The PIONEER

The Pioneer is now part of the recommended reading for the Spiritualists' National Union's education courses.



# Psychic Spirit Photography

# the PIONEER

**The Pioneer is now part of the recommended reading for the Spiritualists' National Union's education courses. Please reference: "Pioneer, volume, issue and page numbers"**

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**Special thanks to Charles Coulston for his work in sub-editing these issues – also acknowledged to Minister David Hopkins and Leslie Price for their past work in sub-editing the issues**

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# Psychic Photography

With the various displays of psychic photography in the Britten Museum at the Arthur Findlay College questions often arise – how do we know the images are genuine? Of course, "We do not know" is my reply – it's more of a case of personal judgement. Mostly the photographs have no information with them, so generally we know nothing of the conditions under which they were taken or, indeed, whether or not the recipient recognised the extra as a family member or a friend, etc. In some cases even the photographer is unknown, although we have some we can identify as William Hope, John Myers, etc.

In the heyday of psychic extras extortionate methods were used to trick the sitter and researcher; psychic photography could be big business for the faker. Spiritualists and the Spiritualist press would often be the *first* to expose the fake medium. Many of our pioneers were expert in photographic techniques used by genuine and fake mediums. Our former President John B. McIndoe (1930-1938) was an expert in psychic photography, who brought to task a well-known psychic photographer. To help to prevent fraud a good knowledge of deception was most helpful, so appropriate test sittings could be developed to ensure genuine photographic mediumship was protected.

The British College of Psychic Science, founded by James Hewat McKenzie in 1920, undertook a lot of important research into various aspects of phenomena, especially in psychic photography; for further details of the BCPS please see Psypioneer, for example Vol. 3, No. 8, August 2007: "A Knight Errant of Psychic Science: James Hewat McKenzie".

On June 26th 1935 Mr. C.P. MacCarthy gave a lecture to the "British College of Psychic Science" and a précis of the lecture was published in its Quarterly Transactions of the BCPS, Vol. XIV, No. 3, October 1935, pages 154-159:

## DECEPTION IN PSYCHIC PHOTOGRAPHY

*NOTE. —This lecture on this subject was so good and exhaustive that I feel some difficulty in making a précis of it. To be complete it should contain all the plates he showed. I must be content with ten of the leading phenomena. —EDITOR.*[9]

The lecture was in three stages: (I) Mr. MacCarthy showed four photographs which he definitely believes genuine psychic productions, and explained how and why he considers them genuine; (2) methods of faking; and (3) how he "was fortunate enough to be able to thoroughly bamboozle a Committee in Sheffield, members of the Sheffield S.P.R."

### METHOD OF FAKING

This was the main purpose of the lecture.

I. A slide was shown with "Mumler I862. U.S.A." written across it. This was produced by the lecturer writing on the negative with a stick dipped in hyposulphite of soda, producing a clear impression on the negative plate.

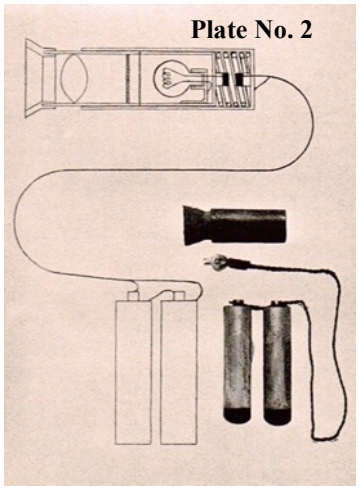
2. Another slide showed "Kate Fox" written on the wallpaper with sulphate of quinine in dilute sulphuric acid, which forms an invisible fluorescent impression, and reappears on the plate exposed.

[9] Stanley DeBrath.

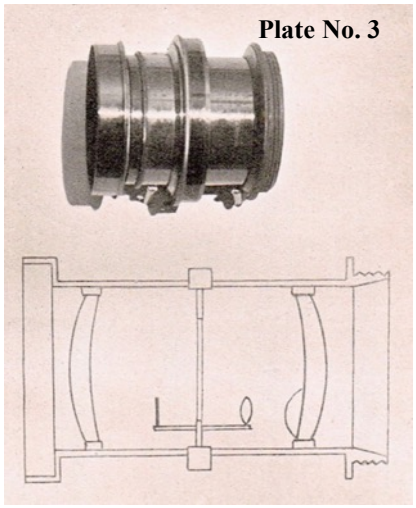
3. Plate No. I is a double exposure. The occupant of the rather obvious white sheet is Mr. MacCarthy himself. Obviously he must have had previous possession of the plate, and very various "extras" could be impressed by this means.


Plate No. I

4. A fourth slide was shown with Miss Gracie Fields as an "extra." This was taken with an American "pusher" instrument, Plate 2. It is an indiarubber tipped metal cylinder which is small enough to be concealed in the hand, and contains a very small positive film of Gracie Fields and a "pea-bulb" light connected to an electric battery. When the pusher is pressed on the plate before development it automatically lights the bulb. The miniature portrait is focussed on the plate. A quarter-second exposure is sufficient.

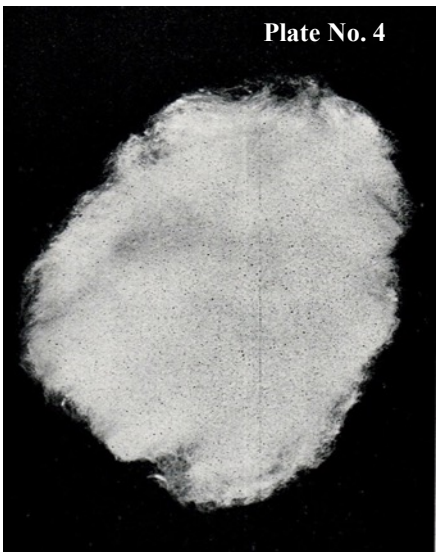

Plate No. 2

5. Here is another American method which shows the demand existing in the States for fake instruments. Plate 3 shows a "fake-lens." An ordinary lens, it appears to the superficial observer, but it contains a pivot on which swings a small lens and a miniature portrait (of Greta Garbo in this case). The light that takes the sitter's photograph goes through the front lens, but also through the small concealed lens and projects the miniature portrait on to the plate.


Plate No. 3

The ectoplasm in this case is not very good—but it is not meant to be good—I am showing fake photographs and wish them to look like fakes at the moment.

## "ECTOPLASM"


Plate No. 4

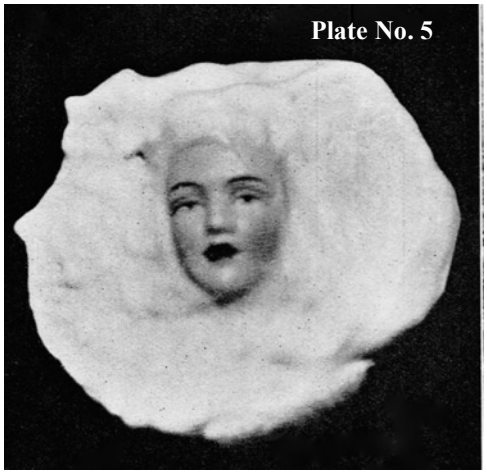
Psychic "extras" have usually some "ectoplasm" around them, and here are some methods of getting good results.

*Plate 4*. Cotton wool makes a fairly good "ectoplasm," but it is given away by the little hairs at the edges. True ectoplasm resembles cotton-wool, but it has no hairs, it fades into nothingness.

*Slide*.—This is cheese-cloth. The lecturer said that he was endeavouring to imitate Hope's results but could find nothing quite satisfactory.

*Slide*.—This is white clay. It is too stiff, but might be handled so as to look convincing. There are of course no hairs.

*Plate* 5. This is one of the best, though somewhat waxy. It is made with palm-olive shaving soap. The face is a china doll.


Plate No. 5

The Lecturer said:

"I have now shown you some photographs which I believe to be genuine. I have shown you some interesting methods of faking. They have all got one drawback—you have either to provide your own camera, your own plates, or to manipulate the plates. You have to prepare the room. The sitter possibly wants 'test conditions.' I have deliberately not mentioned the method by sleight-of-hand substitution. I leave changing the plate and such-like methods aside. I am interested only in scientific procedure. After studying the subject, I realized that there is a way of putting 'psychic extras' on plates under 'test conditions' stricter than are usually asked, or have been asked, of any medium."

*Plate* 6. "I therefore wrote the letter of which Plate 6 is a copy [published at the end of the article].

"The Sheffield S.P.R. accordingly selected a Committee, composed of Mr. C. L. MacCarthy, my father, Vice-President of the S.S.P.R., a Spiritualist who is also a Vice-President of the S.S.P.R., who had thirty years of experience of psychical research; a Rector (M.A. Cantab), who is interested in the subject; a professional photographer; and a lady who had experience in psychic photography."

The declared object was:

I. To prove the possibility of fake under 'test conditions.'

2. To show that one can't be too critical of such phenomena.

3. To indicate the increasing scope for fraud with the advancement of science, though not to disprove the possibility of genuine psychic photography.

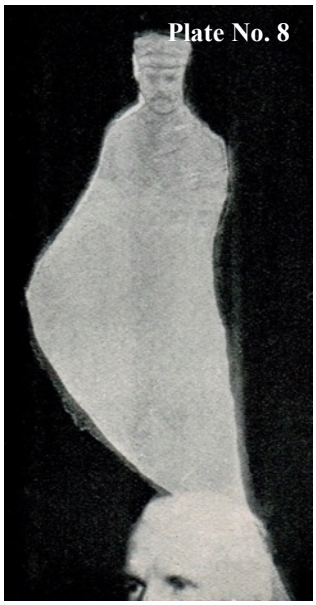

Plate No. 7

The plates were bought by the Committee and sealed at the shop; the camera was hired from stock. The test was held in the house of a member of the Committee. Mr. MacCarthy was searched, took off his coat and put on a sweater without pockets, and was handcuffed with police handcuffs. Plate 7 shows him in this condition. The Committee decided to take the photographs one at a time, develop, and load for the next.

The lady (*slide*) was given precedence. An elderly woman was to be put over her right shoulder. This was a failure.

Mr. C. P. MacMCarthy's father came next. Mr. C. P. MacCarthy said, "I suggest you give me somebody I don't know and have never met." Some conversation ensued, and I knew that he was deeply interested in a subaltern who had been killed at Gallipoli. I led him to name that man. *Plate* 8, which he recognized.

The next to sit was the Spiritualist. I said, "I am going to put the face of an elderly woman with grey hair and an oval face over your shoulder." *Slide*.


Plate No. 8

Then followed the Rector. "I said to him that above his head I would put the face of a man about 35, with a pear-shaped face and a drooping moustache. He said immediately, "If you can, I think I can recognise it." *Slide*. I have got it in writing that this is his uncle, who has been many years dead. Ben Tillett was chosen because of his family likeness to the Rector." *Plate* 9.


Plate No. 9

The professional photographer was the next. After a proof that the plates were blank. I said to him, "I am going to give you a very special demonstration. We will all go downstairs, and bring the plate with you." So we trooped downstairs, and I said, "This is going to be the main feature of the programme. Will somebody name a book that everyone should know?" The Bible was suggested. I opened it at the Acts, chapter 17, verse 26. I said, "Somebody give me a really difficult language." After some conversation, Chinese was proposed. *Plate* 10. It was shown to a Chinese laundryman who read it—"All men are of the same blood like you and I." It was also referred to a Chinese missionary who gave the same answer, and quoted the reference.

## THE EXPLANATION

Mr. MacCarthy gave no diagram of the instrument he used, for the reason that he does not wish to help fakers.

Briefly it is a small brass instrument about the size of the index finger, somewhat on the lines of the "pusher" described in *Plate* 2, but with a simple arrangement for inserting a miniature previously prepared, and a means for sending a ray of invisible ultra-violet light through it. The focal length of the lens is about 18 inches.

Mr. MacCarthy had not this instrument on him when he was searched, but he had put it where it was easily accessible, and the decision of the Committee in giving long intervals between the photographs gave him ample opportunities for changing the miniatures, even though handcuffed. This preparation of miniature positives is essential to the success of the method, and is the only uncertainty in the process. That involved some rather intricate psychological procedure. It was necessary to get the sitter to suggest someone who would correspond to the miniature previously prepared. I give the details in Mr. MacCarthy's own words.

*The photograph of the subaltern*. "It *was* his photograph. My father had forgotten that before this officer sailed for Gallipoli, he had sent me a photograph of his company. I cut out his portrait and


Plate No. 10

prepared the miniature. I edged my father along, and so induced him to name this man."

*The Spiritualist's case*. "I went through reams to find someone who resembled the 'elderly woman' proposed. I spent hours and hours on the search. At last I found in an old second-hand book a portrait of Mrs. Gladstone who, though no relation, has a family-likeness to the sitter, cut the head out, and used that."

*The Rector's case*. "This was another difficult problem. The photograph is of Ben Tillett, and I have actually got it in writing from the Rector that this is an uncle. The mistake is in every way permissible—there is a characteristic likeness."

*In regard to the Chinese writing*. "I worked that backwards. When you say 'Think of a book that *everybody* will know and *everybody* will have,' the first that will be suggested is the Bible. I was wrong. Somebody said, '*Robinson Crusoe*.' I said, 'No, no, that won't do, everyone has not read it.' Someone said 'The Bible.' I said, 'Well, if you like it that will do.' I happened to know which edition of the Bible was in the house. I got a similar edition. The Bible was brought, and as I had asked for it, it was handed to me. I opened it at the place I had chosen and asked 'Will you have the *first*, or the last verse? They chose the last verse on the page (V. 26). Then the suggestion of language. Hebrew was named. The Rector said, 'I know Hebrew.' Someone else said 'Chinese.' So that was all right. My previously prepared miniature would suit.' "

Mr. MacCarthy then showed several slides of photographs taken by infra-red rays, one of a photograph taken by the ultra-violet rays in the dark, gave a description of the eye, and a diagram of the spectrum, showing the infra-red and ultra-violet areas. Mr. MacCarthy said:

"I used ultra-violet, in a special apparatus . . . I simply wished to miss the sensitivity of the eye . . . I just missed it. I had to have small positives, and to get them I took micro-photographs.

*Slide*. From a quarter-plate negative I got an exact picture little bigger than a pin's head. I put them in an instrument little larger than my little finger. . . . In the dark room when they were loading the slide, from a distance of 18 inches, I projected half-a-second's exposure on that plate. The small apparatus had two rings, and I slipped it underneath my index finger and pointed it at the plate where I wanted it to go. With years of usage I can see quite well by red light."

Various questions were asked by the audience, and to each of them Mr. MacCarthy gave satisfactory replies. Asked if he were handcuffed all the time, he said he was, but that there is a certain freedom allowed in the handcuffs. Mr. Lethem asked what method is most used in faking? Mr. MacCarthy replied, "I am afraid that the usual method is the poor and uninteresting method of substitution." There were many more questions and answers. A cordial vote of thanks closed the lecture.[10]

[10] EDITOR'S REMARKS [articles editor] —This lecture (copyright) was delivered at Sheffield, and Mr. O. J. Wendlandt wrote the report that was printed in Light of Nov. 22nd, 1934 and also in *Psychic Science* of January, 1935. It provoked wide discussion, and it gave no clue to the method used. This is now quite clear. 'Mr. MacCarthy freely admitted that Mr. Hope had neither the knowledge, the skill, the leisure, the instruments, nor the money, to undertake the long, expensive, and complicated method of preparing the positive miniatures, and for all normal photography, the 'test-conditions' when the medium is excluded from the dark room, those conditions are valid. But in view of the new possibilities, evidently conditions need to be tightened up.
One of them must be to exclude all possibility of the examining Committee being led to make choices which agree with the miniature previously prepared by the faker. I am not surprised that on Mr. Wendlandt's letter a lively discussion should have arisen among those who knew nothing of Mr. MacCarthy's very ingenious and scientific apparatus.

TELEPHONE No. 26100.
TELEGRAMS: "MACCARTHY, 26100 SHEFFIELD."

# C. P. MACCARTHY.

15, WILKINSON STREET,
SHEFFIELD 10.

CPM/WH. May Fifteenth 1934.

**Fake Psychic Photographs Under Test Conditions.**

I have pleasure in confirming your promise to form a Committee at 70, Clarkehouse Road, Sheffield, at seven o'clock on Friday evening, the eighteenth instant, when I will demonstrate under test conditions Fake Psychic Photography

There are three main reasons for this demonstration.

(1)...To prove the possibility of Fake under test conditions.
(2)...To show you cannot be too critical of such phenomena
(3)...To indicate the increasing scope for fraud with the advancement of science - though not to disprove the probability of genuine Spirit Photography

I guarantee, in the sum of Five Pounds, payable to any recognised Charitable Institution, that no collusion exists, or has existed, or will exist between myself and any other party in connection with this demonstration That is to say, collusion between myself and any other member of the Committee; between myself and any discarnate intelligence; between myself and the Photographic Suppliers ( who will be chosen by the Committee ) ; or between myself and the Photographic Plate manufacturers.

These "Psychic" Photographs will be projected on to the Plates by scientific means - and I make only one stipulation, which is that no-one shall attempt to trick or mislead me in any way.

**Plate No. 6**

Psychic/spirit photography has had a long history from the mid-1800s. It would be true to state that its practitioners have undergone various exposures and even prison; however, it is also true to state that there have also been many tests which have produced remarkable results beyond the possibilities of fraud. The spirit forms which appear on the photographs are generally known as "psychic extras". Many of our old pioneers like Stainton Moses, Emma Hardinge Britten and James J. Morse were involved in this early phenomenon.

It has been noted in recent issues of "Pioneer" that Morse's lantern glass slides were found at Stansted. Morse wrote "A Brief History of Spirit Photography" while he was editor of the "Two Worlds" and serialised it in the journal, starting in August 27th 1915.

