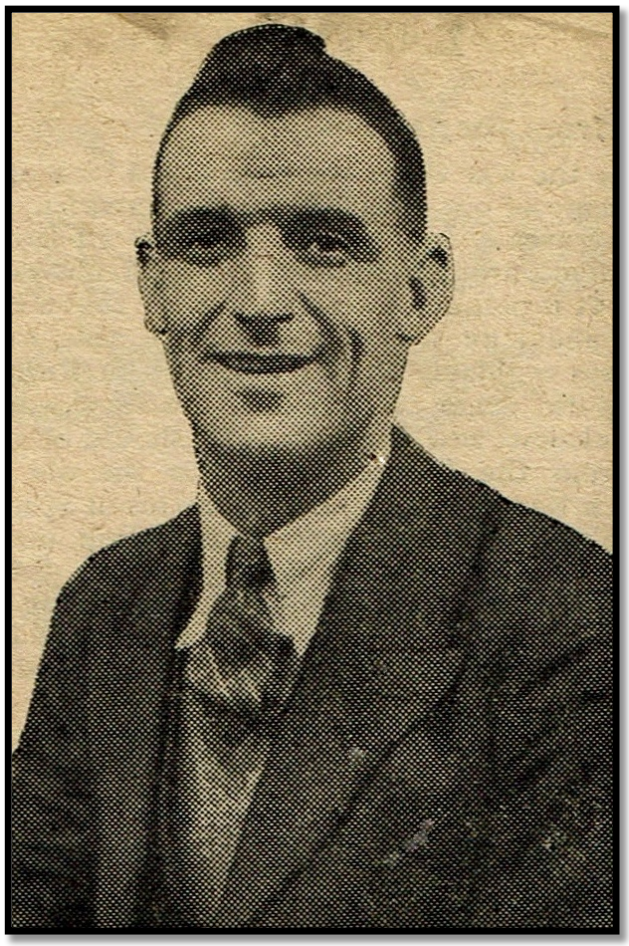
1900 - 1965

The name Hunter Selkirk is little recognised today unless you have had association with Craghead SNU Church, where his name is still very much alive. The Selkirks were very much involved in the history of the Church. This is clearly seen on the church website under the section, "History of our Church". On January 1st 1933 Craghead National Spiritualist Church was opened for the dedication of the religion of Spiritualist services. Later Hunter was its President for 13 years and his brother Jack for two years. In 1983 the church came into sole trust with the Spiritualists' National Union – please see its website.[3]

Much of the available information on Selkirk's mediumship appears to come from a book by Harry Emerson. Originally published in 1946, it describes the author's experiences with the medium; in 1984 it was republished by Craghead SNU Church. Other independent reports were published in the "Two Worlds"; below is taken from October 6th 1944, pages 270-71:

HUNTER SELKIRK

The Northern Trance Medium and Clairvoyant



ONE of the most popular and successful mediums in the Northern Counties is Mr. Hunter Selkirk, of Craghead, Durham, who has spent over twenty of the 44 years of his life in demonstrating the fact of human survival and the possibility of communion between the spirit world and this. Tall, dark and muscular, Mr. Selkirk is a collier working at the coal face, as was his father before him. He ventured to suggest in fact that cutting coal was even less exhausting than taking large propaganda meetings. That is perhaps due to the fact that when upon the platform he puts his whole energy into his work.

In a recent chat I learned that he was born in the neighbouring town of Pelton, Durham, and his parents were connected with the Church of England. From the early age of six he became accustomed to visions of spirit people. These occasioned no surprise. What did surprise him was the fact that other people did not see as he did. He later found that his visions were denizens of another world. When he was ten years of age his father was killed in the terrible explosion at the West Stanley Colliery and his mother was left to bring up a family of nine children. Life was hard, luxuries unknown, and education facilities small.

[3] Craghead Spiritualist Church: http://www.cragheadspiritualistchurch.btck.co.uk

A week after his father's death, Hunter saw him clearly standing at the bedside. He appeared in his pit dirt just as at the moment of death. His father impressed him with the care of his mother and gave him some advice. On telling his mother of the incident he was told he had been dreaming. Mrs. Hunter, however, must have taken the matter seriously for she told the Vicar, who decided that the boy's spiritual welfare needed supervision and drafted him into the Church choir. He often saw spirits in church and frequently received premonitions concerning worshippers who were about to pass over, and this peculiarity has become a regular part of his psychic life.

At 14 years of age, young Selkirk went into the coal pit to work, and there, with a brief break, he has laboured ever since.

Asked when he began to take a serious interest in Spiritualism he told me that when he was about 18 years of age, he decided to go to a New Year's dance at the Hedley Memorial Hall. On the way to the hall, however, his father appeared to him in the street, and said he was to go back, He took the advice, but hearing that a Spiritualist meeting was to be held at the same hall on the following Sunday, he decided to attend and see what it was like. The speaker was Mrs. Lovatt, and in the course of her clairvoyance she gave young Selkirk a striking description of his father with full details of his death. "You have seen him" she said, "and he asks me to say I want you to do the work this woman is doing and to help others as I am helping you. Cast thy bread upon the waters and it shall return to thee."

Mr. Selkirk became a regular attendant at the local Spiritualist society and sat in the developing circles, where his clairvoyance steadily strengthened. Subsequently he joined a "home circle" at the home of Mr. Barker, and this continued for seven years. He soon became entranced, gave evidential messages and delivered long addresses in the trance state. A good deal of physical phenomena also occurred, raps were heard, pictures moved, tables and other objects were levitated some feet away from him, materialised lights appeared, and these phenomena have characterised his mediumship ever since. Many people can testify to materialised forms having appeared at his circles—though he is not fond of physical phenomena and would much prefer those of mental type.

His first public meeting was at Green Street, Sunderland, over 20 years ago. There was a large audience, and he spoke in the deep trance state but gave no clairvoyance. The effort was so successful that he has been on the platform ever since. He soon added clairvoyant demonstrations to his trance addresses, and has received thousands of letters of thanks from sorrowing people to whom he has proved beyond doubt that their loved ones still live. Many years ago he joined the Craghead N.S. Church, and has been its treasurer for some years. He says that the loyalty of the northern folk have made his work a pleasure. He and the loyal band of workers have built a splendid brick church at Craghead which houses some 250 people. During the war the government have taken it over and the congregation meet in the Temperance Hall, but they are looking forward to a speedy return home, and increased activities.

Most of Mr. Selkirk's work has been confined to the Northern Counties. His work in the pit prevents long journeys, though he has paid occasional visits to London and Glasgow. Whilst the war lasts he refuses to be absent from the pit, but hopes when the world becomes sane, to take up public work over a larger area.

Mr. Selkirk recently gave splendid evidence at a large meeting addressed by Lord Dowding at the City Hall, Newcastle. Still a young man, he should have many years of useful service before him for God and the spirit world. All his brothers and sisters are Spiritualists, and his brother Jack also promises to follow in the footsteps of his elder brother.

The Northern Counties have produced many remarkable mediums and none more sincere and honest that Hunter Selkirk, whose happy, jocular, almost care-free temperament, makes it a joy to know him.

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Hunter's physical mediumship also included healing. One of the medium's guides/controls, simply named 'The Doctor', was known to materialise at the séances. Pioneer brings this to attention, as it has touched on another medium, Isa Northage. She was a physical medium and during her healing sessions her spirit doctor would materialise in full view of the sitters and the patient to perform his operations – he cured by removing growths, clots and bone splinters, etc.

Isa's doctor was called 'Dr. Reynolds' – please see Pioneer, Vol. 3, No. 2, April 2016: "Spiritualist Healers of the Past – Isa Northage". (The series also looked at psychic healers as opposed to spiritual healers). The article published below by Grace W. Boyers DSNU, unfortunately, does not go into the healing side in much detail; it is taken from the "Two Worlds", May 9th 1947, front page and concluding on p. 147:

MATERIALISED SPIRIT DOCTOR GIVES HEALING

NORTHERN SINGERS STAGGERED BY PHYSICAL PHENOMENA

On the 17th March, 1947, a seance was held at the Craghead Spiritualist Church. There were nine sitters, present, and the medium was Mr. Hunter Selkirk.

Four of the sitters formed a well-known quartet of male voice singers, and after a very earnest prayer by Mr. J. Selkirk, the proceedings commenced with musical renderings beautifully sung by the quartet. After a short time the guide of the medium gave us greetings, assuring us that the conditions were good, which was subsequently well borne out.

With little or no delay there then began a succession of visits from those who normally now live in another sphere. First came Topsy, a lively, and thoroughly confident young girl, who was obviously very much at home and delighted to be with us. Her completely materialised form swept through the curtains, and she chatted briskly to all and sundry, with a quip and jest typical of any English youngster in high spirits on earth. She explained that her frequent appearances throughout the seance helped to regulate the force used for the production of the materialisations. She certainly carried a bright and happy influence through the evening, like a recurring theme song.