**Morse's introductory statement read:**




IT is proposed to divide the subject matter to which these introductory lines are appended into three parts. First, the historical; secondly, the evidential; and, lastly, the exegetical. By pursuing this plan it is hoped that the reader will be usefully guided to a full appreciation of the great importance of the topic as unfolded in the course of the following narrative. In the first section the history (the materials of which, unfortunately, are all too meagre) will be stated. It is thought that this portion will not be the least interesting matter offered, since it will serve to show that the efforts to obtain post-mortem portraits run back some fifty-four years past. In the evidential section the record of the attested evidences of such photographs having been obtained, and the additionally important fact that recognisable photographs have been secured, will properly supplement the historical résumé, thus joining fact to history, while in the final section the expository method will enable the reader to realise the important issues involved. The stringent tests, the absolute necessity of certitude, the relationship of these phenomena to natural law are each involved. None of these points can be shirked; each is of definite importance. He is bold indeed who says "It cannot be"; while he is wiser who says "I do not know." The few illustrations used in connection are among the most reliable submitted to the writer. The various contributing writers are men known for their honour and probity.

The complete series is reprinted in Psypioneer.[11] In the set of Morse's fairly extensive collection of psychic extras it includes an image of Emma Hardinge Britten with her musical spirit guide Ludwig van Beethoven, taken by the American photographer William Mumler.[12]

[11] Starting in Vol. 9, No. 06, June 2013.

[12] It is very rare for Emma to name a guide or spirits who controlled her. It was an open question with many at the time whether any such control was in operation during her orations. Her utterances were, at the time when she gave her first four principles in 1871, considered entirely inspirational, which the recorded observations of clairvoyants confirmed!

**Morse makes this comment regarding Mumler:**

> IN testimony as to the honesty of Mr. Mumler, and to the genuineness of the spirit-pictures obtained by him, it may be stated that Andrew Jackson Davis, at that time editing the "Herald of Progress." issued in New York, engaged a Mr. William Guay a practical photographer, to investigate Mr. Mumler's process, it being stipulated that he (Mr. Guay) should himself perform all the processes, and use any means which might be suggested to him for the most careful examination. He did so investigate, and reported as follows:—
>
> > Having been permitted by Mr. Mumler every facility, I event through the whole process of selecting, cleaning, preparing, coating, silvering, and putting into the shield the glass upon which Mr. M. proposed that a spirit form should be imparted, never taking off my eyes, and not allowing Mr. M. to touch the glass until it had gone through the whole of the operation. The result was that there came upon the glass a picture of my self, and, to my utter astonishment, having previously examined and scrutinised every crack and corner, plate-holder, camera, box. tube, the inside of the bath, etc—another portrait. Having since continued on several occasions my investigations as described above, and received even more perfect results than on the first trial, I have been obliged to endorse its legitimacy.
> > Signed: Wm. GUAY

Guay's report was made in 1863. Other well-known Spiritualists like Dr. Child, Judge Edmonds and Mr. Livermore testified that a large number of recognised spirit pictures had been obtained through Mumler's photographs.[13]

The full story of Emma's sitting with Mumler from different sources is told in some detail in Psypioneer[14] and is well worth reading; below is a much-edited version which outlines the story published in the "Two Worlds", March 25th 1927, pages 181-182:



*Emma Hardinge Britten alleged musical spirit guide Ludwig van Beethoven ⇒*

[13] It was the American William Mumler who established the practice of spirit photography when he started a trade in psychic photographs in the early 1860s, but was he the first? See Marc Demarest: "The Hands of The Fair Daguerreotypist: Spirit Photography Before Mumler" and see Psypioneer, Vol. 11, No. 03, March 2015.

[14] See Psypioneer, Vol. 9, No. 12, December 2013: "Emma Hardinge Britten, Beethoven, and the Spirit Photographer William H Mumler. "

# SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPH OF THE GREAT COMPOSER



WHILST the civilised world is uniting to celebrate the centenary of Ludwig Beethoven, the great musical composer, it is interesting to recall the close association which was claimed to exist between this great genius and Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, who always claimed that he had on many occasions manifested his presence to and interest in her.

Mrs. Britten was herself no mean musician, and at the early age of 16 composed music (particularly masses) which were used at church services at Bristol. At this age she also composed the Commemoration Ode, which commemorated the life of Edward Colston at Bristol. In later years she wrote musical criticisms for several papers, and was familiar with the greatest works or the great masters.

Her many references to the influence of Beethoven in her life gained corroboration during an experiment in psychic photography with W. H. Mumler, in Boston in 1871, which we reproduce herewith, in which the faint form of the composer is seen bending over her.

Mr. W. H. Mumler was the first spirit photographer, and flourished in Boston from the year 1863.

Ludwig van Beethoven passed away on March 26th, 1827.

The following is Mrs. Britten's own account of the incident, taken from the Medium and Daybreak, December 15th, 1871:

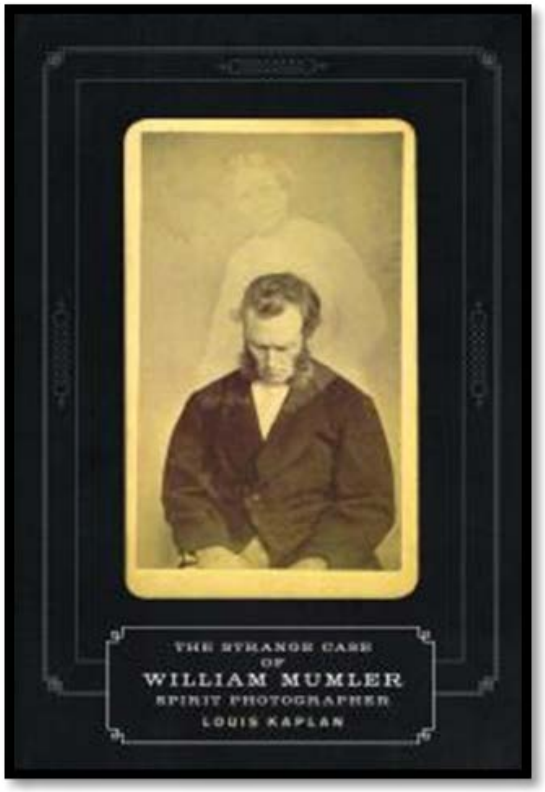
"About a fortnight ago I called upon Mr. Mumler for a sitting, impelled to do so by the remarkable accounts of tests furnished to me by reliable persons, who had obtained through this channel unmistakable proofs of their Spirit-friends' presence and identity. The result of my first sitting was the production of a female form, bending over me in the attitude of affection; but, although the spirit bears some resemblance to a dear departed friend, it is not sufficiently obvious to constitute a likeness. At my next sitting a large and remarkable-looking head appeared on the negative, but ere, the prints were taken I could not trace clearly any well-defined likeness. I remarked to Mr. Mumler that the negative appeared to present the appearance of some musical character, as there were indications of a lyre shadowed forth in the negative. Upon this Mr. Mumler immediately wrote on a slip of paper, backwards, the name of 'Beethoven.' When the prints were at length

produced, they clearly showed the portrait of Beethoven hovering over me, and holding a faintly-defined musical instrument in his hands, so placed as to present the shadow between my dress and the watch-chain which falls across it,

"Now, the circumstances which render the appearance of the great musician upon my photograph singularly significant are these: My principal occupation during my late residence in England was to write musical criticisms, in which the life and works of Beethoven formed the chief theme of my analyses. The very last piece of musical writing which I executed was an essay on the Beethoven Centenary at Bonn, celebrated just as I was about to return to America. Whilst engaged in these writings, I have the best of reasons for believing that the spirit of the noble German was frequently with me, and by a variety of test-facts convinced me and others that he was interested in what I wrote, and not infrequently suggested ideas or dictated corrections upon points of his life and musical intentions. The inspired and venerated spirit assured me, moreover, that he had constituted himself my musical guide, and purposed, in the bright communion of the better world, to reward my unbounded admiration of his character and compositions by assuming the office of my instructor. I think there must be several of my friends in London who will bear witness that I occasionally alluded to communications of the above-named character from Beethoven, but I can most positively assert that I never mentioned them to anyone in America, and I am confident that Mr. Mumler neither knew anything of my musical writings in England nor that I was in the least interested in the appearance of Beethoven.

"These circumstances considered, I think the remarkable resemblance of the spirit-portrait to the well-known head of Beethoven may be taken as a striking and conclusive test of spirit-presence. A vast number of persons with whom I am well acquainted have received admirable portraitures of their spirit-friends from Mr. Mumler, and that when they themselves were strangers to him, and no possibility could exist of his procuring any likeness or knowledge of the spirit-friends represented."






It is of interest to note that Mumler's spirit extras can be generally recognised as his photographs, as the majority have the alleged spirit extra behind the sitter, often with the hands/arms around and touching the sitter.

For example, Mumler's well-known photograph of Mary Todd Lincoln with the assassinated President and their deceased son Thaddeus. Numerous reports do not include the son, maybe because he is more difficult to see, but the name Thaddeus may appear to be incorrect.



# "DORCHAGRAPHS"

## *known today as "Skotographs"*

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Former SNU Vice-President Minister Steven Upton, as previously mentioned in "Pioneer", Vol. 4, No. 2, April 2017, was intending to donate Estelle Roberts' "Album of Red Cloud Pictures and Script in Skotographs by Madge Donohoe". This valuable donation has now been received and is in the Britten Museum & Library at Stansted Hall.

Skotographs originated in the 1890s as a form of "direct phenomena" originally called "dorchagraphs" – images obtained on photographic plates without the use of a camera. This was pioneered by Andrew Glendinning, who during 1864-1908 was involved in psychic photography. He gave the name "dorchagraph" to distinguish them from photographs, basically meaning "hidden images", an image on a photographic plate but without a camera.

Glendinning sent William Stead a series of twenty-six dorchagraph prints; Stead published some of these in his journal "Borderland", Vol. IV, in January 1897. Later these would be better known as skotographs; that term is said to have been proposed by Felicia Scatcherd. It is from the Greek for "dark-writing" – spirit writing, images, or thought photography – impressed on photographic plates in unopened packets, etc. One medium for this was Madge Donohoe, who produced the well-known image of Estelle Roberts' "Red Cloud".[10]

The portrait (as shown) is of William Haxby, produced by Andrew Glendinning, published in Borderland, Vol. IV, January 1897:—



"Two of the pictures deserve special notice. The first of the two, No. 15 on sheet, is unfortunately so "fogged" that it is hardly suitable for reproduction in BORDERLAND. The plate was taken by me [Glendinning] from a new packet, and wrapped in a long strip of ruby cloth to exclude actinic rays. No one was with me when I did this, and no one except myself saw the plate till after I removed it from the fixing; bath. It remained in its wrapper of ruby cloth in my pocket till I found an opportunity for the experiment. My object was to find out whether an abnormal image could be obtained on a plate enveloped in ruby cloth as easily as on a plate in a black envelope. The experiment was quite successful, the image obtained being a facsimile of a photograph of my friend, William Haxby, who died about eleven years ago; it has been readily recognised as such by a number of his friends and acquaintances who have seen it.

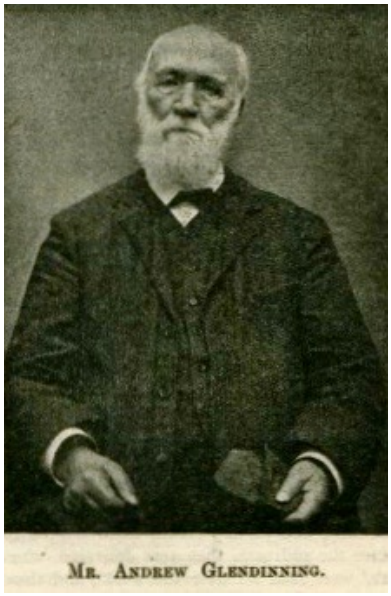
"In a well-lighted room, in presence of A., B., and C., I took the plate from my pocket, held it between my hands in the usual way, and requested A. to place his hands, one above, the other below mine; but he only touched one corner with his thumb and forefinger, for about five seconds, he then said, "You may now go and develop the plate,

[10] Scatcherd was a member of the Spiritualists' National Union and of the Society for Psychical Research, London; she helped W.T. Stead found Julia's Bureau. She was associated with the study of psychic photography. She died in 1927.

there is something on it, I saw it come." I entreated him to come into the dark room with me, as I did not think the "something" could be developed by me unless he were present; he replied that, in his opinion, his presence during development would make no difference, and that he must hurry off to the city. The "fogging" of the plate was caused by the flame of the candle shining directly on the plate while in the developing-tray, through an accident to the small ruby lamp."[11]

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Andrew Glendinning was a pioneer of psychic photography. It can be noted in his obituary published in the "Two Worlds", November 4th 1910, "1826 Transition of Andrew Glendenning 1910", that Glendinning took his first spirit photograph circa 1864. Below is taken from the Memorial Tributes. I quote from Mr. H. Blackwell's Tribute:



MR. ANDREW GLENDINNING.

*"As the rose breatheth sweetness from its own nature, so the heart of a benevolent man produceth good works."*

"AN honoured name, one that has always stood for progress, intelligence, and sympathy, alas! now belongs to the past. With his mental faculties as clear as ever, after but a few hours' illness the dear old man—for he was in his eighty-fourth year—received the call that his well-earned advancement was due. Looking back on his life's record, we can imagine what a joyous welcome would await him.

"The body which had served him so well was placed by the side of his much-loved helpmate in St. Pancras Cemetery on Monday last, Mr. John Lobb impressively conducting the service.

"His life has been a fruitful one indeed, always to the front in whatever movement he considered would benefit others, and the sum total of his life's energies has been a most valuable addition to the world's good. Seventy years have gone by since he joined the Glasgow Total Abstinence Society, and a few years later he was working as the hon. secretary of the Juvenile Temperance League, and also of the Anti-War Society. As time went on, stirred by the terrible evils of the slave trade in America he became an enthusiastic supporter of the Glasgow Emancipation Society. It is sad to remember that in those days out of about 33,000 clergyman and ministers in the United States, 30,000 were arrayed, either directly or indirectly, against the anti-slavery movement.

"In 1863 Mr. Glendinning initiated the early closing movement in Glasgow, and also became the hon. secretary of the local Amateur Photographic Association. A year later he took his first spirit-photograph, and afterwards carried out numerous experiments with his old friend and most versatile medium, Mr. David Duguid. In 1893 he introduced him to Mr. J. Traill Taylor, then probably the foremost photographic expert of the day. It is

[11] Portrait Recognised: — "Mr. Glendinning sent the portrait of No. 15 to two intimate friends of Mr. Haxby, one of them, Mr. Joseph Freeman, of Cape Town, without saying anything as to who Mr. Glendinning regarded as to the original of the likeness. Joseph Freeman writes on the 22nd December, "A glance at it was quite sufficient for me. I have not the slightest hesitation in naming Willie Haxby as being the original of that portrait. I do not think anybody who knew the young man at all intimately would fail to recognise it." The wife of Mr. Fred Freeman writes: "Mr. Freeman wished me to write to say that the enclosed photograph was recognised at once by each member of his family as being the likeness of the late Mr. Haxby, the great medium, who was a great friend during the latter part of his life."

impossible to estimate the good which resulted from this introduction, as Mr. Taylor had the courage to relate the (then) surprising results of his experiments in a lecture before his professional brethren. This was afterwards reprinted by Mr. Glendinning in a most interesting and well-illustrated volume, now very scarce, entitled, "The Veil Lifted." Subsequently he had many sittings with Mr. R. Boursnell, and gladly agreed to be one of the committee formed to present that remarkable medium with an illuminated address and testimonial. Through his mediumship Mr. Glendinning has received six or seven spirit portraits of his wife, and also of his sister, daughter, and friends."

*"To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die,"*
*and our beloved friend still lives"*

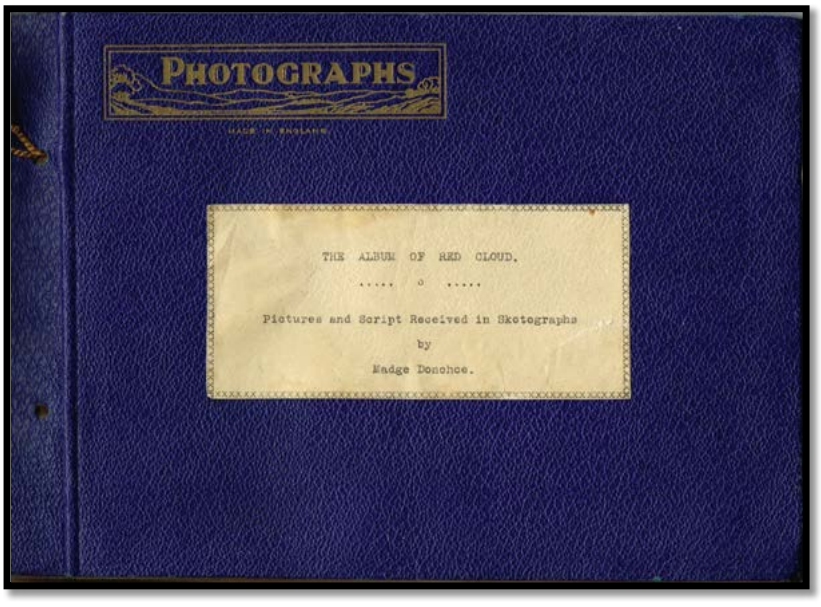


The album shown here (amongst many other items previously donated), now donated by Minister Steven Upton, was passed on to him by Estelle Roberts' then surviving family; Steven has now kindly donated the full collection to the Britten Museum & Library.

This includes the hair of Archael, where in March 1937 sixty people witnessed the fully materialised form of Archael, one of Estelle Roberts' spirit guides, within the cabinet at the "House of Red Cloud" in Wimbledon, London.

At the same séance the materialised form of Red Cloud began to disappear, but his voice could still be heard speaking in intervals and independently of the medium. At one part of the séance, becoming solidly visible again, and with a pair of scissors, he cut a lock from Archael's hair.

The lock was exhibited in the House of Red Cloud's séance room until 1941 and is now exhibited in the Britten Museum & Library.[12]




[12] See "Pioneer', Vol. 1, No. 5, October 2014: "Estelle Roberts and the House of Red Cloud".