Lost her Earthly Disabilities

To one sitter came his mother, whom he acknowledged gladly, and with whom he carried on a conversation for some minutes. She spoke of the fact that she had quite lost her earthly disabilities, and of her happiness at being there. Close together, they stood in full view of the watching sitters. Hardly had she disappeared, when other fully materialised figures followed in quick succession.

Bobby, a young local lad, whose accent was so typically that of the district, caused much amusement. I found this contrast of voice and accent especially entrancing, and evidential, particularly as Bobby was succeeded by Jimmy, a Cockney boy as different from Bobby as could be imagined. Both exhibited a freedom in their movements, and entertained us with their special brands of humour.

A Spirit Kiss

Of deep interest to one sitter was the appearance of his brother. This young man came forth from the curtains, a tall, upright figure, bareheaded, and eager to make himself known to his brother. Giving his correct name, he shook hands with my companion and asked to be introduced to me. I was formally introduced to an individual in the ordinary conventional way our society demands! He kissed my hand with old world courtesy, then drew my head into the crook of his arm to implant a kiss lightly on my forehead! The soft drapery, clothing the arm, swept like gossamer over my face, delicate and slightly warm, but the touch and behaviour was that of a very real and alive personality.

To his brother he gave much evidential matter, which, by nature of its family reference, should remain private. It was, however; enough to cause the sitter to feel a little stunned by the visit. The complete naturalness of the visit, coupled with the fact that this was the first appearance of the brother since his passing many years ago, drew from the sitter renewed comment on the wonder of the phenomena, and it left a deep impression on many which is not likely to be forgotten.

Thunder Struck and Staggered

A former member of the quartet was a surprise visitor to the singers. Two of the number were attending a seance for the first time, and were, in their own words "thunderstruck and staggered" at the solid appearance of a man whom they had known some time before as one of their number. The visiting friend sang a little with the quartet as he retired, after thoroughly satisfying them of his identity.

To one sitter there came the tall and commanding figure of his guide, with whom he carried on a long conversation regarding his future work.

An unusual feature of the seance was the forceful presence of a French doctor, a guide of the medium, who all this time was in deep trance within the curtains. The doctor insisted on giving treatment to one of the sitters, who acknowledged that the guide certainly knew where the trouble was, and that, in his own words, "the power was terrific, nearly lifting me off my feet." This statement is remarkable, in view of the fact that he was talking of a materialised spirit doctor, not a man still in earthly flesh! This is a problem for those who maintain that the spirit people are but shadows or figments of the mind of either sitter or medium.

One Significant Word

To me personally, there came through the curtains a nun, a woman with whom I have been familiar all my life. Anyone who remembers a previous article of mine might remember that I mentioned the appearance of this woman at my bedside when I was a child of five, and whom I have seen frequently many times since. She spoke to me on this occasion of family things, and personal hopes, making use of one significant word. This meant nothing to anyone there whatsoever, but to me at that time it conveyed definite evidence of the knowledge, those we call our friends in spirit, have of our affairs on this side of life.

Disappeared above Sitters

Towards the end of the seance Topsy returned and came round one side of the curtain, took the seat offered her by Mr. Jack Selkirk, swung her legs free of the floor for a few minutes, then came into the centre of the semi-circle to chat with us for a short while. She then took upon herself a more gracious form of a spirit progressed, and her childish irresponsibility gave place to a wise philosophy, with which she slowly drew the seance to an end, finally disappearing *above* us.

Prayer and thanks concluded a wonderful evening.

In all, there were no less than nine fully formed materialised forms, several of them making more than one appearance, most of them free of the curtains some time during their visit. It would be difficult to believe they were anything but what they claimed to be—visitors from another sphere, so closely in touch with our own as to make their contact with us only a matter of the right conditions. If that were not enough, then the evidence they brought of their separate individual selves is further testimony of their memory and continued regard for those they love and seek still in this earth life.

Additional Notes of Seance

By JACK SELKIRK

The Apollo Quartet, Mr. Todd, Mr. A. Todd, Mr. Swarm, and Mr. Hetherington, came from South Shields. The sitter who received his mother was the tenor of the quartet, Mr. Hetherington. After they had ended their private talk she asked him to sing, and as he stood and sang that beautiful old hymn, “Abide with Me,” she knelt in the centre of the circle in prayer. Something happened near the end of this séance which has never happened before in any of our seances, Topsy and the quartet were singing, “The End of a Perfect Day,” when a beautiful, snow white dove flew out of the top of the cabinet right over the heads of the sitters, it did this twice, then came and perched upon my shoulder, cooing and fluttering its wings; once it touched my cheek with its bill. As the last note of the old song lingered in that little room, Topsy rose slowly towards the top of the cabinet, with the dove fluttering around her. It was something I shall remember for a long time.

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Another reason Pioneer brings the above article to attention is because in a recent donation to the Britten Museum & Library by the Lyceum Union are contained two rare lantern slides of Hunter Selkirk's materialisations, one being 'The Doctor', referenced in the above article. There are no details given about this photograph, apart from "Hunter Selkirk and his well-known French doctor guide".





This second photograph is taken at the same unknown location as the image of the Doctor; the images of the two young ladies are said to be "Iza and Nellie the flower girl – guides of Mrs. Cook a member of the Selkirk circle. Photograph taken June 7th 1932". This suggests the other image will be around the same date; it also gives the name Bob Ellis? Maybe the photographer is a circle member or totally unrelated.[4]

[4] If we look at ectoplasm through the heyday of materialisation, there are similarities in its make-up, in procedure almost like a design of a phase of development; but given that it is physical phenomena, it is of course open to normal means, i.e. both can achieve the same effect.

I believe this image shows Hunter Selkirk and his circle, or maybe a general séance



The article below gives a good overview of a Hunter Selkirk séance. It is taken from the front page of the "Two Worlds", July 4th 1947, concluding on page 210. The photograph shown was published within the article:

THE ASCENSION OF A MATERIALISED SPIRIT

WONDERFUL PHENOMENA DRAMATICALLY DEMONSTRATES THE TRUTH OF SURVIVAL

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On Monday, June 16th, a small group of Spiritualists met at the Craghead Spiritualist Church to sit with the well-known north country medium, Mr. Hunter Selkirk. (The proceeds of his seances go to the Church Building Fund, and he has raised £100 during the last six months. The Church will be paid for in the Autumn!) To sit for the phenomena of materialisation is a very serious undertaking for any medium, but Hunter Selkirk appears to regard the matter as nonchalantly as any other incident in his daily routine. He arrived at 6-20 p.m., gay and lighthearted, and enjoyed a cup of tea and a smoke before the seance, which began at 6-30 p.m. Quite informally he stubbed his cigarette and, in his working clothes, walked over to a chair in the corner of the room, and speedily passed into the trance state. The chair was situated in front of the space to be used as a cabinet. So far the curtains were not drawn. Quietly and quickly a group of about twelve people followed and gathered round him in a roughly formed semi-circle.

Good Vibrations

When all were settled, Jack Selkirk, the medium's brother, offered a very sincere invocation. Then Zuru, the medium's guide, gave a few words of welcome to the members of the circle, after which he lifted the chair (still under him) and stepped backwards into the corner, requesting the curtains to be drawn in readiness for the seance. Before allowing the materialised forms to appear he passed the remark that the vibrations were very good. During the phenomena that followed, from a visitor's point of view, the super-normal happenings that took place were more evidential than the conversations which ensued between some of the forms and the sitters. One or two



A MATERIALISED SPIRIT VISITOR AT HUNTER SELKIRK'S SEANCE

spirits had been before several times, and were quite at ease when talking to their earthly friends, but as the conversations were more in the nature of seance re-unions, there was no special attempt at establishing detailed evidence in these cases.

Spirit Levitated.

At the commencement of the manifestations a pillar of ectoplasm seemed to form at the parting of the curtain. This, in the dim red light, seemed motionless for a time and then quite suddenly took on the human characteristics of a young vivacious girl named Topsy, whose mission seemed to be that of cheering everyone into a happy and lighthearted frame of mind. She quite knowingly explained that the motive was primarily to create good conditions for successful phenomena. Having raised the vibrations, she said that she was going to be levitated. "Hold hands everybody!" she exclaimed suddenly, and as we did so, the lower end of her ectoplasmic skirts moved outwards and upwards until her body was bent and suspended at shoulder height in mid air!

Topsy's Mission.

In this position she passed a witty remark about being "neither up nor down." She looked as if she were reclining in an invisible hammock. Then she dropped again, more quickly, and the sound of her feet could be heard as she touched the floor again. Topsy is one of the regular band of spirit helpers who work with Hunter Selkirk, in their joint mission to provide convincing evidence of spirit return, and she was just as much at ease in her ectoplasmic garments as Hunter had been a few minutes previously smoking his cigarette, and her loud voice rang and resounded throughout the room. Her witty remarks would be heard quite plainly in the church although the seance room door was closed.

A Tall Nun.