# MADGE DONOHOE

Madge Donohoe's name is well-known in the production of skotographs. Her fame is no doubt linked to her association with Estelle Roberts and Red Cloud. It should be noted that the production of skotographs was done by many other mediums, for example Billy Hope and the Crewe Circle, and earlier by David Duguid. Many experimental test conditions were imposed by experts in the field of photography, for example by the researcher William Walker. A selection of skotographs under test conditions is displayed in the Britten Museum & Library, which were produced in the Crewe Circle under the watchful eye of William Walker.

Donohoe was tested by various researchers, including F.W. Warrick, a chemical manufacturer and well-known British psychical researcher. His work is published in "Experiments in Psychics" (1939) by F.W. Warrick himself. The book contains six hundred and fifty illustrations relating to experiments in psychic photography. Pages 327-346 concern Mrs. Donohoe's skotographs. There are many images showing landscapes, groups of people, faces, flowers, animals, shapes, spirit messages and scenes of past events. There were 475 pictures illustrating a Grecian story, and tours of spirit homes of "C.D." and "M.D". This brings us more in line with Estelle Roberts' album of Red Cloud, as "C.D." is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and "M.D." is Donohoe's husband, Martin H. Donohoe, a well-known Australian war special correspondent for the "Daily Chronicle", who died in 1927.

The early mediums for direct phenomena would often magnetise the tools of their trade. The direct artist David Duguid would carry or hold his materials close to him before a séance, and photographers would hold their sealed photographic plates often against the forehead. Stainton Moses, when speaking about his writing ("Pioneer", Vol. 3, No. 3, June 2016: "Visit to the College of Psychic Studies"), noted:

> "I procured a pocket-book, which I habitually carried about with me. I soon found that writing flowed more easily when I used a book that was permeated with the psychic aura, just as raps come more easily on a table that has been frequently used for the purpose, and as phenomena occur most readily in the medium's own room. When Slade could not get messages on a new slate, he rarely failed to get one on his own seasoned one.

Donohoe's photographic plates were developed by an unnamed photographer referred to as Mr. L— . Plates developed by Warrick were without success; none showed better results than the test ones. Warrick considered Donohoe's tests were very poor compared with the 4,300 results obtained, developed by her photographer, Mr. L—.

Much of her results she considered were intimately connected with her personal memories and affairs; Donohoe submitted to tests by Major Mowbray at the British College of Psychic Science but no results were obtained.[13] Donohoe was anxious to prove herself genuine and get positive results with Warrick, who notes that mostly her photographic plates are supplied and loaded into the slides by Mr. L—. However, the plates were mostly blank when developed independently. One would expect the results would be similar as usually obtained by Mr. L—, noted Warrick.

On two occasions, developed promiscuously from Donohoe's stock by Warrick's photographer, on one of the plates a "strange unusual mark appeared". On another occasion four plates

[13] Not to be confused with the "College of Psychic Studies", the British College of Psychic Science was founded in April 1920 in London by James Hewat McKenzie and his wife Barbara to study psychical phenomena; in December 1938 the College merged with the International Institute for Psychical Research.

developed by Harry Price "in her (Donohoe's) presence two of the plates bore quite definite markings."

Warrick considered, "If the pictures are due to Mrs. Donohoe's influence, why do they not appear on the Donohoe plates I develop?" He considered Mr. L—'s method of developing – he used pyro developer – and hardly "one among the dozen or so plates she sends weekly to Mr. L— is a failure." Warrick had used the same developer on his plates. He was present at Mr. L—'s studio while Mr. L— developed some of Donohoe's plates and notes: "… nothing better came on them than splotches such as could be produced on sensitive plates by drops of an accelerator falling from a height."

"Mr. L— was averse to being troubled by my attending further developments by him."

Warrick suggested to Donohoe that she should send her plates for a period to another photographer.

She replied

> "that there is no other photographer within a convenient distance; that, being a very busy person occupied with the administration of some property she owns and her own domestic affairs, she has no time to use other than the means close at hand. She is satisfied that Mr. L—could not, even if he would, produce the many pictures so intimately connected with herself which have appeared."

> "Mrs. Donohoe suggests [continues Warrick] that it is quite conceivable that there are favourable conditions under which these psychic photographs can be obtained and others under which they cannot; and that the nearness of Mr. L —'s establishment to her and the regularity of the bi-weekly proceedings (treatment and development) may be among the propitious conditions."

Is this a case of "dual mediumship"? This has been recorded in numerous instances, one being a transmitter and the other as recorder. An example of this is the drawing of James J. Morse's chief control, 'Tien Sien Tie', through the mediumship of Wella and Pat Anderson; see "Pioneer", Vol. 2, No. 5, September 2015: "Morse & Vango". Pat worked as Wella's storehouse, providing him with the necessary energy. The physical medium Frank Hearne would sit with psychic photographers under similar circumstances as Pat Anderson.

Warrick did not consider Donohoe as a fraud and puts on record much of her work, noting that many of her results contain subject-matter which has obvious reference to events associated with herself. He surmises, "These [skotographs] probably have their origin in Mrs. Donohoe's store of knowledge, her past history and her past and present thoughts." On a visit to Donohoe, Warrick noted:

> "It would seem that the intelligent entity operating through Mrs. Donohoe made use of some of the author's memory pictures."

Warrick was further able to request special evidence, which was received in skotographs, including messages from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Warrick later in March 1934 loaded his own plates, among which he marked two plates and sealed them with wafer paper in such a way that they could not be opened without detection, and he included another four plates as indicated in the report below. So Mr. L— did not have them previous to developing, Donohoe treated these in her usual manner (see below); Warrick then used an independent witness, Miss Hagon. This is her report:

Dear Mrs. Donohoe,

I called at your house at 7-45 p.m. and received from you a packet of six photographic slides, four of which were bound with strips of paper and sealed. The four, I understood from you, had been prepared for the test by Mr. F. W. Warrick, and on the plates should be found when developed his signature and the date on which he loaded the slides.

We then proceeded to L—'s studio. I carried the slides which neither you nor Mr. L— touched until each one was emptied and the plate it contained developed. I broke the seal of each of the sealed slides, removed the plate and placed it in the developing dish which Mr. L—had placed ready for the purpose. Mr. L—then poured the developing mixture over it and did not himself touch the plate until the impression had appeared. You and I watched the whole time and know that any other manipulation of the plates except that which I state here could not possibly have taken place. On each of the six plates a clear and definite impression came, the two plates from non-sealed slides showing a vase of flowers and the head of a nun respectively. On one of the sealed plates there was a swastika and on number D/I474 came what looked like a flight of birds or arrow heads in two groups of 13 and 4[14] which you explained stood for your husband's initials, M.D. In addition to the impression each of the sealed plates showed Mr. Warrick's initials and a date.

Each plate was developed separately.

Yours sincerely,
M. HAGON.

The result was:

The two non-sealed plates showed a vase of flowers and the head of a nun.

The less securely sealed bore the swastika and the arrow heads. D/1474 and D/1471.

The most securely sealed plates bore much less definite markings.

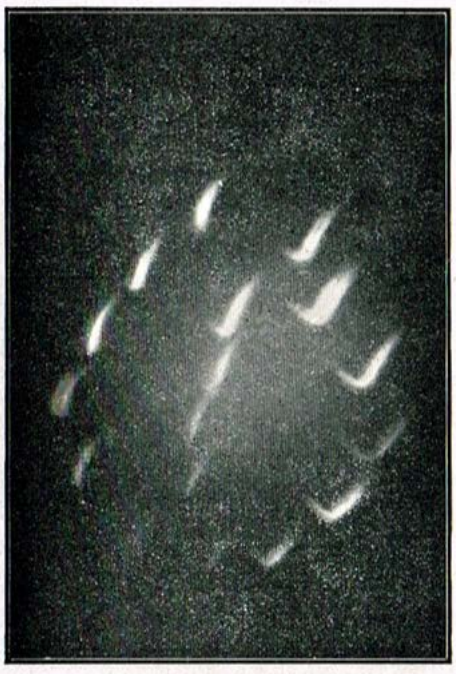


Fig. D/1474.

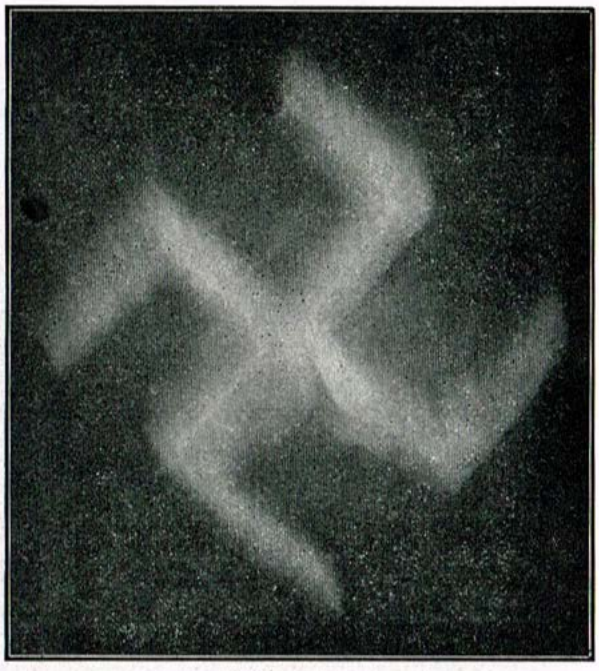


Fig. D/1471.

D/1474. The photographic print itself shows quite distinctly 13 marks in a ring and 4 central marks. The above block does not show them all.

[14] The 13th letter of the alphabet is M, the 4th D.

I conclude with a quote from Warrick's book, pages 330-331, by Madge Donohoe:

# Mrs. Donohoe's own account of her Skotographs.

"It was in 1921, when I was attending a class for Spirit Photography held by Mrs. Deane at the British College of Psychic Science, that I first heard of Skotography from a fellow student. She told me that impressions could be obtained on photographic plates simply held between the hands or strapped to the forehead. The usual procedure, she said, was to get a packet of plates and, without opening it, carry it about on one's person, sleep with it (all this so as to "magnetise" it), and finally holding it—preferably to one's forehead—to ask the Spirit Photographers to impress it. I experimented with this method and had some success, but afterwards modified it for the one I now use.

"I sit twice weekly at night, in a darkness and quiet as absolute as I can achieve, holding pressed against my face a photographic slide containing a sensitised plate. I then, through movements (spelling out) of the slide, talk with the unseen operators and implicitly obey their instructions. Only one plate is impressed at a time. A definite signal announces the beginning of the experiment; another, the end."

"During the years 1921 to 1925 I sat at irregular intervals and obtained many skotographs of varying degrees of interest, several of which showed co-operation with my mind. In I929, after an interval of nearly four years, I began sitting again, this time regularly, and I now have a collection of over 4,300 skotographs. They form an amazing picture gallery, and I myself never fail to be thrilled by the wonder of them, not only because of the miraculous manner in which they come to me, but by their own intrinsic quality and beauty, which testify to the versatility and skill of their unseen authors. Their variety is bewildering. Landscapes (often peopled), flowers, star constellations, jewels, birds, hands, eyes, faces as clear as in any ordinary photograph—all are there.

"It is true that since February of 1929, Mr. L—, of Hampstead, the photographer nearest to my home, has developed over ninety per cent. of my plates, with comparatively few blanks in the first years and practically none nowadays. Apart from the fact that during the twenty years he has been following his profession in Hampstead Mr. L—'s integrity has never been questioned and that, at my request, he has signed a statement that he has in no way tampered with the plates I have entrusted to him, I have good reason for knowing how absurd is the suggestion that he fakes these skotographs. The matters with which a large number of them deal are within the knowledge of only one person in the world—myself. If faking is done, it must be done by me, as I feel sure any intelligent reader of the notes appended to the illustrations in this book will agree. I may add that, except for our business dealings, Mr. L— and I are totally unknown to each other.

"The script which comes on my plates forms one of the most interesting features of my work. During the first three years it was written in a simple code in which the letters consist of short chains or ropes composed of dots. The number of dots employed corresponds to the position of the letter in the alphabet; thus one dot represents A, two B. and so on. Up to October, I932, I had received over a hundred messages given in this manner. But in that month Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and my husband, Martin Donohoe, in collaboration, began sending me the life-story of one of the Pharaohs which they had heard from his own lips, and Sir Arthur, for the purposes of this tale, invented a new code to which he has added from time to time, so that it has really come in seven parts.[15]

[15] A pity the use of codes prevents handwriting recognition. F.W.W.

"Many of the messages which came from my husband in the early code spoke of the flowers he was sending at the same time—on another plate. The first: "I can send you flowers," reached me in August, 1930, and was accompanied by a vase of flowers. Another time came: "I hope you like the flowers," with a bouquet. A third said: "A posy for you, dear!".



*Fig.* D/2144

"These flower gifts have lately furnished another proof that, save for skilful developing, my photographer has nothing to do with the production of the skotographs. From the time he first mentioned them five years ago, up to the 27th March of this year, 1935 my husband never failed to send me at least once a week flowers of some sort, either in a bouquet, vase, bowl, basket or spray. Then for four weeks (eight sittings) none came, and I felt puzzled and disappointed. So at last, before the sitting of the 27th April, 1935, I spoke to him saying what pleasure the flowers had always given me, and how much I missed them (all this, of course, was unknown to Mr. L—). He promised to resume sending them and that same night two of the plates bore exceptional floral greetings. In one (*Fig*. 2144) a messenger dove carries a waratah [16] in its beak, instead of the traditional olive leaf. On the other for the first time there is writing on the vase holding the flowering plant viz., the words "All Love" together with the signature M.D., the latter in response to my special request, as for some time he had discontinued his practice of signing the flower pictures."

"Mr. Warrick, to whom I send a print of each skotograph as I receive it, and who has therefore a collection as complete as my own, can testify to these facts which I am glad to put on record through him, as they serve to disprove, once and for all, the ridiculous assertion that Mr. L— has consistently deceived me for six years, having faked the very large number of skotographs which I have given him to develop in that time. He could not possibly know about my appeal to my husband to resume sending the flowers, nor of his promise to do so.

"Mr. Warrick has reproduced here less than a tithe of the more than 4,300 results my albums now contain. But even this relatively limited number will, I think, demonstrate to any impartial investigator how far removed they are from what I, or any photographer I might employ, could be supposed to invent. The meaning of at least a few is quite outside my knowledge. The interpretation of some I can only guess at. The great majority have for me a definite purpose and message, and what they are I shall try to explain in these notes which Mr. Warrick has kindly invited me to contribute to his book."

"My group of workers in the Spirit World consists of my husband and four nephews. They have the occasional and inspiring help of two high spirits—Fletcher, the guide of the famous American medium, Arthur Ford, and of another whom I know only as "X"

"With the passing of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle five years ago their work received a fresh impetus, for he has continued the same kind, helpful interest in my skotographs which he manifested while here. They elected him their leader, and under his guidance

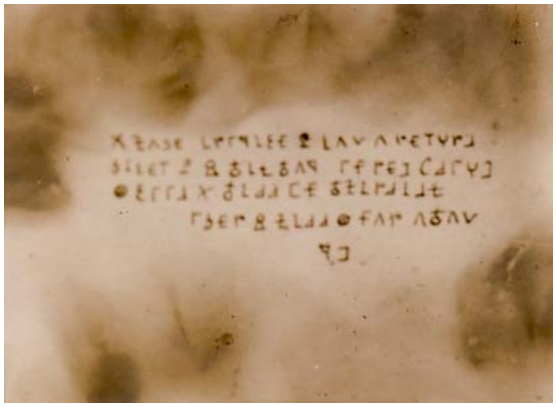
[16] An Australian national flower.

many pictures with explanatory script have come to me in orderly, purposeful sequence, forming now a series of less than a dozen skotographs, and anon one of some hundreds."[17]

—~—☼—~—

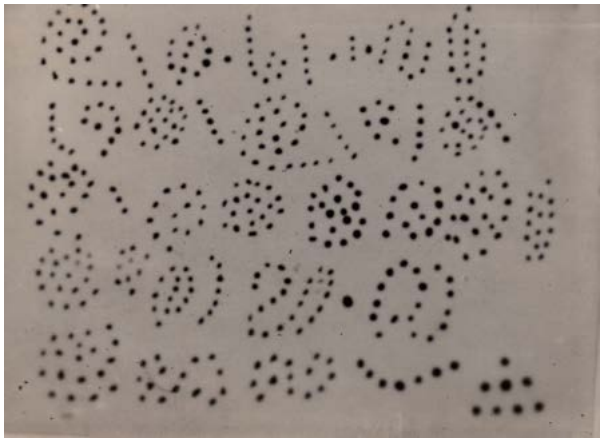
Below are some of the unique images in Estelle Roberts'

# "Album of Red Cloud Pictures and Script in Skotographs by Madge Donohoe"





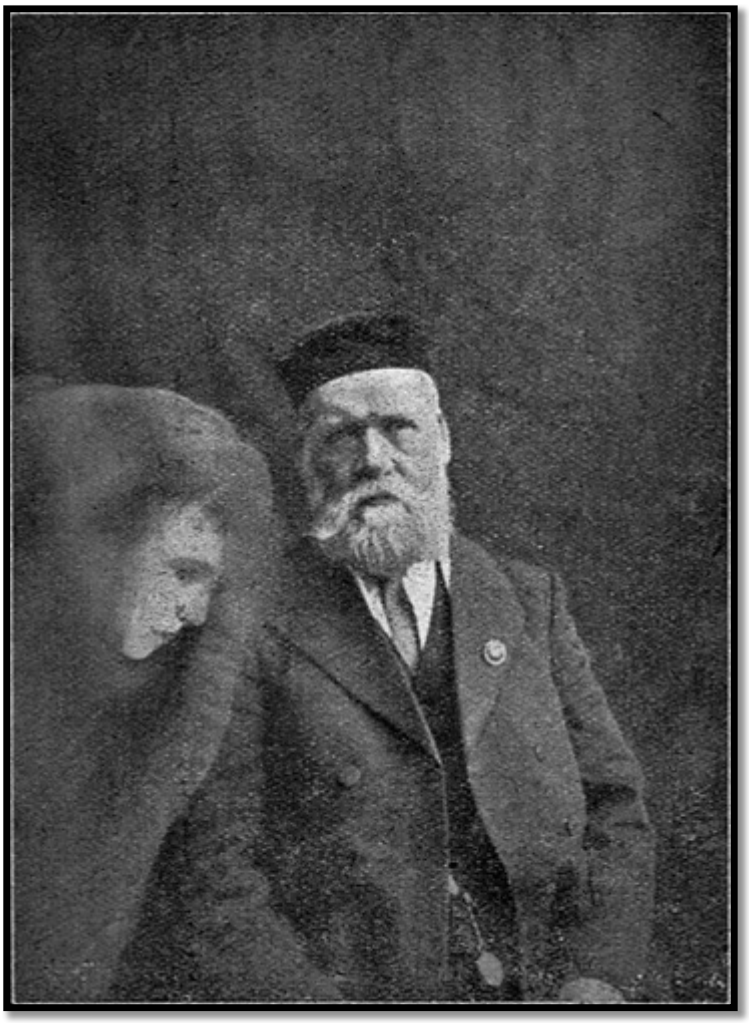
1369/70 – 3/1/34: We promised to pay a return visit to the wigwam of Red Cloud, and soon we shall be whirling over the hills and far away. M.D.



647 – 31/8/32: We make a camp fire. We get Red Cloud, Morning Star and Silver moon to sing war song. A.C.D.




[17] The above quotes contain numerous images of skotographs, which due to space cannot be reproduced here; any reader who would like electronic images please contact the editor.



# SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY.

**BY ALFRED KITSON.**

On Monday October 15th I paid a special visit to Mr. and Mrs. Mack, Runcorn, Cheshire. In the evening a special meeting of the spirit circle was held, Mr. Bostock being the medium. During the sitting, special interest was manifested by the spirit friends in my life's labours for the Lyceum, one of the controls giving the number of Musical Readings as being 28, and Golden Chain Recitations as being four which I had contributed to the compilation of the Manual. I had not kept any account of the number, and none of the sitters being able to help me, we decided to consult the Lyceum Manual when the meeting was over.

**Jack Bostock**

One of the spirit controls spoke in a soft voice something like that of a shy maiden. I thought it was one, and was informed it was the medium's brother Jack. I also learned that he always came in that quiet way. He gave me to understand that he would visit me now we had made each other's acquaintance.

At the close of the circle a copy of the Lyceum Manual was looked up, and its pages in the Golden Chain Recitations and Musical Readings sections examined, when it was discovered there were 28 Musical Readings and 3 Golden Chain Recitations bearing my name; while No. 105 I had composed, but had deleted my name because the subject matter had been too much altered.

**A Visit to Crewe.**

The fortnight following, Oct. 27th, while returning from Longton. I called at Crewe, by appointment, to try and obtain the photo of my spirit guide, Zela. I was rushed for time, only having an hour and a half from arriving at the station to leaving it for home, as Mrs. Kitson was very-ill and I was anxious to get back home.

Two plates were exposed, and an "extra" was found on one of them, which gave me the impression that I had, at last, obtained the photo of spirit Zela. When they were printed, however, I was doomed to further disappointment, as no one knew the spirit whose face appeared. I submitted copies to friends at Batley Carr, Dewsbury, Middlesbrough and Runcorn, in the hope it would be recognised; failing which I expressed my intention of inserting it in the "Lyceum Banner" in hope it would be recognised by some of its readers and so bring joy into some mourning household.

## Our Jack.

When Mr. Mack showed his copy of the photo to Mr. Bostock he exclaimed, "Good Law, its our Jack," one of the spirit friends who had greeted me at their circle.

On learning of the recognition I immediately wrote to Mr. Mack asking him to supply me with full particulars concerning "Jack," when and where born, his age at passing over, and how long it was since he passed over, for publication in the "Lyceum Banner." The following is Mr. Mack's reply, which I print in full, as evidential value of spirit return; and of the honesty of the members of the Crewe Circle for spirit photography:

## The Brothers.

The first time Mr. Bostock came into contact with Spiritualism was when he was living in Manchester. Some eighteen years ago, he was out with a gentleman, and as it began to rain they both sought shelter, and for this purpose entered the first Spiritualist Church he had ever entered—Collyhurst Street. Mr. Bostock had a description given to him, but he failed to recognise it, and so he ruled Spiritualism out of court. About five or six weeks later, he gave the matter a further thought, and another description was given to him, which he recognised. His wife also paid a few visits, and so the matter continued for several weeks, during which time a portion of his past life was described to him. He fully recognised there was something in Spiritualism, but put it to one side as being contrary to his then accepted principles—he was a strong Orangeman.

Mr. Bostock has always seen clairvoyantly, although he did not know what to put it down to. However, the visits to the societies had the effect of developing his clairvoyance, but instead of causing him to throw in his lot with Spiritualism it had the opposite effect and he left it alone.

## Jack Materialises.

Although during the following eighteen months he did not attend any meetings, he had many arguments and conversations on the subject of Spiritualism. On going to Durham to work, he had a ticket given to him to attend a materialising seance. He attended, and saw his brother Jack materialise, the medium giving Mr. Bostock's full name, which no one knew in the meeting. Jack was 6ft. 4in. in height, the medium only being the average in height. The seance had the effect of causing Mr. Bostock to rush out of the place, and to forbid anyone to discuss the matter with him.

This feeling lasted till 1907, when he removed to Runcorn, and there attended the Forresters' Hall. He was told so often by different mediums (in this place) that he was a physical medium that he took the matter up, joining the society, and developing as a splendid trance speaker and physical medium. He ultimately became President of the Society, Lyceum Conductor and assisted greatly in the scheme for purchasing the Runcorn Ashbridge Street Spiritualist Church.[2] Later he went out to South Africa, where he developed clairaudience, given by his brother. Here he sat with friends of the Durban Society, giving many tests. Mr. Bostock has been twice to South Africa.

Later he travelled to Egypt, India, Japan and America, completing the circuit of the world, and then home. This brings us to the present "extra" reproduced in this article.

[2] Runcorn Spiritualist Church is still going today and is affiliated to the Union. Its website informs us that it was originally built in 1888 by a local chemist who was an evangelist preacher, and in 1908 it was bought by a group of Spiritualists: http://www.runcorn-snu.org.uk

October 14th, 1919:—The circle welcomed Mr. Kitson; Jack said he would go to Crewe; then to Yorkshire; then come back.

RESULT: He went to Crewe; then to Yorkshire (Photograph); then came back (Photograph now framed).

The photograph is as he appeared at 16½ years of age. All who have seen it who knew Jack in the body have recognised it immediately, and without being told. There has never been a photograph like this taken, so this could not be a copy.

Mr. Bostock has never been in Crewe outside the station and never met Mr. Hope, as far as he knows. Mr. Bostock's son has a strong resemblance to Jack's photograph. Jack passed out of the body in 1897 at the age of 16 years and 8 months.



**Mr and Mrs Alfred & Mary Kitson**



Shown here is one of the glass slides from the Lyceum Union collection. It appears to be one from the Crewe Circle, William Hope and Mrs Buxton. On December 14th, 1922 Hutchinson & Co published "The Case for Spirit Photography" by Arthur Conan Doyle, M.D., LL.D., and others; the book is nicely illustrated. It appears that the book was written to defend William (Billy) Hope from accusations of fraud. The first chapter begins:

## THE CREWE CIRCLE

AN accusation of a damaging, and, as I believe, of an entirely unfounded character, has been brought forward by Mr. Harry Price against Mr. Hope, whose name has for more than seventeen years been associated with the strange phenomenon which has been called spirit photography. I will deal later with this accusation with which the Society for Psychic Research has unfortunately associated itself by publishing the report of it in their official journal.[3] Before touching upon it I should wish to take a broader sweep and to show the overpowering weight of evidence which exists as to the reality of Mr. Hope's most remarkable gift.

If a man were accused of cowardice it would be natural that his defender should not confine himself to the particular case, but should examine the man's whole career and put forward instances of valour as an argument against the charge. So also if a man is accused of dishonesty a long record of honesty would be his most complete defence. Therefore in considering the case of Mr. Hope, and the value of his mediumship, one must not limit one's investigation to a single case, where errors of observation and of deduction may creep in, but must take a broader view which will embrace an account of a long series of cases, vouched for by men and women of the highest character, and incompatible with any form of fraud. If the reader will have the patience to follow my facts and my argument, I hope to make it clear to any unprejudiced mind that there is overwhelming evidence that we have in Mr. Hope a man endowed with most singular powers, and that, instead of persecuting and misrepresenting him, it would be wiser if we took a sympathetic view of his remarkable work, which has brought consolation to the afflicted, and conviction to many who had lost all belief in the independent life of the spirit.

Many speak of Mr. Hope and of the Crewe Circle without any definite idea of what the words mean. Let me explain, then, that Mr. William Hope, who is a working-man, discovered, some seventeen years ago, quite by chance, that this remarkable power of producing extra faces, figures or objects upon photographic plates had been given to him. In the first instance he was taking a fellow-workman, and the plate, when developed, was found to contain an extra figure which was recognised as being a likeness of his comrade's sister, who had recently passed away.

—~—☼—~—

[3] Should read "Society for Psychical Research".

If we note the image that heads this page and the previous article's psychic extra, we will note that the alleged spirit face is in an arched veil; this is sometimes referred to as the "psychic arch". Below is taken from pages 30/31, which Doyle explains in further detail:

> "Anyone who is familiar with Hope's results is aware that over many of the psychic faces there appears a roll or arch of some peculiar substance which has never been explained upon any supposition of fraud, but is so constant that it would appear to be part of the psychic process. Some of us have always contended that probably this arch represents a formation corresponding to the Cabinet upon this side—an envelope or enclosed space within which psychic forces are generated and condensed. The arch is by no means peculiar to Hope, though the exact form and texture of it is such that one could pick out a Hope photograph among a hundred others. The psychic arch, as it has been named, appears in many forms and many places, some of them very unexpected."

Page 32, Doyle continues:

> "On one occasion remarkable evidence was afforded that we were right in our surmise that a cabinet of ectoplasm for concentration is first constructed, and that the psychic effect is developed inside it. The result, which is depicted in fig. I2, was got by Mr. Jeffrey, of Glasgow, who was, I may add, the President of the Scottish Society of Magicians, and is therefore the last person to be deceived by any sort of trick. In this case the exposure seems to have been too early so that the ectoplasmic bag is exposed in its complete form, without any contents. In the second picture, fig. 13, taken immediately afterwards, the face of Mr. Jeffrey's deceased wife has appeared, and the bag has split to show it, forming the familiar fold over both sides of the face. This picture seems to me to be quite final in showing us exactly how the matter is worked by the forces which direct things upon the other side.

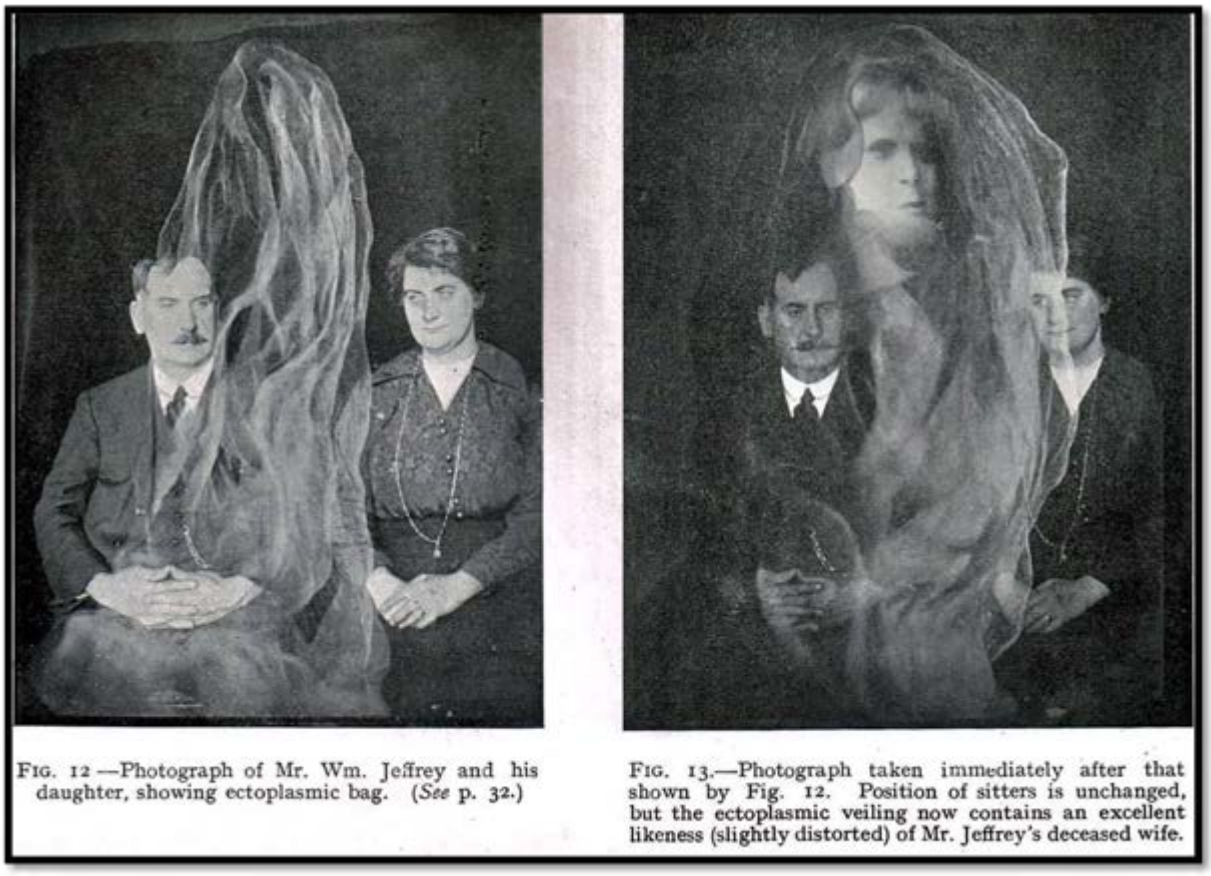
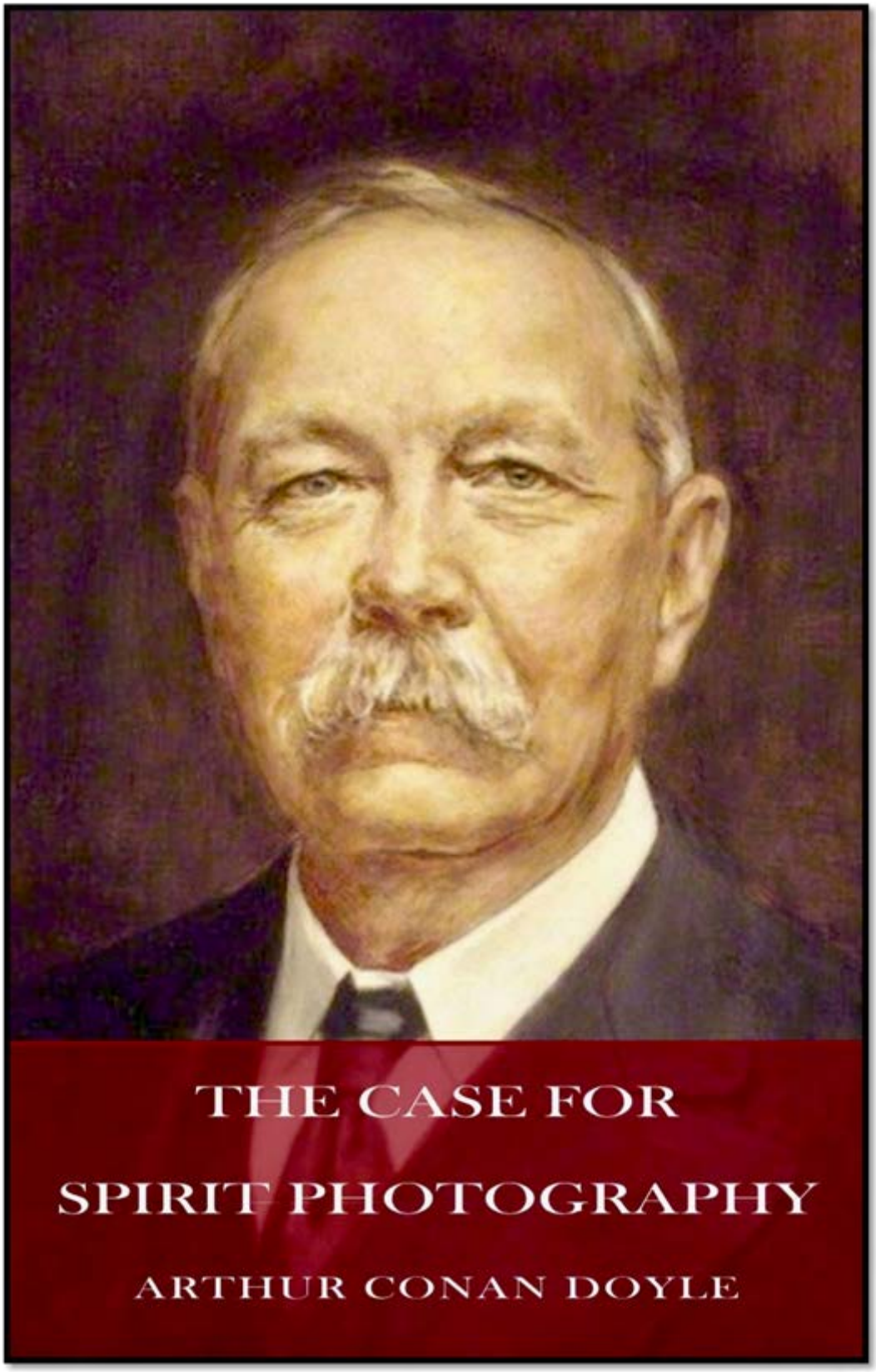


FIG. 12 —Photograph of Mr. Wm. Jeffrey and his daughter, showing ectoplasmic bag. (*See* p. 32.)