A much taller figure, that of a Nun, appeared and beckoned one of the lady sitters to come and stand close to her. She informed this lady that she was constantly with her and had assumed the role of spiritual guardian from her childhood days, and was now delighted to have the opportunity of seeing her in material form. The tall Nun then turned to the lady's husband and thanked him for his earthly guardianship in more recent years, and as a sign of loving affection kissed his cheek, returning a minute later to that world of spirit from whence she had come. The husband explained later how, when the nun had gone, he had regretted not having asked for her name—his wife being almost speechless with wonderment at her unique experience to think of this important detail.

Mind Reading.

With this question on the fringe of his mind he awaited the appearance of the next figure to ask for this information. It was Jimmy, Selkirk's Cockney guide, who immediately asked this gentleman if he wanted to ask a question! Taken by surprise, the gentleman asked for the Nun's name. "I'll ask," said Jimmy. "I won't be a 'crack'." Re-appearing, after conferring with his spirit colleagues, he informed his enquirer that the "lidy was from Spine (Spain) and her nime was Juanita." He then explained how the Nun's aura blended with that of the sitter and because of this she was able to carry out her work as spirit guardian. Jimmy then broke into song and sang his party piece—'The Lambeth Walk' with which he was joined by the members of the circle. (Jimmy had been killed during one of the blitzes on London during the recent war.) A further

materialised figure claimed contact with another member of the circle, but appeared to be under great difficulty in the more dense earthly conditions, yet conveyed great anxiety to establish his identity.

North American Indian Healer.

Zuru then intervened and announced that a giant North American Indian guide had come to speak to Mr. Aikman, and asked him to prepare himself to see a very big man and not to be afraid. Everyone gasped when a colossal figure, very tall and powerfully built, appeared and beckoned Mr. Aikman towards him. The atmosphere became distinctly colder as this mighty figure emerged. When asked for his name, he informed his earthly friend that it was 'Dawn'. In a heavy, deep, and sonorous bass voice he exclaimed, "Me bring you strong power. Me help you because you worth it." (Mr. Aikman suffers from ulcers in the stomach which has a weakening effect upon him). After he had conversed a little longer, and taken his departure, Topsy reappeared to brighten up the vibrations again. "Has he gone?" she asked mischievously, which made everyone laugh, and recover from their spell-bound attitude arising from the appearance of the "Thunderstorm," as Topsy called him. She then told us that he was a tribal chief and still conversed with his tribesmen in "a Redskin river valley."

Family Reunions.

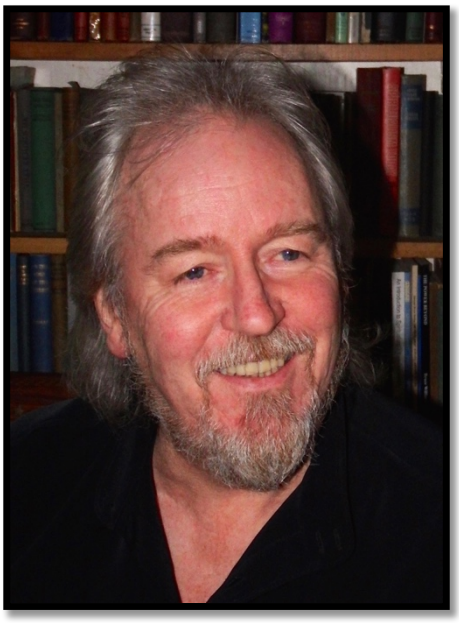
A spirit called Willie Wilkinson then appeared and held a conversation with his father, who was present. Prior to his transition (March 3rd, 1931) he had been organist at Kyo Laws Choir, Annfield Plain. This was his sixth appearance in ectoplasm, and he told his father more news about his musical activities on "the Other Side." The next re-union was between Mrs. B. M. Mather and her spirit husband. He referred to his sister, who passed over ten months after him, and her baby which had been left behind. "Isn't he a fine chap?" he said. "If only things had been different," he added regretfully, inferring the fact that they had not been blessed with children. A cultured spirit gentleman then beckoned another sitter to him. He was a smaller man than the medium, with a definitely smaller face, on which there was to be seen a typical 'van Dyke' beard. His name was Dowell Todd of Sunderland, a former President of the Northern District Council. He gave a personal message for a former colleague.

Spiritual Transformation.

Upon his departure, Jack Selkirk commenced singing a hymn, during which Topsy put her head through the curtains and said, 'Jackie, desist! You sound like a lost sheep upon the mountain—one little blare!" The atmosphere was changed again into one of gaiety and laughter. She became more serious however as the seance drew to a close, and said that she would now be "transformed into what I am" (an older and very wise person in spiritual reality). "If, in the days to come," she said to the sitters, "you need a friend, your call shall be heard where I am now going. I shall now throw off my physical garments and assume my spiritual ones, as you will all do some day."

Ascension of Spirit Form.

She then asked us to sing a farewell hymn and as we complied with her request she began to ascend before us. She looked beautiful as she began to rise, without any visible means of support, into the space above us. As she reached a level near the top of the cabinet, and well above our heads, she slowly assumed a horizontal position and returned to her medium through the top of the cabinet. She was apparently already de-materialising, as it was noticed that her body partly penetrated the metal rod supporting the curtains. This was indeed a wonderfully convincing and beautiful sight, which left no doubt in our minds that we had been experiencing the "communion of spirits and the ministry of angels."



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Alternatively, accommodation is available in the village; a list is available on request.

Gordon Turner was featured in “Spiritualist Healers of The Past”, in Pioneer, Vol. 4, No. 1, February 2017: “Gordon Alan John Turner Medium in TV debate with surgeon over healers in hospitals & Why Does Healing Work—And Fail?”. We can also note his connection as Chairman with the National Federation of Spiritual Healers, in the last issue.

Below is an interesting article of Turner’s views sixty years ago. This was published in the quarterly journal previously mentioned in this issue, in which also appeared “Healing Mediumship” by Harry Edwards.



HARMONY AND HEALING

by Gordon Turner

In recent years a great many attempts have been made to understand the relationship between colour, music, and spiritual healing. Similarly the Aura has been continuously investigated by healers wishing to raise their healing work to the highest possible standard. Of necessity this has caused many varying forms of treatment to become associated within the general pattern of spiritual healing. Colour healing, auric diagnosis, musical therapy and even Yogic relaxation have been blended together, sometimes to the confusion of both patient and healer.

lf we are ever to allow spiritual healing to assume its true significance we must endeavour to bring all aspects of this great subject into their true perspective. Undoubtedly colour does have a definite effect upon the patient. This is also true of music, where it is used to achieve a basic harmony between patient and healer; but we must ask ourselves this question, ‘Do either colour or music actually heal, or are they merely an adjunct to the readier flow of the healing force?’ I personally subscribe to the latter view and feel that any attempt to heal by these means alone would be to place unwarranted limitations upon the true power of spiritual healing.

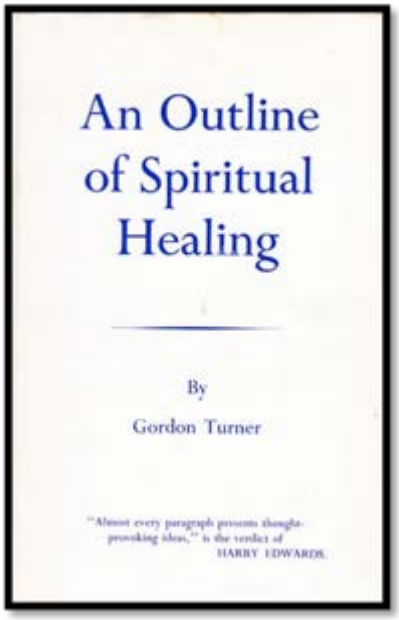
It is desirable that every healer should constantly strive to find means to assist his or her work, but it is not a good thing to allow any ritual relating to these aids to become so essential to the healing that a barrier is created where it is not available. All that happens about us is appreciated by our senses, material and psychic, and every imbalance to which we are subject is impressed upon the auric record by which we are surrounded. When a patient receives spiritual healing this power of love flows within the field of his auric vibration, restoring balance at all levels. There seems to be no doubt whatsoever that any adjunct to this should be utilised, and for this reason alone it would not be a good thing to dispense with any source of aid which might be utilised.