FIG. 13.—Photograph taken immediately after that shown by Fig. 12. Position of sitters is unchanged, but the ectoplasmic veiling now contains an excellent likeness (slightly distorted) of Mr. Jeffrey's deceased wife.




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# JOHN BRUCE BEATTIE



The name John Beattie (left in the photo) today appears to be long forgotten, with very little available information on him. In the early 1870s he was a powerful advocate in spirit photography, to some extent bringing serious doubt on the first British commercial spirit photographer, Frederick Hudson. His intention was not to discredit the possibility of spirit photography, being himself a committed Spiritualist, but he claimed that Hudson's alleged spirit photographs were nothing more than superimpositions, i.e. double exposures, showing the image had been exposed twice, so much so that in some images the background, sitters, etc. could be seen through the ghost. Given Beattie's reputation as a retired professional photographer (living in Clifton, a suburb of Bristol) and a respected active Spiritualist, much credence was given to his allegation against Frederick Hudson.

It was further claimed that the ghost images were in fact Hudson himself dressed up. The editor of the "Spiritualist" weekly journal, William Harrison, himself an experienced photographer (mentioned in the last issue), who photographed the spirit of Katie King with the medium Florence Cook (the photographs previously thought to have been taken by William Crookes), raised doubts of serious signs of superimpositions in Hudson's images.



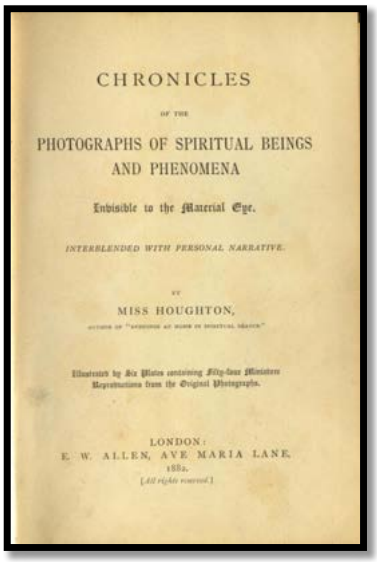
Hudson, it appears, especially in his earlier work, was not directly the medium. For behind his photographic backdrop in his studio, a glass house in his back garden, there was a two-foot gap (a dark cabinet), where a medium would sit to produce the power for the spirit photographs; Hudson would operate the camera, do the development, etc. At the commencement of his work the mediums were Agnes Guppy and Georgiana Houghton, later joined by Charles Williams, Frank Herne and Florence Cook. One photograph shows that the sitter, Frank Herne, is in fact both sitter and ghost image, as shown.[3] More problems arose for Hudson, as it was revealed that some of his spirit forms were found to be images of *living people* who had previously sat at his studio.

However, on the other side of the fence there was much support for Hudson – the evidence was in the recognition of the alleged spirit images. It should be noted that regardless of some allegations many of the images photographed were in fact *solid forms* – these could not be double exposures. Some well-known Spiritualists strongly supported Frederick Hudson, e.g. Stainton Moses, Alfred Russel Wallace.

[3] This photograph does not necessary imply that it was Herne dressed up: other explanations are that it was Herne's spirit double, i.e. his etheric body. There was also some suggestion that it was Herne's brother Willie.

Hudson began his work in March 1872; shortly after, in June, John Beattie began a series of experiments. A brief quote can be noted in "The Perfect Medium: Photography and the Occult", a well-presented book on the history of spirit photography and beautifully illustrated (from page 32):[4]

> John Beattie meanwhile took advantage of the revelations about Hudson to carry out his own photographic experiments. These were regarded as being "of prime importance" by many contemporaries, one of whom, Alexander Aksakov, described them in his book Animismus und Spiritismus as "the foundation of all the phenomenology of mediumistic materializations in general and of transcendental photography in particular." [page 67] As a result of Beattie's experiments, specialist photographic magazines moderated their negative attitudes toward spirit photography.


CHRONICLES

OF THE

PHOTOGRAPHS OF SPIRITUAL BEINGS AND PHENOMENA

Invisible to the Material Eye.

INTERBLENDED WITH PERSONAL NARRATIVE.

BY

MISS HOUGHTON,

Illustrated by Six Plates containing Fifty-four Miniature Reproductions from the Original Photographs.

LONDON:
E. W. ALLEN, AVE MARIA LANE.
1882.
[All rights reserved.]

Georgiana Houghton[5] was instrumental in Hudson's work and development in the early days, along with Agnes Guppy. In 1882 Houghton published "Chronicles of the Photographs of Spiritual Beings and Phenomena Invisible to the Material Eye";[6] this details their work with Fredrick Hudson. Houghton also gives a fair amount of space to John Beattie, publishing his letters originally published in the "Spiritual Magazine", etc.[7]



Below, some of Beattie's research, etc. is quoted, albeit rather long; the images shown are part of the Britten Museum and Library archives from glass lantern slides. It should be noted that these are randomly placed in the article, as I have no way of knowing their order in relationship to the order of séances. The Museum holds a substantial amount of material on this subject, along with other major photographers such as William Mumler, William Hope, etc. Much of this collection was from the Lyceum Union donation: see Pioneer, Vol. 4, No. 4, August 2017: "British Spiritualists' Lyceum Union – Lyceum Archives Moved to Stansted Hall".[8]

[4] Authored by Clément Chéroux, Andreas Fischer, Pierre Apraxine, Denis Canguilhem and Sophie Schmit, published by Yale University Press, 2005.

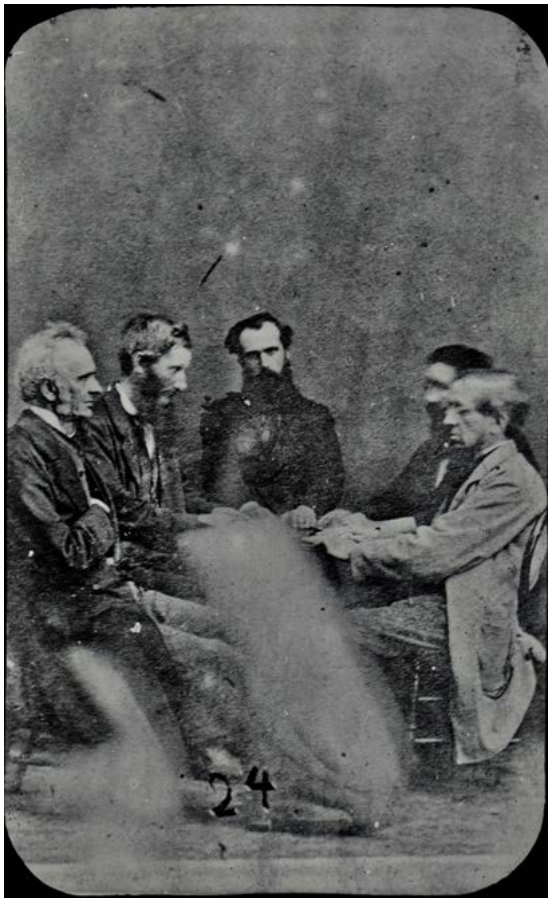
[5] Georgiana Houghton with the alleged spirit form of her sister Zilla on her sister's birthday, May 1872.

[6] "Chronicles of the Photographs of Spiritual Beings and Phenomena Invisible to the Material Eye" is available as a free download.

[7] The *Spiritual Magazine* (1860-1877) was started in January 1860 under the editorship of Mr William Wilkinson, its originator and proprietor, with Mr Thomas Shorter, best known at the time by his *nom-de-plume* of Thomas Brevior (a Latinised version of his name), as sub-editor. William Howitt and Benjamin Coleman were well-known contributors. Later editors in the last years were Dr George Sexton, followed by J. Enmore Jones.

[8] The donation has been put to good use in a PowerPoint showing the early development of psychic photography, a term I believe more apt for the phenomena. The term "psychic photography" was introduced by Trail Taylor in March 1893.

Below quoted from pages 43-48:



In the September number appears a long article from Mr. Beattie (who is a retired photographer at Clifton), with an account of his experiments, which after very many unsuccessful attempts, resulted in their (a circle who sat for the purpose) obtaining some curious photographs which seemed more like spirit-lights shaped into form than anything else. A series of them were sent to me at the time, by a friend to look at, but I regret that I have not any of them in my possession. I will extract a few paragraphs. But no, I think I had better transcribe the whole, as another evidence that spirit-photography needs an expenditure of patience, as well as of time and materials.

"In the experiments I am about to describe, you will find a great part of the evidence required exists in the registered results, and does not altogether depend upon the testimony of witnesses to one or more of the experiments. I will now give the history of these experiments, and how I was led to make them. I was convinced by the American evidence that there was truth in the statement that photographic impressions had been made through the instrumentality of invisible, intelligent beings. We generally find, if credence is given by many people to a statement, it may nevertheless contain much falsehood, but it must have had some root in truth. A falsehood, wholly as such, cannot live unless it draw nutriment from some hidden truth.[9]

"I resolved to try if any result could be obtained in my own experience. I called upon an intimate friend (Mr. Butland), a good trance-medium; his duties allowed him but little time, nevertheless, I was successful in getting him to try the experiments with me. Two other gentlemen, Dr. Thomson (I believe *I* am correct as to the spelling of the name) and Mr. Tommy, agreed to assist me. I next went to Mr. Josty, a professional photographer, and arranged with him for the use of his studio, glass, instruments, and such assistance from himself as we might require. The studio is lighted from nearly north. The camera takes three pictures or exposures on one plate, 8 inches by 5 inches in size; lens, Ross's 6½ inches in focus; all other conditions as usual, only *no dipping bath used, but a flat porcelain tray instead*, with a lid to it, called by some, a developing tray.

"Time of day 6 p.m.; light 'well curtained,' and lens stopped down to lengthen the exposure to about two, and sometimes four minutes. The background was a common one used in everyday work, dark brown in colour, *and standing close against the wall*. The medium sat with his back to it, with a little table in front of him, Dr. Thomson and Mr. Tommy sat on one side, and I, during exposure, at the other.

[9] "Chronicles of the Photographs of Spiritual Beings and Phenomena Invisible to the Material Eye" is available as a free download.

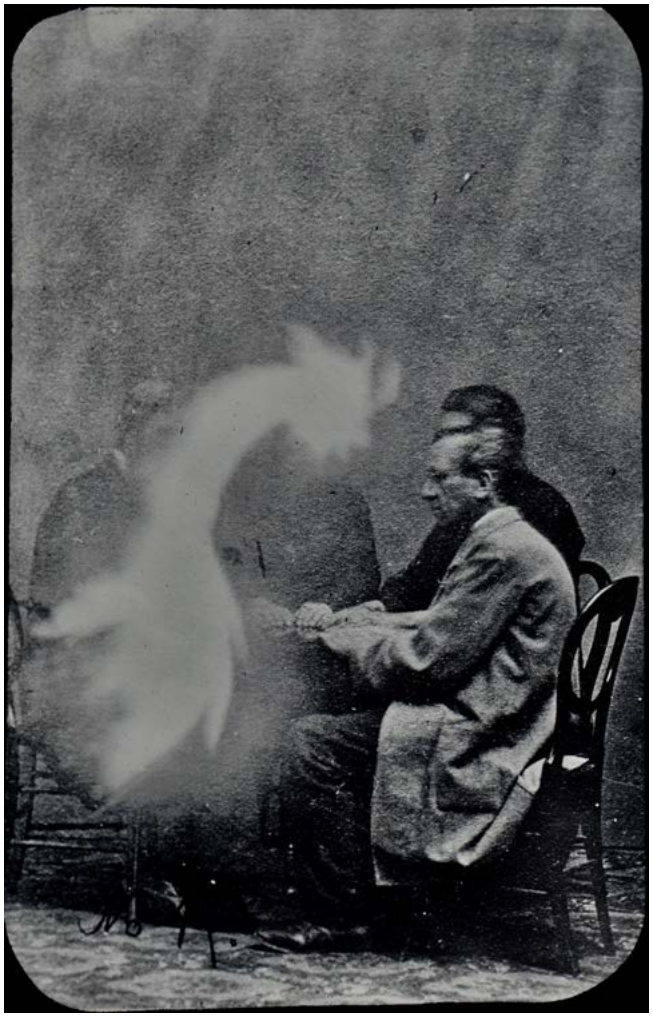



"First séance—nine exposures and no result. Second one, a week after, on the ninth exposure;[10] if nothing had then taken place, we were resolved to give the matter up. We were pleased, however, to find, on the developer *touching* the plate, that an appearance leaped *out at once*. After long discussion, we found that the effect could not be classed in any category of ills that photography was heir to. This induced us to make farther trials. Let me mention that Mr. Josty, up to this point, was laughing at the mere idea of the experiments, although the results in the second séance had staggered him a little. In our third sitting, on the first the first plate no result, on the second plate a manifestation on each exposure; the first two like a luminous bust, with the hands crossed and raised; in the third the same form, but the figure elongated; above and in front of the figure is a strange angular form, differing in size and position in each exposure on the same plate. In the next the figure changes nearer to the human form, and the other image above has grown like a star. This seeming evolution goes on for three more exposures, until the star assumes the outline of a head. While we were exposing one of this series, Mr. Josty uncapped the lens, and was sitting by the camera on a chair. We heard the cap of the lens fall out of his hands; on our looking he was in a deep trance, from which he awoke greatly excited and frightened. After he calmed down a little, he said the last thing he saw was a white figure in front of us, like his wife. After that took place, for the rest of the evening, he could not be induced even to touch the camera or slide, he was so superstitiously afraid. He did not laugh any more that evening.

"In the third series of experiments, the results took other forms more wonderful. First, we got a cone about three-quarters of an inch long, with a shorter cone above it; both like sections of a wax candle. In the second, these forms radiate light laterally; in the third, the cone is changed into a form like a Florence flask, and the short one into a shape like a star; on the fourth the same forms appear, with a duplicate of the star given in addition. On the fifth, the effect is exactly as if an ignited magnesium wire had been dropped into each; the star is now like an illuminated flying bird, and the flask shape has burst into light.

"At our next séance we had eighteen exposures and no result; but the day was very wet. Then on Saturday, the 15th, we had most strange effects both physically and spiritually. I will try my best to give a truthful description. Twelve exposures, and no result. Then Mr. Butland and Mr. Josty were both entranced, and from that trance Mr.

[10] The first manifestation was, therefore, on the eighteenth exposure.



Josty never entirely recovered for the whole evening. He kept saying, 'Fat is dis? I feel queer! I am *tied*! (we smiled at the expression) Fat you say in England when you too much beer?' In fact, he felt the stupid sensation of semi-trance. On the next exposure his duty was to uncap the lens. When he had done so, he walked quickly and stood behind us, at which we were surprised. When the time was up, he ran and replaced the cap. Observe—on this one came out a white form in front of him, just leaving his head exposed. Now, to this hour, he will not believe he went and stood there; he evidently was guided to do so in the trance state.

"Next experiment, Mr. Josty sat with us, and Dr Thomson uncapped the lens. During the sitting, Mr. Josty said, 'I see what looks like a London fog.' On the next part of the plate going on, he said, 'Now I see nothing—all white,' and he stretched out his hands to convince himself we were there. On the third part of the plate going on for exposure, he said he saw a fog again, and Mr. Butland said, 'I see a figure before me.' Now, *observe, these statements were made during the exposure*. When I touched the plate with the developer, the result was most, nay, inconceivably strange. The first came out covered by a semi-transparent veil, and the natural images neutralised, or destroyed; not only was an effect produced, but one prevented. On the next one was complete opacity. On the third a thin veil and figure, as seen by Mr. Butland.



"Next séance, only one result out of fifteen exposures. A figure like a dragon: I can attach no meaning to it. This was followed by an interesting session, in which the plates were covered with strange flames, in each case minutely described by both mediums as to number, position, and brightness during the exposure. One last trial on the 22nd, Mr. John Jones from London present. Mr. Josty was suffering from a severe headache, and Mr. Butland was much fatigued by other duties. Twenty-one exposures, and only three results: one a luminosity only the other two forms like trusses, well rounded, with a clear line in front, and light radiating from behind.



"In this report I have given as well as I can a sort of skeleton of these experiments. During their progress much occurred that required to be seen and heard. The experiments were undertaken for our own satisfaction only. We closed every door from which there was the remotest suspicion of wrong getting entrance. Having done so, we commenced our work earnestly, hopefully, but truthfully. The results have well repaid us, even if we get no more. I enclose you for inspection a set of these results. I am sure you cannot fail to see their immense value in a scientific sense. During the whole of our experiments we have had explicit directions given us as to light, time of beginning and stopping of the lens. Before we begin our work, the table comes round and individually salutes us I do all the photographic manipulating. The images jump out at once, long before the normal images, and this shews the great energy at work. The negatives require no intensifying, a wash with iron solution being all that is required. The invisible friends never know whether they have been successful or not until we tell them. They often express great disappointment at there being no result, saying they tried their best.

"These experiments, if they have been rightly conducted, in my opinion tend to prove that the luminous substances, said to have been seen by sensitives, arising from magnets, crystals, shells, &c., have a positive existence in an objective sense. These substances when condensed exert powerful chemical force; and the energy thrown off from them strikes the plate with an impact equal to that of strong solar light. These substances are taken up by invisible intelligent beings and moulded into shapes, like clay in the hand of the artist, which shapes, when exposed through a lens, can be photographed, whether they be likenesses of human beings or otherwise. By people whose retina can be impressed by these forms, they can be described exactly, before they are made visible to the common eye by development.

"I may be wrong, but I again repeat that these things have a value not easily described. To the purely physical philosopher they reveal a mode of action confirming his notion of the subtle nature of force. And if the doctrine of the unity of force is true, then this is but another mode of the manifestation of force. To the Christian and spiritual philosopher, the experiments confirm their leading idea of the persistence of life, and the existence of unseen intelligent beings, who, though freed from material bodies, are yet working with and for those they care for on this plane of earth.