In the old days of Spiritualism much was said about something which was described as ‘conditions’. A medium sought the best possible ‘conditions’ for his work to be carried out and a group of sitters strove to provide them. Simply, what was meant by ‘conditions’ was an atmosphere of harmony conducive to the settlement of mind both of

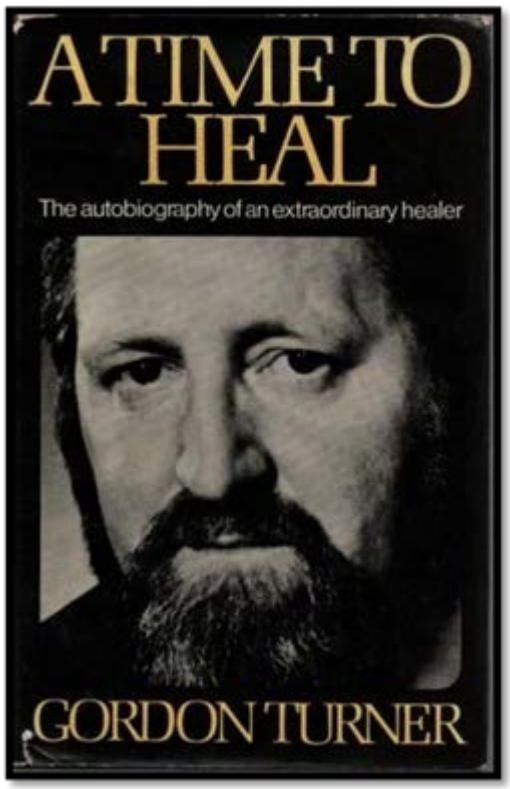
the psychic and the sitter. Surely this is what we must strive to provide with spiritual healing. Too often healing is relegated to the coldest and darkest corner of the church, or a small back room unwanted for any other activity. Here is where the question of vibration undoubtedly becomes important. In our attempt to assist the healing force let us by all means use both colour and music, but let us also blend these within the conditions in which we are working. Rather than place the emphasis upon complicated lamps or concealed loud speakers better by far that we divert these energies into providing the most suitable colour background to the room in which we are healing. I would prefer to know that patients were sitting in a comfortable waiting room in harmonious conditions, than entering a dark and dismal room well equipped with the most-up-to-date record playing equipment and complicated colour projector.

Let us remember at all times that the most important part of these 'conditions' are provided by ourselves, and where the healers are not able to work in harmony one with another, or even to be in harmony with themselves, how can we then expect any apparatus or any research to induce externally the conditions which it has been unable to produce amongst the healers themselves. The keynotes of healing are love, humility, service and simplicity. If we can strive for these then I am certain that our results will always reflect our endeavour.

Gordon Turner published two books on healing.



First published in 1963 by Max Parrish and Co. Ltd., London



Autobiography, first published by Talmy Franklin in 1974

The Constitution of the Spiritualists' National Federation

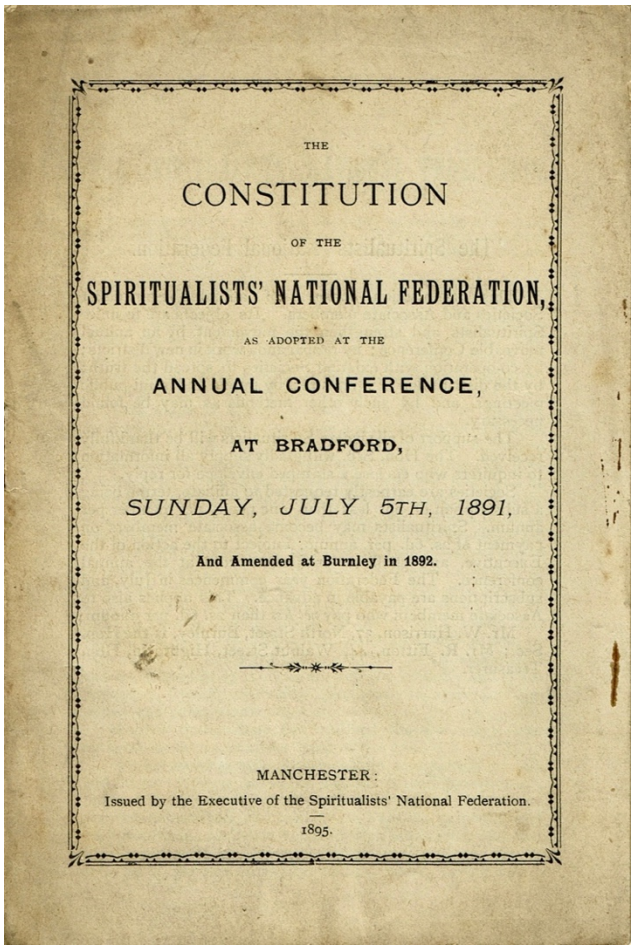
Pioneer has covered much on the formation of the Spiritualists' National Union. Vol. 1, No. 1, August 2013, brought attention to the "National Conference of British Spiritualists", held on July 6th, 1890 at the Assembly Room of the Co-operative Hall, Downing Street, Manchester. In the following July this became the "Spiritualists' National Federation", as detailed in the article below.

Pioneer has addressed some of the advancements made within the National Federation:

> The formation of the early education—certification of speakers/mediums etc., this was approached at the Seventh Annual Conference of the Spiritualists' National Federation held at Daulby Hall, Liverpool on July 4th & 5th 1896 under the presidency of A. J. Smyth. Please see Vol.2 No.4 July 2015.
>
> The formation of the National Federation Fund of Benevolence founded by Mrs Minnie Harriet Wallis which continues today.[5] Please see Vol.1 No.3 April 2014.
>
> The introduction of our first hymn book is given in Vol. 4 No.3 June 2017: "Spiritualists' National Federation – Our First National Hymn Book".
>
> In 1901 the "Spiritualists' National Federation", was re-constituted becoming the Spiritualists' National Union. The transition was rather complicated and took over five years from when Thomas Todd first broached the matter at the 1896 Federation Conference until the Federation was wound up and its affairs handed over to the Union at the July 1902 Federation Conference. This is detailed in Vol.3 No.1 February 2016: "National Federation to National Union".

Below is published the Constitution of the Spiritualists' National Federation, "as adopted at the Annual Conference at Bradford, Sunday, July 5th 1891 – And Amended at Burnley in 1892". This was issued by the Executive of the Spiritualists' National Federation in 1895 at Manchester:

> This organisation consists of affiliated Spiritualist Societies and Associate members. Its objects are to unite Spiritualists and strengthen the movement by an annual moveable Conference; by propaganda work in new districts; by co-operation with existing Societies to spread the truth; by the distribution of literature; by public and semi-public meetings, and by such other methods as may be found necessary.


THE

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL FEDERATION,

AS ADOPTED AT THE

ANNUAL CONFERENCE,

AT BRADFORD,

SUNDAY, JULY 5TH, 1891,

And Amended at Burnley in 1892.

MANCHESTER:

Issued by the Executive of the Spiritualists' National Federation.

1895.

[5] Fund of Benevolence (FOB): https://www.snu.org.uk/appeal/fund-of-benevolence

The support of all sincere Spiritualists will be thankfully received. The Hon. Sec. will gladly supply all information to inquirers who enclose a stamped envelope for reply.

Societies are earnestly requested to affiliate, terms being a subscription of not less than one penny per member per annum. Spiritualists may become associate members on payment of 2s. 6d. per annum, subject to the action of the Executive, and shall be entitled to vote at the annual conference. The Federation year commences in July, and subscriptions are payable in advance. This applies also to Associate members who pay *no*t *less* than 2s. 6d. per annum.

Mr. W. Harrison, 37, North Street, Burnley, is the Hon. Sec.; Mr. R. Fitton, 44, Walnut Street, Hightown, Hon. Treasurer.

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THE SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL FEDERATION.

"Organisations we must have for work: let them be a thousand times multiplied. We must unite, or do but little of what is so much needed. Let it be a union of free men for the enlightenment and up-building of mankind."—WM. DENTON.

Every movement that has made its mark on the pages of history was at first a "forlorn hope"; advocated by isolated individuals who met with scorn and persecution. Then, when numbers increased, bands of earnest and enthusiastic workers began to be formed; they became too numerous and too powerful to he laughed down or ignored, and their enemies began to leave them severely alone.

This stage is always a most trying one for the new movement. Opposition supplies a spur, but indifference, or neutrality, leaves the workers without foes to fight, and necessitates a new course. They must demonstrate that they are *builders*. They must prove that the new ideas can be practically applied in daily life. The scattered forces must be gathered, a plan, and unity of aim and action, must be manifested. The ability of the workers must be displayed in the new direction of *con*structive work—of organised systematic efforts, with a common purpose—a coherency of ideas and methods must be developed. The new cause is on trial. If its friends and advocates can demonstrate its right to survive—by its fitness to meet man's needs and benefit the race—then those who hold aloof will be won to its support and the third stage, viz., that of an established and recognised body is achieved, and the hostility and indifference, or friendly neutrality, give place to active participation and sympathetic support.

Modern Spiritualism has outlived the first stage—*real* antagonism is practically a thing of the past.

We are passing through the second and critical period, and have to prove ourselves capable of self-government; that our Spiritualism is a vital power for good. That we are earnest, determined, and capable. That our principles not only benefit us, make us better, wiser, and truer; but that they are capable of universal application, and will render services of good to humanity. That, indeed, *because* we are Spiritualists we are reformed and reformers—co-operating harmoniously that truth may prevail, knowledge increase, and spiritual progress be effected.

The third stage is rapidly opening out.

Societies of earnest and self-sacrificing Spiritualists have been formed which are becoming educational centres of spiritual activity, and the movement is attaining the importance, proportions, and dignity of a *national* character.

Already for some years a National Federation of Spiritualists has existed. Several very successful representative annual Conferences have been held of delegates from affiliated Societies and of Associate members, and a good deal of propaganda work has been performed to spread the light and consolidate the movement.[6]

The Federation is an organisation for *work—not* a theological institution. As will be seen by the Constitution, it consists of duly constituted Societies and Associate members—namely, sympathetic and earnest Spiritualists, who desire to support the effort now being made to unite the Spiritualists of the kingdom into one fraternal co-operative body.

Union, with liberty, for the good of humanity, is practically the object of the Federation. And all Spiritualists who have the welfare of mankind at heart—who desire that the facts of spirit-communion should be known and enjoyed by all men, and the comforting and salvatory influence of the ministering spirits, together with the enlightening and stimulating power of the Spiritual philosophy, be experienced by the millions who are to-day in darkness, ignorance, and the fetters of fear—all who desire to see Spiritualism a strong and compact movement—a mighty power for good in the community, are sincerely urged to become associate members, and strengthen the hands and encourage the hearts of those who have so zealously and effectually laboured to unite our scattered forces, to help the weak, and foster a spirit of amity and brotherliness in the greatest movement of modern times—THE NEW SPIRITUAL DISPENSATION which is destined to become the RELIGION OF THE FUTURE.

Much good work has already been accomplished. The enthusiasm displayed at the last and most successful conference encourages the Executive to confidently appeal for liberal donations and earnest support. "Organising workers" will be appointed and sent all over the country as missionaries carrying the glad tidings "there is no death" to many a sad and suffering soul. A beginning has already been made, and much good may be done in this direction. A paid Secretary is needed who can devote his whole time and energies to the work, correspondence, and organising labours, but more and ample funds are required to effect this desired change, and other important duties which the growth and exigencies of the movement make imperative if it is to be carried—-and it *must be*—to a successful issue.

Spiritualism is the work of the spirit world; we are striving to faithfully follow the light and leading from the other side, and are assured that the unseen hosts who promoted this work of Federation will not let it languish, but will move the hearts and prompt the acts of generous friends, impress them with the magnitude and importance of this National work, and inspire them to aid the Executive by providing the financial assistance that is required for *con*structive work in the cause, that we may fight with God and the Angels for Humanity and the Truth.

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[6] 'The Building of the Spiritualists' National Union' is serialised in Psypioneer, starting in the August 2012 issue, which also includes the article by James Morse, 'The Nationalisation of Spiritualism'.

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.—TITLE.

The name of this Federation shall be: THE SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL FEDERATION.

ARTICLE 2.—OBJECTS.

The objects of this National Federation shall be—

I. An annual movable Conference.

2. The uniting of Spiritualist Societies and Spiritualists in a Federal Union.

3. The printing, publishing, and distribution of literature suitable for general and special purposes.

4. The engaging in missionary work to extend the cause in new districts, and revive it where it has lapsed, and, on the DIRECT REQUEST of societies, to afford such aid as the circumstances call for, and the means of the Federation permit.

5. To keep a roll of mediums and speakers, societies, and secretaries.

ARTICLE 3.—MEMBERSHIP.

Membership in this Federation shall be composed of—

1. Societies.

2. Associates.

Societies may become affiliated with the Federation, subject to the approval of the Executive, by applying to the secretary. Societies shall be represented at the annual Conference by their duly elected delegates, in the proportion of one delegate to fifty members or part thereof. Said delegates, in conjunction with the associated members, shall elect the officers, and conduct the business of the Conference.

Associate members can be enrolled upon the recommendation of two recognised Spiritualists, subject to the action of the Executive, and shall be entitled to vote at the annual Conference.

ARTICLE 4.—HON. DELEGATES.

The Conference shall have power to invite any visitors present at the annual Conference to participate in the deliberations thereat, without the power to vote. Such invitations to be duly moved, seconded, and voted upon in open Conference.

ARTICLE 5.—OFFICERS.

The officers of this Federation shall be a secretary and treasurer, to be elected annually.

ARTICLE 6.—GENERAL COMMITTEE.

The Conference shall elect a General Executive Committee of fifteen persons, seven to retire one year and eight the next. Retiring members shall be eligible for re-election. The General Executive Committee shall be elected from the members of affiliated societies, and the associate members of the Federation. The said committee shall elect its own chairman at each of its meetings. Nominations for the vacancies on the Executive Committee must be made in writing, and sent to the secretary at least one month prior to Conference. No society shall have more than one member on the General Executive Committee, and not more than one person of a household shall be eligible from the associated members at one time.

ARTICLE 7.— FINANCE.

The finances shall be raised as follows:—

Societies shall, on joining the Federation, contribute a sum of not less than one penny per member per annum. Members of affiliated societies may become associates of this Federation on payment (in advance) of half-a-crown per annum.

Associates, not members of affiliated societies, shall, on joining the, Federation, pay a minimum annual subscription (in advance) of half-a-crown.

Donations, in aid of the Federation's work, will be thankfully received. Further funds shall be raised, as needed, by any other methods the annual Conference shall decide.

ARTICLE 8.—DEBATE.

As the Conference is a deliberative body, each speaker shall be limited to one speech on each subject, not exceeding ten minutes, except the mover of a resolution, who shall be allowed fifteen minutes, with the right to five minutes for reply.

Only delegates and associates shall be entitled to vote.

No associate or society shall be privileged to vote, unless their annual subscription has been paid fourteen days before the date of the Conference in each year.

ARTICLE 9.—AUDITORS.

Two or more auditors shall be chosen from among the delegates to audit the accounts of the Federation, with full power to call for all books, vouchers, papers, and information necessary for their purpose.

ARTICLE 10.—BUSINESS AT THE CONFERENCE.

The order of business at the Conference shall be:—

1. Opening exercises.
2. *Pro tem*. appointments, if necessary.
3. Report of committee of reception upon credentials of delegates.
4. Read minutes of last Conference.
5. Secretary's report.
6. Treasurer's report.
7. Special Committee's report.
8. Deferred business.
9. Motions on the agenda.
10. Election of Federation officers and committee for the ensuing year.
11. Election of president, place and date of next annual Conference.
I2. Election of speaker for next conference, evening meeting.
13. Open Council.
14.. Votes of thanks to retiring officers and committee, and notices of motion for next Conference.

ARTICLE 1I.—PROCEDURE.

The business of the annual Conference of this Federation shall be confined to the items upon the printed agenda paper, and such other matters as may directly arise therefrom. All notices of motion for the agenda to be sent to the general secretary two clear months previous to the Conference, and publicly announced by him in the

Spiritual press at least four weeks prior to the annual meeting.[7] The ruling of the president to be final.

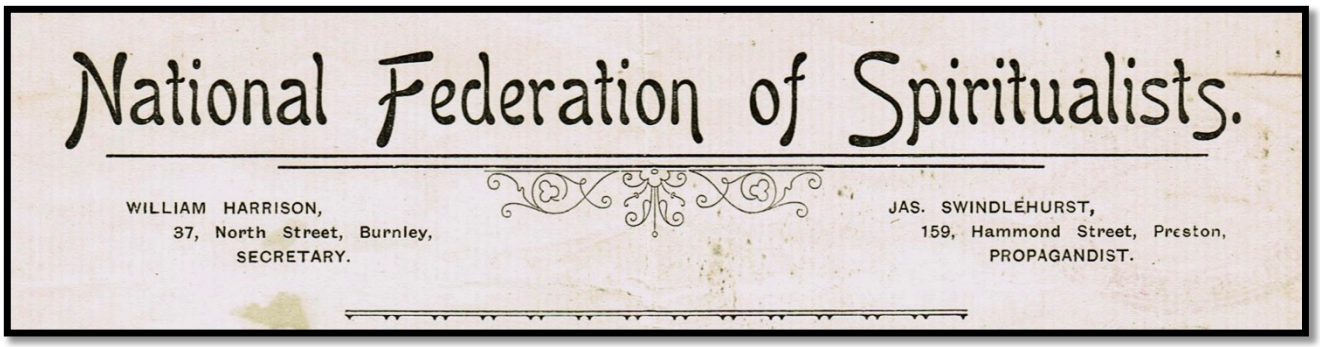
A tea party and social shall be held on the Saturday preceding Conference day each year, and auditors, subcommittee, etc., be requested to perform as much of their duties as possible on that day so as to expedite the business on Sunday.

ARTICLE I2.—REVISION.

This constitution shall only be revised upon a motion, signed by the mover and seconder, which must be sent to the general secretary three months before the date of the Conference, that copies of the same can be published in *the Spiritual press* at least two months prior to the meeting of the Conference. Such motion shall only be effectual when carried by a vote of two-thirds of those present entitled to vote thereon.

[The above is the constitution amended in accordance with the resolutions passed on Sunday, July 3rd, 1892, at Burnley.]