"The photographs ought to be seen in the series to be fully understood: it is the process of growth that is so strange.

"There is no doubt whatever, taking all into consideration, these pictures—or more correctly speaking, manifestations, for they are not pictures—are the strangest that have occurred. They may be imitated but never would be conceived of.

JOHN BEATTIE.

"WESTBOURNE PLACE, CLIFTON."

A year later John Beattie arrived unannounced at Frederic Hudson's studio under the name "Mr Bruce" in order to catch Hudson out,[11] as recorded on pages 149-155:



> The origin of the storm that burst so early on Mr. Hudson's devoted head was that a gentleman who had published, in April, 1872, his recognition of a spirit-portrait, took the said photograph to Mr. Beattie of Clifton, who, *ipse dixit*, pronounced it a fraud, and shewed how spirit-photographs could be simulated (very inferior to the real thing, be it said), thus bringing on all the trouble that I have very faintly shadowed forth. Mr. Beattie afterwards tried experiments of his own, to which also I have slightly alluded in the previous pages, but still, like many other Spiritualists, his *faith* in the unseen powers could only reach as far as his own *experience* had gone. Fortunately, however, he came up to London in the month of June, 1873, and on the 9th, a gentleman, giving the name of Bruce, went to Mr. Hudson for a photographic séance, asking permission to go through the whole process himself with test conditions, to which Mr. Hudson was spiritually impressed to accede, and the result was fully satisfactory. A few days after, much to his surprise, he received a letter with the full signature "John Bruce Beattie," to say how much pleased he had been, and that he should write an account of the séance for the *Spiritual Magazine*. In a later letter he says he believes the spirit to be his nephew, and that he has sent a photograph to the mother for identification. Such is the statement I had written at the back of the picture on plate VI. No.51; and I will now give his own account at full length as it appeared in the *British Journal of Photography* and in the *Spiritual Magazine* for August.
>
> "If our senses perceive any phenomenon we do not understand, and so strange that our reason at first refuses to enquire into the likely causes of it, it is, in such a case, manifestly our duty to see, first, that the new appearance is not opposed to the known and clearly demonstrated truth we are already acquainted with; and secondly, to make careful note of all relating to such appearance, in order that if it re-occur a sufficient number of times, and at the same time under the observation of a strict and free mind, facts will become plentiful enough to point the way to the law or laws upon which the strange phenomenon depends. It must be obvious that if we refuse to sift and record appearances which take place, on the ground that they seem to go against our experience, then little fresh ground will ever be broken. But what have the brains of our scientific men been employed in during this century? Why, they have been making revelations, bringing to light, and reducing to law and usefulness, principles that seemed opposed to all past experience and knowledge. As, for instance, look at the deep-sea sounding: the men so employed have brought to light facts that have completely upset the notions held of organic life in the sea even a few years ago.

[11] Image of Frederick Hudson and Thurston his alleged spirit helper.

"I make these remarks as an introduction to some statements I am about to make relating to some experiments in a new branch of photography,—namely, the power or possibility of photographing forms invisible to ordinary eyesight, and which forms indicate the presence of unseen intelligent beings of some sort controlling the forms so photographed. photographed.

"Last year, at this time, I made a long series of experiments of the same kind. The results of these experiments have astonished many scientific men both in this and other countries. Many smiled, and said I was self-deceived; all gave me credit for truth, but few for brains. I can assure my readers that one thing is true of me—I always look right into everything. I am pledged to nothing but truth, and if I see a thing is straight, I will not say it is crooked. Similar experiments have been made by many men in various parts of America and Europe. Some have been successful, some have failed, and some, I believe, were guilty of deceiving in the matter. My last year's experiments I recorded at the time. I will now give briefly an account of my first experiment this year.

"I, accompanied by a friend, called to see a professional man, whom we did not find at home. Being disappointed, I observed, 'I have long wished to see Mr. Hudson, who is said to have produced "spirit-photographs."' My friend agreed to accompany me, and in a minute's time we were in a cab on our way for Holloway Road. I fully instructed my friend as to keeping my name unknown to Mr. Hudson. My companion being an amateur photographer, he was easily coached up on that point. In a short time we were at our destination, and, cabby discharged, we entered a respectable-looking house. The reception-room seemed as usual in ordinary establishments A lady remarkable in appearance attended to us. She was most civil, modest, and unassuming in her bearing. The head was broad set, indicating considerable balance of character. After some talk I asked if her father ever made experiments in spirit-photography. She replied, 'Yes, sometimes.' Was he successful? 'Only occasionally.' She had just taken from a drawer some samples to shew us when Mr. Hudson came into the room. I scanned him over from head to foot.

"He seemed about fifty-six years of age, of a sanguine nervous temperament, much like a retired actor; he possessed a good frontal brain, but low in all the executive organs; self-esteem, firmness, and the instinct of persistence being all defective—a man you would not take for a deceiver, yet one you might suppose would be easily led.

"But I find I must be brief. After sufficient conversation for us to understand each other, he said—'Do you know my terms?' I answered, 'No.' He replied, 'They are one guinea, and I make these experiments. If nothing comes on the plates I cannot help it.' The daughter had told us that Mr. Young had tried, and had a complete failure.

"I then said, 'I suppose you will allow me a full chance, along with my friend, of investigating the experiments as they proceed?' He answered, 'Yes' freely. We then went out to a garden and into as common a glass-house as any I have been in for years. It had an A shaped roof, with light on both sides. The side and roof lights were curtained with what once had been white but were now yellow curtains. At one end was a background painted seemingly in oil colour, of the usual tint. This stood about two feet from the wall, leaving room for a person to sit or stand in a partially dark place behind it. At the other end the usual operating room, freely lighted with yellow light. The bath was a common one, made of porcelain without case or lid. The camera was a well-worn bellows one, about 10 by 8, drawn in to suit a portrait lens of about six inches back focus. All the machinery I most scrupulously examined, and at the same time had the use of my friend's eyes and other senses. I asked for the glass to be used, and I secretly marked it. We saw it coated and prepared.

"The daughter was to sit as the medium. I said I would rather she would stand by me than sit behind the background, which was agreed to. All being ready, I sat profile to the background, in order that I might see it, my friend at the same time controlling the exposure.

"The sitting occupied about one minute. The result was a failure, no ghost being in attendance.

"In the next experiment all was the same, except that the medium sat behind the background. On the picture being developed, a sitting figure besides myself came out in front of me and between the background and myself. I am sitting profile in the picture; the figure in three-quarter position, in front of me, but altogether between me and the background. The figure is draped in black, with a the white-coloured plaid over the head, and is like both a brother and a nephew of mine. This last point I do not press, because the face is like the face of a dead person and is under-lighted.



"In my last trial—all, if possible, being more strictly attended to than before, and in the same place, relative to me—there came out a standing female figure, clothed with a black skirt, and having a white-coloured, thin, linen drapery, something like a shawl in pattern upon her shoulders, over which a profuse mass of black hair loosely hung. The figure is in front of me, and, as it were, partially between me and the camera.

"I wish, if this business be all deception, some one would 'make a hole' through it for me. Mr. Hudson was exceedingly careless as to my doings. He left me in the dark room many minutes together, and there was nothing I left unexamined. Besides, in my own town, on Tuesday last, in making a series of experiments, I got results of a singular character, but which I will not publish till they are a little farther advanced.

"Now to conclude: if the figures standing by me in the pictures were not produced as I have suggested (remembering their possibility has been otherwise proved), I do not know how they were there; but I must state a few ways by which they were not made. They were not made by double exposure nor by figures being projected in space in any way; they were not the result of mirrors; they were not produced by any machinery in the background, behind it, above it, or below it, nor by any contrivance connected with the bath, the camera, or the camera slide.

"I apologise for taking up so much space with this matter, but I hope the enquiry will interest some of your readers. lt may not appear to be capable of commercial application at once; but surely we are not to measure all knowledge by that standard. If there be truth in this matter, there is no truth so important to our race.

CLIFTON, BRISTOL JOHN BEATTIE."

The editor of the *Spiritual Magazine* adds the following extract from a private letter from Mr. Beattie to himself:—"Since my return home, I have been going on with our experiments. The results are most startling. To write a report of them will require much time and care, they are so completely strange and bewildering. My reason is crushed into submission to what she staggers and rebels against—there seems to be no escape from the consequence. One thing I do thank God for, and that is, I have no bias of any kind; my mind is free to examine, and come to true conclusions. I never feel to have anything at stake as to how the conscience will lead me. I must write carefully a statement of our present work. I cannot go on long with it; the manifestations are so strange, independent of the photography, I cannot rest for thinking about then.

JOHN BEATTIE."

The same magazine contains also the following testimony of Mr. Traill Taylor, editor of the British Journal of Photography, which had appeared in his periodical in the same week as the previous article. "In another column Mr. Beattie has described some photographic experiments of an extraordinary nature which have been conducted in his presence, and has hinted at others which have been conducted by himself under other circumstances. Every one who knows Mr. Beattie will give him ample credit for being a thoughtful, skilful, and intelligent photographer, one of the last men in the world to be easily deceived, at least in matters relating to photography, and one quite incapable of deceiving others; and yet Mr. Beattie comes forward with a statement resulting from experiments performed by himself or in his presence, which, if it means anything at all, means that there is, after all, really something in spirit-photography—at any rate, that figures and forms which were not produced by the operator have been developed upon the plate with quite as much, and in some instances more, vigour than the visible sitter.

"The main facts once admitted, the question arises: By what means are these figures formed upon the collodion film? The first impulse is to attribute it to a double exposure on the part of Mr. Hudson the photographer.[12] But here a difficulty interposes—Mr. Hudson need not be present at all, indeed it is but an act of justice to that gentleman to say that, when we were trying experiments in his studio to determine the truth of the so-called 'spirit-photography,' we obtained entire possession of his dark room, employed our own collodion and plates, and at no time during the preparation, exposure, or development of the pictures was Mr. Hudson within ten feet of the camera or dark room. Appearances of an abnormal kind did certainly appear on several plates, but by whatever means they were caused—and on this we do not intend at present to speak—the photographer had nothing whatever to do with their production. Neither will the 'previously-used plate' theory apply in this case, for the plates were quite new, and were obtained from Messrs. Rouch and Co. a few hours before they were used, and apart from the fact of their never having been out of our possession, the package was only undone just before the operations were commenced.



[12] "Alas! for human nature! should the *first* impulse always be suspicion of fraud?"—G.H.

# Ernest Oaten

*If someone had desired to give me evidence which excluded all possibility of my mind influencing the result, what better test could there be than that of a relative who died before I was born?*



Former SNU President Ernest Oaten has featured in the pages of Pioneer in numerous issues, for example Volume 1, No. 2, January 2014: Ernest Walter Oaten (1875-1952) – His contribution to Spiritualism was long and notable, giving almost 60 years' service – The History of The Two Worlds – Twenty-one Years. Oaten tells us how through spirit guidance his position as editor was orchestrated by the spirit of Emma Hardinge Britten.

We can note in the John Beattie article that psychic/ spirit photography varies considerably: like an artist, each can generally be recognised by their work.

A professional photographer who lived in Bridgwater, Somerset, England developed his own distinctive style of psychic photography circa the 1920s; his name is little known – Mr M. J. Vearncombe.

Below, Oaten tells the story of his meeting with Vearncombe; unfortunately, age has partly destroyed the quality of the image. The Vearncombe collection is part of the archive previously referred to at the "Britten Museum & Library," Stansted Hall. The article is taken from "That Reminds Me", by Ernest W. Oaten, published by the Two Worlds, Manchester in 1938:[14]

## SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY

My interest in spirit photography dates back to actual experiments tried—not without success—with a few friends in 1896.

Such experiments need very careful precautions if you are to be sure of your evidence. Amongst the many mediums with whom I experimented was Mr. Vearncombe, of Bridgewater, then living at Cardiff. He was a professional photographer, and his plates were continuously interfered with, so that he had to persistently ask his sitters to re-sit. This was bad business. He lost his connection and failed. He had never heard of Spiritualism until he was showing a friend some of his spoiled plates, and it was suggested that the effects were psychic.

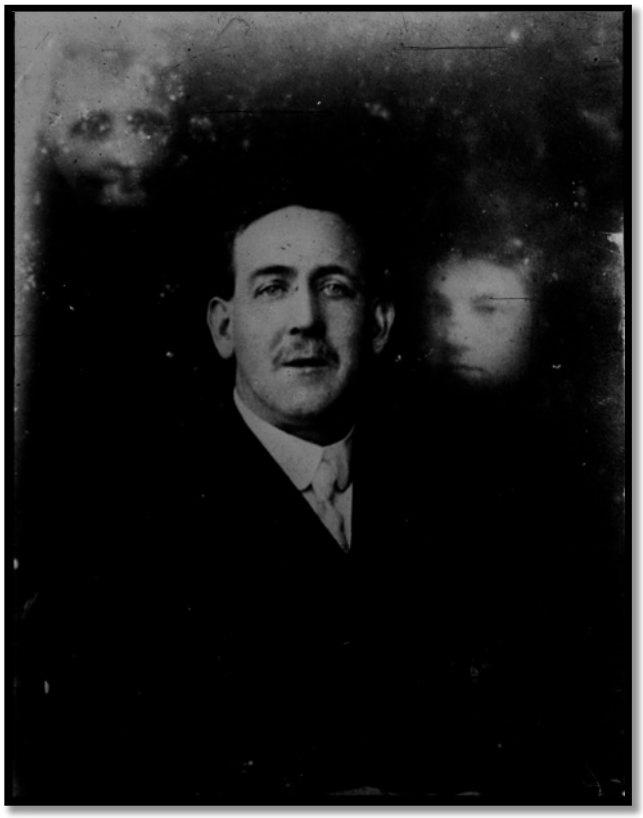
In consequence, his mind was all against Spiritualism. However, he subsequently found that if he did not handle the plates, but used rubber-tipped nippers, the interference ceased.

I called upon him, without prearrangement, and asked him to try an experiment. He was then in business again. His terms were exactly those he charged his clients for an

[14] Available at the Arthur Findlay College bookshop directly by calling the College on 01279 813636 or from the SNU website: https://www.snu.org.uk/shop/that-reminds-me-ernest-w-oaten

ordinary sitting. He took me to his stockroom, which contained many dozens of unopened packets of plates for use in his business. I selected one packet from the centre of a pile. I examined the half-plate slide, and went into the dark-room alone, opened my packet, selected a plate, and loaded the slide. I initialled the plate, wrapped the slide in a black cloth and brought it into the studio. Here, he and I held it between our hands in the usual way, to "magnetise" it.

I then examined his camera—a fine portrait type—and took out and cleaned the lens. I loaded the camera, after focussing it, and took my seat whilst he made an exposure. With the slide in my pocket we went to the dark room—he mixed the developer and I developed the plate and saw it fixed. There were *two* extras.



When I received the print, one face showed a family likeness, but I could not place it. The other was an elderly lady, also unrecognised. I was quite sure I had genuine extras, but was disappointed at lack of recognition. The matter was dismissed from my mind until some months later, when I visited Glasgow. At the conclusion of my service, Mrs. Laird described to me an old gentleman, short, clean-shaven, who had a short leg. He used a stick and answered to the name of Tom. It was my grandfather.

"He is talking about a photograph of his sister which you have," she said. I replied, "You mean my sister?" "Look here, young man, I know what I get! He says '*his sister*,' and I can't alter it." "Well, he's wrong," I replied. "He never had a sister." On inquiring from my mother, I found, however, that my grandfather had a sister who died at least two years before I was born. On showing the photograph to my great-aunt as a photo of myself, she instantly recognised the extra as my grandfather's sister, without any suggestion from me. It was the sister of her brother-in-law. There is no photograph of her in existence.

If someone had desired to give me evidence which excluded all possibility of my mind influencing the result, what better test could there be than that of a relative who died before I was born?

—~—☼—~—



# Ada Emma Deane

***Psychic Photographer***

Psychic photography, throughout its history within the Spiritualist movement, has been the most controversial of phenomena since the early days of William Mumler in America and Hudson in England. The last highly publicised era of psychic photography was with William Hope, Ada Emma Deane and John Myers. All were at times under the hammer of suspicion from inside and outside the Spiritualist movement.

The photograph shown was taken at the British College of Psychic Science; Ada Dean's work at the BCPS ended abruptly in 1922. Mrs Dean was requested to use marked plates while working at the College, as put by James Hewat Mckenzie in a letter on September 4th 1922.

> No doubt you have had time now to consider very carefully the proposal which I made to you recently in a personal conversation, that all further experiments conducted by you at the College should be carried out with plates specially marked by the photographic people.

Suspicion had arisen after several experiments with different sitters at the College, in that Deane had *substituted plates* in several experiments; the request was to use marked photographic plates by a photographic company with the College mark, sealed and stamped by them.

Ada Deane's final comments on the matter were sent in a letter to James Hewat McKenzie on September 8th 1922, concluding:

> In answer to your letter of the 4th September. I have quite made up my mind not to give tests again as I told you when I was last at the College, but so that you shall know that I am not doing this for any unkind reason I am willing to give you one day a month for the satisfaction of those interested in *science,* and then I will use the marked plates. I will take no fee for those sittings but my expenses.
>
> I am sorry for many things that I cannot do as you ask, as I like both you and Mrs. McKenzie very much, but I *cannot* do what you ask. If you knew all I have in my mind, you would understand it better.

McKenzie concluded in a letter on September 14th 1922:

> DEAR MRS. DEANE,
>
> I am in receipt of your letter of September 8th, in answer to mine of 4th inst., and I wish to say that your reply is most unsatisfactory in view of the serious charges which have been made of substitution of plates by you in several experiments with different sitters at the College.

By your refusal to use the College plates your accusers will interpret this as acknowledgment of guilt, which will leave both yourself and the College under a great cloud of suspicion.