Good work has been accomplished with a small income. The balance in hand is small. The Federation is now a really *representative* and responsible body of tried and trusted workers, worthy of confidence and support. Friends of Spiritualism, those of you who have means at disposal on behalf of this work for order, unity, and co-operation *within* our ranks, and promulgation and defence of our principles outside, will you not, by such *donations* as you can afford, strengthen the Federation, and provide the Executive with the needed funds?—W. HARRISON, 37, NORTH STREET, BURNLEY.[8]



[7] The National Federation and, later, the Spiritualists' National Union; Conferences, AGMs and Federation/Union business were published freely in the "Two Worlds".
The first 1890 Conference *pro tem* committee was significantly made up with the Officers and Directors of "*The Two Worlds*" Publishing Company Ltd, Manchester, including its Chairman/President, Dr William Britten, Treasurer Thomas Brown, Secretary Edward Wallis, and its editor, Emma Hardinge Britten (not a director). Emma had significantly supported a national organisation for several years. They nominated the veteran Spiritualist, John Lamont, of Liverpool as their first Conference President/Chairman. The *pro tem* committee would become the first Executive Committee of the newly-formed Spiritualists' National Federation.

[8] Spiritualists' National Federation and Spiritualists' National Union Secretaries, please see Pioneer, Vol. 1, No. 5, October 2014: "General Secretaries of the SNU – National Secretaries".

GRACE BOYERS
(Winifred Whiting Boyers)



Readers may be wondering who the author was of the second reported Hunter Selkirk article who witnessed and reported on the séance; Grace Boyers DSNU was a prominent figure in the movement and within the Spiritualists' National Union.

The profile below is taken from the "Two Worlds", April 14th 1956, and is by their correspondent, Philip Paul, and the photograph shown by Leon Isaacs:

"I CAN'T help believing in reincarnation. I think it is capable of scientific proof. At the moment we are so little aware of the laws that we cannot offer logical proof, but after a long series of empirical investigations it seems only reasonable to assume that cause and effect works both ways."

The speaker is 55-year-old Winifred Whiting Boyers. She first saw the light of day in Nottinghamshire but went with her parents to Lincoln when she was only five. Having been baptised into the Christian faith, she lived "a nun-like existence" in her early years.

Her first psychic experience happened soon after the move to Lincoln. She saw a woman standing beside her bed and thought at first that it was her mother. When she extended her hand to touch her visitor, her fingers passed through the figure.

Youth was spent in semi-trance

As well as seeing "fairies and that sort of thing," she remembers spending many of her youthful years in a kind of semi-trance. "Mother was not prepared to listen to my experiences. She thought it was all imagination."

After marriage and bearing a son, she was ill for a number of years. The child was also ailing. One day, after visiting her doctor with him, she found herself walking unconsciously away from home. "Then I was outside a particular house and was told clairaudiently to go and knock on the door. My son asked me where we were going and I said I didn't know.

The door was opened by a woman who said, 'I know what you have come for.' Inside, she diagnosed my son's trouble and gave him healing. He recovered, but, soon after, I was ill again. In hospital I had an operation. The doctors and nurses were astounded by the fact that I spoke in six different languages whilst I was under the anaesthetic." [9]

Terrified of facing peopled

Grace attended no developing circle—"I was under the objective tuition of my guide, Eli, for two years."

Her first contact with organised Spiritualism came through the woman who had healed her son. It began when she accepted an invitation to demonstrate psychometry in her benefactress's home circle. "I was terrified of facing people but so certain of the people on the Other Side that I knew I could do it."

[9] For similar cases of speaking under anaesthetic, see Pioneer, Vol. 12, No. 5, September - October 2016: "Voices at surgical operations".

A demonstration at a church on the east coast followed. Grace was on the ladder which she has steadily mounted since those days to her present prominent place among British mental mediums.

"I am essentially a researcher." she avers. "I don't want things to happen just anyhow. I dislike to feel that I am controlled or possessed."

Her advent in London came just after the war, when she joined Marylebone Spiritualist Association.[10] Now, her commitments in the capital are such that she spends the majority of her time in London, living in her comfortable Bayswater flat and returning to her husband and real home in Lincoln as often as she can. Normally, this is every other week-end. She runs her own car for these purposes. Last year it covered 35,000 miles in her service.

More men than women are sitters

She has a theory that hauntings are in some way connected with reincarnation. "I have often been asked to lay ghosts. Sometimes I have been successful and sometimes not."

In her 23 years' public mediumship she has noticed many changes. "In the old days the majority of sitters were women. Now they are mainly men."

When it comes to a discussion of her unfulfilled ambitions, she says: "I have done what I set out to do with about two exceptions. I want to write in order to put on record some of the things I have discovered in order to help others. I would like to interest people in the how and why of psychic science. I would like to do more lecturing and, perhaps, to broadcast."

"I can make myself a vacuum"

Small in build and brown-eyed, Grace has two primary allergies—smoke ("tobacco and chimney") and noise. How does she tolerate life in a great city? "Whenever I go into crowds I can make myself a vacuum."

Grace's hopes for the Movement are simply and sincerely expressed. "I should like to see Spiritualism take its place in the world as a power which people sought for its value, not as a temporary relief."

During the war, she served in military hospitals and gave seances in first-aid posts "while we were waiting for things to happen."

On a journey from Wisbech to Lincoln the express train in which she was travelling collided with a goods train and was badly damaged. A girl in her compartment had been recovering from a nervous breakdown. Though neither was injured in the accident, Grace had considerable difficulty in soothing her fears when they at last obtained another train.

"I was able to help her by hypnosis and psychic healing. She lay down with her head on my knee. We completed the journey without further trouble, but I shall never forget the look of consternation which came onto the face of a young man when he entered the compartment and saw the scene!"

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[10] Today this is called the Spiritualists' Association of Great Britain (SAGB).

Editor's note:

Grace Boyers DSNU was a Minister of the Spiritualists' National Union; it can be noted in Pioneer, Vol. 1, No. 2, January 2014: "The J. Arthur Findlay College for the Advancement of Psychic Science –The early years":

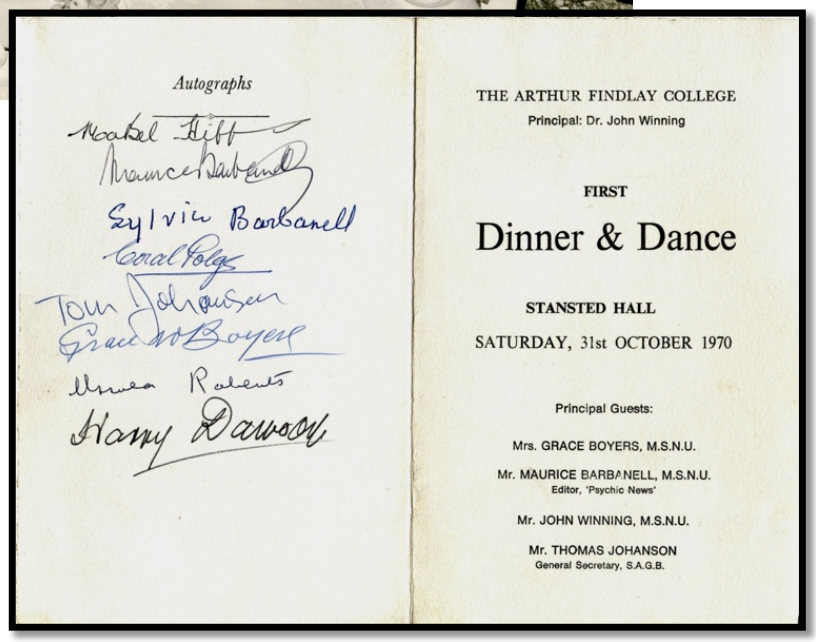
> "… on 24th July 1964, amidst the implementation of agreements and requests, James Arthur Findlay died. The funeral service was conducted by Dr. John Winning, Vice-President of the SNU supported by Percy Wilson, M.A., and Grace Boyers. The service was held in the Gallery of Stansted Hall and attended by members of the Findlay family and friends from Chelmsford and nearby villages. Representing the National Council were Mr W. S. Fowler, Mr Joe Capstack, Mr Sills and Mr S. T. Gunning."

Grace Boyers was on the original Management Committee set up to deal with the transfer of the Arthur Findlay College from Arthur Findlay to the Union; please see the issue cited above.

On a lighter note, in late summer Gordon Higginson agreed to organise the first College dinner/dance for October 31st; the principal guests were Grace Boyers, Maurice Barbanell, John Winning and Thomas Johanson SAGB (Coral Polge's husband), with Frank Tamms as the Master of Ceremonies:



Grace Boyers is, I believe, seated bottom left; second man up is former SNU President Charles Quastel, then another former President, John Winning.



Autographs

Mabel Tiffe
Maurice Barbanell
Sylvia Barbanell
Coral Polge
Tom Johanson
Grace M. Boyers
Ursula Roberts
Harry Dawson

THE ARTHUR FINDLAY COLLEGE
Principal: Dr. John Winning

FIRST

Dinner & Dance

STANSTED HALL

SATURDAY, 31st OCTOBER 1970

Principal Guests:

Mrs. GRACE BOYERS, M.S.N.U.

Mr. MAURICE BARBANELL, M.S.N.U.
Editor, 'Psychic News'

Mr. JOHN WINNING, M.S.N.U.

Mr. THOMAS JOHANSON
General Secretary, S.A.G.B.

THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Albert and May Saxon

When Albert was 17 and May 16 years of age they met at Huddersfield Spiritualist Church Lyceum, the "Huddersfield Examiner" on April 20th 2004 announced:

> "TEENAGE sweethearts Albert and May Saxon will tomorrow celebrate 70 years of wedded bliss. And they happily claim they have reached their platinum wedding anniversary without an argument"

Both Albert and May had long family connections with Spiritualism and the Lyceum.

May was born in 1912; her grandmother was a founder member of West Melton Spiritualist Church. May's parents met at the Lyceum; May was named in the Church, later becoming Lyceum Conductor for many years.

Albert was born in 1911 and in 1885 his great-great-grandmother was a founder member of Huddersfield Spiritualist Church; his parents also met through the Lyceum. In the article which follows we can note that Albert's father was Mr Herbert Saxon.[11] Herbert was the church President for many years; Albert was the church secretary for over ten years in the late 60s and 70s.

The first time I personally came across the name Saxon was when I became curator of the Britten Memorial Museum[12] and noted the various items they had generously donated over the years. One item of great historic value is a miniature psychic painting by David Duguid, said to have been done within the space of two to three minutes in the nineteenth century.[13] Another part of their donation includes an envelope of information on our former SNU President Percy Wilson and his links with another former SNU President, George Berry, and Hanson Hey, General Secretary of the Union.[14]

This information was used to profile "Percy Wilson SNU President 1959-1953"; however, this was on the old SNU website "Presidents Page", which I am hopeful is to be restored on the new one. This article was picked up in America by Percy's surviving two sons, who contacted me with regard to their family history, as the envelope donated showed the family links between the former two Presidents and our second General Secretary, Hanson Hey.

It highlights the importance of donating materials to our Britten Museum & Library!!!

As noted, Albert and May were long-serving Spiritualists at Huddersfield Church, involved within the SNU and Lyceum; May died on September 2nd 2005 and Albert almost to the day four years later, August 28th 2009. Again, the Britten Museum & Library has benefited, with some of Albert and May's papers being donated.

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[11] He died circa 1971 and his funeral service was conducted by the Saxons' close friend, Derek P. Everitt MSNU (1926-1998). Derek was greatly involved with the SNU and served as Vice-President and one-time editor of the Union's Newsletters in the 1960s; these cover our history during this period, the opening of Stansted Hall, etc. He also compiled the "Stansted Story", a visitor's short guide to the history of the Arthur Findlay College. He had strong early links to the Lyceum, becoming Vice-President and President of the Spiritualists' Lyceum Union and organising the Lyceum Conferences and meetings, etc. He organised the first Lyceum Summer School at Scarborough in 1965, then again at Stansted Hall in 1966 and 1967. This information is from Albert's papers.

[12] Now the Britten Museum & Library.

[13] Pioneer, Vol. 2, No. 4, July 2015: "Trance & Direct Spirit Art – David Duguid".

[14] See Pioneer, Vol. 1, No. 5, October 2014: "General Secretaries of the SNU", information on Hanson Hey and Robert Yates.

Below is taken from the papers: "Mr A. Saxon SLU Awareness Scheme":[15]

Huddersfield Spiritualist Church, Old Leeds Road, Huddersfield.
Centenary Year 1985

—~—☼—~—

HISTORY OF SPIRITUALISM IN THE HUDDERSFIELD AREA

When we attend meetings and services in the Old Leeds Road Spiritualist Church, I wonder if we ever think back to the time when there were no Spiritualist Churches, and how did this Religion come into being in the Huddersfield area. With modern technology happenings can be seen instantly, via satellite, at the opposite side of the World.

This is indeed a far cry from the means of communication in 1848, although it was in 1848 that communication from the Spirit World was recorded at Hydesville in America. Under today's conditions teams of reporters and camera men would have invaded the privacy of the Fox family, and in Huddersfield on the Six-o-Clock News we should have had pictures and interviews shown on our television screens. I wonder whether we should have built up our Spiritualist organisation under those conditions. Personally – I doubt it. It was the slow build up and the intensive investigation which was carried out by people who wanted 'to know'. It was undoubtedly because Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten lived in the north of England that interest in communication with the Spirit World, and the resultant implications, became more active in the North.

In the March 10th 1871 edition of the Journal Medium & Daybreak there is printed a letter from a Mr. Varley, who had emigrated from Huddersfield to America in 1868, and he refers to the fact that from 1863 until his departure for America in 1868 they had been holding circles in Huddersfield. That was just 15 years after the events in Hydesville, which illustrates the impact and the tremendous interest that had been aroused by those 'knockings'. Around Huddersfield, groups of people formed circles to investigate into this new religion which was called Spiritualism.

To ensure that only the people who were genuinely interested in the meetings could attend, cards were issued, signed by the holders and which read 'I --- am a truth seeking Spiritualist' and these cards had to be produced to gain admission to the meetings.

The various groups co-operated and hired halls and well known mediums and speakers were invited to take the meetings. Information about the activities in Huddersfield at this time can only be obtained from the journals Medium & Daybreak and later The Two Worlds.

January 6th 1871 edition – no meetings being held in Huddersfield.
March 17th 1871– Huddersfield is the centre of Spiritualist communities.
Dec 29th 1871 – No mediums, movement is at a standstill.[16]

These reports were, of course, relating to public meetings but the various groups must have continued to meet in their circles. It was in 1885 that two brothers, Mr. J and Mr O. Hemingway formed the first Spiritualist Society with a Mr. J. Sutcliffe being elected the first President of the Church.[17]

[15] SLU: Spiritualists' Lyceum Union.

[16] 1871 references: Albert is referring to the Medium & Daybreak.

[17] Joseph Sutcliffe was a leading Lyceumist and a well-known and respected Spiritualist.

The groups in the district supported the Society and the first service was held in newly acquired Church Hall at 3 Brook Street.

Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten and Mr. W. Wallace were regular speakers at the services.



At this period the Lyceum movement was very active and the Lyceum Members played a great part in the activities of the Church. News items written towards the end of the 19th century tell of celebration teas and outings – one report states that 170 people sat down to tea after one of the meetings. In April 1904 the premises were licensed for marriages and the first wedding took place.

As in most societies harmony does not always reign supreme and shortly after the foundation of the Brook Street Church a group of members broke away and started meeting at Kayes Buildings. Two Worlds journal reports a meeting at Kayes Buildings on Nov 20th 1887. This group later moved to rooms at St Peter Street and continued to meet there until they closed down in 1941 when the rooms were requisitioned by the Government.

At the Brook Street Church, the support given to the Society was so great that larger premises were required, and a hall seating 250 people was purchased at a cost of £300. This building was at 42, Ramsden Street, at the corner of Ramsden Street and Commercial Street. This Church was always referred to as Commercial Street Church.

The Society continued to flourish and in 1917 they moved to new premises at 23 Ramsden Street. It was decided that the name of the Church should be 'The National Spiritualist Church, Ramsden Street' and in 1922 new model rules were drawn up. In 1944 the Church building was put in sole trust with the S.N.U. Trust Scheme.



Officers and members of the Huddersfield Church played an active part in National and District Spiritualism. Church President, Mr. Robert Yates was President of the Yorkshire District Council and before the establishment of the S.N.U.[18] office at Manchester, Mrs. E. E. Law was for a period the treasurer of the S.N.U. ln 1922 Mr. Yates tried to get a Bill into Parliament recognising Spiritualism as a Religion. Mr. W Gush compiled a ceremony handbook which was probably the forerunner of the S.N.U. Ministers Handbook. In 1925 Mr. Haigh resigned as examiner for the Lyceum examinations because he was involved in the formation of a Spiritualist Training College. Mr Herbert Saxon was for several years the Yorkshire Area Representative on the S.N.U. Council.

On 18th December 1964 a Compulsory Purchase Order was served upon the Officers of the Church – the site at Ramsden Street was involved in the first phase of the Town centre redevelopment scheme. The discussions and meetings with the Local Authorities and the District Valuer were numerous, long and tedious. Offers of various buildings in the town were made, the corporation to pay for the alterations to make them suitable for Church purposes. A special committee had been set up by the Church officers and insistence was made that we would not accept a converted building in exchange for our Church in Ramsden Street. Eventually the Local Authorities made the offer of a site in Old Leeds Road upon which they would build a new Church. The build was completed in Apri1 1970, and on May 2nd 1970 the New Church was officially opened by the Mayor Elect – Alderman A.J. Hazeldene J.P. The President of the S.N.U. Mr. Gordon Higginson M.S.N.U performed the dedication service.