Your suggestion to give one day a month is quite valueless to meet the difficulty—as such could only be made with a group of College members, whereas the difficulties have arisen with promiscuous sitters.

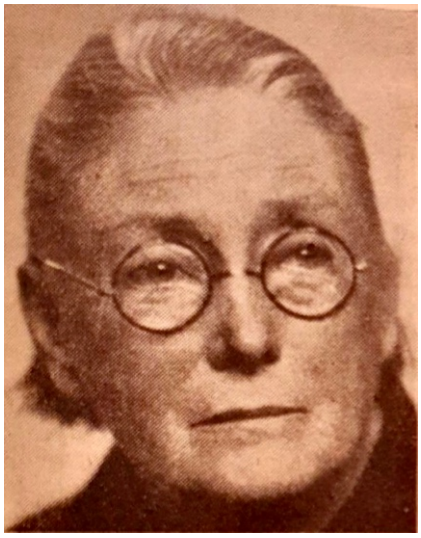
I do not think you have any reasonable grounds for refusal to undertake work as suggested; work which would keep your name above suspicion and uphold the credit of the College. The domestic reasons for refusal are aside from the main issue.

I take it, however, that your answer received on September 8th is your ultimate decision and that there is nothing more to be said. It only remains for me to add that I would not be willing to pursue any further experiments at the College along the lines conducted in the past, as it only seems to lead to complications.

*(Signed)* J. HEWAT MCKENZIE.

The above information is quoted from Psypioneer, which gives the full exchange of letters, etc.[6] Below is published her obituary by "Two Worlds", January 5th 1957. This gives a more positive result of her long-standing work in psychic photography and reference to a positive sitting at the British College of Psychic Science.

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# FAMOUS PSYCHIC PHOTOGRAPHER PASSES ON

## SPIRIT "EXTRAS" APPEARED IN THEIR NATURAL COLOURS

By the passing a few days ago, at the age of 93, of Ada Emma Deane, the Spiritualist movement has lost the earthly presence of one of its greatest psychic photographers.

From the time she began receiving spirit extras on plates in 1920, and for about 14 years afterwards, Mrs. Deane was responsible for providing hundreds of people with permanent records of their loved ones' survival.

**She made psychic history in 1922 with a series of tests when spirit extras were received on coloured plates. These, which made any allegation of fraud ludicrous, showed the "dead" who appeared in their natural colouring.**

### Doctor's test

An outstanding result was obtained by Dr. Allerton Cushman, a well-known medical man, who was Director of the National Laboratories in Washington, U.S.A.

Broken hearted at the passing of his daughter Agnes, aged 17, he came to Britain for a short holiday. In London by chance, someone mentioned psychic photography.

[6] Psypioneer, Vol., Nos. 9/10: "Mrs. Deane's Work Discontinued at The British College." For information on James Hewat McKenzie, who founded the British College of Psychic Science, please see Vol. 3, No. 8: "Knight Errant of Psychic Science".

**Direct link to Psypioneer:** www.pauljgaunt.com

When he inquired where he could find a photographic medium, he was recommended to see Mrs. Deane, then working at the British College of Psychic Science.

He jumped into a taxi, drove to the college, stopping on the way to buy a sealed packet of photographic plates and marked the corner of each one with his initials.

Mrs. Deane was just leaving when he arrived. He told her he had only just heard about psychic photography and begged her to take his picture. She agreed.

**Better than life**

Cushman insisted that his own marked plate be used and placed it in the camera himself. All the medium did was to release the shutter to take the picture. Cushman took out his marked plate and developed it himself.

**Examining the print, he found, above his head, a perfect photograph of Agnes which he and his family declared was a better likeness than any picture taken during her lifetime.**

Mrs. Deane was a psychic all her life, though she did not understand her powers in her youth. Reared as a Roman Catholic, she was, for a time, not sure whether she should use them.

Some nuns were startled when she levitated. On another occasion she floated down a staircase.

She was one of nine children whose mother died at the age of 28. She began work when she was nine and went into service two years later.

After she married, to support her three children she worked as a cleaner in a Roman Catholic school. Seven years later, when the school managers discovered she was a medium, they sacked her!

Her interest in Spiritualism was first aroused by passing a Spiritualist church in Hackney, E. London, where she lived. Then she found a friend regularly attended these meetings.

Mrs. Deane accompanied her on one occasion and was surprised to get a spirit message concerning a pupil at the school where she worked. She thought the pupil was still alive, but inquiry proved that, unknown to her, she had died a few days previously.

The clairvoyant also told her she was a potential photographic medium. “I did not know what this meant,” she said. At the end of the meeting, she asked for an explanation.

**Nuns not told**

The clairvoyant and his wife arranged to sit regularly and develop her gift. They bought a packet of plates and began taking photographs. Nothing appeared on the first eight plates, and she was getting bored. To her surprise, however, spirit extras appeared on the final two plates.

Because of lack of means, her “dark room” was the kitchen table. There were hooks all round it on which she hung a “cloth” made from old dresses and petticoats.

Inside this “dark room” was a paraffin lamp with red glass. To load the camera and develop the plates, she had to crawl under the table.

**In her early days, priests tried to persuade her to give up her mediumship. Once she was asked to take some photographs at a convent. When she developed them, there were spirit extras on some plates. She dared not show them to the nuns.**

After working for the British College of Psychic Science, she gave scores of seances at the Stead Bureau, under the supervision of Estelle Stead, daughter of the famous journalist.



For three years, under test conditions, Mrs. Dean took photographs at Armistice services at the Cenotaph. On the plates a crowd of spirit faces usually appeared, many of them of "dead" soldiers who were later recognised.

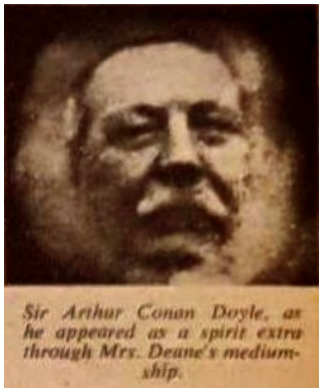
**Doyle's brainwave**

In 1924, the "Daily Sketch" said her Armistice spirit photograph was fraudulent, that the extras were pictures of living people, including well-known sporting personalities.

**Letters of protest sent by famous Spiritualists describing their seances with Mrs, Deane under fraud-proof conditions were not printed. Even a letter from Sir Oliver Lodge telling of outstanding results obtained with this medium in his own home was suppressed.**

Then Conan Doyle had a brain wave. He submitted this Armistice spirit photograph, and the pictures of sportsmen printed in the "Daily Sketch" which the extras were supposed to resemble, to Sir Arthur Keith, the famous anthropologist, who was, if anything, an anti-Spiritualist.

**His verdict was, "Not one of the photographs reproduced by the 'Daily Sketch' is identical with any of the representations or photos produced in the spirit photographs." Doyle sent this verdict to the "Daily Sketch" whose Editor refused to print it.**



*Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, as he appeared as a spirit extra through Mrs. Deane's mediumship.*

It is not surprising that after Doyle's passing he returned on one place with Mrs. Caird-Miller, a medium through whom he communicated to his family, had a sitting with Mrs. Deane. Lady Doyle described this as one of the best photographs of her husband she had ever seen.

One of Mrs. Dean's daughters had the same gift of psychic photography, but never troubled to develop it.

**"Grand welcome"**

In 1938, F.W. Warwick, a retired chemist, published "Experiments in Psychics," which contained 650 illustrations of psychic photographs he had obtained through Mrs. Dean's mediumship. Some of them were skotographs, that is, plates on which extras appeared thought they were never exposed in a camera.[7]

[7] Warrick (correct spelling) gives a very good overview of Mrs Deane's life and work; see Psypioneer, Vol. 2, No. 2: "Concerning Mrs. Deane As Told Me by Herself, Including Some Remarks Made by Her."

Last year I called to see Mrs. Deane in her Dalston, N. London, home, where she had lived for over 30 years. There, surrounded by the dogs she bred—she took many prizes at Cruft's—I obtained many remarkable psychic photographs.

I found a frail figure, semi-convalescent, but with an active brain, and her memory unimpaired. For over an hour, at tea, we recalled the old days.

She begged me to make no reference to psychic photography, which she had not touched for years. Her family had grown up and she saw no point in reviving old controversies.

Estelle Stead, who saw her a few weeks ago, says she looked and felt tired. "She was a fine little woman," says Estelle, "and a staunch friend. She will have had a grand welcome."

—~—☼—~—

We can note in the above article in 1922, the year she left the British College of Psychic Science under a cloud of suspicion, that she produced "Spirit "Extras." Appeared in their Natural Colours"; again, this is addressed in Psypioneer:[8]



**"DIRECT COLOURS"**

Spirit photography in natural colours was produced by the Paget Process "… an early colour photography process patented in Britain in 1912 by G.S. Whitfield and first marketed by the Paget Prize Plate Company in 1913. A paper-based Paget process was also briefly sold. Both were discontinued in the early 1920s. One of the most outstanding exponents of the Paget process was Australian photographer Frank Hurley." In the December 23rd 1922 issue of Light a supplement was issued showing *spirit* extra's through the mediumship of Mrs. Deane using the Paget process as shown.



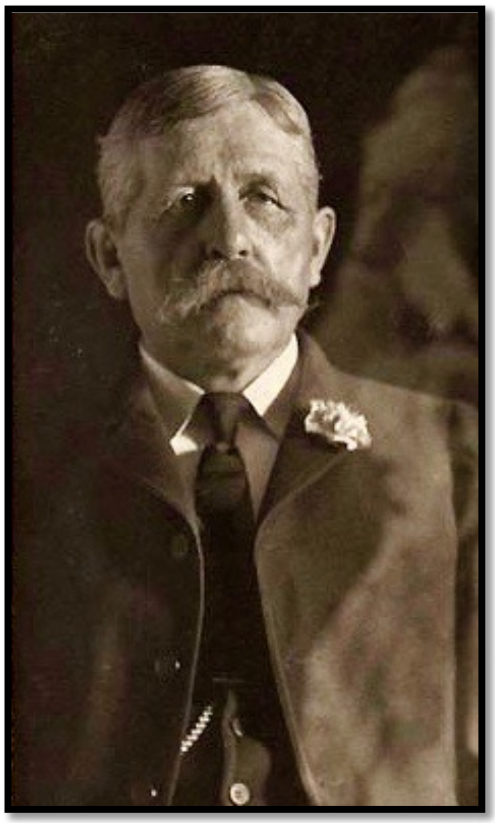




**I have no reference to this image or in fact any details except that I can see it is Ada Emma Deane; I noted the upside- down psychic extra**

[8] See Vol. 10, No. 1: "Direct Colours" – Our Coloured Supplement – *Light* & *Psychic* Photography in Direct Colours – Fred Barlow. Direct link via www.pauljgaunt.com

# ROBERT BOURSNELL



Robert (also referred to as Richard) Boursnell is claimed by some researchers to have obtained psychic images on his photographic plates a decade before William Mumler in America, who was the first to bring psychic photography to public attention, becoming the first professional photographic medium. Mumler was publicly introduced in the Spiritualist press in November 1862.

Psychic/spirit photographs have had much abuse and allegations of fraud levied against them from the very early days; this phase of mediumship has been the most controversial and debated within the Spiritualist movement.

One reason is the actual way the images are presented onto the photographic plate, which has been heavily debated over the decades, insomuch as a genuine and a fraudulent image would most probably be accomplished in a similar way, i.e. by psychic/spirit—*genuine*—means or by normal manipulation—*fraud*. Boursnell referred to his "extras" as 'shadow pictures'; various theories have been suggested in the Spiritualist movement over the years, for example:

(1) That there is an invisible image before the camera; (2) that the "extras" are the result of artistic work by the invisible operators; (3) that the invisibles use a transparency with an image upon it; and (4) that the "extras" are "thought-forms" exteriorised by the medium, the sitters or both. The transparency method of an *ectoplasmic* transparency/overlay over the years has been well circulated, which perhaps also addresses the problem of various photographic mediums giving the same extra! Similarly, a fake transparency/overlay for the fraudulent medium.

Pioneer has addressed a fair range of psychic/spirit photography:

**Vol. 4, No. 2:**

Psychic Photography Deception in Psychic Photography – Mr. C.P. MacCarthy
Spirit Photograph of the Great Composer

**Vol. 4, No. 4:**

"Dorchagraphs", *known today as "Skotographs"*
Andrew Glendinning – a pioneer of Psychic Photography
Estelle Roberts' "Album of Red Cloud Pictures and Script in Skotographs by Madge Donohoe".

**Vol. 4, No. 5:**

Spirit Photography – Alfred Kitson
The Case for Spirit Photography – Arthur Conan Doyle
The Crewe Circle
"The Case for Spirit Photography", now republished

**Vol. 6, No. 1:**

John Bruce Beattie – Spirit / Psychic Photography
Ernest Oaten Spirit Photography – M. J. Vearncombe

Below is mainly focused on Robert Boursnell and is quoted from "Quarterly Transactions of the British College of Psychic Science", Vol. VI. No. 2, July 1927. It gives a nice overview and shows that, unlike most, Boursnell saw the spirit form before he took the photographs; it throws some light on his photographs and explanation, as shown below:

## THE PHOTOGRAPHIC MEDIUMSHIP OF ROBERT BOURSNELL

Mr. Boursnell died in 1909, at the age of 77. The following notes on his life, by Mr. W. T. Stead, are taken from "Borderland," vol. iv., No.1, January, 1897.[10] Mr. Stead made many experiments with him, and introduced sitters to him.

"Robert Boursnell began his career as a professional photographer, forty-four years ago. It was in the early days of the silver bath, and the collodion process.[11] All the plates spoiled during the day were cleaned up at night, or the next morning, and used over again. Many a time upon those plates they would get half a face more than they wanted—sometimes a hand—or sometimes two heads. This used to happen five or six times a week, more or less. The unwelcome figures upon the plates exasperated Boursnell's partner. He declared Boursnell did not clean the plates properly, (an amusing example of the obtuseness of this average mind), and so it was arranged that each should have his own plates. It was further decided that Mr. Clarke, the partner, should take the photographs, and that Boursnell should finish them.

"Mr. Clarke, being an actor as well as a photographer, was sometimes called to rehearse at the theatre. On these occasions Mr. Boursnell was left in charge, and to his annoyance, the figures began to reappear. When Clarke returned from the theatre, and the plates were shown with the second figure upon them besides the sitter, there was a great row between the two partners.

" 'You have been at it again,' said Clarke, 'Why cannot you clean your plates?"

"Boursnell therefore lost his temper, dashed the plate under discussion on the floor and solemnly damned the glass and the people too. From that moment shadow pictures never appeared upon Boursnell's plates until some years ago (1886) when he first made acquaintance with Spiritualism; then, to his great surprise, the same forms which used to appear on the plates in the old days reappeared, and just about as frequently. They came about once a day or about five times a week. Such is the narrative Mr. Boursnell sends me."

Boursnell had the faculty of clairvoyance excellently developed, and often described the building up process of the "spirit extra" before exposure. "Borderland" of the same issue reports the experience of a sitter who went to him in 1896, and who had made previous experiments under good conditions:—

"A spirit form was minutely described before the exposure by Boursnell, who stated that flowers were held up in the hand. I asked my wife, who accompanied me, to hold out her hand, and perhaps our friend would hold the flowers towards her. Boursnell at once said, 'Yes, she holds the flowers down now.' The plate was at the time waiting exposure in the camera. The photo was recognised as a relative, but the fact of changing the pose on the spur of the moment *after the plates had been placed in the camera*, precludes all possibility of imposture." Similar happening's occurred on several occasions with this sitter.

[10] William Stead began his quarterly journal, "Borderland", in 1893, which continued until1897.

[11] The collodion wet plate process started circa 1851: it required the photographic material to be coated, sensitised, exposed and developed within the span of about fifteen minutes, necessitating the availability of a darkroom. During the 1880s the collodion process was largely replaced by gelatin dry plates—glass plates with a photographic emulsion of silver halides suspended in gelatin. Not only was the dry gelatin emulsion more convenient but it could also be made much more sensitive, greatly reducing exposure times.

Mr. Woolley, who has kindly supplied the photograph of Boursnell, says that Mr. Boursnell used to take ordinary commercial photographs as these taken by Mr. B. were "spoiled" by "extras." Boursnell personally had no misgivings at all but that the pictures were produced by spirit agency. He was highly clairvoyant and clairaudient. He was not an educated man, and not scientific in any way, nor a man likely to have discovered some new method of producing the photographs. Mr. Hewat McKenzie had some excellent results with Boursnell twenty-five years ago.

## SUPERNORMAL PHOTOGRAPHY.

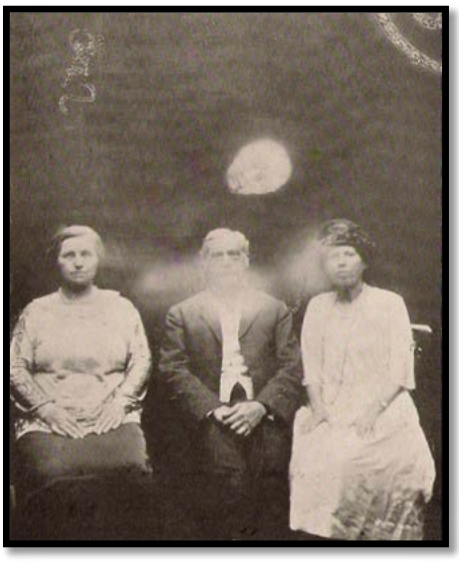
## WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CERTAIN PHOTOGRAPHS BY R. BOURSNELL.

Among all the various forms of physical phenomena, this is one which is most easily checked for genuineness, and is most fruitful in producing conviction of the life Beyond. The common-sense of the average man who has had an experience of it perceives at once that whether the person whose portrait appears is there present invisibly or not, some assistance from the Unseen is obviously at work in producing the phenomenon. This is still more obviously the case when the portrait is of some person, such as Lieut. McKenzie, whom no one in the studio had ever seen.