The name of the Church was altered to 'The Huddersfield Spiritualist Church'. Shortly after the opening of the Church a Healing Sanctuary was endowed by Mr. Clark Findlay in memory of his father Mr. John Findlay and the title 'Findlay Healing Clinic' was agreed upon.[19] In January 1972 the Church was broken into and a fire started – the inside of the Church Hall was destroyed and most of the building had to be redecorated. In spite of this major setback the Church continued to prosper and is very active.

[18] Robert Yates gave over forty years' service to Spiritualism and died on August 26th 1935.

[19] John Findlay MSNU was the brother of J. Arthur Findlay.

In 1985 – the centenary year of the Huddersfield Church – whilst looking back on the past 100 years we must not fail to pay tribute to the wonderful dedicated Spiritualists who through their efforts, knowledge and foresight, their insistence on running their Church in a correct manner made it possible for us to meet in 1985 in a lovely Church.

Let us then 'Look back and give thanks, Look forward and take courage'.

—~—☼—~—

Photograph shows the Huddersfield Church Centenary 1985 [20]

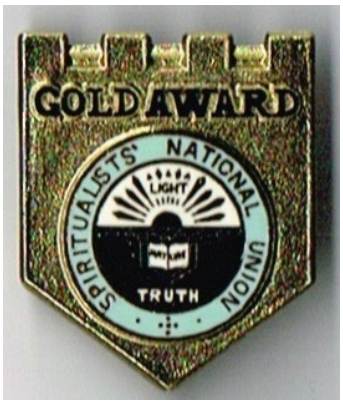


Left to right: Albert Saxon, the Mayor of Huddersfield (and wife?), May Saxon, Church President Mr Tom Mair, SNU President Gordon Higginson.

—~—☼—~—

[20] The photograph is dated July 2nd 1985 and is under copyright to the Huddersfield Examiner, which has given the Spiritualists' National Union Pioneer permission to use this image.

Both May and Albert were awarded the Gold Service Award of the SNU



Mr & Mrs Albert Saxon GSSNU

Today the Church continues to flourish; its solid foundations were laid firm by those early dedicated pioneers.[21]





The Harold Sharp Memorial Library ⇛



Please see the last issue of Pioneer:
"Harold Sharp – *Symbolic Drawings* – *Auragraphs*"

Thanks are due to The Huddersfield Daily Examiner and Trevor Poulter at Huddersfield Spiritualist Church for some of the information contained in this article.

[21]Huddersfield Spiritualist Church: http://www.huddersfieldspiritualistchurch.co.uk

In the last issue of Pioneer we published:

Spiritualist Healers of the Past: John Britnell – Father of "The National Federation of Spiritual Healers"

I received a response from Wim H. Kramer, Managing Director of the Dutch foundation, 'Het Johan Borgman Fonds', asking "Who knows more about the history of the NFSH?"



CERTIFICATE

This is to Certify that

MR J. BORGMAN

is a Member of the National Federation

of

Spiritual Healers

as a Practising Healer

A.J. Ellis Chairman

Class B D. Commerford Secretary

Reg. No. 450 Date 23rd May 1960

This Certificate is the property of the National Federation of Spiritual Healers and is issued on the understanding that it will be returned immediately the membership is terminated.

I have known Wim for some years and he gave me some interesting information which I quote below:

Now and then the National Federation of Spiritual Healers (NFSH) is mentioned in the Pioneer. In the April 2018 edition a one-page article introduced Mr. John Britnell as the father of the NFSH. From this article it is clear that not much is known about the history of this federation.

Mr. Johan Borgman (1989-1976), the founder of our Dutch foundation, 'Het Johan Borgman Fonds', was in his lifetime a very successful psychic healer based in Amsterdam, where he practised for over 50 years in a row. In his early eighties he became ill and infirm and needed home care. He moved from his mansion in Amsterdam to a smaller house in Oosterbeek, a small town in the eastern part of the country. Unfortunately, in the process of moving much of his personal possessions was dumped. However, among the few remaining documents there was an NFSH membership certificate issued on May 23rd 1960, with registration number 450, stating that Mr. Borgman was a Class B member and Practical Healer. Unfortunately, the signature of the President is unreadable[22] to us but the signature of the secretary of the NFSH at that time stated clearly 'D. Commerford', a sister of Harry Edwards, as we have just learned from the April 2018 article in 'The Pioneer'.

In order to enlarge our knowledge of Mr. Borgman's biography we are very much interested to learn more about his connections to the UK and especially the NFSH.

So in the autumn of 2017 we asked Leslie Price if he could give us some clarification about the NFSH. We are in debt to him. Immediately he took our request seriously and started digging. In his e-mail reply to us of September 9th Leslie quoted his old friend Jim Pym saying:

[22] I asked Charlie Kennedy who is mentioned in the article in question:
"I know that Albert Ellis took over as Chairman from John Britnell after John's death. He was President of East Midlands Spiritual Healers Association. In 1958 he was Chairing the Royal Festival Hall Healers' Day Celebrations on 25 October 1958. He also first introduced the idea of collective insurance for NFSH members. He opened business premises in Newark High Street as HQ for East Midlands S.H.A.
"Albert J. Ellis was the founding president of East Midland Spiritual Healers' Association which formed in 1953 and he lived in Lincoln. It was announced in March 1958 after a Council meeting that he was taking over as Chairman of NFSH following John Britnell's death in Dec 1957. He retired as Chairman at the 1960's AGM and Gordon Turner took over as the 3rd Chairman of NFSH. Albert was co-opted onto the NFSH Council at the 1960 AGM."

"From what I remember, both were for full healers. Class A membership was for those who joined through one of the local groups (e.g. Surrey Spiritual Healers etc). Class B, which I was, was for those who were accepted as healers directly with the national body. My – Jim Pym - certificate is dated 26th August 1963, numbered B 828, and signed by Gordon Turner (Chair) and Dorothy Commerford (Secretary). I am still a member, though not very active in healing these days."

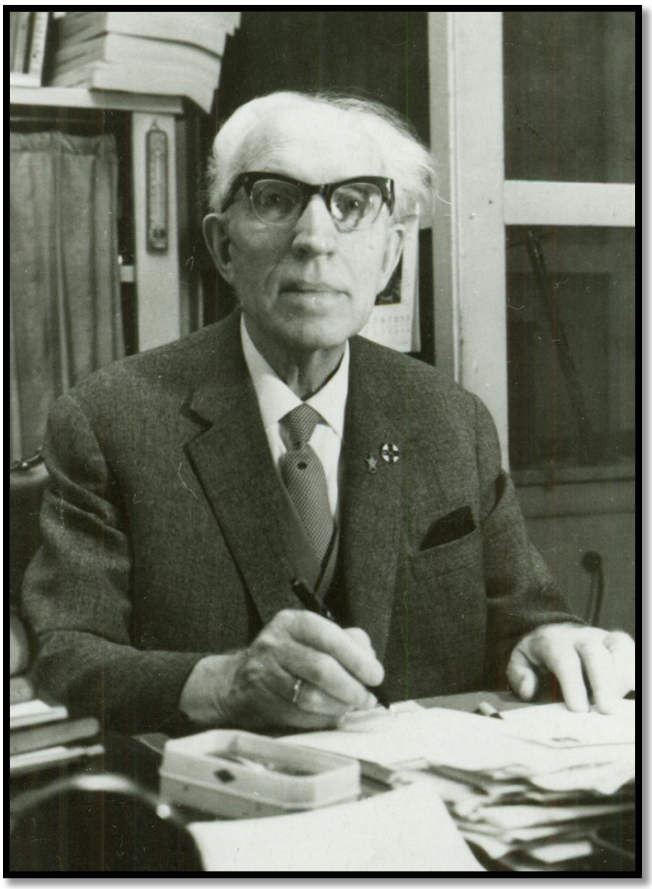
Over time the NFSH was renamed as 'The Healing Trust' and a distinction between A and B Class members does not exist anymore. However, Leslie adds to his e-mail:

'They have always had members who live outside the UK.'

Fascinating, because it made us wonder if there were more healers from the Netherlands amongst their membership.

We were pleased to read in The Pioneer of April 2018 that Charlie Kennedy from the Healing Trust is planning on having a book published on the history of the NFSH.

Dutch Spiritualism



Wim noted in his e-mail:

We are making lots of progress in archiving the history of Dutch Spiritualism and parapsychology. E.g. we have now completed – and made publicly available – the history of Dutch Spiritualism in an archive that contains over 5500 folders… Also we archived – and made publicly available - two other Spiritual collections of former, and now forgotten, Spiritual societies and there are more to come …

I have asked Wim Kramer to give Pioneer some more detailed information on Dutch Spiritualism in archiving their history. Any further information readers may have about international membership of the NFSH and Mr. Borgman for the Dutch foundation, 'Het Johan Borgman Fonds', please contact Pioneer or Wim Kramer at: info@hjbf.nl

The photograph of Mr. Johan Borgman behind his desk taken in October 1968. In this month he was celebrating his 50 years anniversary as a psychic healer in Amsterdam.

Note that he is proudly wearing his NFSH pin and, below, the pin of the NWP, a Dutch healers' federation.