Nevertheless, supernormal photography has never been examined by the Societies for Psychical Research with anything approaching the attention that it merits; presumably because nothing reliable can be predicated of any print or negative apart from the circumstances of its production, and nothing is easier than to counterfeit such photographs.

Numbers of private photographers, however, have taken advantage of the presence among us of photographic mediums like Mr. Hope, of Crewe, and Mrs. Deane,[12] and have been convinced of the genuineness of their work. Mr. Traill Taylor, the editor of the British Journal of Photography, made a test of Mr. David Duguid, and described the results in a lecture to the London and Provincial Photographic Association in 1893. He certified that, accompanied by two detectives, and using his own camera, plates, and all apparatus, he obtained a number of "extras," Mr. Duguid being merely present in the studio and not touching the plates at all. He was, of course, ridiculed, and lost caste among his fellows for his credulity.

In the case of the photographs of Dr. Geley, obtained by myself at the British College, I intimated to Mr. Dingwall, as Research Officer to the S.P.R., that Mr. Hope had not touched the plates throughout the process, and offered them for his inspection. The only question he put to me was, to the best of my recollection, "What was the size of the beaker in which the developer was mixed?"—a question whose inwardness I have never been able to penetrate.



In 1918, the Society for the Study of Supernormal Pictures was formed, with Dr. Abraham Wallace as its president, Mr. Fred Barlow being secretary, and till last year it continued its work of examination and testing. That Society consisted largely of professional photographers. It reported at its May meeting at the College, in 1920, that:—

"The members here present desire to place on record the fact that after many tests and the examination of thousands of pictures, they are unanimously of opinion

[12] See Pioneer, Vol. 7, No. 1: "Famous Psychic Photographer Passes on – Ada Emma Deane".

that results have been obtained supernormally on sensitive photographic plates under reliable test conditions. At present the members do not undertake to explain how the results have been obtained, but they assert that they have undoubtedly been secured under conditions excluding the possibility of fraud."

Probably the most remarkable psychic photographer that has appeared as yet, was Mr. Robert Boursnell, of Shepherd's Bush, who died in 1909, and had been taking these photographs for twenty years, without any attention being paid to his work unless by private experimenters of whom Mr. S. W. Woolley was one.

Much could be added on the history of Supernormal Photography, and those interested are referred to Mr. Coates' *Photographing the Invisible*, to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *Case for Spirit Photography*, and Mr. Campbell Holms' chapter in his book *The Facts of Psychic Science and Philosophy*. The late Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace and Sir William Crookes were convinced of its genuineness; and Sir William Barrett after experimenting with me, came to the same conclusion, as he mentions in his last paper to the S.P.R., published in the Proc. xcii., 1924.

Supernormal photography differs from normal photography in that the objects recorded are not visible to the eye. Nor is the camera an indispensable adjunct. Numerous cases are on record of "Skotographs" (Gr. Skótos = darkness) taken on one plate in an unopened packet.

[…]

**ROBERT BOURSNELL'S NEGATIVES.**

As announced in the Transactions in a previous issue, the College has received from Mr. S. W. Woolley, the generous gift of 89 negatives, taken by Robert Boursnell, in conjunction with himself from February 1897 to April 1907. This gentleman is an experienced photographer and chemist, who set himself the task of examining Boursnell's mediumship with the view of discovering its genuineness or otherwise, and if possible the method of production of the phenomena if he were convinced of their super- normality. Mr. Woolley shows a thorough knowledge of the tricks by which results can be artificially produced. He writes:—

"In regard to the authentification of the photographs, the control which I exercised was never relaxed, but I cannot, at this distance of time, give anything definite regarding a particular print. I took my own plates, previously marked, placed them in the dark slides at Mr. Boursnell's, examining the slides well, and after exposure, took them out and brought them home with me for development. This procedure was only varied a few times in the earlier photographs, the alteration being that in my presence, the negatives were developed, fixed, and partly washed. I took them home in grooved boxes completing the washing at home. Mr. Woolley's records show that as a rule several plates were exposed the same day and taken home for development, as stated above."

In an exceedingly interesting conversation which he kindly gave me at the National Liberal Club, on April 28th, 1927, he explained that until thoroughly convinced of Mr. Boursnell's genuineness, these precautions were rigidly followed. In the later examples, he omitted to mark some plates, but invariably took his own. He states that they were not handled by Boursnell at all. This disposes of the greater part of the ingenious methods of fraud usually put forward.

As in the cases quoted above, no single hypothesis will cover all the various types of photographs, always excepting the hypothesis of fraud. There is scarcely one of these photographs that could not be produced by trickery, *given the time and opportunity for manipulation of the plates*. But this goes dead against Mr. Woolley's positive statements as to the conditions of their production, and also assumes that among the scores of

competent and professional photographers who have conducted the most rigid tests in a thoroughly sceptical spirit, there is not one who had sufficient acumen to perceive whether the medium touched, or changed the plates, or manipulated the back-ground. This kind of scepticism sterilises enquiry. It is therefore set aside in the present article. Personally, I was sceptical of the genuineness of the phenomenon till in company with Dr. Geley, I visited Mr. Hope at Crewe in November, 1919, I have given the full account of the experiment there in my book *Psychical Research, Science and Religion*, and will therefore say no more here than that the medium did not touch the plates till developed and fixed, and that both Dr. Geley and I were satisfied that there is a case for enquiry.[13]

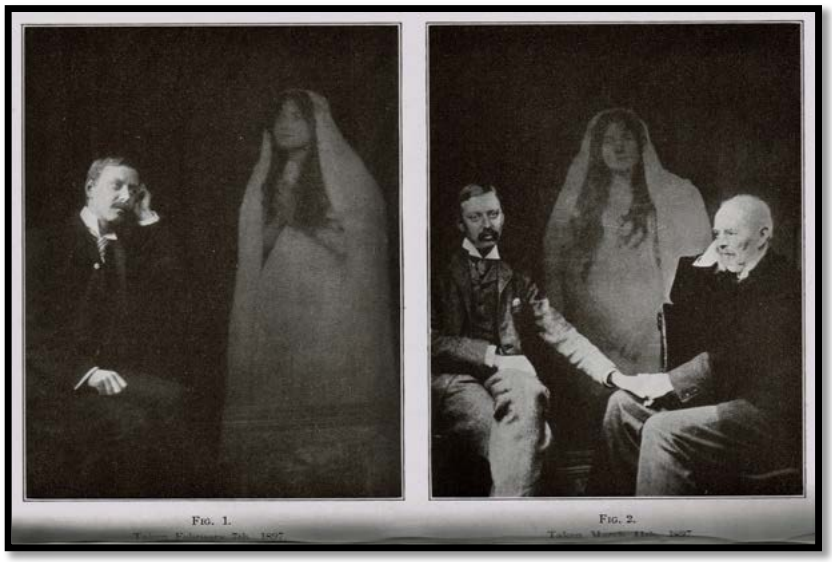


Fig. 1. Fig. 2.

Fourteen plates have been selected as typical. Of these it is curious that Figs. 1 and 2 should have been the first to conform to the usual idea that the image produced is of an invisible person. It is said to be a sister of Mr. Woolley's who died in infancy.

Mr. Boursnell claimed to be clairaudient, and he gave this information, which would be valueless, but that the picture is recognised by Mr. Woolley as having a strong family likeness to a living sister. He says that the occasion was the first on which he met Mr. Boursnell, who did not know of his intention to visit the studio. It will be noticed that the lighting of the normal sitter is from the left, and that of the supernormal from the right. This is usually claimed to be proof of fraud, it being *assumed* that the plate has been prepared beforehand. It is here necessary to repeat that all such arguments are based on the a *priori* reasoning. Not all the pictures are of this clear kind. Fig. 3 is a transition. It was recognised by the sitter (Mr. Clarke) as his wife. It presents a rather wooden appearance in general outline.

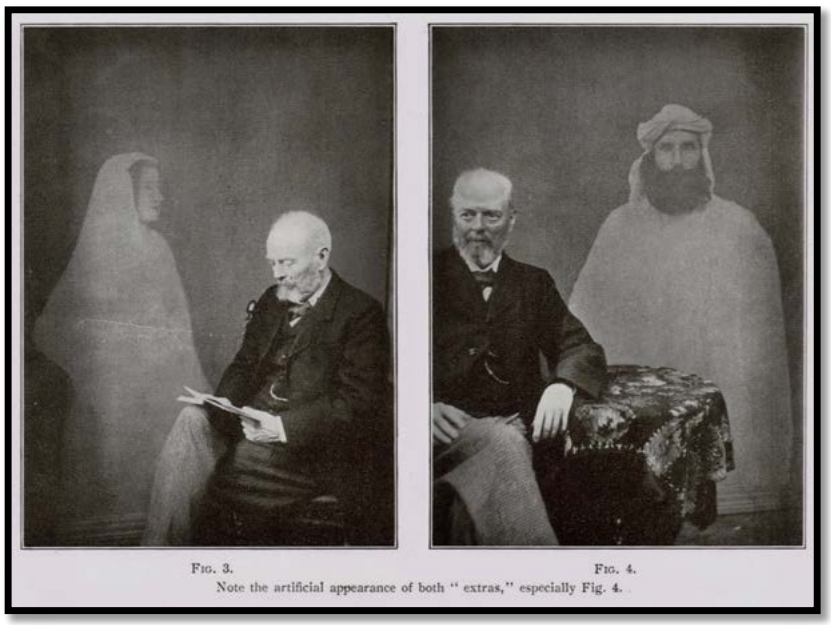


Fig. 3. Fig. 4.
Note the artificial appearance of both "extras," especially Fig. 4.

Fig. 4 seems to be a figure made up to show another method. It is absolutely wooden, the anatomy is impossible. Compare the two shoulders, impossible in a living figure.

[13] "Psychical Research, Science and Religion" by Stanley DeBrath: Published by Methuen & Company, 1925.



Fig. 5.
Taken October 9th, 1904.

Fig. 6.
Taken October 9th, 1904.

Fig. 6 is said to be a pavement artist who drew Fig. 5 on the plate.

Plate IV.

Fig. 7.

Fig. 8.

Number 6 shows a man who was said to be a pavement artist, who, Mr. Boursnell said, had produced Fig. 5 drawing on the plate. The lines of the sketch are quite clear glass in the negative, and it will be noticed that the drawing overlaps the face. There is another negative taken on the same date which shows a very clear bust of a woman above the cloud of light or ectoplasm.

Figs. 7 and 8 are an illustration of quick changes. The sitter has not moved at all, and the plates were therefore taken in rapid succession: the non-movement of the sitter is important. It shows that the two exposures from a double slide were made at short intervals, and that the "extra" is nearly, but not quite, the same in both, the hair showing slightly more and the pectoral cross is added on the second.

Fig. 9 illustrates the mode of formation. In another photograph taken on the same day (March 18th, 1897) the cloud is vague; in this the beginning of a head is seen as the cloud is gathered together.

Yet another mode of procedure seems to be given in Fig. 10, which seems to be a reproduction of an oil-painting. Note the close lines across the breast of the figure and the set of the drapery below the waist; also the hard outline of the shoulder drapery.

Figs. 11 and 12 are remarkable for the clearness of the supernormals which are in focus, the sitter being slightly out of focus. This is due, Mr. Woolley explains, to Mr. Boursnell having focussed the figure on the background, *which he could see*. Again the sitter has not moved at all during the interval between the exposures.

Number 13 is a slightly different pose of another not shown here; the face and figure are more complete and clearer. Again the sitter has not moved between the exposures. As Mr. Woolley loaded the slides himself there is no known means by which the alteration could be produced.

Fig. 14 is an illustration of a figure taken on October 7th, 1906. The self-same figure, identical down to the scratches on the plate, appeared in a photograph taken February 20th, 1905. Note that the scratches on the shoulder extend beyond the figure in both. This is almost certainly due to a psychic transparency being used.

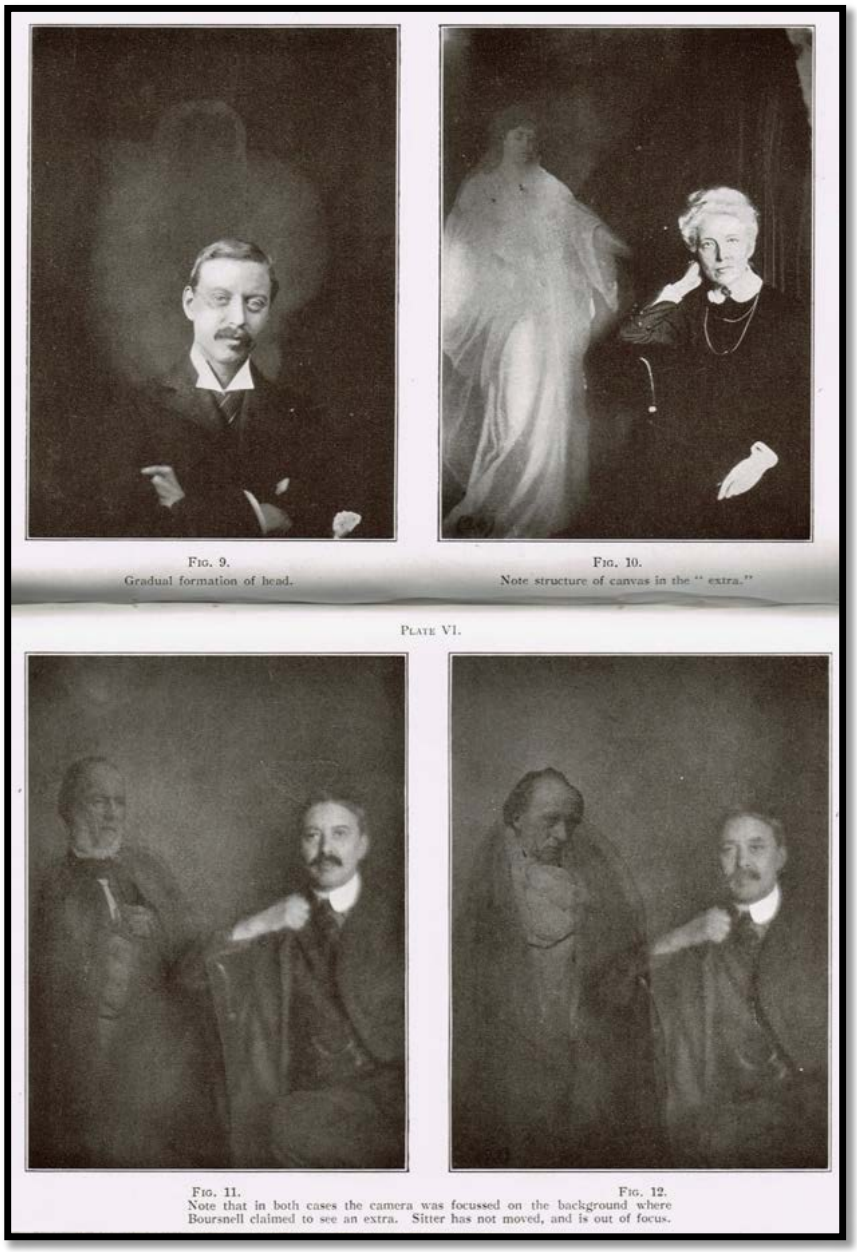


Fig. 9.
Gradual formation of head.

Fig. 10.
Note structure of canvas in the "extra."

Plate VI.

Fig. 11.
Note that in both cases the camera was focussed on the background where Boursnell claimed to see an extra. Sitter has not moved, and is out of focus.

Fig. 12.

It is unfortunate that the block-maker has neatly obliterated these scratches which are not on the plate, but in the structure of the gelatine.

## CLASSIFICATION BY THE MECHANISM.

Assuming that all the photographs are genuine supernormal effects, let us now attempt to deduce some kind of system in their production. We are always dependent not only on the experimenter's good faith (however unexceptionable as in the present case), but also on his powers of observation and his skill in guarding against trickery. I have always maintained, and have experimentally verified, both in company with Sir William Barrett and others, that no trickery whatever is possible when the medium does not touch the plates in any way whatsoever, and the background is plain and the camera my own.

We are agreed that there is scarcely any supernormal photograph (with the exception of unmistakable portraits of a deceased person taken with an unexpected sitter) that cannot be imitated by normal methods, given time, opportunity, and skill. In the present case Mr. Woolley states that "in no case were the supernormal appearances which subsequently appeared on the photographic plate apparent to the eye, and it is hardly necessary to add that all the ordinary precautions were taken of marking the plates, examining the dark slides, camera and lens stops, and background."

Based on experience in normal photography, be classified as under:—

I.—*The Objective Method*.

By this is meant that some normally invisible[14] person is present before the camera, and the photograph is produced by the ultra-violet rays reflected from this body. This would account for the faces in half-tone but not for the drapery nor for the lighting which later should be identical for normal and supernormal but not for skotographs.

II.—*The Thought-form Theory*.

The image is a thought-form projected from the unconsciousness of the medium and sitters. This has a slight plausibility as certain forms—a cap, a stick, and a bottle, have already been produced by intense concentration for fifteen to twenty minutes. But so far no face ever seems to have been produced. Moreover the time of exposure is but a few

[14] "In some cases clairvoyants present would appear to have described these persons as present".

seconds; the faces and forms vary rapidly; and the theory is quite unequal to account for the many variations in form, and for writing, unless indeed the thought-form is produced by the agency of the discarnate.

III.—*The Transparency Theory*.

The image is not produced on the plate but on an invisible film placed between the plate and the lens. This is almost certainly at least one method employed, as is shown by the cases of mirror-images in which the exact replicas are given reversed. The marks on the edges of plates which are usually referred to double exposure (fraudulent) are due to this in some cases, (not all). This would account for everything that could be produced by such method normally—writing, portraits, reproductions, and every variety of image. It would not account for the extremely rapid variation on plates taken within a few seconds of each other, nor for the clairvoyance of Mr. Boursnell, who would seem to have seen the images 11 and 12 on the background. It does not account for the "skotographs" where no light is admitted. If however the photographs are taken by some other means than light, it may indicate another process altogether.



FIG. 13. FIG. 14.